

Ars Magica

# Ancient Magic



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## Ancient Magic

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## Ancient Magic

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# Introduction

[Y]et even now there is much learning in the same city, for teachers of various sects flourish, and many kinds of secret knowledge are explained....

— Ammianus Marcellinus, *The Roman History*, XXII, 16:20

The world of *Ars Magica* is one of archaic splendor and ancient secrets, and none are more aware of this than the magi of the Order of Hermes. Where once mighty wizards flourished amidst the great empires of history, now Mythic Europe is ruled over by the ignorant, intolerant, and fearful; the petty kingdoms are but pale shadows of the once-glorious empires of the Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans.

In the golden age there were thousands of wizards and warlocks, countless rites and rituals. The wizards of times past tamed the wild spirits and elementals of antiquity, fought magical duels that invoked gods and angels, called down curses and blessings that lasted for seven generations. The philosopher-wizards of Greece and Rome vied with Syrian spirit masters, Egyptian alchemists, and barbarian witches to gain precious and irreplaceable knowledge.

Alas, the fall of the Roman Empire, and the growth of the Dominion, have seen the glories of the past fade; the secrets and lore that once saw mages ascend to godhood or gain immortality were lost in the centuries of ignorance, war, and decay called the Dark Ages. The secrets of the ancient

wizards were lost as these practitioners died and took their knowledge to their graves. The mystical continuity of a thousand years was broken, never to be replaced.

## Welcome to Ancient Magic

Not all of the secret knowledge of antiquity was lost. Fragments survived, waiting for the brave and adventurous to seek them out. This book contains a small portion of the once-great wizardry of times past. Included in these pages are the mystical coordinates of Ptolemy, the fetishes of fertility cults, the primeval tongue of Adam and Eve, the sublime hymns of the Hyperboreans, details of ancient curse tablets, and much more.

*Ancient Magic* details the arcane practices of nine distinct magical traditions, thought by most to be lost to the world. Each of the nine chapters details a non-Hermetic form of magic, the way in which Hermetic wizards can adapt and integrate this knowledge into Hermetic Theory, and a number of story hooks and quests for magi who want to search out and uncover this centuries-lost knowledge.

Each of the distinct forms of magic in this book is inspired by the myths

and legends of Mythic Europe, from Ptolemy's *Geographica*, to the secret *Books of Enoch* and Herodotus's *Histories*. These legends have been adapted to fit into the Mythic Europe setting of *Ars Magica*. Each one includes a complete system for use by Hermetic characters in learning or adapting the ancient magic to Hermetic Theory in the Laboratory, as well as details on the legends that inspired the magical tradition.

*Ancient Magic* is a tool-kit for troupes: it includes new kinds of magic for players' characters to learn and use, as well as legends and story hooks for storyguides to gain inspiration from. Suitable for both players and storyguides, *Ancient Magic* is about the quest for lost knowledge and the way Hermetic magi can use that knowledge.

## How to Use This Book

Within this book is a great deal of information on the magic of the ancient world, ranging from new Virtues and Flaws, to unique languages and Supernatural Abilities, to mystical relics and wondrous spells and arcane rites. All of this is divided into this introduction, nine chapters, and a bibliography:

**INTRODUCTION:** What you are reading at the moment, the introduction also details the system used for

## What Ancient Magic is Not

This book is not a book of Mysteries for Initiates of Hermetic sects and cults. Hermetic Mysteries have been detailed extensively in *Houses of Hermes: Mystery Cults* and *The Mysteries Revised Edition*. The magic in this book cannot be Initiated by a Hermetic magus; rather, it must be integrated into the very essence of Hermetic theory. Unlike a Hermetic Mystery, there are no living practitioners for Hermetic wizards to learn ancient magic from, to assist them in understanding the golden age lore, or to advise them on how to overcome the many obstacles in the way of even finding the lost secrets. The result of discovering these secrets may, however, be a new Hermetic Mystery, if the troupe so desires.

Furthermore, *Ancient Magic* is not an adventure book. Although it does

contain numerous story hooks and saga seeds, as well as locations for characters to visit and explore, they are offered as the beginnings of ideas that can be used to build and develop your own stories, rather than as ready-made scenarios. They detail many possible quests and obstacles that may stand between a Hermetic magus and the lost secrets of the ancient world.

Finally, although this book is inspired by real-world legends and myths, it is neither a how-to guide for real magic, nor a textbook for students. The tales retold in this book have been adapted to fit into the imaginary Mythic European setting of *Ars Magica*. If you seek more information on anything in this book, a bibliography has been included.

Hermetic characters who are trying to integrate the ancient knowledge of the following chapters into Hermetic theory.

**CHAPTER 1: THE LANGUAGE OF ADAM.** The first language of the world names things more truly than later tongues, giving those who speak it Arcane Connections to anything they can name. Learning the language, however, is far from easy, and may lead the characters to the Garden of Eden itself.

**CHAPTER 2: CANAANITE NECROMANCY.** The necromancers of biblical Canaan could contact almost any of the dead, without the need for specific Arcane Connections.

**CHAPTER 3: DEFIXIO MAGIC.** The curse tablets of the ancient world could affect their targets without the need for an Arcane Connection.

**CHAPTER 4: FERTILITY MAGIC.** The relics of an ancient fertility cult

hold the key to affecting the traits of the unborn, and even ensuring that they are born with The Gift.

**CHAPTER 5: GRIGORI MAGIC.** The angels who fathered the Nephilim also taught secrets of magic, which magi today could learn in order to break the Limit of Vis.

**CHAPTER 6: HERON OF ALEXANDRIA'S LEGACY.** Heron was a great engineer and magician of the Hellenistic world, and his legacy might enable magi to create items with independent intelligence.

**CHAPTER 7: THE HESPERIDES.** Ptolemy's coordinates allow magi to form Arcane Connections to any place, but the place where their secret can be found may be more interesting still.

**CHAPTER 8: HYPERBOREAN MAGIC.** The sages of Hyperborea could heal and create enchanted items without vis; magi who study their rel-

ics may be able to reproduce those and other great feats.

**CHAPTER 9: RUNE MAGIC.** The rune wizards who attacked much of Europe and fought against the Order of Hermes between the eighth and tenth centuries are thought to have died out, but their artifacts may remain, allowing magi to learn how to make magical changes to objects that are, nevertheless, natural and thus unaffected by Magic Resistance.

**FURTHER READING:** A list of books and sources used by the authors as inspiration. Use this resource to learn more about the myths and legends contained within.

## Ancient Magic and the Order of Hermes

The Order of Hermes is, relatively speaking, a new tradition, comprising a hodge-podge of arcane methods and knowledge from the barbarian secrets of the druids to the mighty rites of the Romans. Most of what constitutes Hermetic theory is based on the surviving remnants of rituals from the Cult of Mercury. Apart from the innovations Bonisagus learned from Bjornaer and Diedne, Hermetic magic derives from a single magical tradition; most Founders traced their lineages back to the Roman Cult of Mercury. The ancient magic in this book is distinctly non-Hermetic, and pre-dates the Order of Hermes, and even the Cult of Mercury, by hundreds of years.

The magi of the Order of Hermes are well aware of the once-mighty magic of the past. While many scoff at the powers of the wizards of yore, pointing out that Hermetic magic is more versatile than any past form of magic, other Hermetic magi search out what remains of the long-lost and forgotten rites and rituals. These

magi, called Seekers, lust after the secrets of the ancients, and search the world, from Hibernia to the Middle East, for hints and rumors of the old ones and their magic. Seekers come from all of the Hermetic Houses and are a guarded and cagey group, often unwilling to assist each other for fear that they may unwittingly help a rival stumble across a great secret.

All of the Houses of Hermes would be interested in learning one or more of the forgotten secrets of the ancients. While Bonisagus magi may wish to expand and improve the theory of magic, Criamon may wish to gain a greater understanding of the essence of magic, and wary Tremere look at the potential to safeguard the Order from attack or collapse. There are innumerable reasons for Hermetic characters to go in search of ancient magic and attempt to reconcile it with the Hermetic theory: personal advancement, glory and prestige, or to altruistically spread and preserve knowledge are but three examples.

Many of the secrets within *Ancient Magic* reach or even break the limits of magic; however, this knowledge cannot be learned from the laboratory. Hermetic wizards who wish to make use of these glorious powers must venture out into the world and risk their lives in the hunt for knowledge.

## Hermetic Integration of Ancient Magic

*Ancient Magic* contains a variety of pre-Hermetic magics and arcane secrets. While complete synthesis of these magical traditions is not possible, Hermetic magic is versatile enough to integrate many of the principles of these magics, pushing the bounds of Bonisagus's theory and perhaps even the limits of magic themselves.

## Historical Settings

Many of the traditions described in this book are given enough detail to make it possible to play a living member of the tradition. While the traditions are dead in 1220, at least in the standard *Ars Magica* setting, you might choose to set your saga in an earlier period, when they are still active. You will need to fill in a few rule details, as the traditions have not been written up as full examples of hedge magic traditions, but most of what you need is here.

## THE BREAKTHROUGH

A magus ambitious enough to attempt to unify the various magics contained in the chapters of this book with Hermetic theory may attempt to achieve a Breakthrough in Hermetic theory, accomplished through research and experimentation. Any magus may, at any time, attempt a Breakthrough; there are no minimum Art or Ability scores required. To successfully integrate the magic into Hermetic theory, he must accumulate a number of **breakthrough points** determined by the type of Breakthrough he is attempting.

Each chapter of *Ancient Magic* details the number of breakthrough points required to integrate a specific part of that ancient magic into Hermetic Theory.

There are three kinds of Breakthrough: **Minor**, **Major**, and **Hermetic**. Note that it is recommended that the exact number of breakthrough points required be varied, so the players do not know the precise number needed for the Breakthrough.

A **Minor Breakthrough** is a development that is immediately useful and applicable in the existing frame-

## The Integration Process

1. Find a source of ancient magic, such as a relic, book, or the like. This typically involves a quest or adventure of some sort.
2. Investigate the source to gain Insight; this typically takes two or three seasons.
3. Invent a spell or magical device incorporating the Insight. A magus must experiment while doing this. If she succeeds in inventing the spell, she gains a number of breakthrough points equal to the magnitude of the spell or device. The spell may break Hermetic limits, but if it does, it cannot be invented by another character without access to the inventor's Lab Text, and cannot be varied in any way.
4. Continue to research, gaining more breakthrough points, until the threshold is equaled or exceeded.
5. Bask in the glory of having improved Hermetic theory, or alternatively, prepare for the political consequences of your impudence.

work of Hermetic magic, such as a new Range, Target, or Duration. It improves upon or adds to existing theory without truly reaching the limits of magic. (Typically requires around 30 breakthrough points.)

A **Major Breakthrough** pushes those limits, but does not break them; these include creating new Hermetic Virtues for Gifted characters. Incorporating hedge magic into Hermetic theory is a Major Breakthrough, and the incorporation can then be taught to others as Supernatural Virtues. (Typically requires around 45 breakthrough points.)

A **Hermetic Breakthrough** is research that breaks one of the Hermetic limits of magic, whether by creating a new Arcane Ability or giving the ability to cast permanent duration spells without vis. Hermetic Breakthroughs re-write the theory books; the only Hermetic Breakthrough in the last 450 years was the development of the *Parma Magica* by Bonisagus. (Typically requires around 60 breakthrough points.)

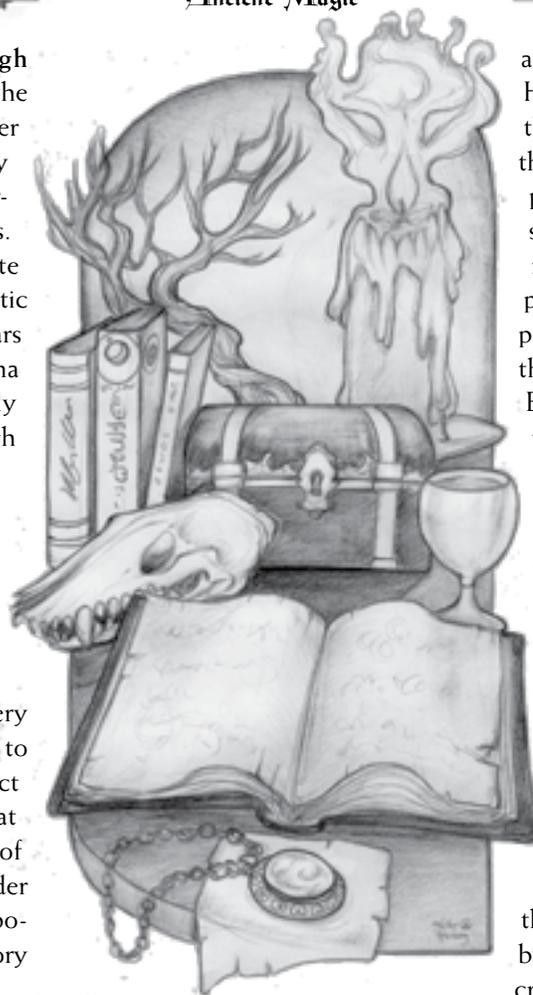
### INSIGHT

Insight is gained from studying some existing source of the ancient magic in question. Every Insight the magus gains allows him to produce a partially Hermetic effect incorporating some aspect of that lost magic. As he produces more of these effects, he gains the broader understanding necessary to incorporate that aspect into Hermetic theory as a whole.

The seasons spent gaining Insight produce Lab Texts. Any magus may study these Lab Texts over the course of a season in order to gain the same Insight for himself, even without direct access to the source. Summaries of Lab Texts are not useful in this way, however; only the whole thing can be used. For purposes of copying, Lab Texts that detail Insights have a level equal to the typical number of breakthrough points needed for the type of Breakthrough in question.

There are three sources of Insight: **texts**, **relics**, and **teachers**.

**Texts** are ancient books and tomes, symbolic wall paintings, or other explanatory sources that describe how to learn, perform, or cast a magical effect. If the text contains the information needed to gain a Supernatural Ability, a character could



use it to learn the Ability, as per the normal rules. Most Hermetic magi, however, cannot learn Supernatural Abilities due to prohibitive penalties. Alternatively, the text may contain the rites and practices needed to perform a magical spell or ritual associated with the ancient magical tradition.

**Relics** are mystical devices or sacred items enchanted by practitioners of the ancient magic, and incorporate unique aspects of that tradition. Additionally, a relic may be an ongoing mystical effect caused by magic of the ancient tradition. Like Hermetic magical devices, a magus is able to investigate the device to learn its secrets and unlock the methods used to craft it.

**Teachers** are individuals who possess the Supernatural Abilities associated with the ancient magic

and are able and willing to instruct a Hermetic magus. The very nature of the ancient magic in this book means that there are no remaining living practitioners to teach the arcane secrets of antiquity. Nevertheless, most of the ritualists who knew and performed the various magics were pagans; their ghosts may still haunt the mysterious regions of Mythic Europe, and could be convinced to teach a Hermetic magus.

For every season a magus spends investigating a source of insight, make a stress roll of Intelligence + Magic Theory against an Ease Factor of 18. The Inventive Genius Virtue adds three to this roll, and some sources of Insight may add their own modifiers. If the roll succeeds, the magus gains an Insight. If it fails, he learns nothing now, but may try again in another season.

He may do other things before returning to his study. On a botch, the magus thinks he has an Insight, but does not. He realizes this if he creates an effect, as described below, in an attempt to use the Insight; upon completion, he discovers that the final product is either entirely Hermetic, or simply non-functional.

A single source can generally only provide a single Insight, although there may be rare exceptions. The same source provides the same Insight for any magus who studies it.

### CREATING THE EFFECT

A particular Insight allows a researcher to create one specific effect. This effect might be a spell, or an effect enchanted into an item. It could, conceivably, be another laboratory project; anything that uses a Lab Total and creates something may be a legitimate Insight outgrowth. However, spells are by far

the most common, followed by item enchantments.

The researcher does not get to choose the effect for which he receives Insight, and as the level of the effect is fixed, the Insight might only be useful for creating an effect he cannot yet invent. For example, the effect might be level 40, while the researcher has a Lab Total of 32. In that case, the researcher would have to increase his Lab Total before he could work on the effect.

The troupe should decide on the effects that result from particular pieces of Insight, choosing ones that advance the saga without upsetting play balance. Player characters can vary things as much as they like once they fully integrate the system, so the restrictions at this stage should be accepted with good grace.

The researcher must invent exactly the effect inspired by the Insight. He may not vary the Range, Duration, or Target, or any other parameters. As the magus must experiment while inventing the effect, the result may be slightly different, as a result of rolls on the Extraordinary Results Table.

A spell is cast like a normal formulaic spell, and characters with Flexible Formulaic Magic may vary it at casting time in the normal way. The spell may also be mastered, again in the normal way.

The effect created may bend or break the limits of magic, as it incorporates non-Hermetic elements. Setting the level of the effect may require a judgment call by the troupe, as it may do something for which there is no Hermetic guideline.

If the effect is successfully created, the magus gains a number of breakthrough points equal to the magnitude of the effect. This applies even if the final effect is warped or has

## Integration and Original Research

*Houses of Hermes: True Lineages* includes rules for original research, which allows magi to add features to Hermetic magic based purely on their own inspiration. Integrating ancient magic tends to be faster and safer, but it does have two disadvantages. First, the magus can only aim for the Breakthroughs suggested by the ancient magic in question. Second, he has to get out of his laboratory and find existing sources of Insight. From the storyguide's perspective, these may be advantages, of course.

The two sets of rules are similar, and both approaches may be taken to a single Breakthrough. That is, breakthrough points from integration may be added to breakthrough points from original research to determine whether a Breakthrough has been achieved.

a side effect. These points are added to the magus's running total, and he must find another source of Insight before repeating the procedure.

The effect produced in this way can be reproduced by other Hermetic magi. However, they can only do so if they have access to a Lab Text describing it, and it is not possible to vary the effect in any way; it must be reproduced exactly as it was initially created. Reproducing the effect in this way does not grant breakthrough points unless the reproducing magus also gains the relevant Insight, whether from investigating the same item or from reading the original investigator's Lab Texts. It is possible to reproduce the effect first, and study the insight Lab Texts later.

## AFTER THE BREAKTHROUGH

Minor Breakthroughs are usable immediately in the game, and are understandable by all Hermetic magi. New Ranges or Durations may be incorporated into new spells or items, and the Lab Texts distributed for a spell may be used by another Hermetic magus without his needing to research the Breakthrough. Any magus who has created an effect using the Breakthrough can then use that Range of Duration freely in his other spells, and any magus trained by that magus, in either Arts or spells, may also do so.

Major and Hermetic Breakthroughs must be taught to Hermetic magi directly. An Ability may be taught in the usual way, either in person or through books. The discoverer converts his breakthrough points into experience points in the new Ability, so that a magus who accrued 50 breakthrough points to integrate an Ability would start with a score of 4.

A new Virtue may be Initiated according to the normal rules for Mysteries. The discoverer gains the Virtue when he completes the integration, and does not need to be Initiated. He does need to design an Initiation Script, following the rules in *The Mysteries Revised Edition*.

Inventing a Major or Hermetic Breakthrough that does not require teaching necessitates another Major Breakthrough, which may be achieved by these rules or the original research rules. If this succeeds, any magus may create an effect using the Breakthrough as long as he has a Lab Text, and then may use the Breakthrough freely. As for Minor Breakthroughs, the same applies to any magus taught Arts or spells by a magus who understands the Breakthrough.

## Chapter One

# The Language of Adam

*And out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air, and brought [them] unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that [was] the name thereof.*

*And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for Adam there was not found an help meet for him.*

*And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof;*

*And the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man.*

*And Adam said, This [is] now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.*

— Genesis 2:19–23

*And Adam called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all living.*

— Genesis 3:20

According to traditional legends about the beginning of the world, the very first man was named Adam, and lived in a fantastic garden called Eden created for him by God, where his every need was served. God brought all the animals before him, and Adam gave them their names. These were specific words that best described them, terms that meant "horse" or "lion" or "crow" or "salmon," that

each encompassed the entirety of the beast's essential nature in a few specific sounds and the concept in Adam's mind. It might even be said that the name defined the beast, that each name had mystic significance that determined the qualities of the particular animal's species.

Yet though they all had fine qualities, none of the animals was found to be the perfect companion for Adam. And so God created another like Adam, a person to live the garden as he did. As Adam called himself "Man," his companion was called "Woman," and both she and he inherited all the traits that these names represent. And in time, just as Adam was called Adam and not just "Man," he also gave the "Woman" a name for her own: Eve, meaning "mother of all living." From this, Eve developed other unique traits, not just the traits of a woman, but qualities particular to her own identity, and together she and Adam had mastery and dominion over the land.

Many medieval scholars believe that there is great power in the language that Adam spoke, as it is the original language of all things, perhaps the language spoken by God himself to bring about the creation of the universe. The power of naming, of assigning a being a name that truly and succinctly describes it, might be considered to be the very first form of magic, the most ancient magic in the whole world. Uncovering this

lost tongue, known as Adamic, is the focus of this chapter, an epic quest that will surely earn the magus who does so a place in Hermetic history and legend.

The power of the first language is simple, but direct. A character who is fluent in Adamic — that is, who has at least a score of 5 in the Dead Language (Adamic) Ability — can give anything within range of his voice a new name, which he may use as a permanent and lasting Arcane Connection to that target from then on. He also has an Arcane Connection to any mundane thing he knows the name of (anything without a Might Score). For Penetration, this second connection is valued as if it lasted "hours," though it is effectively permanent.

A character with some knowledge of Adamic receives a +1 bonus to his Penetration multiplier whenever he uses his magic on a target with Magic Resistance, as a form of sympathetic magic. To do this, he must name the target while it is within range of his voice, working this name into whatever ritual he performs to produce the magical effect, and if he is not fluent in Adamic he must have an Arcane Connection to the target, just as with other sympathetic bonuses. For example, a character with Adamic 1 and an Arcane Connection that lasts hours (+1) would have a Penetration multiplier of +2 when naming his target within Voice Range. A char-

## Story Hook: The Language of Innocence

A few ancient and contemporary theologians have theorized that the first language of man is that of pure innocence, of a mind unsullied by sin, and have sought to recreate the first language through experimentation, reasoning that if a child were to never hear any other words, what he would develop would be a language based in instinct, a reasonable facsimile of the language of Adam. Roman historians wrote legends of an Egyptian pharaoh who had two children raised in the wilderness, and who, when summoned, pointed to their mouths and said "becos," the Egyptian word for bread, which supposedly proved that Egyptian was the oldest language in the world. Frederick II, king of Germany and Holy Roman Emperor in 1220, is said to have conducted a similar experiment, but the results were inconclusive as the children disappeared after being left in the wilderness and were never heard from again.

In Mythic Europe, an imaginative child who has The Gift and is raised without any other linguistic influences develops a special language of his own in the first few years of his life, and this language is very similar to Adamic. However, as he grows older and learns to communicate with others he necessarily loses much of the innocence that mimics Adam's state before he was cast out of the garden, making it impossible for him to develop his vocabulary beyond the primitive ideas associated with his childhood.

To represent this in the game, instead of beginning with a Living Language score of 5 during character creation, a child with The Gift and a positive Intelligence who was raised in controlled conditions or the wild may begin with a score of 2 in Dead Language (Adamic). Unfortunately, he is unable to develop this language any further than this, as by age 5 he has lost the innocence that allows

him to create this knowledge. Like with other Dead Languages, he may increase his understanding of Adamic through formal instruction, if he can find a teacher. He can also teach the basics of his made-up language to others once he learns to communicate with them. In this way, other characters may acquire this rudimentary knowledge of Adamic if they wish.

This method is a good hook for a storyguide to draw a character with an interest in ancient magic into the quest, and one way to do this is by having him discover and adopt a child who intuitively speaks Adamic, perhaps one of the children used in King Frederick's experiment. From this child, the character may learn the basics of the original language, and thus gain a slight increase to his Penetration Ability, though to gain the full benefits he must eventually become fluent in it through one of the other means described in this chapter.

acter with Adamic 5 would have a total Penetration multiplier of +5, since because he is fluent in the language, he always has a lasting Arcane Connection to his target.

Whenever a character fluent in Adamic names something for the first time, such as a newborn baby, a piece of art, or a newly discovered land, the name he gives it subtly influences its destiny, causing its true nature to change and conform to his image of it. This birthright is something the storyguide should eventually integrate into the story in a subtle way that makes the name meaningful, as if it were a divine prophecy or an inheritance of some sort. Aside from choosing the concept associated with the name, however, the character has no direct control over this effect;

this capability is simply to allow the player to use his character's powers to help create new stories.

## Hermetic Integration

Adamic does not need to be integrated into Hermetic magic, because learning it gives the character the power to make use of it immediately. The Adamic language is extremely difficult to study, however, because it is truly a dead language. There are no humans still living who speak it, and there are no written records to suggest how it would have sounded. How, then, are interested characters to recover the secret? The sections below contain three suggested means of learning the language, any of which

characters might come up with on their own or have suggested to them by others who hypothesize that the original language of man has arcane significance. Each path follows a different route to this knowledge, but they all overlap in various ways.

The first method is to reconstruct the language from contemporary sources. Much like the qualities of a person's ancestors may be divined by studying their effect on the descendant, so too can Adamic be learned by studying the different languages into which it has transformed over the years. This quest begins with the story of the Tower of Babel, the monumental structure built to touch Heaven itself, thwarted by God's intervention and the invention of a babble of many different tongues.

A second method is to seek out the Garden of Eden, the idyllic and timeless place that was the origin of humanity and from which Adam and Eve were exiled forever. The inhabitants of the garden may still speak the original language, and a character who can find his way there may be able to learn to speak it from them. Tracking down this place requires that the characters travel to Mesopotamia, seeking out the place where four mighty rivers once converged, and somehow convincing the angelic guardians to let them pass.

Finally, there is one being remaining on earth who lived before the fragmenting of the language and who thus still speaks Adamic: Cain, the firstborn son of Adam, who killed his brother and whom God cursed, giving him a mark that signified his crime and doomed him to wander forever. The third method of learning Adamic is to find Cain and convince, trick, or force him into teaching the characters the lost language of his father.

## The Tower of Babel

*And the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech.*

*And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar, and they dwelt there.*

*And they said one to another, Go to, let us make brick, and burn them thoroughly. And they had brick for stone, and slime [bitumen] had they for mortar.*

*And they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top [may reach] unto heaven, and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth.*

*And the Lord came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded.*

*And the Lord said, Behold, the people [are] one, and they have all one language, and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do.*

*Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech.*

*So the Lord scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off building the city.*

*Therefore is the name of it called Babel, because the Lord did there confound the language of all the earth: and from thence did the Lord scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth.*

— Genesis 11:1–9

The Bible explains the development of different languages as a curse, an act of God designed to prevent the people of Babylon from building a great tower to touch the sphere of Heaven. They had the materials necessary to construct this impressive structure, and aspired to set themselves upon it like rival gods above the rest of the world. But God caused them to scatter in every direction, each group developing its language in a different way, and even the name of their city, the word *bab-ilu* that had meant "gate of the god," came to be associated with the term *balal*, "to confound or mix." From this babble of languages eventually emerged every tongue that is now spoken in Mythic Europe.

Thus, a character interested in tracing the first language back to the time before the folly of the Tower of Babel must discover the roots of that language in contemporary speech. By studying the similarities found in different ancient languages, the character can reconstruct how Adamic must have been spoken.

When the people of ancient Babylon scattered, some of them went west into Israel, some went south into Egypt, and some went north into the mountains of the Caucasus, while others went east and eventually north and west into Europe. This created four different groups of original languages, each with its own distinct structure and vocabulary. These were **Semitic**, named after Noah's son Shem, from which Hebrew, Aramaic, and Arabic developed; **Hamitic**, named after Noah's son Ham, from which Egyptian and Coptic have descended; **Scythian**, related to the languages spoken by the people who lived in the area between the Black and Caspian seas, descended from Noah's son Japheth, and from which developed the languages of Slavic, Baltic, and Persian; and a fourth language, the language of the nomadic people who traveled around the Caspian Sea into the far north and eventually settled all of Europe, who were the ultimate origin of Greek, Latin, and the Germanic languages. This fourth language has never had a name, but it might be called **Cainite** after Cain, thought by some to be the ultimate father of these nomadic people.

To discover the Adamic language through research, the character must first become fluent in two of these four ancient languages via linguistic research (see the sidebar), and then develop those two languages to reconstruct the original language they have in common. For most characters, these two languages are likely to be Semitic and Cainite, as it is relatively easy for a character in Mythic Europe to learn Hebrew, Arabic, Latin, and Greek, since there are a great many excellent texts and teachers available.

Before he can research Adamic, however, the character must also become more familiar with ancient Mesopotamia, to gain the required

## Linguistic Research

The process of reconstructing an ancient language from contemporary ones is difficult, but can be done, although it requires a special seasonal activity. This works much like the process of original research, except that instead of performing a magical project in the laboratory, it requires a season of study, during which time the character experiments by matching the words and sentence structure of one language with the other, sounding out what older words might have been like and inventing linguistic notions to describe the similarities and differences between the two. This gives the character two points of Exposure experience in the common language Ability, but the character must be fluent in both derivative languages, and must also be familiar enough with both cultures to understand the conditions that could have caused them to change over time. This is represented by a required Area Lore score of 5 for the birthplace of the common language.

With these requirements met, the character may also experiment with the lost language in the lab as if he were researching a Breakthrough. For every two points or fraction thereof by which the character's score in the related languages exceeds 5, the player may modify the results of the experimentation roll by +1 or -1, to a maximum of +3 or -3, but if he rolls a 0 he must still check for a botch. If the result of this roll is "Discovery," the character receives 15 experience points in the common language, or perhaps enough experience to increase his score to the next level. A botch means that the character has ruined some of his work, by making a faulty conclusion or a mistaken translation, and he both gains no experience that season and loses 15 experience points in the shared Ability — this represents the fact that he must later discover his error and redo his work for that season. Other results, such as "Side Effect" or "Story Event,"

might give the character experience in a related field like Area Lore or Artes Liberales, or have other appropriate effects at the storyguide's discretion.

As an example, a magus has a score of 5 in Dead Language (Egyptian) and Dead Language (Coptic). He would like to analyze these two languages to discover a working knowledge of Hamitic, the language from which these two other languages developed. He also has Area Knowledge (Ancient Egypt) 5, indicating that he understands how local conditions would have influenced the two languages. Every season he spends examining their similarities he gains two experience points in Dead Language (Hamitic). After only 38 seasons of this careful study, he becomes fluent in the lost form of speech. If he experiments, he has the chance of gaining 15 additional experience points each season, and so it may be more worth his time to risk cutting corners.

Area Lore score of 5 that is necessary to develop his linguistic research, and this probably necessitates a journey to the Levant, since apart from brief mentions in a few tractatus by Roman historians, there have been very few books written on the subject.

## Seeking Lost Babylon

In order to gain sufficient knowledge of the culture of Ancient Babylon, to give the characters necessary insight into the mindset of the people who built the great Tower of Babel before they were scattered throughout the world, the characters need to investigate the ruins of the once-great city and explore their

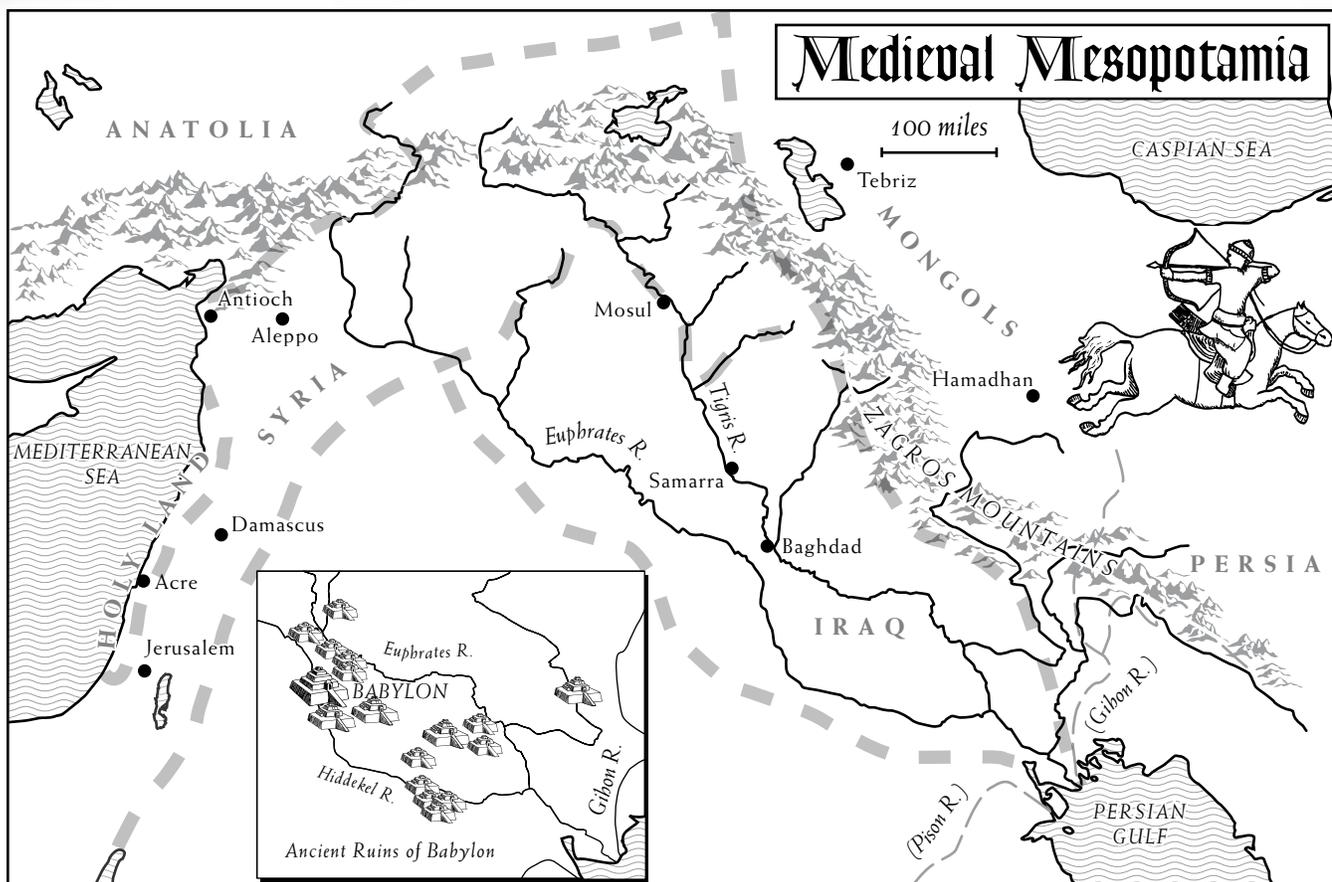
environs. This might involve excavating historical artifacts of the ancient world from beneath the centuries of sand that cover them, or speaking with the loremasters of the region to hear stories and legends, or exploring the land to get a sense of how the people lived in the most ancient times. It takes about 15 seasons of exploring Babylonia to gain a score of 5 in Area Lore (Ancient Mesopotamia) through Practice.

At one time, Babylonia encompassed the entire Fertile Crescent, the lands of Mesopotamia that enclose the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, and extended as far west as the Mediterranean Sea in Syria and north into Cappadocia. To the east, much of the northern part of the region

is mountainous, descending to flat steppes in the southeast, and thick marshland in the south near the confluence of the two rivers and the Persian Gulf.

At the center of the region is the city of Baghdad, which is also the religious and political center of Islam, the seat of the caliphate. The Exilarch, the spiritual leader of all the Jews, also lives there, and there are many Christian colonies in the surrounding area.

The city of Babylon was located about 50 miles south of Baghdad, and in the 13th century the area is almost entirely deserted. There are many dried-up riverbeds throughout the region, signifying that at one time the ground was much less arid than



it is now, and Babylon lies on the plain directly in the path of one of these, which splits from the Euphrates approximately 20 miles northwest. Careful exploration within the region reveals the paths of at least four different rivers throughout the lands between the Tigris and Euphrates. Closer to the Persian Gulf, where the two rivers join and meet the sea, there is evidence that thousands of years ago the shore was about 100 miles northwest of its present position, perhaps because of a rise in water levels subsequent to the Great Flood.

Strange pictures of a many-stepped tower may be discovered on the artifacts unearthed throughout the region, including clay tablets, stone cylinders with sunken writing used to officially seal documents, *kudurru*s or stone blocks ornamented with reliefs and inscriptions, amulets, bas-reliefs, and jars. The Tower of Babel is shown

as a great ziggurat that is usually depicted as sacred, often with a sun shining down at the very summit, perhaps indicating that the top of the tower would have surpassed the heavenly spheres. Magi may discover that many of these ancient artifacts contain a pawn or more of *Terram vis*, if the inscriptions remain readable and the objects have not been disturbed.

It is said that the base of the great unfinished building remained intact for ages, but was completely demolished by Xerxes almost 500 years before the birth of Christ, and that the site was later partially cleared by Alexander the Great. The area of the city itself is often called *Babel* in the local tongue, and all of it lies in ruins, though streets still extend some 30 miles out from the former palace of Nebuchadnezzar, which can still be seen on the horizon. Local legends tell of a curse upon the place, and say

that the area is infested with snakes and scorpions, but it is also a fine quarry for the people of the valley, and there are plenty of strong, baked bricks still hidden beneath centuries of dust. There is scarcely a house in the entire region that was not built from stones hauled away from that place. The closest settlement is a community of 20,000 Jews who live within about 20 miles of Babel, and perform their worship in the Synagogue of Daniel, a great building said to have been built in antiquity by the great prophet, constructed of the same solid stones and bricks taken from the ruins of the Tower.

Beneath the site of the ancient city is a deep pit in which, according to Muslim legends, two fallen angels named Harut and Marut hang suspended upside down by their feet, necks, and knees. These angels were responsible for teaching magic to the

descendants of Adam and Eve, in accordance with God's wishes, but when God observed that they did not have compassion for humankind, he gave them human emotions and sent them to earth to be tempted as people are. Both angels sinned, and as penance they were given the choice of punishment in this life or the next. They chose the former, and so they hang there until the end of the world.

Rubble and bricks supposedly cover the great rock that blocks the entrance to the pit. It is said that one man once managed to gain entrance, by digging around the edges. He had been warned by his guide not to speak the name of God in the area, but upon beholding the greatness of the two angels he could not help himself, and Harut and Marut became so agitated that they almost broke their chains. The man and his guide fled and never returned again.

In fact, the pit and the two angels are hidden within an Infernal regio of level 3. At the top of the well, there is a level of the regio with an Infernal aura of 1, where the well was once sealed. Although the stone has been broken, at this level the pit only contains thousands of scorpions. On the mundane level, there is only a thick slab of stone, nine by nine paces across, beneath the rubble, and the entire city has a faint Magical aura of 1.

## The Encroaching Mongols

The lands surrounding ancient Babylonia are a very dangerous place to explore in the middle of the 13th century, for there is another power converging upon them: the great army of the Mongols, nomadic invaders

## Mongol Trooper

**Characteristics:** Int -1, Per +1, Pre 0, Com -1, Str +1, Sta +2, Dex +1, Qik +2

**Size:** 0

**Age:** 30

**Virtues and Flaws:** Puissant Ability (Ride), Puissant Ability (Bows), Warrior, Reckless, Disfigured (scars), Infamous

**Personality Traits:** Brave +3, Reckless +3, Loyal +3

**Reputations:** Murderous 4 (local)

**Combat:**

Dagger: Init +0, Attack +7, Defense +6, Damage +4

Composite Bow (mounted): Init +0, Attack +16, Defense +13, Damage +8

Composite Bow (on foot): Init -2, Attack +13, Defense +10, Damage +8

Saber (mounted): Init +4, Attack +14, Defense +12, Damage +7

Saber (on foot): Init +2, Attack +11, Defense +9, Damage +7

Spear (mounted): Init +4, Attack +11, Defense +10, Damage +6

Spear (on foot): Init +2, Attack +8, Defense +7, Damage +6

**Soak:** +4 (armor and Stamina)

**Fatigue Levels:** OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-15), Incapacitated (20+)

**Abilities:** Animal Handling 3 (horses), Area Lore Mongolia 3 (geography), Area Lore Persia 2 (geography), Area Lore Russia 2 (geography), Athletics 3 (running), Awareness 2 (in combat), Bargain 2 (livestock), Bows 5+2 (composite), Brawl 3 (dagger), Craft Bows 3, Hunt 3 (tracking), Living Language Mongolian 5, Ride 3+2 (battle), Single Weapon 5 (saber), Survival 3 (steppe)

**Equipment:** composite bow (Load +2), metal reinforced leather half-armor (Load +2), saber (Load +1), daggers, spear (Load +1)

**Encumbrance:** 2 (3)

**Appearance:** A fierce-looking eastern warrior on horseback, his upper body lightly covered by fur-lined leather armor, with an acorn-like metal helmet also fringed with fur. He carries a bow in a quiver on his saddle, a saber, and a short spear with a small hook at the base of the blade.

While there are younger soldiers in the Mongol army, this trooper represents the finest specimen that the characters are likely to encounter, the sort of character who would fight in the van during a group engagement or who might be found singly acting as a scout or guard.

from the Far East. Fierce warriors with lance, bow, and sword; practically raised on horseback, and hardy as the steppes on which they were born, this force has united under the banner of one supreme chieftain named Genghis Khan, Lord of the Earth, a brilliant tactician, a charismatic leader, and a ruthless opponent.

In 1218, the governor of a Persian frontier province seized a Mongol trade caravan, killing the drivers.

Genghis sent ambassadors to the shah demanding that the governor be turned over to him for retribution, but these ambassadors were humiliated by the shah and sent back, with the leaders of the deputation put to death for their insolence. The Mongols declared war, and more than 100,000 Mongol horsemen rode westward, obliterating resistance when it was offered and bypassing areas where there was none. The speed and viciousness of

## Orlock (Mongol General)

**Characteristics:** Int 0, Per +1, Pre +2 (1), Com +1, Str 0, Sta +2, Dex +1, Qik 0

**Size:** 0

**Age:** 40

**Confidence Score:** 2 (5)

**Virtues and Flaws:** Affinity with Leadership, Clear Thinker, Improved Characteristics, Inspirational, Puissant Ability (Leadership), Puissant Ability (Ride), Self-Confident, Strong-Willed, Warrior, Enemies (Europe); Outsider; Vow (loyalty to Great Khan); Disfigured (scars), Infamous

**Personality Traits:** Resolute +3, Ruthless +5, Cunning +4

**Reputations:** Murderous 4 (local)

**Combat:**

Dagger: Init -1, Attack +7, Defense +4, Damage +3

Composite Bow (mtd.): Init -2, Attack +14, Defense +9, Damage +7

Composite Bow (on foot): Init -5, Attack +11, Defense +6, Damage +7

Saber (mounted): Init +2, Attack +12, Defense +8, Damage +6

Saber (on foot): Init -1, Attack +9, Defense +5, Damage +6

Spear (mounted): Init +2, Attack +9, Defense +6, Damage +5

Spear (on foot): Init -1, Attack +6, Defense +3, Damage +5

**Soak:** +4 (armor and Stamina)

**Fatigue Levels:** OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-15), Incapacitated (20+)

**Abilities:** Animal Handling 3 (horses), Area Lore Mongolia 3 (geography), Area Lore Persia 2 (geography), Area Lore Russia 2 (geography), Athletics 3 (running), Awareness 3 (in combat), Bows 5 (composite), Craft Bows 3, Brawl 3 (dagger), Folk Ken 2 (nobles), Guile 3 (elaborate lies), Hunt 3 (tracking), Intrigue 3 (alliances), Leadership 6+2 (7) (battlefield), Ride 3+2 (in battle), Artes Liberales 1 (military communication), Craft Siege Equipment 3 (catapults), Single Weapon 3 (saber), Living Language Mongolian 5, Living Language Persian 3 (negotiations), Survival (steppe) 3

**Equipment:** composite bow (Load +2), metal reinforced leather half-armor (Load +2), saber (Load +1), daggers, spear (Load +1)

**Encumbrance:** 3 (3)

The Mongolian generals are experts in strategy and tactics, and most of their successes may be attributed to their superior military intelligence and their ability to quickly assess the nature of the battlefield. They constantly patrol the borders of the Empire and often sent out groups of scouts in every direction, watching their enemies carefully for weaknesses and familiarizing the army with the lay of the land. They also maintain an excellent communication network, using a semaphore system to signal across great distances, and a series of horse posts to keep units of soldiers in contact with their leader.

The army can employ a great many forms of misdirection extremely well, such as a smokescreen across a battlefield with flaming arrows, or riding their horses in fast flanking motions across rugged terrain. They typically have so many spare horses that they can often send out decoy forces of a few men that look like a whole legion. Many of their enemies are fooled by their organized retreat, their finest maneuver, wherein they pull back, drawing their opponents out behind them in a long pursuit, exhausting them, and then suddenly turning around and attacking.

## Mongolian Bows

A great part of the military might of the Mongols comes from their unusually strong bows, rarely seen before in the West. These are double recurve composite bows made of layers of sinew, horn, and wood that can have a pull weight of over one hundred pounds. A warrior usually carries two, in special quivers on the saddle of his horse: one

is a short-range bow called a horse bow used for shooting from horseback, and the other is a composite bow with a greater range used for shooting long distances. In addition to extra arrows — usually about 60 for each type of bow — many warriors also carried arrows with specialized purposes, such as armor-piercing arrows, blunt stun-arrows,

flaming arrows, and even whistling signal arrows.

In the table on the following page, one asterisk (\*) indicates a bow that requires two free hands to load and fire, two (\*\*) indicate that you should add the values of the bow and arrow to determine the final modifier, and three (\*\*\*) indicate that the arrow deals non-lethal damage.

## Mongol Spirit Shaman

**Characteristics:** Int +1 (1), Per -1 (1), Pre +2 (1), Com +1, Str -2 (1), Sta +2 (1), Dex -1 (1), Qik +1 (1)

**Size:** 0

**Age:** 55

**Decrepitude:** 1 (5)

**Confidence Score:** 1 (3)

**Virtues and Flaws:** Wise One, Summoning (see *Realms of Power: The Infernal*, page 114); Ghostly Warder (homeland spirit); Puissant Ability (Ride), Warrior; Enemies (Europe); Outsider; Disfigured (scars), Infamous, Vow (loyalty to the Great Khan)

**Personality Traits:** Resolute +3, Ruthless +5, Discerning +4

**Reputations:** Murderous 4 (local), Spirit-worshipper 3 (Infernal)

### Combat:

Dagger: Init +1, Attack +4, Defense +4, Damage +1

Composite Bow (mounted): Init -1, Attack +12, Defense +10, Damage +5

Composite Bow (on foot): Init -3, Attack +9, Defense +7, Damage +5

Saber (mounted): Init +3, Attack +10, Defense +9, Damage +4

Saber (on foot): Init +1, Attack +7, Defense +6, Damage +4

Spear (mounted): Init +3, Attack +7, Defense +7, Damage +3

Spear (on foot): Init +1, Attack +4, Defense +4, Damage +3

**Soak:** +4 (armor and Stamina)

**Fatigue Levels:** OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-15), Inc. (20+)

**Abilities:** Animal Handling 3 (horses), Area Lore Mongolia 3 (geography), Area Lore Persia 2 (geography), Area Lore Russia 2 (geography), Athletics 3 (running), Awareness 3 (in combat), Bargain 3 (spirits), Bows 5 (composite), Craft Bows 2, Brawl 2 (dagger), Faerie Lore 2 (spirits), Guile 2 (elaborate lies), Hunt 2 (tracking), Infernal Lore 3 (spirits), Leadership 2 (battlefield), Magic Lore 3 (spirits), Penetration 4 (spirits), Ride 3+2 (in battle), Single Weapon 3 (saber), Living Language Mongolian 5, Living Language Persian 3 (negotiations), Survival (steppe) 3

**Arts:** Summoning 22

**Equipment:** composite bow (Load +2), metal reinforced leather half-armor (Load +2), saber (Load +1), daggers, spear (Load +1)

**Encumbrance:** 3 (3)

A few of the Mongols in the army are tribal shamans versed in the power of the spirit world, and can summon spirits to aid them in scouting out the area, attacking supernatural enemies, and spying on their opponents. More complex rules for summoning spirits in this way are found in *Realms of Power: The Infernal*, Chapter 11: *Ars Goetia*, but for the sake of simplicity you may assume that the shaman can easily summon an appropriate Faerie, Magical, or Infernal spirit of Might 30 or less and bargain with it to convince it to do his bidding. These spirits might agree to be bound to a weapon, creating a sort of enchanted device, or commanded to perform a task for the shaman. The shamans employ whatever sort of spirit is convenient to help them accomplish their objectives, even demons.

All shamans have a personal familiar spirit, usually an ancestor spirit associated with their homeland that follows them and aids them. For examples of these sorts of beings and the powers they have at their command, see *The Mysteries Revised Edition* or *Realms of Power: Magic*.

## Mongolian Bow, Continued

WEAPON	ABILITY	INIT	ATK	DEF	DAM	RANGE	STR	LOAD	COST
Bow, Composite*	Bow	-2	+4	0	+7	30	-1	2	Exp.
Bow, Horse*	Bow	-2	+5	0	+8	15	-1	2	Exp.
Arrow, normal**	Bow	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Std.
Arrow, Armor-piercing**	Bow	-1	-1	0	+2	-15	+1	0	Exp.
Arrow, Blunt**	Bow	-1	-1	0	+2***	0	0	0	Exp.
Arrow, Flaming**	Bow	-4	-1	0	+1	-15	0	0	Exp.
Arrow, Signal**	Bow	-1	-1	0	-3	+10	0	0	Exp.

the attack caught the shah and his troops completely by surprise, and soon all of Persia was in utter chaos.

It is said that the caliph of Baghdad, who was hostile to the shah, sent Genghis a regiment of Christian prisoners taken in the Crusades as a show of support. The Mongol army had no need for infantry, however, and these men were released. Those of them who made it back to the Holy Land eventually carried the first descriptions of the Mongol invaders to Europe. Thus, characters researching the local area lore might hear of them and prepare themselves.

By 1221 the shah flees for the Caspian Sea, but is pursued and soon caught by the Mongol army, which swells to nearly 200,000. Then, while Genghis hunts down the shah's son — for the Mongols always seek to destroy any nobles to whom their enemies might rally — his great general Subatei secures the region and begins to scout out their surroundings, sending a force of 40,000 horsemen on a reconnaissance mission into the Caucasus.

For the next fifteen years, all of western Persia is a military staging area and heavily guarded camp, as the Mongols first advance tentatively into Europe and then later invade it with their full strength. Constant patrols of mounted scouts watch the western border of the Empire carefully for threats to their army and signs of easy conquest. Information-gathering sorties periodically make their way through Mesopotamia, and overt displays of magic or heavily armed soldiers certainly attract their attention, perhaps even altering the course of Europe's history if the Mongols are forced to respond.



## The Garden of Eden

*And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden, and there he put the man whom he had formed.*

*And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food, the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil.*

*And a river went out of Eden to water the garden, and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads.*

*The name of the first [is] Pison: that [is] it which compasseth the whole land of Havilah, where [there is] gold;*

*And the gold of that land [is] good: there [is] bdellium and the onyx stone.*

*And the name of the second river [is] Gihon: the same [is] it that compasseth the whole land of [Kashshu].*

*And the name of the third river [is] Hiddekel: that [is] it which goeth toward the east of Assyria. And the fourth river [is] Euphrates.*

— Genesis 2:8–14

In medieval times, the Garden of Eden is seen as an idyllic paradise, a place very similar to Heaven, where cares and age are stripped away and all human needs are provided for by God. There, the lion lies down beside the lamb, and the hunter puts aside his bow, for he has no need to hunt. Legends tell of men and women who have located this blessed land on distant shores, in dark forests, under deep waters, or within great mountains — but those who know the lore of the faeries imagine that these stories refer to Arcadia, the realm of the fae, and not Eden, the legendary birthplace of mankind.

Yet just as people seek Arcadia, others may yearn to reach Eden, especially those who wish to learn the

Adamic language, for it is shown in the Bible that the serpent could speak to Eve, tempting her to eat the fruit of knowledge, and so brought about the fall of man. Outside the garden, most animals seem to have lost the power of speech, but it is a common hypothesis that all of them could talk while within the land of Eden, and the language they spoke must surely have been the same as Adam's.

Scholars who are familiar with the first chapter of the Bible know where Eden is said to be located, for the passage in Genesis is quite clear that it was to be found at the joining of four great rivers: the Pison, the Gihon, the Hiddekel, and the Euphrates. Of these names, only the Euphrates is still in use, and those who know something of ancient geography may know that the city of Babylon was built near its banks. From there, it is only a question of journeying down the river until this confluence is found, and there, presumably, an entrance to the regio in which Eden resides may be discovered. Characters already exploring the area of lost Babylon and seeking knowledge of the history and geography of ancient Mesopotamia might also stumble across the edges of this regio in their travels.

## The Guardians

*And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever:*

*Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken.*

*So he drove out the man, and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.*

— Genesis 3:22–24

## Guardians of Eden

Choir: Cherubim

Divine Might: 50 (Vim)

Characteristics: Int +5, Per +5, Pre +5, Com +5, Str +4, Sta +5, Dex +4, Qik +2

Size: +2

Confidence Score: 3 (7)

Virtues and Flaws: Greater Immunity (fire), Second Sight, Sense Holiness and Unholiness

Personality Traits: Love of God +5, Contemplative +4, Wise +4, Righteous +2

Combat:

Flaming sword\*: Init +4, Attack +17, Defense +15, Damage +30

\*The sword is not affected by Magic Resistance of any kind.

Soak: +16

Wound Penalties: -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-15), Incapacitated (20+)

Abilities: Area Lore (Eden) 7 (animals), Area Lore (Ancient Mesopotamia) 3 (geography), Awareness 7 (approach), Dominion Lore 4 (angels), Etiquette 6 (humans), Magic Lore 4 (magical beasts), Great Weapon 7 (sword), Penetration 7 (mortals), Philosophiae 7 (natural), Second Sight 7 (illusions),

Sense Holiness and Unholiness 7 (demons), Theology 7 (Eden)

Powers:

*Angelic Mantle*, 2 points, +12, Corpus: The guardian takes a human form, apparently flesh and blood.

*Divine Insight*, 3 points, +0, Mentem: May temporarily grant the Clear Thinker, Free Expression, or Inspirational Virtues.

*Enfolding*, 2 or 10 points, +10, Vim: The guardian protects the target's mind or body from all harm.

*Envisioning*, 1 or 5 points, +0, Mentem: The guardian may appear in a dream (or a daydream) to the target.

*Fiery Form*, 1 point, +16, Ignem: May become a fiery shape at will, doing +5 damage to anyone who approaches within five feet.

*Turn the Unworthy*, 0 points, +16, Vim: The guardian forces the target to return immediately to the next lowest level of the regio. This is a miraculous power, and thus cannot be resisted with Might or other kinds of Magic Resistance.

Equipment: flaming great sword

Encumbrance: 0 (2)

Appearance: The guardians appear differently to each person who

confronts them, always taking a shape that inspires awe and implies authority. This is typically the shape of an angel, a great androgynous human being with a powerful presence, an aura of light, four sets of wings, and a flaming sword. They can communicate differently with multiple characters at once, seeming to say one thing to one character but something completely different to another.

The guardians can understand any language (including Adamic), and can speak directly into the mind of anyone who wishes to speak with them. Their sole purpose is to forbid entry to the garden to those who have been barred from it, though they might be willing to engage characters who approach the regio in conversation, and may even answer questions about the Garden, and who may enter it, if they are asked. "None of the sons of Adam or daughters of Eve may enter," they might say, "nor any of the Serpent's kin. All other animals are welcome." They may also warn the characters not to touch the trees that grow at the center of the garden.

It may be that Eden, as a concept, is literally part of paradise, where righteous and holy souls spend eternity after death. In the Bible, the garden is "eastward in Eden," implying that there were once other parts of Eden that were not the garden. In *Ars Magica*, this may be explained by the fact that Eden is a Divine regio, a piece of Heaven on earth, a place that is typically hidden from mundane eyes beneath the waters of a great sea. It may be reached by passing through a boundary found somewhere along the southern part of the Euphrates River,

by traveling towards the place where four rivers once joined into one.

The regio has three levels. The mundane level is under water, in the middle of the Persian Gulf. Level 1 is still flooded, but the ground is muddy marshland and is close enough to eventually swim and wade back to shore. On Level 5, the four rivers are clearly separated, coming together to form a large island, covered with grass and brush. Finally, on Level 10, the island is larger than the whole city of Baghdad, thickly forested with tall trees, and gnarled roots and trunks

create an impenetrable barrier around the entire perimeter, except on the east side, where there is a clear opening forty paces across. Beyond this entrance, the great primeval garden can be clearly seen, but before they can pass through, the characters are confronted by one of the guardians.

The guardians do not allow entry to any human beings, whom they call "sons of Adam" and "daughters of Eve." They also do not permit any reptiles to pass into the garden, or "Serpent-kin," as they call them. There are four guardians surrounding Eden, prevent-

## Other Edens

This version of the Garden of Eden is not necessarily the only version of Eden the characters could discover. For example, there may be a Magical Eden, a primordial forest to which the first animals, plants, and people may be traced. There could also be an Infernal version of Eden, a tempting garden full of sinful delights and corrupting illusions. Such a garden could appear anywhere, but visiting it would be perilous to the characters' souls. There could even be a faerie version of Eden, a part of Arcadia made real from legends

and stories about it — though such a faerie paradise would have very little grounding in reality, and it would be impossible for characters to learn Adamic from the inhabitants. It might seem as if they could, but this knowledge would be like learning from a dream, and would vanish as soon as the characters returned to the real world. Characters searching for Eden might seek out or stumble upon one of these other versions of it first, which might lead them into exciting and challenging alternative adventures.

ing anyone who is forbidden to enter from passing into the regio from any direction, and they descend upon any who somehow emerge inside without passing through the boundary, using their *Turn the Unworthy* power to immediately eject them into the lower level of the regio.

There is a way for human characters to access the garden, though: non-reptilian animals are not prevented from coming and going as they will, and characters who watch the entrance long enough to see an animal approach and enter may recognize this fact. If the characters can change their shapes through Muto Corpus magic or appropriate Supernatural Abilities, they can enter. Changing their shape tells the guardians that they identify themselves with another form, communicating that they should be treated as animals rather than people, but this must be a complete change or the guardians see through it — that is, the characters cannot simply change their appearance to make themselves look like animals. They must also remain in this shape the whole time they are in Eden, for if any of them ever adopt a forbidden form, the guardians immediately remove them.

The guardians can see into the spirit world, and prevent all non-corporeal humans from entering (ghostly warders, spirit familiars, and so on), as well as all faeries and demons, including animals that have Faerie or Infernal Might. This is because the guardians view Faerie as essentially associated with people, and faerie beings cannot separate themselves from humanity enough to seem like real animals to the guardians. Demons and characters with Infernal Supernatural Virtues are always considered Serpent-kin and are denied entry no matter what their shapes. Characters with Divine Might can enter and leave whenever they wish, and characters associated with Faerie but who do not have Faerie Might may still enter if they adopt an appropriate shape.

## The Animals

*Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?*

*And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden:*

*But of the fruit of the tree which [is] in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.*

*And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die.*

*For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.*

— Genesis 3:1–5

Inside the regio, Eden is a magical paradise, a garden of vibrant color and life. It is a timeless, immortal place, where day and night pass as normal but the seasons never turn. Years may pass outside of the regio, but within the inhabitants never hunger or thirst, and indeed never want for anything. They are not cold or warm, they do not need to hunt, and none of them must sleep, though nocturnal creatures stir when the sun is down and others rest in comfort until the dawn. Everything is peaceful and tranquil, and visitors who upset this balance find themselves removed by the guardians.

Magi who enter in animal form find that they no longer have The Gift while within the garden; they are not offensive to other animals, but they cannot work magic either. This does not cancel magical effects that are already upon them, but they cannot cast spells, including the Parma Magica, and they cannot experiment as if in a magical laboratory. Enchanted devices they bring that have continual effects remain active, but those that must be activated by the wielder or that trigger in response to conditions besides night and day fail to function.

All the animals who make their way inside are blessed with the miraculous power to speak as humans do. If they know a language, they find that they may communicate with others through words and gestures. All the

beasts who live in Eden can speak Adamic, but none of them know any others.

The power of the garden does not give an animal an Intelligence score, only the ability to communicate and a heightened sense of cunning. They do not have supernatural Might or any special powers. At one time there were two of each kind of animal, one male and one female, though many of these have departed over the years, and others have entered the garden. All of the animals here are essentially domesticated, though they are not necessarily tame. They are not hostile, but ambivalent to the characters. They have no sense of time passing, and while they may recognize newcomers from day to day, if the characters leave the garden and come back, they need to reintroduce themselves.

The beasts know nothing of good or evil, right or wrong, or virtuous or sinful, and have great difficulty understanding these concepts. The closest concept the characters may be able to communicate is "instinctive" — the animals follow their instincts as proper behavior, and recognize that acting against their instincts is improper. Attacking each other is improper here, for example, because the animals' instincts to attack each other are suppressed; the characters may be able to communicate the idea that there are things that are proper here but improper in the world outside, and vice-versa.

By befriending the animals, the characters may be able to convince them to teach Adamic to them. This is difficult, because they need nothing from the characters, and so there is little that students can offer in exchange. They may threaten the animals, but if they attempt to harm them they find themselves outside once more. The animals may enjoy hearing stories of their descendants in

the world beyond, and may be willing to speak with the characters in exchange for tales. The animals may also be willing to teach the characters if they somehow acquire a sense of responsibility to them, such as if the characters conveyed the idea that the animals and characters are somehow related.

Most likely, the characters learn Adamic via Exposure, which is a slow process, since it only gets them two experience points each season. However, it is the surest way to discover this knowledge. If they can convince the animals to interact with them directly and intensively through speech and gestures, they can begin to learn through Practice, which gives eight experience points per season, a dramatic improvement.

## The Fruits

*And when the woman saw that the tree [was] good for food, and that it [was] pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make [one] wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat.*

*And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they [were] naked, and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons.*

— Genesis 3:6–7

Besides the animals, there is also an amazing amount of vegetation growing in Eden, including two unique trees that may pique the characters' interest. They grow in the center of the garden, a short distance apart from one another: one of them what seems to be a pomegranate tree and the other apparently a fig tree. The former is the Tree of Knowledge and the latter the Tree of Life. Hanging from each are about a dozen ripe

## Talking to the Animals

Animals in the mundane world do not typically have a score in a Language Ability, unless they have been trained by a human to simulate or recognize particular commands, and even then it is doubtful they could have more than a score of 1. Most animals can communicate fluently with others of their species, however, and a similar concept allows the animals in Eden can communicate to each other in Adamic.

Since they do not have Intelligence scores, however, effects like the spell *Thoughts Within Babble* (InMe 25) do not make sense of the words the animals speak unless they are designed with an Animal requisite. Likewise, characters with Supernatural Powers that allow them to understand other languages do not automatically understand what the animals are saying.

fruits, most of them easily within reach of even small animals.

All of the animals native to the garden know not to touch the fruit of these trees, and they warn others to stay away from them as well. It is "not proper" to eat anything here, they say, or to remove the fruit from the branches, and they immediately distance themselves from any characters who do so. They instinctively guide characters away from the area, so that only those who specifically seek it out or set out to explore the garden stumble across the trees.

Intelligent characters find the scent overpowering and irresistible. The fruits call to them like the most powerful desires they have ever had, virtuous or base, for they represent all of humanity's greatest wants. It requires great strength of will for the

characters to come within range of the trees and not succumb to the temptation, for they were all born with a taste for them. The storyguide may ask for appropriate Personality Trait rolls if the characters seem genuinely hesitant, or simply give the players a choice of which of the two fruits their characters eat. Once they begin down the path toward these trees, however, it is almost inevitable that they eventually give in; the only question is which of the two fruits they pick.

Characters who eat either type of fruit immediately disappear from the garden, but the storyguide should wait to describe what happens to their players until everyone has chosen which fruits their characters eat. If some characters resist, wait until they leave Eden to reveal what has happened to their companions. (In the meantime, allow the players of those characters who tasted the fruit to believe that they have died, smitten by God's wrath — a bit of disappointment and regret at this point might heighten their appreciation for the actual consequences when they're revealed.)

The pomegranate tree is more appealing to spiritual characters, especially magi who are interested in esoteric pursuits such as discovering the Adamic language. This is the Tree of Knowledge, and curious characters, or characters who usually study or teach, find it the most difficult to resist. Eating the juicy pomegranate seeds brings with it the feeling of incredible power, as well as an intense feeling of guilt. All characters who partake of it gain an Intelligence score if they have Cunning, or gain The Gift if they are already intelligent. They also receive 1 Warping Point plus enough additional Warping Points to increase their Warping Score by 1 (which ensures that all magi gain at least 2

## Other Trees of Power

It may be that the Tree of Knowledge and the Tree of Life are only two of several different trees of power that may be found in Eden, for though they are the only two mentioned in the Bible, it stands to reason that the other fruits of the garden could have undiscovered supernatural properties, since it is not necessary for the animals to eat while they dwell in Eden. These trees might be found in other parts of the garden, perhaps hidden in such a way that characters cannot simply stumble over them, but if they seek them out, they can discover them.

These additional trees might include a vine called the Tree of

Truth, with rich, round grapes that produce a sweet wine that is heady but not intoxicating, and a dark bramble known as the Tree of Falsehood, with prickly, thorny trails and black berries, which produces a sticky juice that can drive a person mad from just the scent. Tasting either fruit could change a character in much the same way as the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge or the Tree of Life, altering him as appropriate, perhaps giving him Divine or Infernal Virtues like True Faith or Chthonic Magic (see *Realms of Power: The Infernal*, page 123), or perhaps Magical or Faerie Virtues like the Gentle Gift or Faerie Blood.

Warping Points and must make a roll to avoid Twilight).

The fig tree is more alluring to characters who are drawn to the physical and earthly. It is the Tree of Life, and calls to characters who seek to become closer to nature. The tender pods are squishy and the innards sticky, and the taste carries a feeling of intense contentment and carelessness, like a pleasant daydream. It is such an overwhelming experience that the character falls into a deep sleep from which he cannot be roused. He must make a successful Aging roll (one which does not cause him to gain an Aging Point) to wake up. If he does, he appears outside the garden and finds that he has a Magical Might score equal to  $(10 - \text{Size})$ . If he already had a Might score there is no other effect.

In either case, a character removed from the garden for eating either the fruit of Knowledge or Life is thenceforth prevented from entering it again. The character also soon realizes that he has permanently become the shape he was when he ate the fruit. That is, he has lost his human form (if he had

one), and is from then on only an animal, albeit one with human abilities. Magi can use their magic to transform themselves into a human shape, using a Muto Animal spell with a Corpus requisite, but it is no longer their true form and so this can never be a permanent change.

In addition, all animals of the same species as the character who ate the fruit are cast out of Eden, and prevented from returning by the guardians. For example, if a character in the shape of a hound eats the fruit of the Tree of Life, all other canines living in the garden are instantly transported out of the regio at the same time as the character. In the same way that all humans and reptiles are forbidden from entering because of the actions of their ancestors, all canines are similarly punished for the character's transgression.

There may be other ramifications of the characters' taste of the forbidden fruit. Theologically speaking, it could cause great turmoil within the Church, as the effects suggest that The Gift is born from original sin, and

## Story Seed: The Serpent's Desire

The characters have previously encountered a powerful, ancient dragon who has something that the characters want in its hoard. It is willing to make a bargain with them: if the characters bring it a piece of fruit from the Tree of Knowledge, it will give them what they ask, for it and its kin have been cursed by God ever since their ancestor was driven from the garden, and it believes that if it were to eat this fruit, its eyes would be opened, and it would gain a

soul like humans, able to choose between good and evil.

This may be an impetus to make the characters decide to travel to Eden, and though they can take the fruit with them if they resist its allure, they find that it loses its special properties outside of the garden. The dragon keeps its part of the bargain if they bring the fruit to it, but finds that like everything else it turns to ashes in its mouth ("...and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life," per Genesis 3:14).

supports the idea that some animals have souls. Religious authorities are unlikely to take characters' reports of entering and being cast out of Eden seriously, though, so even though the characters might be able to spread new ideas among thoughtful characters associated with the Order, they are unlikely to have an impact on Church dogma or teachings.

## The Mark of Cain

*And Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the Lord.*

*And she again bare his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground.*

*And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord.*

*And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering:*

*But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell.*

*And the Lord said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen?*

*If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee [shall be] his desire, and thou shalt rule over him.*

*And Cain talked with Abel his brother: and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him.*

— Genesis 4:1–8

Adam's firstborn son was named Cain, and the curse said to have befallen him is well-known in medieval times, taken directly from the account in the Bible. Many of the specifics of the story are confusing to those who might investigate them, however, and there are many mysteries buried in these simple verses. For example, what was the exact nature of Cain's curse? What was the mark that God placed upon him, and how did those who saw it know what it meant? Who was Cain's wife, and where did she come from?

This section outlines possible answers to these questions, to make it possible for the characters to find Cain and talk to him, and perhaps convince him to teach them his native language.

## Cain's Curse

*And the Lord said unto Cain, Where [is] Abel thy brother? And he said, I know not: [Am] I my brother's keeper?*

*And he said, What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground.*

*And now [art] thou cursed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand;*

*When thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength; a fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth.*

*And Cain said unto the Lord, My punishment [is] greater than I can bear.*

*Behold, thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the earth; and from thy face shall I be hid, and I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth; and it shall come to pass, [that] every one that findeth me shall slay me.*

*And the Lord said unto him, Therefore whosoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold. And the Lord set a mark upon Cain, lest any finding him should kill him.*

— Genesis 4:9–15

In jealousy, Cain slew his brother and lied about it to God. As punishment for this, the tiller of the ground was forced to become a fugitive and a vagabond, rejected by the earth which he had dirtied with Abel's murder, trembling and moaning according to some translations of the text, and was banished from his family and their society.

One interpretation of this curse is that Cain was physically changed by it; that it made him into a monster. Since the ground would not yield its bounty to him, he was forced to feed on flesh and blood. He could father children and build a city, but he had to go far away from his father and mother to do so, for he could no longer bear the presence of God that

## Adamic Writing

Characters fluent in the Adamic language who also know how to write (that is, who have a score of 1 in Artes Liberales) may name objects or beings in writing rather than words. They inscribe the symbols that mean a thing's name upon it, and this is the same as naming it in Adamic, creating an Arcane Connection that the magus can use to target it more effectively in the future.

The mark of Cain might be said to mean "Cain" in the Adamic language, and inscribing it upon a thing is essentially the same as naming it Cain, so long as the character is fluent in the magical language of Adam and has some understanding of the ancient alphabet from which the symbol derives. This creates an Arcane Connection between the magus and the object, but also gives the target a prophetic association with Cain, a magical destiny that might not be desirable.

surrounded their home. Worst of all, unless he repented and atoned for his evil deed, his sin could never be forgiven and he would not join God in Heaven upon his death, but would be forced to remain on earth, soulless, for all eternity.

Many medieval authors describe the "trembling and moaning" that Cain was forced to endure. According to the story, Cain began to shake and wail, and became agitated, driving himself into madness and frenzy, and it is in this state that he protested to God that his punishment was too harsh; apart from his existence being unbearable, he would be a pariah, and that anyone who found him would surely kill him. If this was to be his

fate, why did God not just kill him outright? Instead of explaining, God placed a mark upon him as a sign to others that he was not to be harmed, and as a warning that any person who was to slay him would also suffer.

The Bible says nothing beyond that simple word, "mark." It is the same word as for "sign," also used to describe a single letter of the Hebrew alphabet, as well as a brand or scar, a message from God, an ill omen, or an astrological event. The symbol for the word "mark" was a simple cross. It was also an ancient custom to brand criminals on the forehead with a symbol of their crime, and perhaps this practice originated with Cain's mark. Thus, Cain has the sign of the cross on his forehead, raised as a scar and burned like a tattoo onto his skin.

Some scholars have suggested that Cain's mark was not a physical symbol, but rather a metaphorical one, like an aura of evil about him, or a wild look in his eye. Many believed it to represent some sort of supernatural protection, designed to keep Cain safe from harm until he finally repented of his crimes. And some described it as an unnatural manifestation of these qualities upon his body, making him look like a wild beast, with sharp teeth or horns growing out of his head. These ideas may be confirmed in the mind of any person who encounters Cain; they may perceive him as a predatory animal at first, before recognizing him as a man.

## Cain's Children

*And Cain went out from the presence of the Lord, and dwelt in the land of Nod, on the east of Eden.*

*And Cain knew his wife, and she conceived, and bare Enoch: and he builded a city, and called the name of the city, after the name of his son, Enoch.*

*And unto Enoch was born Irad: and Irad begat Mehujael: and Mehujael begat Methusael: and Methusael begat Lamech.*

*And Lamech took unto him two wives: the name of the one [was] Adah, and the name of the other Zillah.*

*And Adah bare Jabal: he was the father of such as dwell in tents, and [of such as have] cattle.*

*And his brother's name [was] Jubal: he was the father of all such as handle the harp and organ.*

*And Zillah, she also bare Tubalcain, an instructor of every artificer in brass and iron: and the sister of Tubalcain [was] Naamah.*

*And Lamech said unto his wives, Adah and Zillah, Hear my voice; ye wives of Lamech, hearken unto my speech: for I have slain a man to my wounding, and a young man to my hurt.*

*If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold, truly Lamech seventy and sevenfold.*

— Genesis 4:16–24

A puzzling question left by the Bible is Cain's wife, who is mentioned in the story of Cain, but her origin is never explained. If Adam and Eve were the first man and woman, where did Cain's wife come from? Many scholars learned in ancient lore believe that she was Lilith, the first woman created in the Garden of Eden, who was exiled from it before ever Eve came to be. Many stories also describe Lilith as the mother of all tempting demons and dark spirits, and a wicked witch who practiced evil magic and kidnapped babies in the night. (For more about Lilith, see *Realms of Power: The Infernal*, page 27.)

Another possibility is that while Adam and Eve were the first man and woman, they were not the *only* man and woman; they were simply the first man and woman who knew God, were privileged to live with him in the Garden of Eden, and were blessed with his favor though they had sinned against him. When they left the gar-

## The Descendants of Cain

According to popular legend in Mythic Europe, the giants and ogres that are common in stories from medieval times all the way back to the classics of antiquity are the descendants of Cain, specifically in the epic poem *Beowulf*, where the phrase is used to describe both the monstrous beast Grendel and his mother.

The term "descendant of Cain" is ambiguous. It could mean that these creatures were descended from the daughters of Cain, who it is said bore children to the angels who remained on earth. Or, it could be that the creatures are the fiends of the night said to be the children of Lilith, who may have been Cain's wife. Alternately, it could be that they were others who inherited Cain's curse, perhaps by kill-

ing Lamech, becoming seventy and seven times more monstrous than Cain and doomed to suffer seventy and seven times his punishment. Or perhaps more than one of these circumstances are the case — perhaps Lamech, the descendant of Cain and Lilith, had other children with his two wives, siring a race of monsters who inherited the curse of his ancestor.

The names of Lamech's children, as recorded in the Bible, may hint at other interpretations as well. One of them, described as a master artificer who worked in brass and iron, is named Tubalcain. The "b" sound is often interchangeable with the "v" sound in early European languages, which could suggest that this famous smith's name might have developed into "Vulcan" over time.

den, perhaps they found many other people already living in the world that they had inherited, just as there were plants and animals and all the other things that God created spread all throughout the world.

Whatever the case, Cain and his wife had a son named Enoch, and they built a city of the same name in the land of Nod, far to the east of Jerusalem. No one knows where this land is, but some think it is in Persia or the mountains of the Caucasus. Others suggest it was in Europe, in Novgorod, that these nomads wandered north as well as east. Cain and his wife also had many daughters, for it is said that the angels who did not join with God or with the Devil were beguiled by the daughters of Cain, and had children by them.

Cain's great-great-grandson was named Lamech, a man who in the Bible sang that he slew a man and

a boy, and declared that if any who harmed Cain were to suffer sevenfold, those who harmed him would surely suffer seventy and sevenfold. According to Biblical apocrypha, this is because the man he killed was Cain, and the youth was his own son. Lamech was a hunter, and when he and his son were in the forest, the boy spotted a wild animal in the brush, and called to his father to shoot it. The arrow struck soundly, but they found that the target was not a beast, but his ancestor, who they recognized by the mark on his forehead. In fury, Lamech beat the boy to death with his bow.

Thus, Lamech inherited the curse of his ancestor, for by slaying Cain, he was as doomed to suffer God's vengeance as he had been. Lamech suffered the same physical transformation as Cain, and it affected him much more severely, transforming

## Story Hook: Ancient Devices

Verditius magi seeking unique enchanted items as part of a Mystery Quest might learn of an ancient device made of brass and marked "Tuvulcan", but written in Hebrew and dating back to the ancient times long before legends of the Roman deity ever came to be. Perhaps this leads them to speculate that all or many of the pagan gods and goddesses of the classical world were actually the children of Lamech, and directly descended from Cain.

him into a hideous, wild creature. He fled his homeland, traveling far away, and it is said he died in the Great Flood, though whether or not he did, or passed on the curse to anyone else, is unknown. In any case, like Cain, Lamech is never mentioned in the Bible again.

## Finding Cain

Cain was shot through the heart, and he should have died. Yet he was not welcome in paradise, for he had never repented of his crime, but he had also already received judgment and punishment from God directly, and so neither could his soul be consigned to eternal damnation. Thus, Cain arose from where he fell, a shadow of himself, both living and dead but neither living nor dead, a man but not a man, a being something else entirely. He became a ghost of sorts, solid enough but also unreal and otherworldly, a living corpse forced to live in places steeped in fear and hidden by the night. In short, he became a faerie, a legendary creature of darkness and death.

## Cain, the Fugitive

**Faerie Might:** 10–70 (Corpus)

**Characteristics:** Int –2, Per –1, Pre +4, Com +2, Str +3, Sta +5, Dex –1, Qik –1

**Size:** 0

**Age:** n/a (120)

**Personality Traits:** Murderous +7, Bloodthirsty +3, Envious +3, Fearful +3, Hateful +3, Reckless +3, Thieving +3, Vengeful +3

**Reputations:** Murderer 9 (local), Cursed by God 6 (local)

### Combat:

**Dodge:** Init –1, Attack n/a, Defense +6, Damage n/a

**Fist and Nails:** Init –1, Attack +6, Defense +7, Damage +4

**Bite:** Init –2, Attack +7, Defense +6, Damage +8

**Club:** Init +0, Attack +8, Defense +7, Damage +6

**Soak:** +5 (Stamina)

**Wound Penalties:** –1 (1–5), –3 (6–10), –5 (11–15), Inc. (20+)

**Abilities:** Animal Handling 3 (oxen), Area Lore (any) 3 (geography), Area Lore (Ancient Mesopotamia) 8 (geography), Athletics 3 (running), Awareness 5 (watching from a distance), Brawl 7 (grappling), Dead Language (Adamic) 5 (agricultural terms), Guile 5 (lying to authority), Hunt 7 (long distances), Single Weapon 6 (club), Stealth 6 (hide), Survival 8 (desert), Swim 3 (rivers), Teaching 2 (children)

### Powers:

**Desperate Speed,** 3 points, +2, Corpus: Cain can move with astonishing speed when necessary, traveling twice the distance a normal man could move in the same amount of time and adding +7 to his Initiative.

**Supernatural Fury,** 3 points, +2, Corpus: When driven into a mur-

derous rage, Cain may ignore all wound penalties and add +4 to his Attack.

**Rush of Strength,** 3 points, +2, Corpus: Cain summons a sudden burst of angry vigor, increasing the amount of damage his next blow deals by +4.

**Shadow of Cain,** 0 points, +2, Corpus: One of Cain's "shadows" separates from his body and goes elsewhere, taking away 10 points of Might and one of his +3 Personality Traits. This is for all purposes a different being, a specialized instance of Cain that is unaware of the actions of any others, with its own agenda and its own desires. It rises from Cain's body, however, so Cain cannot do this if he is bound or imprisoned. Each of these shadows can join together with the others, so that it is possible for there to be two versions of Cain in different parts of the world, one with 40 Might and another with 30. When all of his shadows are combined, he has his maximum Might Score of 70.

**Appearance:** Cain can appear in many forms, but most commonly he looks like a crooked old man in a dirty, kilted tunic and hood, with which he covers a black scar in the shape of the cross branded into the center of his forehead. Most of the hair on his head has fallen out, though his eyebrows are unnaturally bushy and he strangely does not have a beard. He bears signs of a nasty arrow wound on the right side of his neck. His remaining teeth are long and sharpened to points, and his fingernails are like claws. His skin is pallid and cold, like a dead body.

Cain does not regain Might like a normal faerie. He must sleep to recover lost Might, replenishing 1 Point per hour if he sleeps for more than six hours. During this time his body is indistinguishable from a corpse. Killing and eating a living thing also restores some of his Might, approximately 1 Might Point for each two points of Size above –15. If his Might Score has been diminished from its default value, each night it is increased by one. Also, he heals very quickly when he is incapacitated, completely recovering from all wounds as if they were Light Wounds, though they often leave unpleasant scars on his body.

Like other faeries, Cain does not age, and he does not suffer Fatigue. He suffers pain from exposure to the elements, but does not need warmth to survive and has no need to breathe or eat. He may walk all day and all night without stopping. If he is not sleeping, he must concentrate on remaining in one place, or he is compelled to travel. He prefers the night, since he is less noticeable then, but also prefers settlements and cities to the wilderness.

Cain's shadows wander throughout all of Mythic Europe, but he is often drawn back to Mesopotamia, his homeland. Characters investigating the ruins of Babylon or searching for the Garden of Eden may stumble across his body huddled within a Faerie aura, appearing to all medical and magical examination to be dead (apart from his Faerie Might), or discover him lurking in the dark of night, watching them from a distance.

Cain's original curse was a sort of faerie blood, which he passed on to his descendants and which associated him with the Faerie realm while he was still living. When he died, however, he became a true faerie creature, wholly belonging to that realm. This version of Cain was a very different sort of faerie from the other faeries of the time. It might be supposed that Cain was the first "dark faerie" of the ancient world.

In fact, part of Cain's curse is that there are as many as seven shadows of Cain loose in the world, each of them slightly different, but all of them wicked and frightening. All of them are Cain: they know what he knew when he died, and they want what he wanted when he was still alive. Thus, while there is only one Cain, he may appear in several places at once; this is the sevenfold vengeance mentioned in the Bible.

Cain's seven aspects usually travel individually, though they can also come together to create a more powerful whole, and in fact they always do when two or more of them meet in the same place. In the many ages since the original Cain lived, each instance has developed a particular Personality Trait, which is its primary reason for killing. These break off from the whole when Cain appears to sleep, each pursuing its own form of murder. For example, the Wrathful Cain hunts those who have slighted him, seeking revenge, while the Fearful Cain hides in shadows, striking from darkness so that he is not seen.

The main reason characters might seek out Cain is because as a son of Adam, he is a native speaker of Adamic. In fact, while he can speak and understand any language by virtue of his faerie nature, Adamic is the only language with which he is fluent, as it is the language he spoke when he was alive. When convinced



to talk, he communicates in a strange garble of words and dialects, often cursing to himself in his own tongue. Characters may be surprised to hear their own names spoken among this stream of sounds under his breath if they listen carefully, even if they have not introduced themselves to him. They may deduce that many of these words are spoken in Adamic, and through exposure to Cain's bizarre manner of speaking, they can pick up experience points in the language. This is an absurdly slow process that

may require the characters to dog his steps across all of Mythic Europe, but it is one method by which they may recover the original language of man.

A better way to learn Adamic is to convince Cain to teach them, for though he is a mediocre instructor, it is faster than picking up a word or two here and there over the course of a season. However, Cain is unlikely to do this, for he is vengeful and petty, and he may treat people with whom he empathizes even worse than those he dislikes. Yet some medieval schol-

## The Faerie Cain

Cain is depicted here as a faerie for several reasons. Firstly, Cain is a character of myth, though he appears in the Bible, and after his death he is primarily a bogeyman used as a frightening example of someone who committed a terribly evil act and suffered the consequences for it. It is even possible that this faerie version of Cain came into being after the real Cain's death, in response to stories told about him. In any case, this version of Cain is a legendary figure, a living character from a famous folk tale. Secondly, Cain is depicted as essentially amoral; he does not wish to corrupt others or lead people into sin, but sates his own desires. If he were a demon, it would be impossible for the characters to ever

save his soul, and would conclusively answer the question of whether or not Cain had been forsaken by God. Interacting with Cain as a demon would be a mortal sin and a Hermetic crime. Thus, this version of Cain is morally ambiguous. Finally, as a faerie, Cain's appearance is mutable, so that his curse is not necessarily tied to his skin color or his nationality — the idea of Cain as a murderous being cursed by God can appear in any culture, and this makes clear that his mark is not tied to his race or tribe. This version of Cain is one taken from European myth, but as a faerie creature he could just as easily appear in a different form recognizable to people living in other parts of the world.

ars speculate that Cain still has his soul, for God has given him a different punishment than Hell for his sins, and thus he may yet be saved from eternal damnation if only he can be made to repent. If Cain understands and believes this, perhaps he would be willing to tutor the characters in exchange for their hearing his confessions. He may even enjoy it, as it gives him an opportunity to brag about his exploits. Characters who listen to him non-judgmentally may befriend him,

at least temporarily, long enough to learn what they need.

Then again, it may be that the only way for the characters to learn what they want is to force Cain to cooperate, perhaps by capturing him and threatening to hurt him. Cain is especially susceptible to the Dominion and holy things, for Divine auras cause his head and limbs to tremble and shake, and turn his voice into a series of unintelligible screams and moans. The touch of a holy relic

burns him, leaving black marks upon his skin. This torture may cause him to yield, bitterly but pleadingly, though he nurses his vengeance and vows to cause his captors all the suffering they inflict upon him and more. He has all the time in the world to get even, and he ensures that those who punish him eventually suffer much, much more than he did.

Should any character slay Cain, that character inherits Cain's curse, as a kind of Greater Malediction. He becomes twisted and deformed, driven from the Dominion by the same trembling and groaning that Cain suffers, and doomed to become a shadow of himself when he dies. So too will Cain the faerie eventually raise himself from the slumber that for him mimics death, his desire for vengeance against his killer sated by passing on his curse. This process of death and rebirth might take only a few days or many generations, but Cain ultimately resumes his wanderings as if nothing had happened.

## Conclusions

Once the characters have learned to speak Adamic fluently, the information will probably begin to spread throughout the Order, possibly



## Magic in Other Languages

Hermetic magic is based in Latin, because that is the language of learning in Mythic Europe, and has been since before Bonisagus developed his theory of magic. Magi can certainly cast spells without speaking Latin, but they suffer a penalty to their casting totals, just as if they were not incorporating their voice at all. To integrate another language into their magic, they have to perform original research, experimenting in the lab. This process is based on the rules described in *Houses of Hermes: True Lineages*, page 26.

Like other means of adapting non-Hermetic magic into Magic Theory, the magus must begin with a project, perhaps inventing a spell

using another language that he speaks fluently instead of Latin. He is seeking to achieve a Discovery on the Extraordinary Results chart, and each time he does so, he produces a spell that he may cast using the new language. He may then attempt to stabilize this discovery, and if he does he receives a breakthrough point for each magnitude of the invented spell. Completely integrating this new language into Hermetic magic is less work than a Minor Breakthrough, requiring only 15 breakthrough points to achieve, and unlike other forms of original research, the magus does not gain Warping Points from this procedure.

Adapting a language to Magic Theory is not that onerous, and it is unlikely that the result will be considered a true "breakthrough" by other researchers in the Order of Hermes. Perhaps it has been done before, and exotic magi in lands further east have already converted their spells into Greek or Arabic, even using this language to teach their apprentices magic. Once this process has been completed, a character with the Living Language Ability at a score of 4 or more and Artes Liberales-based knowledge of the associated alphabet can learn the newly translated spell from a Lab Text, and from then on may invent his own spells in that language.

attracting the attention of scholars in more academic circles. Given that it is supposedly the first language of man, and presumably the language of God, representatives of the Christian Church, Judaism, Islam, and other faiths may also take an interest, perhaps declaring that it is a holy language, sacred and not to be profaned by wizards and magicians for use with their heathen rites. This could lead to great conflict within and without the Order.

As more and more magi learn the language, another idea that is

likely to surface is the suggestion that Hermetic magic incorporate Adamic instead of Latin, for magic is so much more powerful when cast using the words of the first language. It is unlikely that Adamic could ever replace Latin completely, since all the greatest books of the day are written in Latin, as are all the authoritative tomes of their Hermetic predecessors, but in time it could become a sort of secret sign among magi, used among their own to help them hide their Arts within the populace.

Because of the incredible Penetration advantages that Adamic gives magi, widespread knowledge could lead to the downfall of the Order, since it negates the value of the Parma Magica as an equalizer. Then again, it could also ensure that Hermetic magic achieves supremacy over all other forms of magic, since magi would have both superior resistance and unstoppable strength. Ultimately, it is a discovery that would transform the way magic is used, and how magi are perceived by all other supernatural beings.



# Canaanite Necromancy

*Then said the woman, Whom shall I bring up unto thee? And he said, Bring me up Samuel.*

— I Samuel 28:11

In Canaan, a kingdom in the biblical Holy Land, there was a magical tradition of necromancers who could summon and speak to the dead. Late in the second millennium before Christ, Canaan was conquered by the Israelites. For a short time afterward, necromancers continued to work in the city of En-Dor until they were destroyed in a purge of prophets, priests, and witches conducted by the Israelite king Saul.

It is common knowledge, among the educated of Mythic Europe, that such a magical tradition once existed, as some information about it is preserved in the Old Testament book I Samuel, even though the tradition itself was not connected to the Divine. Despite this tantalizing glimpse, the Order of Hermes has little useful knowledge of the ancient tradition and, in particular, the exact location of the city of En-Dor has been lost.

Some classical authors also wrote of the Canaanites and their practices, and recently crusaders returning from the Holy Land have spoken of ruined cities in the Levantine desert, leading some to contemplate expeditions to search for biblical and magical artifacts. Purportedly Canaanite artifacts, in the form of inscribed clay tablets, have also occasionally surfaced in the markets of Constantinople and else-

where in Mythic Europe, although the authenticity of these is questionable.

## Secrets of the Necromancer

Canaanite necromancy, as practiced by Zephaniah and her colleagues in biblical Canaan, is represented by a new Major Supernatural Virtue Canaanite Necromancy, and the corresponding Supernatural Ability Canaanite Necromancy. This Ability can be taught to a Gifted character by the ghost of Zephaniah using the rules for learning Supernatural Abilities (ArM5, page 166). However, this is not very practical for any magus, except an apprentice, as the penalty to the teaching Source Quality due to the student's Art scores makes it effectively impossible for him to learn the Virtue. Therefore, a magus desiring to revive Canaanite necromancy really needs to modify and integrate the abilities of the Canaanite necromancers with Hermetic theory.



## Major Supernatural Virtue: Canaanite Necromancy

Canaanite necromancers have special abilities to speak to and summon the dead. A character with this Virtue has a score of 1 in the Supernatural Ability Canaanite Necromancy, which she may use to replicate any Hermetic Corpus or Mentem spell effect that deals with communicating, commanding, or summoning the dead. A stress roll of Communication + Canaanite Necromancy Ability against an Ease Factor of (3 x the magnitude of the effect) indicates that the character has successfully replicated the spell. For example, if Zephaniah attempts to replicate *Whispers Through the Black Gate* (InCo 15) (ArM5, page 130), a stress roll must be made for her against an Ease Factor of 9. Canaanite necromancers can also access the special Range: Veil of Death, detailed below.

### CANAANITE NECROMANCY:

**Communication + Canaanite Necromancy Ability + stress die vs. Ease Factor (3 x magnitude of effect)**

Despite biblical commentary, Canaanite necromancy is inherently neither Divine nor Infernal in nature. It is aligned to the Magic realm, although an Infernal variant does exist; see Story Seed: The Sho'elim'ov,

## Saul, Samuel, and the Witch

The biblical book I Samuel tells the story of Saul the Benjaminite, whom the elderly prophet Samuel anointed as the first king of Israel in about 1000 BC. From his fortress at Gibeah, Saul and his son Jonathon successfully led the Israelites in battle against the hostile kingdoms that surrounded them, including the Ammonites (who were defeated at Jabesh Gilead) and the Philistines (broken, but not defeated, at Michmash). However, during the war against the Philistines, Saul committed a terrible sin by constructing an altar from which he made a sacrifice to ascertain the will of God; it was a sin because such a sacrifice could only be made by a priest, like Samuel. In addition to appropriating the power of the priest, Saul also directly disobeyed

the will of God — as communicated by Samuel — by dividing the best sheep and oxen of the defeated city of Amalek among his soldiers, rather than destroying them, and by failing to execute the defeated king of the Amalekites, Agag.

The power struggle between Saul and Samuel — between king and prophet — led Samuel to groom a possible replacement king, David, who by the will of God defeated the Philistine champion Goliath. Frightened and jealous of the threat posed by David, Saul unsuccessfully plotted to kill him. Samuel then died and David fled into the wilderness as Saul purged the Israelite priesthood — in the process eliminating the Canaanite necromancers and other magical traditions. David, meanwhile, allied with the Philistines and

eventually returned to Israel with the Philistine army. As he surveyed the Philistine host encamped at Shunem, Saul feared a military disaster and so attempted to discover the will of God. Receiving no insight, he then traveled to the city of En-Dor, where the last necromancer to escape his purges still lived. The name of this witch was Zephaniah and, despite distrusting Saul, she summoned the spirit of Samuel, to whom Saul pleaded for help. The ghost of Samuel refused Saul, he said that God had forsaken Saul, and that he and his dynasty would be extinguished the following day. The next day, as the ghost predicted, the Israelites were defeated, Saul's three sons were killed in battle, and Saul killed himself after being sorely wounded by Philistine archers.

below. The Canaanite Necromancy Ability can be improved by study, practice, or teaching.

## Hermetic Integration

A magus may work in his laboratory, with an assistant who has the Canaanite Necromancy Major Virtue (the ghost of Zephaniah or a character she has taught, for example), to integrate Hermetic and Canaanite practices. By studying with a necromancer assistant for a season the magus may gain an Insight into the theoretical framework of Canaanite necromancy and produce an Insight Lab Text, as described in the Introduction.

Once the magus has gained an Insight into Canaanite necromancy, he may attempt to incorporate his Insight, by using the Insight Lab Text to invent an effect (spell or item) that deals with the dead in some way.

Often, this is a standard Hermetic effect, but the storyguide may specify that a particular non-Hermetic effect can be invented, which utilizes the special Range Veil of Death. In either case, as described in the Introduction, this gives the magus a number of breakthrough points equal to the magnitude of the invented effect. Once the magus has accumulated 45 breakthrough points (remember that each additional effect requires an additional Insight Lab Text) then he has successfully integrated Canaanite necromancy and gains the Minor Hermetic Virtue Canaanite Magic.

### TO INTEGRATE CANAANITE NECROMANCY: Accumulate 45 or more breakthrough points

Note that the character does not gain the Hermetic Virtue until the integration is complete, and so until then he does not gain the special

Arcane Connection and he may only utilize the special Range Veil of Death in those spells that he invented using Insight Lab Texts.

### CANAANITE LABORATORY ASSISTANTS

The magus needs the assistance of a Canaanite necromancer to gain Insight into the ancient tradition. This is because Canaanite necromancy was an oral tradition and there are no written texts or artifacts to base research upon, although the role can be performed by a modern student of Zephaniah. A Canaanite necromancer can also help the magus invent spells and items during the experimental phase of the integration when breakthrough points are accumulated.

The magus receives a bonus to his Lab Total equal to the necromancer's Intelligence + Canaanite Necromancy

Ability score during any season that the necromancer provides assistance to invent effects that exploit an Insight. This is similar to the way that Hermetic assistants can help in the laboratory (ArM5, page 103) and follows the same rules, but the Canaanite necromancer can *only* assist in laboratory experiments designed to integrate Hermetic and Canaanite practices. If the magus has managed to learn the Supernatural Ability Canaanite Necromancy and is producing Insight Lab Texts by himself, then he receives no bonus for "assisting" himself, but he may choose whether to use either his Magic Theory or his Canaanite Necromancy Ability Score to calculate his Lab Total.

## Minor Hermetic Virtue: Canaanite Magic

A magus with this Virtue has a special understanding of the dead, based upon the archaic techniques of the Canaanite necromancers. This understanding means that the magus becomes partly of the world of the living and partly of the world of the dead. This transformation is permanent and irreversible.

- The first benefit is that the magus may access a special Range Veil of Death. He may use this Range to affect any of the dead (see insert).
- The second benefit is that the magus becomes a permanent Arcane Connection to the dead. This means that he is always connected to all of the dead, and so can always target them with magic (see Guidelines for Canaanite Magic, below).
- The third benefit is that the magus can exploit this Arcane Connection for a +4 Penetration

multiplier bonus, much like any other permanent Arcane Connection (ArM5, page 84), when casting spells on the dead. The value of the Penetration bonus can be increased, with sympathetic connections, as normal.

There are also risks inherent in Canaanite Magic:

- The dead are *always* aware of the presence of the magus. Effectively, this means that a ghost or other spirit of a dead person knows when the magus approaches within a radius of seven miles, and can subsequently precisely identify the location of the magus on a simple Perception roll against an Ease Factor of 6.
- The dead also have a permanent Arcane Connection to the magus, which they may exploit for a +4 Penetration multiplier bonus when magically attacking the magus. Since a ghost needs to have a score in the Penetration Ability to exploit the bonus, this is not often problematic for the magus.

## New Spells

Some spells that exploit the Range Veil of Death are listed below. These spells are, with the storyguide's approval, appropriate effects for a magus to invent during the process of integrating Canaanite magic with Hermetic theory.

### ANAT'S SEARCH IN THE MIRY ABYSS

InMe 20

R: Veil, D: Diam, T: Ind

This spell senses a specific person in the world of the dead. If a person cannot be sensed, then she is either alive or beyond the reach of the spell. The only reason that a dead person

## New Range: Veil of Death

Spells cast with this range may affect any dead mortal human. The distance between the caster and any physical remains of the target is irrelevant, but the caster must still be connected to the target in some way — which can be achieved by appropriate Intellego magic with this Range, or by possessing an Arcane Connection to the target. Physical remains are suitable Arcane Connections and the Minor Hermetic Virtue Canaanite Magic (which the caster would normally possess) also provides enough information for targeting spells. For the purposes of spell magnitudes, this range is equivalent to Sight.

would normally be beyond the reach of the spell is that she is in Heaven. Once sensed, the magus may cast other spells on the target, as long as this spell is active.

(Base 4, +3 Veil, +1 Diam)

### THE OB OF MOT

CrMe 25

R: Veil, D: Conc, T: Group

This spell allows those about the caster to speak with a specific person in the world of the dead — to them it appears that the caster is speaking with the voice of the dead person. The caster is effectively acting as a temporary container or vessel for the dead spirit, and botches of this spell might cause the caster to become possessed by a malevolent spirit.

The caster must either have an Arcane Connection to, or otherwise be able to sense, the target, and the target must be in the world of the dead; that is, neither alive nor in Heaven. The dead person is compelled neither to speak nor be truthful. The

## The Problem of Samuel

Zephaniah was able to summon the spirit of Samuel who, being a prophet of God, should have been in Heaven and thus unreachable by Canaanite necromancy, which at first appears to be an indication that Zephaniah broke the Limit of the Divine. In fact, Samuel was not in Heaven. His spirit, along with those of all the Old Testament saints, initially dwelt beneath the earth in paradise. It was not until after the crucifixion of Jesus Christ that Heaven became accessible to man, allowing Samuel, and the other prophets, to enter.

caster is aware of the conversation, but cannot participate without making an Intelligence + Concentration roll against an Ease Factor of 12.

(Base 3, +3 Veil, +1 Conc, +1 Group)

### THE VISAGE OF MOT

ReMe 35

R: Veil, D: Conc, T: Ind, Ritual

This spell summons the ghost of a specific person in the world of the dead. The caster must either have an Arcane Connection to, or otherwise be able to sense, the target, and the target must be in the world of the dead; that is, neither alive nor in Heaven.

(Base 15, +3 Veil, +1 Conc)

## New Items

Some items that exploit the Range Veil of Death are listed below. The items are also appropriate effects for a magus to invent, with the approval of the storyguide, during the process of integrating Canaanite magic with Hermetic theory.

### ZEPHANIAH'S BRAZIER

InMe 15

Pen +0, 1/day

R: Veil, D: Mom, T: Ind

This brazier is a copper dish about five inches in diameter. The color of the smoke in the brazier can be used to determine whether an individual is dead. To use the brazier it is lit, and the name of the target is spoken into the white smoke spiraling upwards from the dish. If the individual is dead, the smoke changes, becoming acrid and purple in color. The brazier may be used once per day.

(Effect: Base 4, +3 Veil)

### MOT'S HAND

ReMe 37

Pen +20, 3/day

R: Veil, D: Diam, T: Ind

This item is a skeletal marionette-type puppet about one foot tall, and by manipulating the puppet the puppeteer may direct the actions of the closest ghost. As this effect has a Range of Veil of Death there is always a ghost in range, although of course, unforeseen consequences may result if the manipulated ghost is not within the sight of the puppeteer. The effect can only penetrate a Might of 19, so ghosts that are more powerful are unaffected.

Gross movements of the ghost (stop, move left, etc.) are controlled without a roll. A stress roll of Dexterity + Profession Puppeteer must be made against an Ease Factor of 9 to direct the movements of the ghost more carefully (to move through a doorway or up stairs, for example). To attempt very precise movements (to write or fight, for example) a stress roll of Dexterity + Profession Puppeteer against an Ease Factor of 12 must be made.

(Effect: Base 5, +3 Veil, +1 Diam; Modifications: +10 Pen, +2 3/day)

## Guidelines for Canaanite Magic

### WHO IS DEAD?

The Minor Virtue Canaanite Magic provides an Arcane Connection to the dead, and the Range Veil of Death allows a magus to interact with any of the dead that he can sense. In this case, "the dead" means any mortal man, woman, or child who has died but who has not, yet, entered Heaven. This includes mortals who are resident in Hell or Purgatory, those who die while in a Faerie or Magic realm, and ghosts, including living ghosts (see *The Mysteries Revised Edition*, pages 70–74) and Infernal ghosts (see *Realms of Power: The Infernal*, page 36).

Magi in Final Twilight, who have become faeries, or who have become magical creatures are not dead. Dead or living fae, angels, demons, or supernatural creatures are also not accessible to Canaanite necromancy, nor does Canaanite necromancy allow a magus to interact with dead animals. Once the Minor Hermetic Virtue Canaanite Magic is known, however, it is a Minor Breakthrough to produce through original research (see *Houses of Hermes: True Lineages*, page 26) an equivalent that allows interaction with dead animals.

Characters who are in Heaven may not be affected, due to the Limit of the Divine. However, characters who have received a Divine burial rite — a conventional Christian, Judaic, or Islamic burial, for example — may still be affected, if they have not entered Heaven, but in this case if the caster botches double the number of botch dice are rolled. The immunity to necromancy granted by extreme unctio (see *Realms of Power: The Divine*, page 75) is only a flaw in Hermetic theory, which is corrected by the integration of Canaanite necromancy.

## SPEAKING TO THE DEAD

It is certainly possible, and indeed likely, that a magus will use Canaanite necromancy to speak to the long dead. The magus quickly discovers, however, that communicating with the long dead is not trivial. Although simple Intellego Mentem spells eliminate language barriers, many concepts (nations, theories of magic and nature, notions of the afterlife, etc.) are mutually unintelligible between the interrogating magus and his ancient interviewee. Even if the magus can make himself understood, the long dead have little reason to cooperate with the living, and may well resent the disturbance. Additionally, the long dead are more likely than the more recently deceased to be unavailable to the magus, as many have left Purgatory for Heaven.

It will also inevitably occur to a magus to question the dead about the nature of the afterlife they inhabit, but he finds such questions unanswerable. For example, some authorities hold that Arcadia is the world of the dead, and Canaanite magic does not offer any evidence to either support or refute this, although mortals who die while visiting the Faerie realm remain accessible to a Canaanite necromancer. In any case, no information about the world of the dead, other than who is in it, may be communicated. Possibly, this is a result of an error in either Canaanite necromancy or Hermetic theory.

## THE INFERNAL AND NECROMANCY

Canaanite necromancy, and indeed any sort of necromancy, may attract the attention of the Infernal. If a character botches when attempting to summon or speak to the dead, a likely result is that a malevolent spirit pretends to be the intended target. Usually, this spirit

is one of many minor demons with a (Mentem) Might of 10, but a more powerful demon could be attracted too; in either case the demon is often an Infernal ghost (see *Realms of Power: The Infernal*, page 36). The demon normally plays his part as accurately and for as long as he is able, while subtly trying to corrupt any information provided. Hermetic magic is unable to penetrate the demon's deception, but the demon may make mistakes that reveal he is not what he claims to be.

## Seeking the Dead

In order to revive the traditions of the Canaanite necromancer, the questing magus must locate, and then travel to, the ruined city of En-Dor. Once there, the magus must discover a hidden regio that is inhabited by the ghost of the last necromancer Zephaniah, and convince her to either teach Canaanite necromancy or provide Insight into her practices.

## Finding En-Dor

En-Dor is located on the northern face of Mount Hermon a few miles southwest of the town of Tiberias, which is itself located on the shores of Lake Tiberias (or the Sea of Galilee). The approximate location of En-Dor is relatively well known and during the 12th century many pilgrimages were made to several sites that were claimed to be En-Dor. Christian pilgrims travel less frequently to these sites today, as the area is under Muslim control, and a large group of armed explorers certainly attracts attention. However, the local people, perhaps

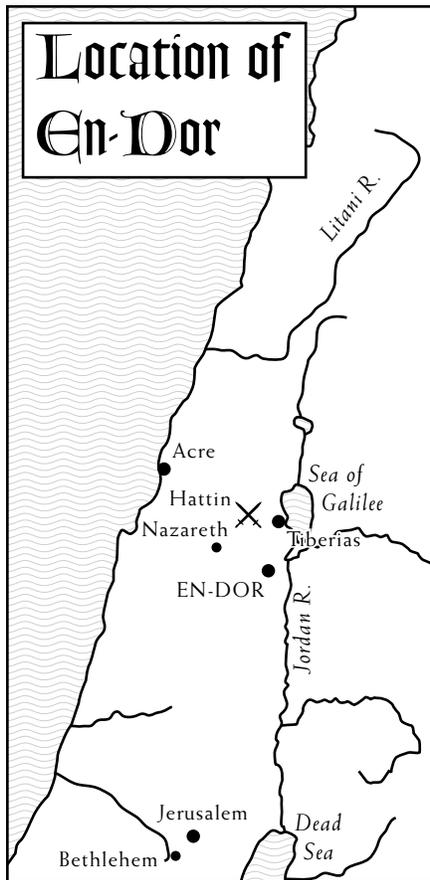
from the town of Tiberias, can be easily persuaded to guide interested parties to the old pilgrimage sites.

Unfortunately, it is very difficult to discern which, if any, of the 12th century pilgrimage sites is the true location of En-Dor. To search among the various possible locations to find the true location of En-Dor takes one season. A resourceful magus may use magic to assist the search, but this is not an inherently magical task and could certainly be accomplished by a suitably skilled companion or team of grogs. In fact, a character need not actually be present to search for En-Dor; for example, it is possible for a magus to search by scrutinizing maps and documents in his laboratory. On the other hand, being in the field does make the search easier.

A successful Intelligence + Area Lore Canaan roll, made against an Ease Factor of 18 (or an Ease Factor of 21 if the searcher is not in the field), indicates that during the season the true location of En-Dor is found by the searcher. Although this is a stress die, a botch has no consequence unless the searcher is not in the field, in which case he erroneously believes that he has found the correct site; the error is revealed by a visit to the purported site. Any similar Ability — Area Lore Galilee or Area Lore Levant, for example — may be substituted with the storyguide's approval.

If a team of characters search together, then use the Characteristic and Ability scores of the team leader for the roll, but add to the roll the number of team members with an Area Lore Levant score within 5 of the team leader's score, up to a maximum bonus equal to the leader's Leadership Ability score.

**TO FIND EN-DOR: Int + Area Lore Canaan + stress die vs. Ease Factor 18 (or 21 if not in the field)**



**TEAM BONUS:** Number of team members with Area Lore Canaan within 5 of leader, to a maximum bonus equal to leader's Leadership Ability score

If several competing groups successfully discover the site of En-Dor during the same season, the group whose total roll is the greatest finds En-Dor first. However, as the likely area is relatively small, their discovery cannot be kept secret even from unsuccessful competitors in the field for more than a few days, unless extraordinary precautions are made.

## BOOKS

As the search for En-Dor is quite difficult, a sensible character will try to improve his knowledge of Canaan before seriously embarking on the

## Story Seed: The Teutonic Knights

The military religious order of the Teutonic Knights was founded in 1190 during the siege of Acre, which is where their hospital is today. The Teutonic Knights wear a white coat emblazoned with a black cross and, in 1220, the total number of knights is about 300. Most, including the current Grandmaster Hermann von Salza, are based in Acre, although a significant number live in Burzenland, Transylvania, which they have controlled since 1211. Von Salza travels widely throughout Mythic Europe, often as part of the retinue of the Holy Roman Emperor Frederick II, and — if your saga follows history — the Teutonic Knights are expelled from Burzenland in 1225, but are immediately given a home in Prussia where, in 1226, Frederick II grants the order very wide powers to act in his name. By the mid-1230s the knights effectively control Prussia, a status that is then formally recognized by the Pope. A related order, the Livonian Brothers of the Sword, operates in the Baltic and — again, if your saga follows history — the Brothers are amalgamated with the Teutonic Knights in 1237,

which brings Estonia and other Baltic regions also under the control of the Teutonic Knights.

The Teutonic Knights are searching for the location of En-Dor. Like all the military orders they are ultimately seeking to complete the re-capture of the Holy Land, and they believe that the powers of the Canaanite necromancers can be used to further this goal. The knights have not yet discovered En-Dor, and they neither reveal how they have learned of Canaanite necromancy nor why they are dedicating resources to the pursuit of the ancient city. The masters of the Teutonic Knights are certainly aware of the Order of Hermes and, although ostensibly suspicious of magic, they have had dealings with House Tremere in Transylvania, and the knights may (knowingly or not) be acting as proxies for House Tremere in this matter. The knights could be convinced to cooperate with a magus searching for En-Dor, but conversely they may attempt to eliminate rival searchers. The Teutonic Knights searching for En-Dor are led by Brothers Konrad and Adolph, and a talented scribe named Otto.

quest. Although Canaan has not existed as a political entity for some millennia, Area Lore Canaan is an ordinary Area Lore Ability that can be improved through study or practice (ArM5, page 163).

For the purposes of this Ability both the Bible and the Mishna (a Jewish work) may be studied as if they were tractatus of Source Quality 5. These books are readily available, although a rabbi, rare in some parts of Mythic Europe, must be sought in order to gain a copy of the Mishna.

Classical books on Area Lore Canaan include: *Phoenician History* by

Philo Byblius, a summa of Source Quality 10 and level 5; *The Syrian Goddess* attributed to Lucian of Samothrace, a summa of Source Quality 11 and level 6; and *Praeparatio evangelica* by Eusebius, a tractatus of Source Quality 7. Locating and gaining access to complete versions of these texts may be significant adventures in and of themselves. The original manuscripts are likely to be lost, but copies, which may have been translated backwards-and-forwards several times into Arabic, Greek, Hebrew, or Latin, are held by clerical libraries in Constantinople and

## Tiberias

Named after a Roman emperor, the town of Tiberias is built on the shores of Lake Tiberias (which is also known as the Sea of Galilee), and is believed to have been the site of many of Christ's miracles. (Nazareth is also not far away.) The region is claimed by the king of Jerusalem, who is currently based in Acre, and Tiberias was the crusader capital of the principality of Galilee. However, after Saladin defeated the crusaders in 1187 at Hattin (which is just west of Tiberias), most of Galilee, including En-Dor, came under Muslim control. A large congregation of Orthodox Christians still worship in Tiberias, without significant friction with their Muslim overlords.

Tiberias is a spiritual center for the Jewish community, too. Rabbi Yehudah HaNasi edited the final form of the Mishna there in the second century; recently the Jewish sage Maimonides, who wrote the Mishneh Torah (a reductive codification of Jewish law) and many other books on philosophy and medicine, was buried in a tomb near the center of Tiberias after his death in 1204. Many influential Jewish scholars can be found studying in rabbinical schools in Tiberias.

Rome, and by the University of Paris. Inaccurate or incomplete translations have lower Source Qualities.

### THE CLAY TABLETS

During the mid 12th century in Jerusalem, when a number of buildings were demolished to make way for an enlargement by the crusaders

## Story Seed: The Sho'elim'ov

A form of Canaanite necromancy, corrupted by the Infernal and appropriated by the Israelites who conquered Canaan, is still practiced by some reclusive members of the Jewish community known as the Sho'elim'ov (detailed in *Realms of Power: The Infernal*, page 119). Their practices have drifted considerably over the millennia and they have no useful knowledge of their Canaanite precursors, but they are curious about magi searching for information about En-Dor within the Jewish community. If the Sho'elim'ov discover Seekers of Canaanite necromancy, they may decide to either monitor or interfere in the search.

of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, a carefully preserved set of clay tablets were discovered. Since then, the tablets have been split up and are now scattered across Mythic Europe.

Inscribed on the tablets is text written in an ancient writing system. Knowledge of this writing system has been lost, but a character who acquires one or more tablets may try to decode them, if he can read Hebrew; the tablets are written in an archaic form of Hebrew. A season's worth of decoding work is represented by a roll of Intelligence + Hebrew against an Ease Factor of 18. If this is successful the character determines that the tablets form a gazette of the cities of the ancient kingdom of Canaan. Originally, there were 42 tablets that formed seven sequences, each six tablets in length. Each sequence of tablets may be studied as if it was a summa of Source Quality 15 and level 10 in the Area Lore Canaan Ability, by a character who

has decoded the tablets and is fluent in Hebrew (Ability score 4 or greater). If some tablets are missing from a sequence then the Source Quality is reduced by 3 for each missing tablet; that is, a sequence must be at least two tablets long to be of any value at all for study.

Most of the tablets are held by collectors from Venetian, Genoese, and Florentine merchant houses, who cannot read them. The Teutonic Knights have the largest collection — a complete sequence of six tablets and three tablets from other sequences — and one of their scribes at Acre has managed to decode them. Several tablets have recently been purchased from a merchant in Constantinople by Redcaps acting for the Hermetic library at Durenmar, and it is possible that other tablets have been lost or destroyed.

Each tablet forms an Arcane Connection to the other five tablets in the same sequence, and so once a tablet has been found the others may be found using an Intellego Terram spell. The tablets do not, however, form Arcane Connections to the city of En-Dor; it has been more than 2,000 years since the tablets were actually there.

### LINKS OF STONE

InTe 25

R: Arc, D: Mom, T: Ind

The caster holds a piece of stone in her hands and receives a brief mental image of the surroundings of the object that this stone is an Arcane Connection to. This spell could be used to find the statue that a fragment came from, or the quarry that the blocks of a castle were chiseled from. If the stone is an Arcane Connection to several things, then the newest Arcane Connection, or the closest, is revealed.

(Base 4, + 5 Arc)

## At En-Dor

Once En-Dor has been found, a magus must find his way into the magical regio at the site. The regio consists of two levels.

### EN-DOR REGIO LEVEL ONE

The first level of the regio at En-Dor can be entered by anybody who can see into this level (ArM5, page 189). It has a Magic aura of 2, but this is swamped by a Divine aura of 4 that was engendered by the veneration of the Christian pilgrims who arrived at the site last century.

This level of the regio appears to be uninhabited, and a few partial stone structures that are Roman in origin are all that stand. In fact, there is a single inhabitant in this regio: an elderly pilgrim named Roland of Toulouse. He observes intruders in the regio from his hiding spot in the stone ruins, and if the intruders are not obviously hostile, he approaches and greets them.

Roland is friendly and answers questions about both his past and the location as best as he is able. Roland is a distant cousin to the Count of Toulouse: he left France as a young man, in 1170, on pilgrimage to Jerusalem. Close observation reveals that this journey was successful, as he wears the tattoo of a cross inside his wrist, which indicates a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. After a year or so, Roland left Jerusalem and traveled to other holy sites, reaching the Sea of Galilee in early 1185 and En-Dor later that year, where he has remained since. He prays three times a day, and is sustained by prayer and by water from a stream that flows through En-Dor. Roland thinks that he has been at En-Dor for a few years, although he is not very certain. Other pilgrims used

## Story Seeds: The Clay Tablets

The inscribed clay tablets are a good device storyguides can use to introduce the ancient tradition of Canaanite necromancy to the characters. Some possible stories are:

- A merchant who deals with the covenant has acquired a tablet from a collector in Italy and, knowing the esoteric interests of the magi, he offers the tablet to them, for sale.
- The Redcaps, carrying the newly purchased tablets between Constantinople and Durenmar, stop for the night at the covenant but ultimately fail to reach Durenmar. A Quaesitor eventually arrives at the covenant, searching for the Redcaps, and, after being convinced of the covenant's innocence in their disappearance, requests their assistance in continuing the search.
- Several tablets have been purchased by a Venetian relic forger who, although unable to read the tablets, has made a number of duplicates. The forgeries are sold for him at fairs by a group of corrupt Cistercian monks and are worthless, but by questioning the monks the relic forger and the original tablets may be found.

to arrive fairly frequently, but their numbers have dwindled and recently stopped altogether.

Inspection of the stream that Roland drinks from indicates that it is magical. Drinking from the stream, daily, provides sustenance and also acts like a +5 Longevity Ritual (ArM5, page 101); but this effect only lasts while within the regio, and a character who drinks from the stream must immediately make an Aging roll (ArM5, page 168) when she leaves the regio, even if she is below the age of 35. A magus with a Hermetic laboratory can extract two pawns of Aquam vis from the waters of the stream, each season, but the resultant vis is tainted with the Divine (ArM5, page 190). The stream flows out of a cave, further up the slope of Hermon, that overlooks the ruined town, and Roland may mention that an old Jewish woman who lives in the cave sometimes ventures out to speak with him. Their conversions are not very successful, however, as Roland's Hebrew is poor and the

woman does not seem to speak any other language. Roland has been into the cave, but he found no one within.

The cave is, in fact, the entrance to the next level of the regio.

### EN-DOR REGIO LEVEL TWO

The second level of the regio at En-Dor has a Magical aura of 5. This regio can only be entered through the cave in the first level, which anybody who can see across the regio boundary can do. For a character who cannot find the way to the second level of the regio the cave appears to have only one opening, that which leads back to first level of the regio.

In the second level of the regio, the cave has a second exit, which opens at the foot of a small valley. The valley is a several hundred feet across and almost one mile long. At the head of the valley a spring flows from the mouth of a stone face carved into the wall of the valley, and its waters splash into a

## Zephaniah

**Magic Might:** 25 (Mentem)

**Characteristics:** Int +2, Per +1, Pre +1, Com +2, Str -1, Sta 0, Dex 0, Qik 0

**Size:** 0 (non-physical)

**Age:** n/a (50)

**Decrepitude:** Already dead

**Confidence Score:** 1 (3)

**Virtues and Flaws:** Wise One, Canaanite Necromancy, Famous, Good Teacher, Enemies (Israelites); Higher Purpose, Nocturnal.

**Personality Traits:** Protective +3, Kind +1

**Reputations:** Necromancer 6 (Ecclesiastical, Hermetic)

**Combat:**

Brawl (knife): Init +2, Attack +3, Defense +2, Damage +1\*

\* When physically manifested. When Zephaniah is non-physical she can neither be harmed by combat, nor can she harm others in combat.

**Soak:** +2

**Fatigue Levels:** n/a when non-physical. OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious, when manifested.

**Wound Penalties:** n/a when non-physical. -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-15), Incapacitated (16-20), when manifested.

**Abilities:** Area Lore Canaan 5 (ancient sites), Artes Liberales 3 (cuneiform), Awareness 3 (En-Dor), Bargain 5 (ghosts), Brawl 1 (knife), Canaanite Necromancy 5 (summoning), Concentration 5 (necromancy), Hebrew 5 (Canaanite dialect), Leadership 4 (ghosts), Magic Lore 4 (ancient traditions), Penetration 3 (commands), Survival 2 (desert), Teaching 4 (necromancers)

**Powers:**

*Dead Canaanite Necromancer*, 0 points, constant, Mentem: Zephaniah is aware that she is a ghost and when she is incorporeal she can turn invisible at will, pass through walls, and ignore physical attacks and fatigue or wound penalties. She also has a permanent Arcane Connection to the dead that she can exploit as a +4 Penetration multiplier, much like any other permanent Arcane Connection (ArM5, page 84), when interacting with the dead.

*Return to Flesh*, 10 points, Init, Corpus: Zephaniah is linked to the world of the living and the world of the dead. This Supernatural Power allows her to physically mani-

fest, returning her to the world of the living for a period of one day. When physically manifested, she interacts with the world as if she were still alive. She cannot will herself dead again, but must wait until this Power's duration expires instead. If she takes a wound or suffers a Fatigue level she must make a Concentration roll to remain manifested, and if she is incapacitated, killed, or loses consciousness she immediately becomes an incorporeal ghost, again.

**Vis:** 5 pawns of Mentem.

**Appearance:** Zephaniah is a ghost, but is only slightly transparent and, in poor light, could be mistaken for a living person. She has dark skin and long graying black hair, into which are tied colored wooden beads. Zephaniah appears to be about 50 years old; her face is lined and creased, and her eyes are slightly shrunken into their sockets. She is thin and bony and dressed in a simple grey robe. When physically manifested she emanates a slightly stale air, which the unGifted find disconcerting.

shallow pool, about ten feet across, which is tiled in stone. From the pool a stream flows down the valley and into the cave mouth. This stream has the same properties as the stream in the first regio level, as it is, of course, the same stream. A character who tries to leave the valley, except by passing through the cave, finds herself back in the valley.

The valley floor is dry, and empty, apart from several dozen stone buildings, each about the size of a small house or Hermetic laboratory. The

buildings are all constructed in a similar manner, with a stone floor and a roof supported by columns, but neither walls nor doorways. The buildings are pre-Roman and reminiscent of Greek architecture. All the buildings are whole and un-ruined, and each contains one or more stone slabs upon which lie skeletal remains: En-Dor is a city of the dead. In total, there are about 100 skeletons, some of which are adorned in gold and silver jewelry, fragments of decaying clothing and burial shrouds, or simple bronze weapons.

## THE GHOSTS OF EN-DOR

There are no living inhabitants in the second level of the regio at En-Dor, but about a dozen ghosts haunt the buildings in the valley. These are the ghosts of Canaanite necromancers who were killed in the purges of King Saul, along with the ghost of the last necromancer — Zephaniah, the witch of En-Dor. The ghosts usually appear at night, when they gather about the pool at the head of the valley, and Zephaniah acts as their leader. She has a Magic Might of

25 (Mentem) and is both aware that she is a ghost and still capable of affecting the world of the living. The other ghosts are much weaker, with Magic Might 10 (Mentem), and are no longer truly conscious.

Zephaniah is not hostile, but she is obsessively protective of the other ghosts who were her friends and colleagues until they were murdered by Saul and his soldiers. Although the other ghosts are essentially mindless, Zephaniah still attempts to interact with them, treating them much like loved, elderly relatives who have become senile. She certainly does not appreciate attempts by magi to harvest the ghosts for vis.

## The Order of Hermes and the Dead

The regio at En-Dor is a good location for a covenant because it has a high magical aura, is difficult to enter, and already contains a number of buildings suitable for conversion to Hermetic laboratories. Obviously, magi wishing to site a covenant at En-Dor need to come to some sort of accommodation with Zephaniah.

Zephaniah does not know of the Order of Hermes, but she is very interested to learn of it and may



— partly motivated by her traumatic experience of the purge conducted by the Israelites — ask the Order of Hermes for protection. Deciding whether to grant protection could make an interesting story, including discussion at a Tribunal or House level. In return, Zephaniah can offer to teach the Supernatural Ability Canaanite Necromancy or assist in

integrating Canaanite necromancy with Hermetic theory.

The powers of Canaanite necromancy, once they become known to the Order of Hermes, may touch off a great deal of political intrigue as magi with various agendas attempt to contact, or at least confirm the death of, historical casualties within the Order, including the Founders. Some suggested consequences are listed below, although not all of these issues will necessarily arise in every saga, and the specific actions taken by the characters who revive Canaanite necromancy will obviously influence the attitude of the wider Order.

- Tylalus disappeared in mysterious circumstances and a group of magi seek to resolve his fate with Canaanite necromancy. Other magi might seek to clarify the demise of the other Founders, many of whom also met ambiguous ends.

- House Tremere carefully ensures — by disposing of their ashes through the

Gate of Eurydice at Coeris — that dead Tremere magi leave no loose Arcane Connections that can be used to threaten the future of the House. The House therefore may view the development of Canaanite necromancy, with its promised ability to arbitrarily contact the dead, as a threat.

- Attempts to contact dead mundanes, to clarify succession and

## Ghosts of Necromancers

**Magic Might:** 10 (Mentem)

**Characteristics:** Int -2, Per +3, Pre 0, Com 0, Str +1, Sta 0, Dex 0, Qik +2

**Size:** 0 (non-physical)

**Age:** n/a (varies)

**Decrepitude:** Already dead

**Personality Traits:** Mindless +3, Loyal +2

**Combat:** The ghosts are non-physical and so can neither be harmed by combat, nor can they harm others in combat.

**Abilities:** Area Lore En-Dor 3 (hiding places), Awareness 2 (En-Dor), Brawl 3 (wrestle), Hebrew 5 (Canaanite dialect), Stealth 10 (nighttime)

**Powers:**

*Traumatic Death*, 0 points, constant, Mentem: The ghosts are united by the traumatic death that they suffered at the hands of Saul's soldiers. The ghosts are Arcane Connections to each other, are constantly aware of everything that the others sense, and can communicate with each other regardless of distance.

*Marionette*, 5 points, Init 0, Corpus:

The ghostly necromancers are drawn to the living and sometimes attempt to move the living about as if they were marionettes. This Supernatural Power allows each ghost to attempt to control the limbs of a single person, the marionette, for a period of Diameter. The ghosts are not very proficient and their influence is only equivalent to a child trying to push the marionette about. A conscious marionette can automatically resist the pushing of the ghostly necromancer, but to do anything else at the same time he must make a simple Intelligence + Concentration roll against an Ease Factor of 9 – Size.

**Vis:** 1 pawn of Mentem.

**Appearance:** The ghosts are translucent, and can only be seen with difficulty. They are dressed in funeral bindings or shrouds that may be adorned with jewelry. When in motion, the ghosts drift several centimeters above the ground.

## Story Seed: Canaanite Gods

Investigating Canaanite necromancy and integrating it with Hermetic theory is independent of most aspects of the original Canaanite culture. However, in his research a magus may discover hints about Canaanite cosmology, either from classical documents or interviewing Zephaniah, and decide to embark upon quests to contact the Canaanite gods — who may be Faerie or Magical in nature. Such quests are beyond the scope of the information presented here, but briefly, the Canaanite pantheon includes: El, father of the gods; his consort, Elat; Ba'al, an agrarian weather god and also the lord of the gods; and Ba'al's sister/consort Anat, a virginal, hunter, warrior goddess. One crucial story, which is known by Zephaniah, tells how Ba'al challenged another son of El, Mot, the god of death. In the story, Ba'al is slain by Mot, but his corpse is recovered and buried by Anat, who then seeks Mot out and pleads with him to return Ba'al to life. Mot refuses, and so Anat slays Mot herself, which enables Ba'al's resurrection. Anat's victory over Mot is celebrated by Zephaniah at the spring equinox.

inheritance, may provoke conflict between the Order of Hermes and nobles.

- House Guernicus, rightly or wrongly, may fear that hidden survivors of the Schism War will seek to acquire Canaanite necromancy in order to contact the leadership of House Diedne.
- Conservative forces within the Order of Hermes, led by House Guernicus, might recognize that

Canaanite necromancy has the potential to resurrect many old conflicts that had died with their protagonists. The concerned Quasitores might therefore attempt to extend the Peripheral Code's prohibition against scrying to the use of Canaanite necromancy, and so make it illegal to attempt to "scry" on dead magi.

- Some Quasitores might be so concerned at the destabilizing influ-

ence of Canaanite necromancy that they argue for the Wizard's Marching of the Canaanite revivalists — paralleling Saul's purge more than two thousand years ago.

# Defixio Magic

In the ancient world, cults of sorcerers practiced a form of magic that allowed them to use spells on targets without needing an Arcane Connection. To understand this defixio magic, the investigator must delve into the secrets of ancient traditions and uncover the relics of the cultists who practiced defixio magic. Although cultists dedicated to the gods of the underworld — Hecate, Pluto, and Proserpina — made up the majority of defixio magic users, followers of Ceres and Minerva also practiced the art. These cults largely faded from prominence in the second century, but remnants of their magic remain to be discovered.

Cultists who practiced defixio magic could use it to coerce spirits into invoking curses, or alternately, could use those spirits as conduits through which they could channel their own magic to affect a victim. To perform this magic, the cultists created defixiones (singular: defixio), which are small magical devices that name or describe the target of the curse, the effects of that curse, and the events that cause the curse. Defixio magic could be used to affect anyone the cultist could name and could be held in abeyance until a specific event occurred.

The unique aspects of defixio magic may be incorporated into Hermetic theory as a new Duration or Range. A magus who understands this

tradition gains the ability to do what is impossible for all other Hermetic magi — cast spells on targets that the magus has not sensed and for which he has no Arcane Connection. Learning this ability could also allow the magus to correct what is generally believed to be a flaw in the theory of Bonisagus.

## Learning Defixio Magic

Although the practice of using defixiones is largely unknown in medieval Europe, there are several sources available to the magus that describe the practice in varying levels of detail. Several ancient Greek and Roman authors describe the practice of using defixiones in their writings. Pliny the Elder describes the common fear of defixiones in his chapter on magic in *Natural History*. Plato also references the use of defixiones by sorcerers in both *Laws* and *Republic*. Likewise, Tacitus describes a curse placed on Germanicus and the process of discovering and destroying the defixio to free him in *Annals*. An astute magus, one who succeeds in an Intelligence + Magic Theory roll against an Ease Factor of 9, recognizes that the effects of the defixiones men-

tioned by the ancient authors violate the Hermetic limit by not requiring an Arcane Connection.

The references in works of ancient authors might lead a magus to look for similar references in the writings of the Founders. Defixiones were still in use in some areas as late as the seventh century, and the Roman Founders had at least a passing familiarity with the practice. Of course, because many of his followers were members of the cult of Hades, Tremere was the Founder most likely to be familiar with the practice.

Another avenue to introduce the investigators to defixio magic would be for a character to discover a defixio. If the saga is located in an area formerly under Roman control, covenant excavation might uncover an old Roman gravesite. Likewise, the discovery of a cave or well that served as an ancient sanctuary or oracle to a Roman god might uncover defixiones that could spur the magus to research the tradition.

## Investigating Defixio Magic

To fully understand defixio magic, the investigator must discover and comprehend the secrets of each of the five specialties that comprise the whole of defixio magic. Gaining

Insight into each cult grants the ability to invent spells that utilize that cult's specific Art and Form combination (see the Defixio Lore insert). Before inventing a spell, the magus must investigate a defixio and formula for that cult in the laboratory. If the magus investigates a defixio and formula from the same cult simultaneously, the magus adds +3 to his Insight roll.

A defixio that has released its magic is useless for investigatory purposes, and each defixio or formula may only be studied once. A magus need not necessarily know the specific cult that created a defixio. An Intellego Vim spell (base level 4) reveals the following details about an "active" defixio: the spell or Supernatural Ability channeled, the level of the effect, the cult specialty of the creator of the defixio, the target of the defixio, and the triggering condition of the defixio.

## Integrating Defixio Magic

Once the magus has gained Insight, he must invent a spell by experimentation that uses the appropriate Technique and Form for that cult. Because Event Duration and Unlimited Range (see below) both require Rituals, any spell invented to achieve a Breakthrough must also be a Ritual. The spells the magus invents cannot utilize the Event Duration or Unlimited Range until she achieves a Breakthrough. The final spell invented that reaches the Breakthrough total incorporates the appropriate Range or Duration, but before the Breakthrough, the spells are slightly flawed, in that they do not incorporate the Breakthrough the magus seeks.

## The Leadworker Virtue

Some members of House Tremere possess the Leadworker Virtue, which is derived from the defixio magic tradition (see *Houses of Hermes: True Lineages*, page 143). House Tremere probably gained access to this Virtue from one of two sources. Tremere may have learned it from his master, Guorna the Fetid, who was the leader of the remnants of the cult of Pluto and may have practiced defixio magic herself. The other possible source is the necromancers from Dacia who accompanied Tremere to the First Tribunal. Because the Leadworker

Virtue is not widespread among the followers of Tremere and its practitioners use the Greek terminology for defixiones, it is more likely that the Virtue derives from the eastern Hades worshipers. Regardless of the source of the Virtue, however, Tremere magi familiar with the history of their House are a potential source of information in researching this ancient tradition. Possessing the Leadworker Virtue neither hinders nor helps in the integration of defixio magic, but may provide the researcher with access to additional sources for study.

Before making a Breakthrough, the spells the magus invents for the Unlimited Range require an Arcane Connection, but add +6 to the magnitude of the spell rather than +4. A spell invented for the Event Duration Breakthrough requires the magus to invent two spells: a *Watching Ward* spell and the spell that the *Watching Ward* triggers. The two spells are permanently linked and may not be cast individually, unless re-invented independently.

After the magus successfully invents a spell, he gains breakthrough points equal to the magnitude of the spell. If the magus invents a spell that attempts to integrate both the Event Duration and Unlimited Range, she must allocate the breakthrough points for that spell between the two goals.

The investigator must understand the magic of all five cults to completely integrate the components of defixio magic. The magus must make a Minor Breakthrough (30 breakthrough points) for Event Duration and a Hermetic Breakthrough (60 breakthrough points) for Unlimited Range. The storyguide should not allow breakthrough points from a

single cult to count toward more than one-fifth of the total points required to make either Breakthrough.

## New Duration: Event

This Duration is only available for Ritual spells. When the Ritual spell is cast, it is held in abeyance until a specific condition occurs. The circumstances necessary to activate the spell must be fully described when the Ritual is cast. A spell with Event Duration may be suspended in perpetuity, if the specific criteria never occur. No spell that requires aiming to affect its target may be used with the Event Duration. Unlike Defixio Lore, which is limited to specific combinations of Arts, a spell with Event Duration may have any combination.

Any spell that uses the Event Duration must have an Intellego requisite. If the triggering condition is dependent on the identification of some person, place, or thing, the appropriate Form is also required as a requisite. If the person who would activate the Event condition is protected by Magic Resistance, the spell

# Defixio Lore

Defixio Lore is a Major, Supernatural Virtue and corresponding Ability that allow a character to perform the rituals necessary to create a defixio. They are presented for illustrative purposes only. Magi are generally incapable of acquiring the Virtue or learning the Ability; the only practical way for a magus to utilize the secrets of defixio magic is to integrate its effects into Hermetic theory.

Defixiones allow their creator to use a Supernatural Ability or spell against a target that is not sensed and for which the creator has no Arcane Connection. A defixio itself does not possess any power other than the ability to provide a conduit to the target. Defixiones are not Arcane Connections. Although they allow their creator to cast spells or use Supernatural Abilities without regard for the distance to the target, they can never be used to improve a magus's Penetration multiplier.

For every level in the Defixio Lore Ability, the character may select one cult from the list below. The cult limits the type of magic that may be used in conjunction with the defixio. The character may not utilize any spell or Supernatural Ability that has a Technique and Form combination or requires a requisite that falls outside of those listed for the cult specialties known by the character.

For every level in Defixio Lore, the character may choose one of the following cults:

**Cult of Ceres:** Creo Mentem

**Cult of Hecate:** Perdo

Corpus/Animal

**Cult of Minerva:** Rego

Corpus/Animal

**Cult of Pluto:** Rego Mentem

**Cult of Proserpina:** Muto Mentem

The process of preparing a defixio is very involved. During the creation of the defixio, the preparer must designate the spell that he is going to use against the target. The spell or Supernatural Ability selected must meet the Technique and Form requirements of the cults known by the character. The creator must spend one day and expend one pawn of vis per magnitude of the spell or Ability in preparing the defixio. The vis expended must match the Technique or Form of the cult specialty utilized.

The defixio must contain both a description of the spell to be cast and a description of the target of the spell. An accurate and complete description of the target makes the defixio more effective. A defixio can target someone who is not yet known. For example, a defixio may be created that contains a trigger that occurs in the future. If the target of the defixio is not yet knowable because the triggering event has not occurred, then the spell is cast and does not affect anyone until the target is identified.

The Ease Factor is increased by one for every magnitude of the spell or Supernatural Ability used in conjunction with the defixio. A Minor Supernatural Ability is the equivalent of a fourth magnitude spell and a Major Supernatural Ability is the equivalent of a seventh magnitude spell for these purposes.

After the defixio is created, the preparer must roll Intelligence + Defixio Lore + a stress die. If the total equals or exceeds the Ease Factor, then the character may cast the spell or use the Ability previously selected. If the spell or Ability botches, the defixio is destroyed, otherwise a failure merely requires a repeat attempt. Once a spell or

EASE FACTOR	EXAMPLE
0	The target's full name and an Arcane Connection to the target are incorporated into the defixio: "Marie the Perfumier, daughter of Claude," and a lock of Marie's hair.
3	Only the target's full name is used in creating the defixio: "Marie the Perfumier, daughter of Claude."
6	Only the target's pseudonym or a nickname is known: "Jarvis," "Lucky," or "The Weasel."
9	The target is precisely described without using his full name or a pseudonym: "The shield grog of Carolus," "the covenfolk of Semita Errabunda," or "the person who stole my cloak."
12	The target cannot be known at the time of creation: "Any person who defiles my grave," "my killer," or "the next person to attack me."

Supernatural Ability takes effect, it continues until it would normally expire or the defixio is destroyed. For the spell or Supernatural Ability to penetrate a target's Magic Resistance, both the Defixio Lore and the underlying magical effect must penetrate. Defixio Lore's Penetration total is equal to the amount that the stress roll exceeds the target Ease Factor.

**Specialties:** a particular cult. (Supernatural)



must penetrate for the event to be triggered, otherwise nothing happens. If an incident that would trigger the condition occurs within an *Aegis of the Hearth*, the spell must penetrate the *Aegis* or be cast by a member of the covenant for it to take effect. Should a new *Aegis* ceremony take place before the condition occurs, the spell must penetrate the new *Aegis*.

The triggering event must occur within the spell's range for it to be detected. The range is measured from the point where the spell was cast, so Touch Range means that the triggering event must happen at that point. A spell with Event Duration and Voice Range is triggered if the described event occurs within 50 paces of the casting point. A spell with Sight Range is ineffective unless an *Imaginem* requisite is used and the triggering event occurs somewhere that would be "visible" from the cast-

ing point. For these reasons, Arcane Connection or Unlimited Ranges are the most useful for Event Duration spells that are meant to cover a large area.

The Event Duration adds +1 to the magnitude of the spell cast. The duration of the underlying effect is also considered when calculating the final level of the spell. If the spell triggered has a Duration longer than Momentary, the level is increased appropriately. For example, a spell with Event Duration that lasts for Moon, after being activated, has an effective magnitude of +4 (+3 for Moon and +1 for Event). Concentration is not an available Duration for Event spells.

At the storyguide's discretion, the investigator may integrate the Event Duration, imperfectly, before a Breakthrough is reached. The spell that increases the magus's breakthrough point total past half the total

required for the Breakthrough, and all those invented thereafter, provide all of the benefits of the Event Duration, except +3 magnitude is added to the base Duration. The spells created must follow all of the other requirements of an Event Duration spell. If a spell is beyond the capability of the magus, then he invents a spell as described above without the Event Duration and with an accompanying *Watching Ward* spell.

## Event Duration Examples

*Moratamis creates a spell to warn the turb if anyone enters the covenant without the knowledge of the guards on duty. The target of the spell is the grog barracks. Moratamis wants the entire covenant to be monitored; therefore, Voice and Sight Ranges are inadequate. Moratamis uses an Arcane Connection to allow the entire covenant to be covered. Because a person surreptitiously entering the covenant triggers the condition, the spell must have a requisite of Corpus.*

### CALL TO ARMS

Re(In)Me(Co) 35

R: Arc, D: Event (Mom), T: Room, Ritual

This Ritual wakes all of the grogs (or any other predefined group) in one room of the covenant if the condition described at the time of casting occurs within the walls of the covenant.

(Base 4, +4 Arc, +1 Event [Mom], +2 Room)

*Darius wants to set a trap for anyone who might try to assassinate him in his sleep. He decides to cast a Perdo Corpus Ritual that wounds anyone who enters his sanctum and was not present at the casting of the spell. Because the triggering condition and the Form of the spell are both Corpus, no requisite is required. If Darius had created a spell that was triggered by the target's intentions, it would have needed a Mentem requisite.*

**TRAP FOR THE THIEF IN THE NIGHT**  
Pe(In)Co 25

R: Voice, D: Event (Mom), T: Ind, Ritual

Inflicts a Medium Wound on any person who meets the definition of the target determined at the time of casting and who comes within the range of the casting point.

(Base 10, +2 Voice, +1 Event [Mom])

*Although a spell with Duration Event is a continuous magical effect, it is not generally cast on anything until it takes effect, and thus does not cause Warping. On the other hand, it cannot move.*

## New Range: Unlimited

This range is only available for Ritual spells. As part of the Ritual, the caster must have a single sympathetic connection to the target, or multiple connections that combine to provide at least a +2 bonus on the Sympathetic Connections table (see ArM5, page 84). An Arcane Connection is not required. Distance is immaterial for a Ritual with Unlimited Range, unless the storyguide imposes some limit. This Range adds +6 to the magnitude of the spell or, for spell guidelines that require an Arcane Connection, it adds +2 magnitudes to the base.

There are multiple ways the caster can acquire the +2 bonus needed from the Sympathetic Connections table. For instance, knowing the target's nickname (+1) and casting his horoscope for the day (+1) is sufficient to use Unlimited Range to cast a spell on him. Likewise, a simple drawing or clay model of the target created by the magus (+2) is sufficient to cast an Unlimited Range spell.

If the storyguide allows it, the investigator may partially integrate the Unlimited Range before achiev-

ing a Breakthrough. The spell that increases the magus's breakthrough point total past half the total required for the Breakthrough, and all those invented thereafter provide all of the benefits of the Unlimited Range, except that they require sympathetic connections totaling +5 bonus multipliers. A partially integrated spell must follow all of the other requirements of an Unlimited Range spell.

### UNLIMITED RANGE EXAMPLES

*Moratamis wants to create a spell that mimics The Inexorable Search, but does not require an Arcane Connection. Creating a representation of the quarry in the form of a small figurine is sufficient to fulfill the +2 sympathetic connection requirement.*

### DRAW ON DIANA'S HOUNDS

InCo 30

R: Unlimited, D: Conc, T: Ind, Ritual

Locates any person named in the Ritual on a map. Before the Ritual begins, the caster must create a figurine of the target of the spell. The caster then places the figurine on a map. At the completion of the Ritual, the figurine moves toward the person's location at the rate of one inch per minute. When the figurine reaches the location, it spins rapidly. The target is located somewhere within the area covered by the spinning figurine. If the quarry's location is not on the map used, the figurine does not move.

Although only one map is required to cast the spell, multiple maps of various scales provide the best results. A character may draw a map for use in the spell with a successful Dexterity + Area Lore roll against an Ease Factor of 6. If the roll is unsuccessful, the figurine does not move. The figurine is the focus of the spell and, as long as the magus maintains concentration,

the figurine may be placed on any number of maps.

A Dexterity + Craft roll of 9 is required to create the figurine depicting the quarry. The figurine created is approximately three inches tall. To determine the location of the target more precisely, the caster may create a smaller figurine. For each halving of the size of the figurine, increase the Ease Factor by 3.

(Base 3, +6 Unlimited, +1 Conc)

*Darius wants to create a spell that replicates The Leap of Homecoming, but allows the caster to travel anywhere. Because the range for the base spell is Personal, but it requires an Arcane Connection, the Unlimited Range Breakthrough allows the Arcane Connection to be replaced by a +2 sympathetic connection and adds +2 magnitudes to the final level of the spell.*

### PASSAGE TO THE PLACE PICTURED

ReCo 45

R: Per, D: Mom, T: Ind, Ritual

This spell transports the caster anywhere. As part of the Ritual, the caster must paint or draw a picture of the location to which he wishes to travel. If the player succeeds in making a Dexterity + Craft roll of 9 and the spell is cast successfully, the magus is transported to the site depicted. If the roll is botched the character may be transported to the location but buried in a wall, be sent to a place that merely resembles the intended location, or be sent to a Faerie regio.

(Base 35 with Arc, +2 Unlimited)

## Defixio Magic in Play

The magus who understands Defixio Lore and incorporates it into Hermetic theory is able to utilize its underlying concepts to great tactical and strategic advantage.

# Naming Conventions

## CHRISTIANITY

The popularity of using baptismal names varies by region. In some areas, parents do not name a child until the baptism, people avoid referring to the child specifically until that event, and the child then uses his baptismal name for his entire life. In other areas, the parents give the child a secret name, which is used only by the family or may never be used, and the child uses his baptismal name in public. In many areas, however, parents name their children at birth with either the name of a recently dead relative or even a sibling who predeceased the newborn. In these areas, a distinct baptismal name is either not given or never used. Regardless of the naming convention in any particular area, the use of nicknames is common. Bynames could be added to a personal name based on some prominent physical characteristic, personality trait, place of birth, or occupation.

## ISLAM

Although naming conventions vary by region for Muslims too, there is much more uniformity across the Islamic world. A person's birth name is only one of many names she has. A person may use a patronymic name that could encompass two or three generations. Often a person could also have a name designating his occupation, tribal lineage, or geographic origin. As Muslims become adults, they no longer use their birth names and might only be referred to as the father or mother of their first-

born son. It is offensive to refer to an adult by her birth name alone.

In addition to the above names, a person might also take a "laqab." This byname might be descriptive of a personality trait held (or desired) by the person. "Harun Al-Rashid," for instance, means "Harun the Rightly-Guided." But a laqab could also be religious in nature. Some take the name servant ("abd" for men and "amat" for women) of one of the ninety-nine names of God. Examples of such names include: Abd Al-Aziz (servant of the Almighty), Amat Allah (servant of God), abd Al-Malik (servant of the Sovereign), amat Al-Khallaq (servant of the Creator), or Abd As-Samad (servant of the Eternal). Some people do not use a birth name or are given a laqab as a birth name.

Some examples of Arabic names include: Umm Ja'far Zaina bint Yusuf ibn Farouk (Mother of Jafar, Zaina, daughter of Joseph, son of Farouk); Abu Isma'il Ibrahim ibn Ishaq ibn Ibrahim ibn Bashir al-Bukhari (Father of Ishmael, Abraham, son of Isaac, son of Abraham, son of Bashir, from Bukhara); and Abu al-Ayyub Abd al-Rahim ibn Ahmad al-Harrani (Father of Job, servant of the Merciful, son of Ahmad, from Harran).

## JUDAISM

Jews often adopt the naming conventions of the surrounding communities. This means that Jews in Europe usually identify themselves by only their given name, possibly with one byname. Jews in Islamic society often use multiple patronymic names and

other bynames. Men are more likely to be named using traditional Biblical names, while women often take names from the local community. When a Jewish man in Christian Europe takes a byname, it is usually based on his father's name, the local geography, a personal characteristic, his occupation, or his rabbinical status.

Although women can be referred to as daughter or wife of someone, these are rarely part of their proper names and are generally merely a designation of a familial relationship. Jews in Islamic societies do not usually take religious laqab names, but might have bynames indicating their piety, devotion to God, or religious scholarship.

## RELIGIOUS NAMES IN DEFIXIO MAGIC

A target's nickname, birth name, or byname may be used as a sympathetic connection to her, but the target's baptismal, religious laqab, or rabbinical name may not. If a person's birth name and religious name are the same, then that name may not be used in any magic ritual. For such an individual, only his nickname or byname may be used to identify him. If a religious name is incorporated into the description of a target, in defixio magic or an Unlimited Range spell, the spell is treated as if the religious name had not been included. If only a religious name is used, the spell always fails. If one of the above religious names is part of the target's full name, the spell or Ability is treated as if only the target's nickname or pseudonym is known.

## USING DURATION EVENT

Event Duration spells lend themselves to defensive measures. They allow magi to create traps and alarms based on a wide variety of criteria. Remote vis sites, covenants, and sancta are prime locations for traps to repel or punish intruders. A magus could also cast a spell to automatically protect the covenant library with *Sootbe the Raging Flames*. With the addition of a Mentem requisite, magi can create alarms that warn of potential attacks before they even occur. A covenant concerned with spies or traitors might create alarms that identify enemies without forcing a magus to cast Intellego Mentem spells on every member of the turb or covenant.

The storyguide should always require the player to write out a complete description of the triggering event and record the relevant spell totals. The magus may cast a spell that is not activated until years later. A character's statistics may have changed significantly during that time. Similarly, a written triggering event reduces the likelihood of arguments about the exact circumstances that activate the spell.

A spell with a duration of Event could create a situation where the magus unintentionally violates the Code of Hermes. Given that it is not a violation of the Code, per se, for a magus to enter a covenant without invitation, a spell that activates an alarm or a trap against an intruding magus would likely violate the Code. If the magus casts a spell with a trigger based on the target's intentions and a magus enters the range of the spell, whether the magus triggers the spell or not, this could violate the Code's prohibition on scrying.

One way to reduce the likelihood of an unintentional violation of the Code is to reduce the Ritual's

Penetration Total to zero, but a magus would still be vulnerable at sunrise and sunset when his Parma Magica expires (see *Houses of Hermes: True Lineages*, page 72). The unfortunate side effect of forceless casting is that any creature with a Might score would never trigger the spell. The safest way to define a triggering event is to specifically exclude members of the Order from any description.

## USING RANGE UNLIMITED

Spells with Unlimited Range should have a greater impact on game play than Event Duration. Although all of the effects that Unlimited Range spells allow can be duplicated by spells with an Arcane Connection, characters are freed from the need to collect, fix, and maintain multiple Arcane Connections. Characters may affect people anywhere with little more than the person's name and current location. Similarly, a spell like *The Leap of Homecoming* with Unlimited Range allows a character to travel anywhere in Mythic Europe and possibly the world. Because of the drastic impact this may have on game play, a storyguide may wish to impose some arbitrary limit on the distance, such as the edges of continental Europe, or 49 leagues.

A magus must create any symbolic representation used as a sympathetic connection in an Unlimited Range spell (see ArM5, page 84). Obviously, a poorly drawn map or an inaccurate picture fails as a sympathetic connection. The character, however, may not know that his representation is insufficient and may attempt to use the representation with disastrous results.

The troupe should discuss the possibility of the magus creating a representation of a location that the magus has never visited. What hap-

pens if a magus reads of Prester John's Kingdom and attempts to travel there? What happens if the author's description is accurate, but the magus's rendition was not? What happens if the location is actually fictitious? An easy solution might be to require personal knowledge of the location depicted, but other answers might be more interesting. Should the storyguide not wish to have such a wide-ranging saga, characters may simply travel to Faerie regiones created by the fanciful tales told about the fictitious location. A botch using a travel spell with Unlimited Range could produce a similar result.

Because incorporating Unlimited Range into Hermetic theory allows the magus to break one of the minor Hermetic limits and do something that Bonisagus himself was unable to do, the troupe should consider the ramifications of this discovery. Any magus who fully incorporates defixio magic into Hermetic theory achieves a Hermetic Breakthrough and is likely vaulted to the status of the greatest living Hermetic theoretician.

## Finding Defixiones

Defixiones are some of the most common artifacts recovered from the ancient world. Some graves or wells literally contain hundreds of defixiones in various states of degradation. Not all defixiones, however, are suitable for study. A magus may only study those defixiones whose magic has not yet been released.

There are a number of reasons that a defixio could have been created and never used. For example, if a jealous husband cursed his wife's

lover and she had always remained faithful to him, the curse would still be pending and could be studied. If an absentminded person cursed the thief of his cloak and he later found that he had simply misplaced it, the curse would still be pending. In general, the storyguide should limit the number of suitable defixiones discovered to one or two per season the investigators spend searching.

## Types of Defixiones

### CURSE TABLETS

The curse tablet is the most common form of defixio and was utilized by all practitioners of defixio magic. A curse tablet could be made from any material upon which a sorcerer can write. The usual medium was a flattened lead tablet, though parchment, wax, or other soft metals could be utilized. Silver and gold were popular material for defensive defixiones and were often worn on necklaces. The sorcerer performed an intricate ceremony to prepare the surface of the material before writing on it. Using a brass stylus, the cultist then described the target, detailed the curse, and inscribed words of power and mystical symbols.

Once the tablet was inscribed, the sorcerer folded the tablet over upon itself to conceal the writing and then transfixed it with a nail, often one that had been used in a crucifixion. The ritual was completed when the defixio was deposited in a suitable location. Defixiones seeking revenge or destruction were often placed in a place where Pluto or Hecate were worshipped. Those seeking justice or victory were frequently placed in an oracle or spring dedicated to Minerva or a local deity. Defixiones used to control ghosts were usually placed in that ghost's grave.

### SILHOUETTES

Cultists of Hecate specialized in the creation of silhouette defixiones. These devices were created during a ritual that involved molding a statuette of the target in lead. The cultist then engraved the statuette with a description of the individual and words or symbols of power. While reciting an oral formula to empower the defixio, the cultist used a heavy weight to smash the figurine flat, which left a thin, silhouette-shaped figure. The cultist then deposited the defixio in an inaccessible location, such as an underground body of water, or an oracle or sanctuary dedicated to an appropriate deity.

### FIGURINES

Cultists of Ceres and Proserpina specialized in the creation of figurine defixiones. The figurines were most often used in ceremonies to inspire love or lust in a target. As part of a lengthy ritual, the cultists created a figurine by molding a representation of the target from wax, clay, or wood. The sorcerer then etched the person's name into the figurine and, while reciting the oral formula to empower the defixio, impaled the figurine with numerous iron nails. The cultist then deposited the figurine in an inaccessible location, such as a well, underground stream, or spring dedicated to the appropriate deity.

### FORMULAE

In addition to requiring the creation of one of the three physical examples above, defixio rituals also involved an oral component. These formulae were essential to empowering the defixio to channel the underlying

magic that affected the target of the curse. These rituals were often recorded in large collections — some of which still exist. Although the investigators can learn much about the practice of defixio magic through examination of the physical remains, their research is made easier by acquiring and studying the accompanying formulae.

## Ancient Texts

The ancient sources of defixio formulae are not texts in the traditional sense and do not have Source or Quality ratings. They are merely collections of formulae for various defixio spells. Studying such a collection does not allow a character to gain any ability in Defixio Lore, but some formulae may provide a suitable source for investigation.

If the investigator is able to discover a formula for the same cult as a defixio in his possession, the character receives a bonus of his Insight roll. Over the centuries, many formulae have been copied incorrectly, and original texts have been ravaged by time; therefore, few formulae are suitable for study. In addition to providing access to formulae, some ancient texts provide descriptions of the most efficacious locations to deposit defixiones. These descriptions can provide the investigator valuable clues in recovering specimens for study.

### TOLEDO SCHOLARS

Many texts from ancient Greece and Rome survived in Arabic translation throughout North Africa and other Moorish lands. Some of these texts have begun trickling back into Europe through Andalusia for the last century. The translation center at Toledo serves as a prolific source

of Latin translations of both ancient Greek and Egyptian texts.

Because the Church sponsors the translation of these texts, the search for defixio formulae is difficult. When most Church officials uncover a magical text, they simply destroy it. Not all translators agree with this policy, however. The investigator may need to identify a sympathetic translator or blackmail one to locate suitable formulae.

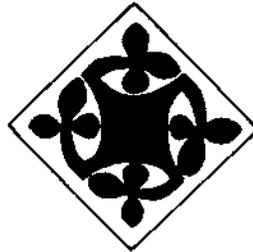
### EGYPTIAN FORMULAE

The Roman Empire had extensive contacts with Egypt, and defixio texts may still survive there. Many believe that defixio magic originated in Egypt. The Greek and Egyptian formulae, which were adapted by Roman cultists, still exist in the libraries of Moorish scholars and magicians in the Levant and Egypt. These texts may be the most comprehensive sources for defixio formulae, but they are also likely to be the most difficult to obtain, and require a journey to Islamic territory. Once obtained, the magus must translate and decipher them from Ancient Coptic or Greek before conducting any laboratory investigation or attempting to understand them.

### TREMERE ARCHIVES

Some ancient collections of defixio formulae may have survived to the present in the hands of members of the Order. A sufficiently large collection of magical texts from the time of the Founders — such as the Tremere archives — might have some examples of defixio formulae. It is doubtful that anyone in that House attaches much importance to them, given the popular belief that the

magic of the earliest members of the Order has been fully incorporated into Hermetic magic. However, the investigator is still not able to gain access to the archives of Coeris without offering something valuable to the leadership of House Tremere.



The investigator might seek the assistance of a conspirator to gain access to the Tremere archives. A disgruntled grog or servant may be willing to risk his life to cross the Tremere, but the justification would need to be great. The Tremere are likely to discover any theft by a non-magus rather quickly. A less risky alternative might be to identify a Tremere magus with the Leadworker Virtue who wishes to return his magical lineage to prominence. Of course, such a magus is likely to be manipulating the investigator to his own ends, as well.

The storyguide has the option of using the Tremere as a source of assistance or hindrance in the investigation of defixio magic. House Tremere may be concerned about the investigator's research for several reasons. First, they may not want the magus to disclose the secrets of the Leadworker Virtue to the Order as a whole, because it would weaken the House's current necromantic dominance. Second, defixio magic provides its user with powerful tools for war and espionage. The Tremere may want to monopolize these techniques to improve their political advantage in the Order. Finally, even if the secrets of defixio magic are eventually available to the entire Order, House Tremere

may want to slow their spread until the House can perfect it, or develop defenses against it.

### Gravesites

Cultists of Pluto could coerce restless ghosts to perform fell deeds. Other cultists also placed their defixiones in gravesites to deter the victims of their curses from finding and destroying the devices. Therefore, ancient gravesites are very fertile grounds for discovering defixiones. Although the practitioners of defixio magic were spread throughout the Roman Empire, Rome contained the highest concentration of cultists. The sheer quantity of gravesites makes Rome a likely destination for uncovering defixiones, and any large Roman city is likely to have defixiones interred in its ancient tombs.

Locating a graveyard in Rome is not difficult. However, finding one that contains useful defixiones presents a potential problem for investigators. The cultists favored the graves of children and victims of violence because they possessed vengeful ghosts willing to harm the living. Romans believed that people who died in an untimely fashion, especially those who died too young to have progeny of their own to tend their tombs, were likely to be restless spirits filled with hatred and jealousy for the living. Ghosts of individuals who were betrayed in death or died with an important task unfinished could remain active to the present. Rumors of haunted areas or ghosts may provide the investigators with some of their best leads.

### THE CITY OF ROME

Rome has a current population of perhaps 10,000 permanent residents.

This number varies greatly depending on the season, being inflated by pilgrims and other visitors to the Holy See. Because vast areas of Rome have been destroyed and rebuilt over the centuries, potential gravesites exist in unexpected locations. The source of a haunted home, inn, or plaza could be the ghost of an ancient Roman who is restless because his grave is no longer marked.

The investigator might encounter many problems searching in Rome. The least of these problems is that within the city walls his actions come under close scrutiny from Church and city officials as well as innocent bystanders. In addition, the powerful Dominion impedes the use of most magic, including the search, discovery, and excavation of tombs.

### OLD ROME

Many of the gravesites of ancient Rome are no longer within the city proper. The area surrounding Rome, which was previously part of the ancient city, has become rural and is dominated by farms and pasture, with only scattered villages. Rural Rome possesses a weak Dominion aura that interferes with magic, but not to the extent of Rome proper.

Outside of Rome, investigators may more easily utilize Intellego spells to locate defixiones, graves, or ghosts. A powerful Intellego or Muto Terram spell could allow the investigator to look through the earth to locate graves. The search for graves is made difficult, however, by the ancient Roman funerary practices of cremation. The magus must therefore look for grave markers and burial chambers; any bones or corpses the investigators find probably received a Christian burial.

Both *Sense of the Lingering Magic* and *Sight of the Active Magics*, with Terram

requisites, could detect active defixiones below ground. Unfortunately, these spells may be beyond the capability of a non-specialist or a junior magus. A different tactic might be to follow the approach that where there is smoke, there is fire. A magus using *See the Spirits of the Night*, or anyone with Second Sight, might stumble across a ghost from ancient Rome.

### SEE THE SPIRITS OF THE NIGHT

InMe 30

R: Per, D: Conc, T: Vision

The caster is able to see Mentem-based spirits (ghosts) that are normally invisible to the living. For spirits that are not in close proximity to the caster, a successful Perception roll may be required to locate them. For example, ghosts hidden behind intervening walls are not visible, and a ghost amid a large crowd may not be immediately obvious. This spell does not allow the caster to communicate with the dead, only to see a ghost. This spell must penetrate the Magic Resistance of the invisible ghost to be successful.

(New Base 5 [Sense any Mentem spirit], +1 Conc, +4 Vision)

### GHOSTS OF ANCIENT ROME

The residents of rural Rome might direct the investigator to the general location of a ghost because it is relatively well known. One such example is the ghost of Libitina. Libitina was a priestess of the cult of Hecate in Rome. She was a powerful sorceress who was driven to achieve power at any cost. In pursuit of this quest, she murdered her own children and used their restless spirits to punish her enemies and guard her defixiones.

This foul act still binds Libitina to the world of the living. She haunts the countryside of Rome terrorizing parents. She believes that she remains in this world to protect children and punish anyone who abuses them. The characters may hear children playing while repeating a rhyme that calls for Libitina to punish cruel mothers and fathers.

If the magi communicate with Libitina, they may be able to lay her ghost to rest. Once she admits that her deeds in life were despicable and cannot be undone by punishing others, she passes to the other side. As a reward, she provides the magus with a powerful defixio that she created to protect her grave. The statistics for Libitina are left to the discretion of the storyguide, but she should have a Might that presents a challenge to the group. Because she feels overwhelming guilt over her mistreatment of her children, a magus using *Coerce Spirits of the Night* on Libitina receives a +4 to his Presence for threats involving her children.

### CATACOMBS

While searching for defixiones, the investigators may stumble across the catacombs of Rome. The catacombs were subterranean burial places for early Christians that are located outside the walls of old Rome. Because Pre-Christian Roman law prohibited the interment of corpses within the city, Jewish citizens buried their dead outside the walls. When Christians came to the city, they continued the practice. The catacombs vary greatly and range from rough, narrow tunnels with small shelves for the dead to professionally finished stone tombs with stairs and shafts to the surface to provide light and ventilation. The catacombs fell out of use when the

Empire became Christian, and their existence was generally unknown during the Middle Ages. It is possible that still-active defixiones rest in the catacombs, especially if they were intended to call forth the spirit of a Christian or Jewish ghost protected by a Divine burial.

### VARDIAN'S TOMB

Although most of the catacombs possess a weak Dominion aura, this is not true for every one. Legend tells of Flambeau's conquest of a group of Roman cultists who refused to join the Order. Flambeau followed the fleeing wizards into the catacombs and, in an epic battle, killed them all, destroying their most powerful artifact — Vardian's skull. This powerful magical act created an aura that a small covenant utilizes today.

The covenant, which calls itself Vardian's Tomb, is composed of several Ex Miscellanea necromancers and Jerbiton magi. The covenant must remain small because of the limited size of the aura. Despite its size, the covenant can provide investigators with valuable assistance. The magi know the catacombs and the area around them well, including the local restless dead.

The magi of Vardian's Tomb also know that there are defixiones located throughout the catacombs. Because unexpended defixiones contain vis, the magi have spent a great deal of time searching for them. The magi may be willing to trade the defixiones in their possession for vis, but they do not trade them on a one-for-one basis. If the investigator attempts to take advantage of the magi of Vardian's Tomb, ridicules them for their poor amenities, or is discovered taking the covenant's vis sources, the magi secretly encourage



the Spectres (see below) to deal with him.

### THE SPECTRES

The members of Vardian's Tomb are not the only people living in the catacombs. A group of bandits, calling themselves the Spectres, has also taken refuge there. The bandits have used the haunted reputation of the area to discourage resistance from their victims, and actively cultivate the impression that they are spirits. To this end, the Spectres cover themselves in charcoal dust and preface their attacks with eerie sounds produced by horns and other musical instruments.

The Spectres are a particularly despicable group of ruffians who have no compunction about disturbing the dead. During the day, they remain

in the catacombs, hidden from the authorities, and slip out at night to waylay travelers or raid villages. The bandits know the countryside well and are able to avoid the authorities with little trouble. The investigators might stumble across the Spectres' lair or encounter them during one of their raids.

Despite the popular belief that the restless dead are terrorizing the Roman countryside, the local officials and the Church correctly suspect something more mundane is the source of the problems. The officials are therefore combing rural Rome, going village-to-village in an attempt to find the parties responsible for the raids. Of course, whether the characters encounter the Spectres or the local officials, either group could complicate their investigation. Some of the troops traveling with the Roman officials are combat vet-

erans of the Crusades. They are also often accompanied by clerics from the Holy See with the protection of relics and possibly True Faith.

## Chthonic Sanctuaries

The cults of Pluto, Ceres, and Hecate worshiped in underground temples dedicated to their gods. The cultists often deposited their defixiones in these isolated locations. Once a magus learns of the cults that practiced defixio magic, an Intelligence + Magic Lore roll against an Ease Factor of 12 reveals that these temples could contain defixiones or information concerning defixio magic.

There are several sources that could lead an investigator to an appropriate sanctuary. A Tremere magus or Ex Miscellanea maga of the Witches of Thessaly might provide the investigator with the location of a sanctuary for a price. An Intelligence + Magic Lore roll against an Ease Factor of 15 provides the general region of an appropriate sanctuary. The magus may also discover the location of a sanctuary from an ancient text or formulary.

Locating a sanctuary without specific directions is difficult. Because the sanctuaries are often located in Magic auras or contain vis sources, an Intellego Vim spell designed to detect either may be useful. Of course, investigating a sanctuary can cause problems should the investigator interfere with another covenant's magical resources.

The cults that practiced defixio magic were present throughout the Roman Empire, but they were most heavily concentrated on the Italian and Grecian peninsulas. The example sanctuary below is dedicated to Hecate and is set in the Cambunian Mountains of the Theban Tribunal,

but it could be almost anywhere and, with little effort, it could be dedicated to any of the chthonic gods.

### CAVE COMPLEX

The entrance to the cave is rough-hewn and barely large enough for an adult male to enter on his hands and knees. The tunnel extends for several yards before opening into a large multi-room complex of finished stone. An alabaster altar with a fire pit in front of it dominates the largest room. This is where the cult's most powerful ceremonies took place. The walls of the main chamber are covered with small niches that contain defixiones, some of which are suitable for study.

The rear chambers were living and working areas. If other parties have not taken the defixio formulae of the cult, they are located here. The complex also has caves that lead deeper into the mountain. Within these caves, the remains of some of the cult's victims and its dead members are interred.

### PROTECTIVE DEFIXIONES

The cultists of Hecate have created defixiones to summon spirits or cast harmful spells on any man who enters the sanctuary. The spirits should be numerous and powerful enough to pose a threat to a moderate-sized Spring covenant. The curses are equivalent to powerful Perdo Corpus spells of the fifth, sixth, or seventh magnitude. The defixiones are staggered to affect the intruder consecutively as he goes deeper into the sanctuary. If the defixiones guarding the sanctuary can be removed without triggering their curses, they provide a potent source for study.

Their removal is relatively simple if the characters know that only a male activates them. Any woman may enter and exit the sanctuary with impunity. Discovering this trigger is only possible if one of the defixiones can be studied. The easiest way to disarm the cave is for a magus to locate the active defixiones through a Muto Terram spell to turn the walls of the cave transparent. Once the defixiones are located, the magus can then use *Unseen Arm* to remove them from the cave. Of course, while they remain physically intact the defixiones continue to protect the sanctuary regardless of their actual location. Destroying them ends the protection, but also makes them unsuitable for investigation.

### EREBOS

The cave complex is home to a colony of bats. The bats have lived in the strong magical aura of the sanctuary long enough to become warped by it. Some of these warped bats have a Magic Might of 15 and the ability to become invisible when stationary, as in *Invisibility of the Standing Wizard*. The warped bats do not attack the characters, and the characters may not even notice them. The body of each magical bat has three pawns of Perdo vis. The total vis available is equivalent to two high-level vis sources for the saga (see *Covenants*, page 72).

One of the covenants of the Theban Tribunal, Erebus, has discovered the sanctuary. The magi of Erebus have not entered it because of the various traps set by the cultists of Hecate. The covenant contains several Perdo specialists, and they consider the cave their most important vis source. The magi of Erebus harvest some of the magical bats each season as they exit the cave.

The covenant has clearly marked the entrance to the cave as its property. Its magi have set their own traps to immobilize any intruders and alert the covenant if anyone enters. They take trespassing very seriously and deal harshly with thieves, being concerned that any intrusion into the cave or disturbance of the defixiones may reduce its aura or cause the colony of bats to relocate, which would destroy their vis source.

The magi can be reasoned with, and a well-thought-out plan assuages most of their fears. However, they are not willing to endanger their vis source or give up the vis-laden defixiones without suitable compensation. The magi of Erebos may consider allowing the investigators access to the cave in exchange for assistance in resolving their conflict with the Daughters of Erictho.

### DAUGHTERS OF ERICTHO

The Witches of Thessaly were also worshippers of Hecate and are experts in sorcery, necromancy, and the dark arts (see *Realms of Power: The Infernal*, page 140). Many of the Witches joined House Ex Miscellanea, but a small number of the holdouts survive today in the Cambunian Mountains. These witches are known as the Daughters of Erictho. The Daughters are powerful adversaries with a strong dislike for the Order.

The Daughters of Erictho once used the sanctuary and consider the encroachment of Erebos just the most recent in a long line of trespasses. They have also come into conflict with Erebos and other covenants of the Tribunal of Thebes over certain magical resources. As civilization and the Dominion encroaches on vis sources and weakens magical auras,

the conflict between the Order and the Daughters has only increased. The Daughters and the Order have also come into conflict regarding their relations with the faeries of the area.

To gain access to the defixiones, the characters may have to act as mediators between the Daughters of Erictho and Erebos. Some of their differences may be irreconcilable without introducing new magical resources. The characters may be forced to provide additional vis sources or locate magical auras to placate the Daughters. Smoothing relations between the Daughters and Erebos not only allows the investigators admission to the cave, but could also provide valuable assistance through access to ancient defixio formulae. Previous generations of the Witches of Thessaly practiced defixio magic and some of their formulae collections still exist.



# Fertility Magic

Several millennia ago, a fertility cult was ubiquitous across Mythic Europe. Cult practitioners were, through rituals and spells, able to influence conception to promote desirable traits in children. Remains of the cult, in the form of small fetish statuettes carved to resemble a wide-hipped pregnant woman, can be found in remote caves, but are seldom identified as artifacts of a coherent cultic practice, and are often confused with the relics of Figurine Magic (see *Houses of Hermes: True Lineages*, page 33).

Other than the fertility fetishes and a few cave paintings, there are no relics or records of the culture that produced the fertility rituals, so it is unclear exactly who the fertility cult members were: certainly they had been wiped out, or assimilated, long before Rome's legionnaires marched through Europe. The fertility cult may have been part of an antediluvian culture that was destroyed in the flood, and credibility is lent to this theory by the fact that some of the isolated mountain caves the fetish statuettes are found in contain shells and the preserved bones of sea creatures. It is also possible that there were several similar cults — rather than a single, monolithic cult — and given the wide distribution of the fertility fetishes and their apparent independence of any ancient empire, this is even likely.

## Cultic Fertility Magic

The original cultic fertility practices are irrecoverable: the surviving relics are simply too diffuse and do not preserve enough knowledge about the cult. Despite the paucity of recoverable information about the fertility cult itself, the ancient fetishes provide enough of a magical record for a Seeker to discover their usage and thus attempt to reconstruct the fertility rituals of the cult. The reconstructed rituals — the product of integration with Hermetic theory — are not the original cultic rituals, however, as they are embedded within the Seeker's Hermetic theory.

## Integrating Fertility Magic into Hermetic Theory

A magus may gain Insight into fertility magic by studying an ancient fetish figurine, or a cave painting (see *Cave Painting Galleries*, below). Additional Insights may be gained,

as required, by studying other relics, but a fetish figurine that has been destroyed to extract its vis may not be studied for Insight.

Once the magus has an Insight Lab Text he can begin the process of integration with Hermetic theory, by inventing an effect that deals with birth, pregnancy, or the fertility of women, thereby gaining breakthrough points, as described in the Introduction. Possible Hermetic effects that might be usefully invented include an Intellego Corpus effect that reveals a pregnancy (InCo, base 4) or a Creo Corpus effect that restores a woman's body to her pre-pregnant state (CrCo, base 20). With the storyguide's approval, a non-Hermetic effect, chosen from those below, that utilizes the Range Unborn Child, may be invented during this integration process. However, the Fertility Ritual itself may not be attempted until the appropriate Breakthrough has been achieved.

There are two breakthroughs in fertility magic. The first allows the magus to learn the Arcane Ability Fertility Lore; this is comparatively simple and requires only 15 breakthrough points. The second grants the magus the Minor Hermetic Virtue Fertility Ritual Magic, and is more complex, requiring 35 breakthrough points. There is no need to achieve both breakthroughs, although the Fertility Lore Ability is useful in developing Fertility Rituals.

### Story Seed: Ancient Fetish Figurines

Characters exploring cave systems may find fetishes made by ancient fertility cult practitioners. Such a discovery is the most likely method by which a character can learn of the ancient fertility cult. The exact shapes and forms of the fetishes vary considerably — some are carved from animal bone or antlers, others from stone or wood — but all represent a female figure, usually faceless, and are about the size of a fist. Each fetish figurine contains one pawn of *Creo vis*, but extracting the *vis* destroys the fetish.

Cave paintings (see *Cave Painting Galleries*, below) are also sources of information about the fertility cult.

### Arcane Ability Fertility Lore

This Ability covers the knowledge of fertility, and can be used to determine fertility and blood relationships between characters. The Arcane Ability Fertility Lore is not a supernatural ability, and the determinations are made via a simple visual inspection, which takes about five minutes to perform. If the character wishes to make the inspection surreptitiously, increase the Ease Factors listed here by 3. Note that as the inspections are purely visual, the character cannot make any determinations about an unborn child using this Ability alone.

- A roll of Perception + Fertility Lore against an Ease Factor of 3 indicates whether a character is pregnant and what the *natural* due date is, to within 10% of

### New Target: Unborn Child

The Minor Hermetic Virtue Fertility Ritual Magic allows a magus access to a new Target Unborn Child. This Target is equivalent to Individual for the purposes of calculating a spell level, and it may be used to make an unborn child, from the moment of conception until birth, the target of a spell. The magus must be able to sense the mother to target the unborn child, and the mother's Magic Resistance (if any) protects her unborn child.

the remaining time. So, the less time until the birth, the more accurate the estimate, although if magic has altered the length of the pregnancy the estimate may be erroneous.

- A roll of Perception + Fertility Lore against an Ease Factor of 3 determines whether two characters are related or not. The Ease Factor is increased by 1 for each generation of separation between the characters, and modified by a further +3 if the character wants to determine the exact relationship. For example, to identify that two siblings are related the Ease Factor is 3, and to identify a character's grandparent the Ease Factor is 8 (3, + 2 two generations apart, + 3 exact relationship).
- A roll of Perception + Fertility Lore against an Ease Factor of 12 reveals whether a character (male or female) is fertile; remember that characters who use a Longevity Ritual are not fertile.

Books may be written about the Arcane Ability Fertility Lore and it may be studied, practiced, and taught like any other Ability.

### Hermetic Magic and Mother and Child

An unborn child, carried in the womb, is difficult for Hermetic magic to target as it is not quite a separate individual. Mainstream Hermetic magic can target a baby in the second trimester, and onwards until birth, as a Part of the mother, but targeting a Part of an Individual increases the magnitude of a spell (see *ArM5*, page 112). Thus, the Target Unborn Child allows a maga to effect an unborn baby with lower magnitude spells. In addition, mainstream Hermetic magic cannot usually discriminate at all between mother and child in the first trimester. This is a flaw in Hermetic theory, which is circumvented by the integration of fertility magic.

### Minor Hermetic Virtue: Fertility Ritual Magic

The magus with this Hermetic Virtue has access to the new Target Unborn Child, and can devise Fertility Rituals that are performed during conception to influence the traits that the child is born with.

### New Spells

Some example spells that utilize the Target Unborn Child are printed below. A maga might invent versions of these spells with a Range of Personal to affect her own unborn child, and these spells may be invented during the integration of fertility magic and Hermetic theory.

**MIDWIFE'S EYE**

InCo 5

R: Touch, D: Mom, T: Unborn Child

This spell indicates the general health and sex of an unborn child. A Perception + Fertility Lore roll against an Ease Factor of 3 indicates the expected date of birth.

(Base 4, +1 Touch)

**THE FROZEN WOMB**

MuCo 35

R: Touch, D: Year, T: Unborn Child, Ritual

This Ritual spell freezes the development of an unborn child for a year. The spell does not damage either the child or the mother — although the mother may be seriously inconvenienced by a delayed late-term pregnancy — but both mother and child gain Warping Points due to being under the influence of a constant, high-power mystical effect (see ArM5, page 167).

The spell can be cast at yearly intervals in order to delay a pregnancy for years, or even decades, and versions of this spell with other durations could be used to delay a birth until an astrologically favorable moment.

(Base 10, +1 Touch, +4 Year)

**BLACK ANNE'S KISS**

PeCo 10

R: Touch, D: Mom, T: Unborn Child

This spell wounds an unborn child, causing the fetus to abort. A Stamina stress roll against an Ease Factor of 6 must be made for the mother; if it fails she suffers a Medium Wound.

(Base 5, +1 Touch)

**THE PROMENADE OF CAESAR**

ReCo 15

R: Touch, D: Mom, T: Unborn Child

This spell transports an unborn child instantly out of his mother's womb, to a distance of up to five paces away. This is normally fatal for the child but does not harm the mother — the spell also removes the placenta. To determine whether the child survives, make a Stamina roll against an Ease Factor of 3 + 3 for each month prior to natural birth. For example, if *The Promenade of Caesar* is cast on an eight-month-old fetus the Ease Factor is 6. An unborn child has a -4 penalty to his Stamina.

(Base 10, +1 Touch)

R: Touch, D: Mom, T: Unborn Child

When this ointment is smeared over the belly of a pregnant woman, it wounds her unborn baby, which kills it. If the mother is more than one month pregnant, a Stamina stress roll against an Ease Factor of 6 must be made for her, and if it fails she suffers a Medium Wound. Otherwise, the woman suffers no physical harm.

(Effect: Base 5, +1 Touch; Modifications: None)

**POTION OF CREATION**

CrCo 25

Pen +0, charged item

R: Per, D: Sun, T: Unborn Child

When a fertile woman drinks this potion she is guaranteed to conceive if she has intercourse with a fertile man within a day. If the man is not human (a faerie, for example), then the woman still conceives if a Stamina stress roll against an Ease Factor of 9 is made for her; such a child inherits some traits from his father.

(Effect: Base 15, +2 Sun; Modifications: None)

## New Items

Some example items that utilize the Target Unborn Child are described below. These items may be invented during the integration of fertility magic and Hermetic Theory.

**THE MYSTIC'S FORCEPS**

MuCo 5

Pen +0, 1/day

R: Touch, D: Conc, T: Unborn Child

These forceps are used during birth, and temporarily reduce the size of the baby as it travels down the birth canal. This greatly speeds and eases the birth process, which means that there is less opportunity for disease-causing demons to wound either mother or child. If the forceps are used to assist birth, they guarantee the birth of a live baby, and prevent any injury or disease from befalling either mother or child due to the birth.

(Effect: Base 3, +1 Touch, +1 Conc; Modifications: None)

**BLACK ANNE'S OINTMENT**

PeCo 10

Pen +0, charged item

## The Fertility Ritual

The Fertility Ritual is a special ritual performed during conception. It is similar to the Longevity Ritual: developing the ritual is a Laboratory activity that takes one season, and this produces a Lab Text describing the Fertility Ritual. Any Gifted character can perform a Fertility Ritual for which he has the Lab Text, and the Lab Text is required to conduct the ritual — this is the only benefit of a Fertility Ritual's Laboratory Text.

The first step to devising a Fertility Ritual is to calculate the maximum number of Trait Points of the ritual. The ritual is worth 1 Trait Point for every 10 points or fraction thereof of the magus's *Creo Corpus Lab Total*. The magus may receive a bonus to his *Lab Total* if he has a fertility fetish prepared by the intended mother (see below).

**MAXIMUM TRAIT POINTS: 1 for every 10 points or fraction of *Creo Corpus Lab Total***

Next, the traits that the child should manifest are chosen. Each trait costs a number of Trait Points, and the total number of Trait Points cannot exceed the maximum calculated for the ritual.

TRAIT	TRAIT POINT COST
Major Virtue or Flaw	3
Minor Virtue or Flaw	1
The Gift	3
Specify gender	1
Specify other general features (e.g., red hair, green eyes)	1
Specify precise features (e.g., child's features are those of the king of France)	3

Virtue and Flaw traits are chosen from the list of Virtues and Flaws (ArM5, page 38). Hermetic Virtues and Flaws can be chosen if The Gift is also chosen, but they may not be accessible to the character until after the Arts are opened during apprenticeship (see ArM5, page 106). In any case, Virtues and Flaws may only be chosen that are inherently a part of a

### Example: Fertility Ritual Trait Point Cost

A magus is approached by a noblewoman who wants to commission a Fertility Ritual, so that she may give birth to a son who has Improved Characteristics, is Inspirational, and is Strong Willed. The magus has a *Creo Corpus Lab Total* of 50, and so therefore may invent a ritual with a maximum number of 5 Trait Points. The Trait Point cost of the ritual that the noblewoman desires is: 1 (Improved Characteristics) + 1 (Inspirational) + 1 (Strong Willed) + 1 (a son) = 4. So, the magus can create a ritual to fulfill the commission. Being reflexively devious, the magus secretly adds a Minor Flaw to the ritual: the Minor Personality Flaw Prohibition. He decides that if the son disobeys an instruction by the magus, he is struck by a piercing, migraine headache that lasts for a day; to attempt any complex activity while he has a migraine, a Stamina stress roll against an Ease Factor of 12 must be made. The total Trait Point cost of the ritual is therefore 5 (the maximum that the magus can create), it takes the magus a season to develop the ritual, and 5 pawns of vis must be spent during the performance of the ritual.



### The Maga's Own Child

A maga may create a Fertility Ritual to influence the conception of her own child. In this case, the maximum number of Trait Points for the ritual is equal to 1 for every 5 points, or fraction thereof, of *Creo Corpus Lab Total*. However, this ties the ritual to the maga and it may not be performed for another mother. This bonus only applies to mothers.

character's nature. So, for example, the Minor General Virtue Affinity with Ability is appropriate, but the Minor General Virtue Temporal Influence is not. Social Status Virtues and Flaws are not normally appropriate, but the judgment of the storyguide is the final arbiter as to whether a trait is appropriate or not. Virtues and Flaws detailed

in other *Ars Magica Fifth Edition* supplements may also be taken, with the storyguide's approval.

It takes around half an hour to perform the Fertility Ritual, during which conception takes place. Both of the parents must be fertile (remember that the Longevity Ritual sterilizes a character); the ritual may be per-

formed by one of the parents (if either is Gifted), or it may be performed by a third party, who must be present. Conducting the Fertility Ritual consumes an amount of vis equal to the total Trait Point cost of the desired traits. Usually, the vis consumed is a combination of Creo and Corpus vis but, with the storyguide's permission, other types of vis that match the traits of the child may be substituted. For example, a Fertility Ritual that is intended to grant a child the Major Hermetic Virtue Elemental Magic may use the vis of each element.

Nine months later the child is born and manifests the traits determined by the Fertility Ritual. The ritual is specific to the child, so normally a different ritual must be devised for each performance — although it is possible to repeat the ritual (see below).

## Balancing Traits

The Virtues and Flaws determined by the Fertility Ritual do not need to balance. However, if the child is a player character it is recommended that the troupe allows the child to develop additional Virtues and Flaws as he ages, so that by the time he reaches adulthood the traits do balance. The acquisition of a balancing trait could make a good subject for a story.

## Supernatural Traits

The traits of the parents are irrelevant to the Fertility Ritual, so it is perfectly possible to choose Supernatural Virtues like Giant Blood, or Faerie Blood, even if neither parent manifests these traits. However, the magus can only develop a ritual granting powers that derive from realms he has a connection to. This means that

only a magus with the Faerie Magic Virtue can develop spells that grant Faerie Virtues, like Faerie Blood, and equivalent conditions apply to Divine and Infernal traits. The Gift provides a connection to the Magic realm.

## Fertility Fetishes

Fertility fetishes are small representations of a pregnant woman crafted by a woman under the tutelage of a character who has the Ability Fertility Lore. A single fertility fetish may be used to add a bonus to the magus's Lab Total when devising a Fertility Ritual spell. If a fertility fetish is used, then the Fertility Ritual so developed may only be used for a child of the woman who made the fetish.

**FERTILITY FETISH LAB TOTAL BONUS:**  
 mother's (Dex + Craft Ability) +  
 supervisor's Fertility Lore Ability

A woman must construct her own fertility fetish, but she may use virtually any Craft Ability that produces a physical artifact. The construction of the fertility fetish occupies the woman for a season, during which time she must be supervised by a character with the Arcane Ability Fertility Lore. The creation of a fertility fetish is automatic, but the skill of the mother and the supervisor does affect the bonus that the magus gains. A character only needs to have the Ability Fertility Lore to supervise the construction of fetishes, and may supervise a number of mothers, per season, equal to up to his Leadership Ability Score. This does not distract him from other work during the season.

A fertility fetish can only be made by a fertile woman, and in the process of creating a fertility fetish, the woman imbues it with her fertility, which infuses the fetish with one pawn

## Breakthrough Points from Fetish Creation

A maga who has accomplished the first Fertility Magic breakthrough, and therefore has the Arcane Ability Fertility Lore, may create her own fertility fetish (if she is fertile) as an effect worth 5 breakthrough points towards the second Fertility Magic breakthrough. This does not require any additional Insight, and fetishes created by other characters under her supervision do not generate breakthrough points, nor can they be studied as sources of Insight.

of Creo vis, and prevents her from creating another fetish. The fetish is a permanent Arcane Connection to the mother, and to any children conceived under a Fertility Ritual that utilizes the fetish. Like ancient fetish figurines (see above), which were created for similar reasons, the vis may be extracted from a fertility fetish. This destroys the fetish and renders the woman infertile. However, a fetish may be kept indefinitely, depending on the materials used in construction, and used to assist in inventing Fertility Rituals for a number of children.

## Repeating a Fertility Ritual

A Fertility Ritual can only be successfully repeated, without risk, if the original child dies. A reckless magus may, however, experiment with a repeat performance of a Fertility Ritual, or a magus may discover a Lab Text for a Fertility Ritual and perform it without being aware he is duplicating the actions of another. In either case, the magus immediately gains a

## Minor Supernatural Flaw Corrupt Fertility Ritual

The character's conception was influenced by a Fertility Ritual that had already been used to influence the birth of another. The character is physically similar to his predecessor(s), but not identical; he could even be of a different sex or race — as long as those factors were not determined by the ritual. The character has a sympathetic connection to his predecessor(s), and they to him, which provides a +2 multiplier bonus to the Penetration of spells or magical abilities that they use on each other (ArM5, page 84). The character also suffers a -3 penalty on all social interactions (as others perceive that there is something not quite right with the character), and every year, on his birthday, he gains a Warping Point. Upon the death of the character's predecessor(s) he loses the Corrupt Fertility Ritual Flaw, although any Warping Points suffered remain.

number of Warping Points equal to half the Trait Point cost of the ritual (round up), which may cause him to enter Wizard's Twilight (ArM5, page 88). The new child, when born, has the Minor Supernatural Flaw Corrupt Fertility Ritual (see insert).

## Cave Systems

The principle sources of information about Fertility Magic are ancient fetish figurines that are normally found in multi-chambered caves sys-



tems, once dwelt in by fertility cult members. The caves are often in isolated areas of Mythic Europe, as it is the isolation of the cave systems that has preserved the relics of the ancient Fertility Magic practitioners — more accessible caves had their treasures looted or despoiled over the millennia. To determine whether a character can find the site of a cave in a particular area, make a Perception + Area Lore roll against an Ease Factor of 18. Of course, the character can only find such a site if the storyguide determines that one is in fact in the local area. As the cult was very pervasive most regions of Mythic Europe contain some examples, although obviously not every single cave in Mythic Europe was used by the fertility cult.

**TO FIND A SUITABLE CAVE SYSTEM:**  
Per + Area Lore vs. Ease Factor 18

Although there are variations, dictated by the physical structure of the caves, each cave system used by the ancient fertility cult has a similar layout consisting of a series of rooms connected by passageways. Typical rooms include a cooking chamber, sleeping chambers, a birthing chamber, galleries, a refuse pit, and sometimes a burial chamber. The birthing chamber, where fetish figurines are found, is normally at the back of the cave system. Sometimes, there is an aura in the cave system, which is strongest in the galleries, birthing, and burial chambers. The refuse pit is not normally part of the main cave system but is a nearby ravine or pit into which animal bones and other food scraps were dumped. These scraps have decomposed over the millennia prompting the growth of very lush and fertile dells, which are now the telltale sign of a nearby

## Cave Painting Galleries

Some caves have chambers whose walls are adorned in paintings, drawn in ochre and charcoal, or in some cases scratched directly onto the rock surface. Common representations in these galleries include animals such as deer, ibex, horses, bison, and aurochs; tracings of hands; and abstract diagrams that describe hunting and fertility rituals. These representations were used to teach initiates hunting or fertility skills, and a modern magus can study and learn from these images, too.

A gallery that depicts Fertility Rituals may be investigated by a magus, as a source of the Insight required to integrate fertility magic and Hermetic theory. In addition, a laboratory may be constructed in the gallery, which (in addition to the normal bonuses and penalties for the laboratory) provides a +3 bonus to *Creo Corpus Lab Totals* (including during the development of a Fertility Ritual). Alternatively, the paintings may be removed from the cave and taken to a remote laboratory (including to a laboratory in another gallery cave), which reduces the *Lab Total* bonus to +1. Cave paintings that depict hunting rituals provide a +1 bonus to *Animal Lab Totals*, regardless of where they are installed. A magus may benefit from no more than three different cave paintings, and replications of cave paintings (whether produced via magical or mundane means) cannot be used either as sources of *Insight* or to provide bonuses to a *Lab Total*. This is because the cracks, texture, and nature of the cave surface add resonant meaning to the painting, which is not preserved by a mere image. The cave paintings are more than images: they are cultic artifacts.

A mundane mason can successfully remove a cave painting on a

Dexterity + Craft Masonry stress roll against an *Ease Factor* of 15: a botch means that the mason destroys the painting. Once removed, the painting weighs about 400 pounds. Alternatively, a *Rego Terram* spell similar to *Hand of the Antiquarian* can be used.

### HAND OF THE ANTIQUARIAN

ReTe 15

R: Touch, D: Sun, T: Ind

The magus traces around a section of stone up to one pace in diameter. That section, to a depth of up to an inch thick, floats out of the wall. While the magus touches the stone, it is effectively weightless.

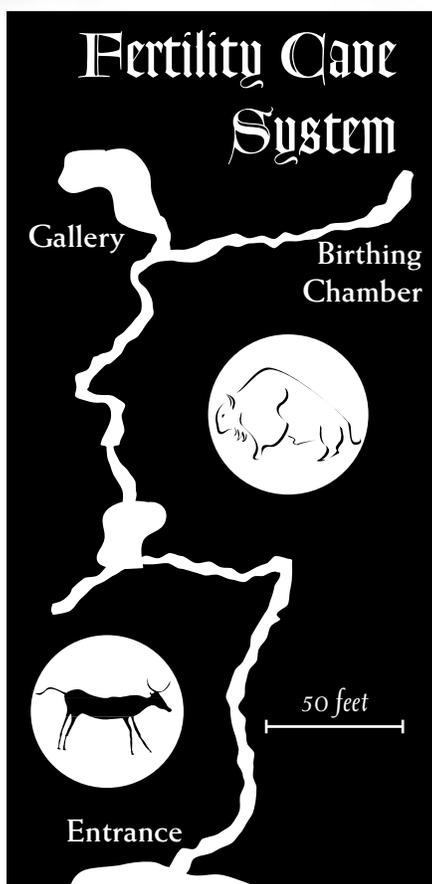
(Base 3, +1 Touch, +2 Sun, +1 Stone)

## Example Cave Systems

Of course, any magus who starts investigating isolated caves searching for ancient fetishes and cave paintings may encounter the current inhabitants — who may not welcome the intrusion. Anyone or anything may be living in a cave: a faerie, an animal, a magical beast, a demon, or nothing at all. Most are totally unaware of any connection between their cave and the practices of an ancient fertility cult. Exactly what is in any particular cave is entirely at the discretion of the storyguide, but below are some examples of what might be found in different, individual caves.

### THE DUERGAR'S CAVE

This cave has a Faerie aura of 3 and is the home of a bad-tempered faerie named Orpee. Orpee is a Duergar, a race of dwarf faeries who are notoriously malicious towards men, and he works in the smithy of



ancient habitation. The super-fertility and the rich diversity of the wildlife in these dells also attracts various nature spirits, and these are frequently found living near the caves once inhabited by the fertility cult.

The ancient fertility magic practitioners were apparently well aware that the fetish figurines they created formed potentially dangerous Arcane Connections to mother and child, and so most figurines were destroyed once the mother passed childbearing age. Other fetish figurines have been destroyed in ignorance to extract the *vis* that they contain. A few, however, do remain — perhaps forgotten when the cave was hastily abandoned due to some threat, or left untouched when a mother died young and without children — and a typical cave system might contain two or three figurines.

## Orpee

**Faerie Might:** 15 (Terram)  
**Characteristics:** Int 0, Per 0, Pre -2, Com -3, Str +4, Sta +3, Dex 0, Qik -1  
**Size:** -1  
**Age:** n/a (40)  
**Confidence Score:** 1 (3)  
**Virtues and Flaws:** None  
**Personality Traits:** Angry +3, Reclusive +3, Intolerant +2  
**Reputations:** Angry faerie 4 (local)  
**Combat:**  
 Bludgeon: Init -1, Attack +6, Defense +4, Damage +6  
**Soak:** +5  
**Fatigue Levels:** n/a  
**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-4), -3 (5-8), -5 (9-12), Incapacitated (13-16)

**Abilities:** Area Lore 2 (iron deposits), Awareness 3 (underground), Brawl 4 (bludgeon), Carouse 1 (with craftsmen), Craft Ironwork 3 (horseshoes), Faerie Lore 2 (Duergar), Living Language 5 (blacksmithing terms), Stealth 4 (underground), Survival 5 (underground)

**Powers:**  
*Iron Glare*, 3 points, Init +10, Terram: Orpee can inflict a Medium Wound on anyone with whom he makes eye contact (for a description of targeting effects with Range Eye see ArM5, page 111).

*Sense of Iron*, 0 points, constant, Terram: Orpee can sense and is aware of precisely where any item made of iron is, within the room where he is.

**Equipment:** leather apron, metal working tools

**Encumbrance:** 0

**Vis:** 1 pawn of Terram in each eye.

**Appearance:** Orpee is a stocky man with muscular arms wearing simple leather clothes and a sooty leather apron that is hung with a number of metal-working tools. In low light his eyes have a warm orange glow, like dying embers.

## Senna

**Faerie Might:** 10 (Herbam)  
**Characteristics:** Int +1, Per +1, Pre +3, Com +2, Str -2, Sta -2, Dex +3, Qik +1  
**Size:** -1  
**Age:** n/a (30)  
**Confidence Score:** 1 (3)  
**Virtues and Flaws:** None  
**Personality Traits:** Jealous +3, Canny +2  
**Reputations:** Forest faerie 4 (local)  
**Combat:**  
 Dodge: Init +1, Attack n/a, Defense +1, Damage n/a  
**Soak:** -1  
**Fatigue Levels:** n/a  
**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-4), -3 (5-8), -5 (9-12), Incapacitated (13-16)  
**Abilities:** Area Lore 3 (plants), Awareness 4 (forests), Charm 3 (men), Folk Ken 2 (travelers), Guile 3 (Orpee), Faerie Lore 2 (forests), Living Language 5

(plants), Profession Herbalist 4 (growing plants), Stealth 7 (forest), Survival 3 (forest)

**Powers:**  
*Into the Trees*, 2 points, Init +10, Herbam: Senna can move inside any living plant that is bigger than she is. She is aware of everything about her, as normal, and cannot be harmed when she is inside a plant, but if the plant is destroyed Senna is too. A plant can be destroyed by being either uprooted, or totally consumed by fire. She can leave the plant again at will.

*Tender to Plants*, 1 point, Init +2, Herbam: Senna may duplicate any Hermetic Creo Herbam spell of magnitude 2 or less.

*Speaker to the Trees*, 0 points, constant, Herbam: Senna can speak with any living plant.

**Equipment:** Dress made of leaves

**Encumbrance:** 0

**Vis:** 2 pawns of Herbam in her hair. This vis can be harvested without harming Senna, although she might not give permission, and it grows back in spring.

**Appearance:** Senna is a small, lithe woman with a green tinge to her skin, and long, olive-green hair, which is twisted together into several thick strands that have the appearance of the roots of a young tree. She wears a dress made of: in spring, tiny leaves interspersed with small white flowers; in summer, of lush green leaves, and in autumn, of rustling yellow and orange leaves. In winter her dress disappears entirely which forces her, slightly embarrassed, to spend the season sleeping inside a tree.

a local faerie lord. Orpee's cave contains two fine galleries; one illustrates a hunting ritual, and the other details

a fertility ritual. Orpee is very fond of his galleries and, when he is not at the smithy, spends his time contem-

plating and carefully protecting the images, which he fears visitors will damage or destroy.

Orpee's wife, a forest sprite named Senna, lives in a fertile dell near the cave, which has a Faerie aura of 2. According to villagers who live in the region near the cave, Seena tends to the plants in the forest and is responsible for planting new trees where old ones have fallen. Seena is jealous of the time that Orpee devotes to his galleries and tries to convince travelers that pass to destroy the galleries while Orpee is at work so he will visit her instead. She is too frightened of Orpee's reaction to attempt this for herself.

The cave contains two ancient fertility fetishes.

### THE CAVE OF LIGHTS

The ceiling of this cave system is filled with tiny lights that are in fact tiny magical insects, which glow in the dark like stars. The configuration of the insects on the cave roof actually matches the star field outside the cave, but the star field inside the cave includes extra stars that are invisible to the naked eye. A character can use the cave roof as an astronomical aid and gains a +3 bonus to all Artes Liberales (astronomy) Ability rolls made while within the cave. In addition, twice a year, the insects that represent the positions of Jupiter and Mars may each be harvested for vis and contain one pawn of Rego vis and Perdo vis, respectively. The exact time that this occurs varies from year to year and is different for each planet, but can be determined with a successful Intelligence + Artes Liberales (astronomy) roll against an Ease Factor of 9. The cave contains two fertility fetishes and a gallery that depicts the fertility ritual.

### THE WORM'S CAVE

A large and ancient worm, almost 100 feet long, inhabits this cave. The local people greatly fear the worm, especially its frequent forays during inclement weather, when it eats stranded stock and even the occasional shepherd. Once, the worm was a sea creature: it swam into the cave during the flood, and became stranded when the waters receded. Since then, the worm has adapted to living far from the sea; in fact, it has thrived by preying on the livestock of local farmers. The worm no longer desires to return to the sea, but when it rains it does remember the enveloping caress of the sea and ventures from the cave so that it can again feel water flowing over its body. The worm has no knowledge of the Order of Hermes or indeed any other human institutions; its only real concern is for itself and its continued survival. The worm's cave contains three ancient fertility fetishes.

### THE FLOODED CAVE

In the millennia since this cave was abandoned by the fertility cult several earthquakes have struck, disrupting the geography of the region. One of the earthquakes caused the diversion of a river, which flooded the cave. Today, the river runs into the cave and drains through a whirlpool in the rear chamber of the cave. The whirlpool, through a network of tunnels, feeds a nearby lake.

A character exploring the flooded cave notices that the water flows, with a rapidly increasing velocity, towards the rear chamber. If he enters the rear chamber he must, each round, make a Strength + Swim roll versus an Ease Factor of 12 to avoid being sucked into the whirlpool. After about ten

minutes of bumping and buffeting through the tunnel network, a character that is sucked into (or voluntarily enters) the whirlpool is expelled into the lake. Every minute a Stamina + Swim roll is made for the character versus an Ease Factor of 12; if the roll is failed the violent buffeting inflicts a +15 injury (see ArM5, page 181). In addition, the character may take damage and drown due to lack of air (see ArM5, page 180). The cave system contains two fertility fetishes that can be retrieved from inside the flooded tunnel network.

### THE BONE CAVE

This cave system has a single entrance formed by a fissure in the side of a mountain, and is currently used as a burial site by a group of villagers that are clustered together in the shadow of the mountain. The villagers have been using the cave for this purpose for centuries, and now the cave is filled with the skeletal corpses of their ancestors. Roman missionaries who adapted their own rituals, to ease the villagers' doubts about conversion, preserved this eccentric burial ritual when they converted the region to Christianity.

The villagers would be very displeased to find a magus interfering with the remains of their ancestors. In addition, the priest, who preaches from a church in the largest village, fears that the presence of the characters will annoy the local saint whose bones are also interred in the cave, and so tries to rally the villagers against the intruders. The saint's bones are housed in a shrine at the back of the cave, in what was once the fertility chamber. The villagers' veneration of the saint has generated a Divine aura of 4 in the cave, and it contains three ancient fertility fetishes.

## The Worm in the Cave

**Magic Might:** 35 (Aquam)

**Characteristics:** Int -1, Per +1, Pre -2, Com -2, Str +5, Sta +7, Dex +3, Qik +3

**Size:** +7

**Age:** n/a (30)

**Confidence Score:** 2 (10)

**Virtues and Flaws:** None

**Personality Traits:** Secretive +3, Selfish +2

**Reputations:** Evil worm that lives in a cave and causes storms 6 (local)

**Combat:**

Grapple in Coils: Init +3, Attack +10, Defense +5, Damage +10

The worm attacks by attempting to envelope and disable prey by grappling them in its coils. This is resolved using the non-lethal combat rules (ArM5, page 174). Once its prey is unconscious the worm swallows it. This action, when complete, kills the prey. It takes half an hour to swallow a Size -1 character, an hour to swallow a Size 0 character, two hours to swallow a Size +1 character, and six hours to swallow a Size +2 character. The worm cannot swallow larger characters and smaller characters are swallowed almost instantly.

**Soak:** +15

**Fatigue Levels:** OK, 0/0/0, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-12), -3 (13-24), -5 (25-36), Incapacitated (37-48)

**Abilities:** Area Lore 5 (ambush sites), Awareness 5 (movement), Brawl 5 (grapple), Hunt 7 (prey lost in a storm), Magic Lore 3 (worms), Living Language 5 (shepherd terminology), Stealth 6 (hiding), Survival 10 (local area), Swim 10 (great depths)

**Powers:**

*Wound the Sky*, 10 points, Init, Aquam:

The worm can call up an immense deluge that causes rain to fall from the sky for a duration of Sun, over an area about ten miles in diameter. It is virtually impossible for a normal individual to move about during the deluge, and for each character out in the open, a Stamina roll against an Ease Factor of 12 is made every ten minutes. If the roll is failed the character loses a Fatigue level, and any character that becomes Unconscious likely drowns. The deluge also causes rivers in the area to flood, which can cause damage that lasts for years.

*Wisdom of Water*, 2 point, Init +2, Aquam: The worm may duplicate any Hermetic Intellego Aquam spell of level 25 or less.

*Reform Body*, 1 point, Init +5, Animal: The worm can reduce a wound

it has sustained by one level each time this power is used: a Medium Wound becomes a Light Wound and so forth. The only way to prevent the worm from repairing a wound is to completely slice through its flesh, by inflicting an Incapacitating Wound and then physically separating the segments before the worm can start to reconnect them — which it does by reducing the Incapacitating Wound to a Heavy Wound.

**Vis:** 10 pawns of Aquam.

**Appearance:** The worm is 100 feet long, 5 feet in diameter, and covered in bony, segmented armor that originally protected the worm from the pressure of the ocean depths. The worm has no visible sense organs, but a gaping, toothless maw. In fact, the worm senses through delicate tendrils along the length of its body, which detect changes in pressure. Although these work well, the worm has a -3 penalty when making rolls to sense stationary targets. The worm attacks by enveloping its prey in its coils, constricting the prey until dead, and then slowly swallowing the body.

## Consequences of Fertility Magic

The introduction of the Fertility Ritual to the Order of Hermes could result in interesting stories, and some possibilities are described below. Exactly which, if any, of these stories come about in your saga should

depend upon the actions of the magi who develop fertility magic, and on the scope of your saga. In any case, there are probably factions within all of the Houses of the Order of Hermes that will want to take advantage of the development of Fertility Ritual spells.

- A Bonisagus Archmage offers a large amount of vis, or a number of valuable books, in return for

being taught the Fertility Ritual Magic Virtue. The Archmage wants to breed a number of Gifted apprentices with interesting combinations of traits.

- A wealthy noble seeks out the magus to commission a Fertility Ritual to assist in the conception of an heir. His brother, who otherwise stands to inherit, learns of this and tries to prevent the

## St. Anna-Marie

St. Anna-Marie was a girl who lived in one of the nearby villages 200 years ago. At the time, the local lord had imposed a harsh tax regime on the villages, which they were unable to meet, due to a poor harvest. Unconvinced, or unmoved, by the villagers' claims of poverty, the lord sent his soldiers into the village to collect the unpaid taxes by force. A tense stand-off between the soldiers and the men of the village was miraculously defused by Anna-Marie's offer to return with the soldiers to the lord's castle so that she could plead for the village. Several weeks passed and then, to the villagers' delight, Anna-Marie returned accompanied by the lord's stonemason. Anna-Marie had prayed for the deliverance of her village on the journey to the castle and, upon her arrival, she not only shamed the lord into granting the village a tax reprieve, but also convinced him to send his stonemason to build a church for the villagers. All the villagers helped with the construction of the church, and it was rapidly completed. Over the next few years, the harvests improved and the village was able to meet the more reasonable tax

demands of the lord, who frequently attended mass at the new church. Anne-Marie spent the rest of her life cleaning the church and cooking for the itinerant priests who preached to the village. Upon her death she was interned in the bone cave, and since then she has been venerated by the villagers.

**Divine Might:** 25

**Characteristics:** Int +5, Per +5, Pre +5, Com +5, Str n/a, Sta n/a, Dex n/a, Qik n/a

**Size:** 0

**Age:** n/a

**Confidence Score:** 2 (10)

**Virtues and Flaws:** None

**Personality Traits:** Pious +3, Attentive +2, Benevolent +2

**Reputations:** Saint 6 (local), Saint 2 (ecclesiastical)

**Combat:** n/a

**Soak:** n/a

**Fatigue Levels:** n/a

**Wound Penalties:** n/a

**Abilities:** None

**Powers:**

*Tomorrow's Bounty*, 2 points, Init +0, Herbam: This power allows the saint to instantly create enough food to feed a large crowd —

often sacks of grain or baked loaves of bread.

*Terrify the Unbeliever*, 2 points, Init +18, Mentem: This curse causes fear in the target, making him terrified of the saint and her power and forcing him to flee. A Brave or equivalent Personality Trait roll of Ease Factor 12 is needed to overcome this terror, which lasts until dawn.

*Acknowledgement of Evil*, 1 point, Init +10, Vim: This power forces any demon within Voice Range of the petitioner to declare his Infernal nature, loudly stating that he is a demon. The Penetration of this miracle (Divine Might – 5) must equal or exceed the demon's Infernal Might for it to be effective.

**Equipment:** white robes

**Encumbrance:** 0 (0)

**Vis:** 0

**Appearance:** St. Anna-Marie does not usually appear to the faithful, but when she does choose to it is as a young girl, aged about 13, dressed in a simple, pure white robe, accompanied by a delicate, but unidentifiable, perfume.

magus from successfully inventing or performing the Fertility Ritual. Obviously, the magus also runs the risk of censure for interference in the affairs of the mundanes.

- A Mercere magus learns the Fertility Ritual Magic Virtue and develops a new Breakthrough to create Creo Animal Fertility Ritual variants, which he uses to create fantastic riding mounts for Redcaps.
- The magi of an isolated covenant learn the Fertility Ritual Magic

Virtue and set about creating and training an array of servants with optimal traits — including guards, assassins, courtesans, spies, and merchants. Depending upon the breadth of their ambitions the magi may have also researched a method of insulating themselves from the Warping effect of repeated performance of a Fertility Ritual. When the plans of the magi are brought to the attention of the broader Order they claim that this veritable army is a defensive contingency only, but

an investigating Quasitor fears that a massive attempt to interfere in the mundane world has been uncovered.

- Rumors of the Order of Hermes' discovery of the Fertility Ritual reaches the Papacy in Rome, and a Dominican monk, carrying a letter of Inquisition, is tasked with investigating the Order of Hermes. The Church is concerned at both the revival of what it sees as pagan birthing rituals, and the prospect of an alarming explosion in the number of Gifted.

## Chapter Five

# Grigori Magic

*The Nephilim were on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of men, and they bore children to them. These were the mighty men that were of old, the men of renown.*

— Genesis 6:4

In the days before the flood, beings of great power walked the earth, sharing wisdom with humanity and taking human women as their wives. The offspring of these unions were the gigantic Nephilim, who are described in detail in *Realms of Power: The Divine*. But who were the fathers of the Nephilim, and what became of their teachings?

Genesis describes these beings only as *b'nai elohim*, the sons of God. Prior to the fifth century, the Church's interpretation was that these beings were angels. Indeed, *b'nai elohim* is only ever used in the Old Testament to refer to angels. This view caused problems for the Church, however. Celsus and Julian the Apostate both used it to attack the philosophical underpinnings of Christianity, arguing that the divine could never take on material form without being defiled. The Church also became concerned about the worship of angels, which St. Paul warned against in his letter to the Colossians. Finally, the idea that angels had fathered children was potentially at odds with Jesus's words in the Gospel of Matthew, where he says, "For in the resurrection they

shall neither marry nor be married, but shall be as the angels of God in heaven." As a result, a different interpretation arose, found first in the *Chronicle* of Julius Africanus. He argued that the "sons of God" to which Genesis referred were the descendants of Seth, the third son of Adam and Eve, who were righteous and godly, while the "daughters of men" were the descendants of Cain, the first murderer. This "Sethite interpretation" found favor with the Church, and in the 13th century it is the orthodox view.

*And it came to pass when the children of men had multiplied that in those days were born*

*unto them beautiful and comely daughters. And the angels, the children of heaven, saw and lusted after them, and said to one another: 'Come, let us choose us wives from among the children of men and beget us children.'*

— I Enoch 6:1-3a

The belief that the fathers of the Nephilim were angels did not simply disappear. This view was supported by a number of texts cited by the early Church Fathers. Some factions, however, held that these non-canonical works were "contaminated by Jews and heretics," and after the Council of Laodicea in 364 AD they were excluded from the Christian canon. (The Council also explicitly condemned the worship of angels as a form of idolatry.) The single passage in Genesis remained the Church's only acknowledgment of the Nephilim, and even it was obscured, as the Greek and Latin versions of the Old Testament described them merely as "giants." Other groups did preserve this knowledge in numerous texts, including the work that came to be known as the *First Book of Enoch*. Allegedly written by the grandfather of Noah, who ascended into Heaven and became the Archangel Metatron, *I Enoch* contains five separate sections dealing with different subjects. The first section, however, called the *Book of the Watchers*, provides considerably more detail about the fathers of the Nephilim than does Genesis. It is

### But the Grigori Were Angels!

Despite the widespread acceptance of the Sethite interpretation in Mythic Europe, the fathers of the Nephilim were in fact angels. This does not mean, however, that orthodox clergy take kindly to magi suggesting that they were anything other than the descendants of Seth. It also means that most post-fifth century Church histories and commentaries do not contain useful information about the celestial nature of the Grigori, making the process of finding their legacy a more daunting task.

explicit in describing them as angels, and it calls this rebellious group the Watchers or, to use the Greek term, the Grigori.

*And all the others together with them took unto themselves wives, and each chose for himself one, and they began to go in unto them and to defile themselves with them, and they taught them charms and enchantments, and the cutting of roots, and made them acquainted with plants... And Azael taught men to make swords, and knives, and shields, and breastplates, and made known to them the metals of the earth and the art of working them, and bracelets, and ornaments, and the use of antimony, and the beautifying of the eyelids, and all kinds of costly stones, and all coloring tinctures. And there arose much godlessness, and they committed fornication, and they were led astray, and became corrupt in all their ways. Semyaza taught enchantments, and root-cuttings, Armaros the resolving of enchantments, Baraqijal taught astrology, Kokabel the constellations, Ezeqel the knowledge of the clouds, Araquel the signs of the earth, Shamsiel the signs of the sun, and Sariel the course of the moon. And as men perished, they cried, and their cry went up to heaven ...*

— I Enoch 7:1–2, 8:1–3

In Enoch's account, the Grigori did far more than father children. They taught their wives arts and sciences; these teachings then spread to the rest of humanity. The Watchers instructed the people in agriculture and astronomy, about stone cutting and blacksmithing, and with this knowledge, humanity thrived. Most importantly, the Watchers taught them the secrets of magic.

Many people were not ready for such power, however, and they used their magic for evil. The students of the Grigori grew powerful and built up great empires. They forgot the ways of God, and they used their powers for sinful and unrighteous pur-

poses. It was also at this time that the gigantic Nephilim, with their insatiable appetites, began to lay waste to the earth. Enoch wrote that the whole world was filled with blood and unrighteousness and that the earth itself cried out because of what the Grigori had done.

These cries did not go unheeded, and the Watchers could not escape God's punishment forever. God instructed Noah to build the ark in preparation for the flood. He stripped the Watchers of their place in Heaven and commanded the Heavenly Host to seize the leaders of the Grigori and bind them until the day of judgment. Some of the Watchers, including their leader Semyaza, rebelled and became demons. When Noah was prepared, God sent the flood to cleanse the earth of the wickedness that had been wrought by Watchers. In the deluge, the evil and unrighteousness spread by the Watchers' students and offspring were washed away. None who knew the secrets of the Grigori survived, and only the pair of righteous Nephilim who stowed away on the Ark were saved. With their leaders bound and their students destroyed, the Grigori and their magic passed from the world of men.

## The Secrets of the Grigori

The precise nature of the magic the Grigori taught to humanity is unknown, but strands of the tradition have influenced Hermetic magic. Indeed, the magic that the Grigori taught their students was not much different from what the Order of Hermes practices. It is this similarity that makes the secrets of the Grigori

so valuable to the Seekers. Each of the chiefs of the Watchers taught mastery over one Technique and two Forms. Those who learned from these leaders were able to blend these Arts together in way that is now lost.

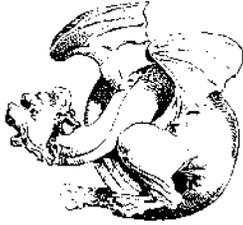
Grigori Magic consists of a number different Supernatural Virtues called Secrets, each named for one of the Grigori who taught it. Araquel's Secret, for example, gives a magus mastery over the Arts of Creo, Corpus, and Terram. The angels and their students, however, made no distinction between these three Arts, using vis for each of them interchangeably. A magus who knew Araquel's Secret could use Terram vis as though it were Creo or Corpus vis, and vice versa. In addition, a magus casting a spell that used one of these Arts that included either of the other two Arts as requisites could ignore these requisites.

The drawback of Grigori Magic since the flood is that it is prone to both Divine and Infernal interference. Anyone who uses vis through any of the Secrets in either a Divine or Infernal aura must roll double the usual number of botch dice for the vis. Similarly, a botch for a spell that uses a Secret to ignore requisites also doubles its normal botch dice in these auras.

Grigori Magic may be intriguing to a magus, as it can form the basis of some intriguing original research, the end result of which might be on par with Bonisagus's discovery of the Parma Magica. If Grigori Magic could be integrated with Hermetic theory, it could potentially break the Limit of Vis.

The first step toward integration is using the Insight gained from Grigori sources to create a non-Hermetic effect as described in the Introduction. This should be something that allows different Arts to be used interchangeably and is a Muto Vim effect. The

following is an example of a spell that could be investigated with Insight into Grigori Magic.



**HARNESSING THE ESSENTIAL POWER (FORM)**

MuVi Gen

R: Touch, D: Mom, T: Ind

You cast this spell as another spell of a level less than this one is cast. The targeted spell, which would normally use vis of any other type, may instead use vis of the specified Form. There are ten versions of *Harnessing The Essential Power*, one for each Hermetic Form. This spell never requires vis, even if its level would normally require it to be cast as a Ritual.

(Base effect, +1 Touch)

A magus may also wish to transform a Grigori Secret from a Supernatural Virtue into a Hermetic Virtue, called a Legacy. This qualifies as a Major Breakthrough, requiring 45 breakthrough points. Again, the appropriate Arts are Muto and Vim. If the magus performing the research actually possesses any of the Secrets as Supernatural Virtues, he gains one extra breakthrough point per season.

Once the Major Breakthrough is reached, the magus may teach others the Virtue, which has had the taint of the Grigori removed from it.

If the magus wishes to break the Limit of Vis, it requires a Hermetic Breakthrough with 60 breakthrough points. Again, if the magus possesses any one of the Grigori Secret or Legacy Virtues, he gains an extra breakthrough point each season of research. If this Breakthrough succeeds, then vis of any Art may be used

for vis of any other Art. Hermetic magic will be forever changed.

**ARAQUIEL'S SECRET**

*Minor, Supernatural (Divine)*

Some say that what the Grigori taught their students was the basis of Hermetic magic. Sadly, as there are no living practitioners of these arts, it is difficult to say with certainty. There are definitely links between the two, however, as this Virtue demonstrates. Araquiel's Secret allows anyone who possesses it and who can use the Arts of Creo, Corpus, and Terram to use vis for any of these Arts interchangeably. When using vis in this way in either a Divine or Infernal aura, however, the wielder must roll double the usual number of botch dice. Araquiel's Secret also allows the possessor to ignore Creo, Corpus, or Terram requisites for any spell that uses another of these three Arts.

**ARAQUIEL'S LEGACY**

*Minor, Hermetic*

Any magus who possess this Virtue may used Creo, Corpus, and Herbam vis interchangeably. Araquiel's Legacy also allows the possessor to ignore Creo, Corpus, or Terram requisites for any spell that uses another of these three Arts.

## Finding the Magic of the Grigori

While much of what the Watchers brought to earth was washed away in the flood, several means to learn their secrets remain. A curious magus has several options for locating the heritage of the Grigori.

## The Chiefs of Ten and their Secrets

The *Book of the Watchers* gives the names of the 19 Grigori "chiefs of ten." Each of these leaders had stewardship over ten other Watchers and could impart one of the Secrets of Grigori Magic. The *Book of the Watchers* only describes the teachings of nine of these leaders. The Arts covered by each of these Watchers' Secrets are as follows.

- ARAQIEL: Creo, Terram, Corpus
- ARMAROS: Rego, Imaginem, Vim
- AZAEI: Perdo, Terram, Imaginem
- BARAQIJAL & KOKABEL: Intellego, Mentem, Imaginem
- EZEQUEEL: Muto, Aquam, Auram
- SARIEL: Perdo, Mentem, Ignem
- SEMYAZA: Creo, Corpus, Herbam
- SHAMSIEL: Rego, Ignem, Vim

The Secrets taught by the other ten leaders are uncertain. Their names, as given in the *Book of Watchers*, are Rameel, Tamlel, Ramlel, Danel, Batarel, Ananel, Zaqiel, Satarel, Turel, and Jomjael.

Each of the Grigori Supernatural Virtues and their associated Hermetic Virtues works the same way, substituting the single Technique and pair of Forms those Virtues cover. The Virtues based on the teachings of Araquiel are provided, below, as templates.

This chapter provides several suggestions of ways that magi might learn the some of the Secrets of the Watchers, but this list is by no means exhaustive. Storyguides are encouraged to invent alternative means of acquiring them, as well as to determine the fates of the "lost" Secrets.

## The Lost Book of the Watchers

While the Church excluded *I Enoch* from its canon, this does not mean that it disappeared entirely. A number of Christian historians continued to consult non-canonical literature, especially in their attempts to document archaic history. Quotations from *I Enoch*, the *Book of Jubilees*, the *Apocalypse of Moses*, and the *Life of Adam* abound in the works of Julius Africanus, Eusebius, and Georgius Syncellus. Historians often saw these works as filling in the details left out by Genesis, and while they cautioned their readers not to read the works in their entirety, they felt no compunction about quoting them, albeit with a heavy dose of their own interpretation.

These histories provide the first step in unlocking the secrets of the Grigori. Although the Grigori are not mentioned by name in Genesis, as we have already seen, the Nephilim are. This passing reference may pique the curiosity of a magus, and although learning more about the fathers of the Nephilim may provide difficult, the Christian chroniclers can provide a starting point. The story of Nephilim is told in greater detail in *I Enoch*, but locating the full account proves difficult. Although commonly cited by early Christian writers, *I Enoch* was lost to Europe in the ninth century. Fragments of it do remain, preserved in the works of early Christian chroniclers. The largest set of quotations may be found in the *Chronography* of Georgius Syncellus, a ninth century Byzantine monk who compiled a history of the world from creation to the reign of Diocletian. Syncellus had access to a fragment of *I Enoch* commonly called the *Book of the Watchers*, and his work contains all of the quo-

## Library Consultation

Tracking down the lost *Book of the Watchers* likely requires a substantial research. Storyguides can give characters a bonus to their Intelligence + Ability rolls to discover a particular fact according to the research rules presented on page 98 of *Covenants*. Troupes looking for a more in-depth treatment for extended fact-based research and library usage may use the following rules. They may be particularly appropriate for Ease Factors over 18.

Characters wishing to answer a single fact-based question may declare that they are spending a season on library consultation. During library consultation a magus can consult a number of books on the relevant ability up to his Intelligence + Artes Liberales per season, getting Quality experience points from each, but only for answering this question. A magus may consult either tractatus or summae. Summae level limits do not apply for the first season for each question. At the end of the season, the magus rolls Intelligence plus the

temporarily boosted Ability against the Ease Factor of the question. Failure indicates that the answer has not yet been found, and the magus may spend future seasons in library consultation, using either the same books or different ones. (Tractatus may be used multiple times.) A botch gives the character the wrong answer. There is no limit to the number of seasons a magus may spend consulting. The temporary experience points go away if the magus spends more than four seasons not consulting, and any other research of any type or lab work makes these experience points go away. A magus may avoid the loss in these two situations by spending a single season preparing a set of library notes. If these notes are reviewed when consultation resumes, the temporary experience points return. Only the magus who prepared them can use the library notes in this way; to everyone else, they are useless. A magus performing library consultation gains Exposure in either Artes Liberales or the Ability in question.

tations from *I Enoch* included in this chapter.

Many of these Alexandrine and Byzantine historians subscribed to Sethite interpretation of Genesis 6:4, and their discussions of the Watchers reflect this. A small group of historians, however, called the Logothete School, drew on a much older set of documents that explicitly discusses the angelic nature of the Grigori, and through the works of these authors, including Leo the Grammarian, the legends of the Watchers were kept alive. The Syriac chroniclers, unlike their Byzantine brethren, also did not cling to the Sethite view. The 12th century chronicle of Michael Syrus,

for example, explicitly affirms the angelic nature of the Watchers and discusses the kingdom they founded, based around Mount Hermon. Thus, despite the best efforts of the Church, the truth about the Grigori persists.

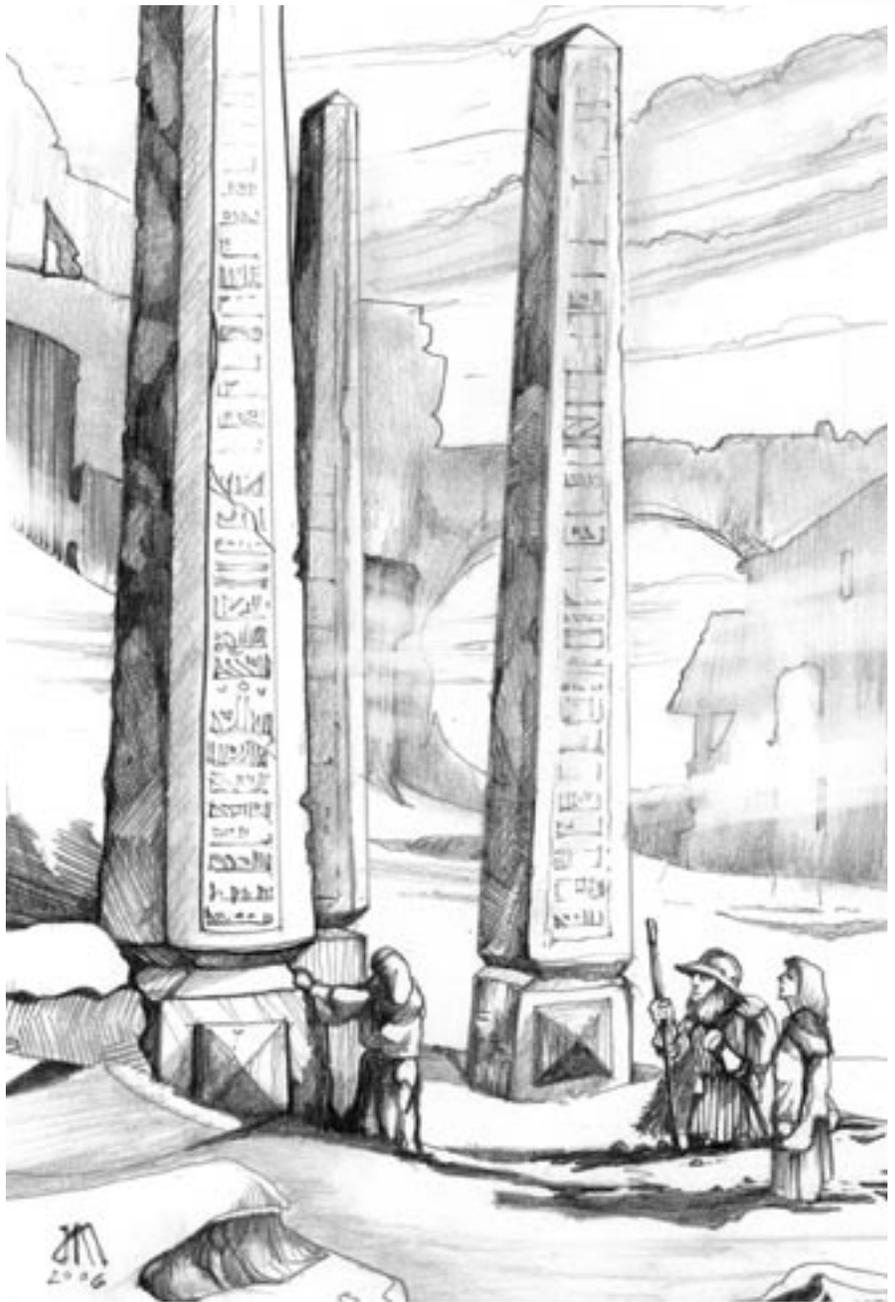
Perhaps the most useful source of information about the Grigori is *The Enigma of the Sons of God*, a work in two books written in the late tenth century by St. Nerius. (See *Realms of Power: The Divine*, page 91 for more on St. Nerius.) The first book contains extensive quotations from the *Book of Watchers*, as well as St. Nerius's observations on the nature and history of the Grigori. Saint Nerius expresses some confusion at the prevalence of

the Sethite interpretation, pointing out the works of the Logothetes and questioning why, if the "sons of God" were merely the descendants of Seth, that their children should be monstrous. (St. Nerius suggested that the prevalence of the Sethite interpretation could be due to demonic influence as the fallen Grigori, now the Dukes of the Deluders, attempted to obscure their own origins.) His book, written in Latin, argues convincingly against the Sethite view and acts as a tractatus on Dominion Lore with Quality 8. Saint Nerius also makes references to a number of topics that he says he will address in the second half of his work. Copies of this first book are common among the libraries of the Order.

The second book contains the only known complete copy of the *Book of the Watchers*. Combined with St. Nerius' marginalia and notes on the nature of Grigori magi, it functions as source of Insight for integrating Grigori Magic with Hermetic theory, as described in the Introduction. This volume also relates many of the legends about relics of the Watchers and their fate, as described in the following sections. This book is substantially harder to find than the first. Only three copies are known to have existed, and while the Great Library at Durenmar used to possess one, it disappeared sometime around the middle of the 12th century. The locations of all three copies are uncertain.

## The Legacy of the Grigori

*In the twenty-ninth jubilee, in the first week, in the beginning thereof Arpachshad took to himself a wife and her name was Rasu'eja, the daughter of Susan, the daughter of Elam, and she bare him a son in the third year in this*



*week, and he called his name Kainam. And the son grew, and his father taught him writing, and he went to seek for himself a place where he might seize for himself a city. And he found a writing which former generations had carved on the rock, and he read what was thereon, and he transcribed it and sinned owing to it, for it contained the teaching of the Watchers in accordance with which they used to observe the omens of the sun and moon and stars in all the signs of heaven.*

— Jubilees 8:1–4

The *Book of the Watchers* is not the only artifact that remains as a testament to the Grigori's teachings. Although their students perished in the flood, some of their works remain.

In the Hebrew Apocrypha, the *Book of Jubilees* describes how Kainam, father of the Chaldeans, found the Stelae of the Watchers, several stone obelisks that contained much of the lost wisdom of the Grigori. It is from

## Finding the Grigori

Finding the locations of these relics and sites to help break the Limit of Vim may be their own adventures. If the troupe desires to focus on the acquisition and use of the knowledge rather than on the search for the relics' locations, simple Ability rolls may suffice to learn where they may be found. The following are suggested Abilities and Ease Factors for use in that search.

EXISTENCE OF *THE ENIGMA OF THE SONS OF GOD*: Order of Hermes Lore, Ease Factor 12

LOCATION OF THE SECOND VOLUME OF *THE ENIGMA OF THE SONS OF GOD*: Order of Hermes Lore, Ease Factor 24

LOCATION OF THE CAPITAL OF THE NEPHILIM: Dominion Lore, Ease Factor 15

LOCATION OF SHAMSIEL'S PRISON: Dominion Lore, Ease Factor 21

LOCATION OF AZAEL'S PRISON: Dominion Lore, Ease Factor 15

Storyguides may wish to use the optional library consultation rules to assist in the characters' research.

these writings that much of the *Book of the Watchers* comes, and they contained far more about the nature of Grigori magic than do the fragments that have survived in Christian chronicles.

Saint Neri's second book gives a full account of this story as well as noting that several legends give the location of Kainam's stela as near Mount Hermon, north of the Sea of Galilee. Even today, he remarks, there are still carved stones to be found there.

Mount Hermon has been a holy site for millennia. The ancient Canaanites used the mountain for

their pagan rituals. The river Jordan has its source in the snow of its upper slopes. At the base of the mountain, near the town of Banias, which the Romans called Caesarea Philippi, Jesus granted to St. Peter the "keys to the kingdom of Heaven." And it was at Mount Hermon that the Watchers descended from Heaven to teach their secrets to the people.

The lower slopes of the mountain are devoid of any Grigori relics, as any that were here have long ago been taken or destroyed. The upper slopes, however, are covered by snow most of the year. It is near the summit that an ancient city of the Nephilim is found. Wishing to be near their fathers, the giants of legend built a great city from massive stones on the northern face of the mountain. Perhaps 700 Nephilim lived here before the flood, but since that time it has been abandoned. Anyone willing to make the treacherous ascent of the northern slope finds the city of the giants empty and foreboding. The city itself is built on a massive scale. The gates of the city stand 20 paces high, and within are stone houses built for giants, with doorways reaching almost three times the height of a man. There are few traces of the Nephilim to be found here, however. The only clue that remains as to its inhabitants lies at the heart of the deserted city. There stand three massive stone obelisks, carved in archaic Hebrew, and they tell the story of the coming of the Grigori and of their teachings.

The obelisks may be treated as a summa on Magic Theory with Level 8 and Quality 6. In addition, for the purposes of integrating any of the Secrets of the Grigori with Hermetic theory, a copy of the inscriptions functions as source of Insight, as described in the Introduction.

These stela have a special connection to the descendants of the

original inhabitants. Anyone with the Blood of the Nephilim Virtue who spends a season studying the stones *in situ* gains the Baraqijal's Secret Supernatural Virtue. Studying copies of the inscriptions does not have this effect, and this is obvious to anyone with Virtue. For more on the Nephilim, see *Realms of Power: The Divine*, pages 16 and 66.

## The Watchers Themselves

*And again the Lord said to Raphael: 'Bind Azael hand and foot, and cast him into the darkness: and make an opening in the desert, which is in Dudael, and cast him therein. And place upon him rough and jagged rocks, and cover him with darkness, and let him abide there forever, and cover his face that he may not see light...'*

— I Enoch 10:4–6

Ambitious magi might seek to cut the relics of the Grigori out of the picture entirely and instead seek their creators as a source of Insight. The *Book of the Watchers* describes how the Grigori were cursed by God and chained to the earth to suffer until the day of judgment. Their leader, Semyaza, was bound "into the valleys of the earth" by the archangel Michael, while one of their chiefs of ten, Azael, was cast into a great pit in the desert and covered with sharp rocks by Raphael. Many of the Grigori fell and became demons. (For more on the demonic Grigori, see *Realms of Power: The Infernal*.) Some, however, accepted their fate and remained Holy Watchers.

## THE SHAMED LEADER

St. Neri's records that the monks of the monastery of St. Jacob on the

slopes of Mount Ararat have a legend that when the flood waters subsided and the Ark came to rest on the mountain, Noah and his family were careful to avoid the northern face, for the Lord warned them away from it. He also writes that stones akin to those found on the slopes of Mount Hermon have been found near Mount Ararat as well. These legends are not without foundation.

When God brought the deluge to wash sin and wickedness from the earth, the students of the Grigori sought refuge from the waters of the flood. Some tried to use their magic to save themselves, but they were powerless in the face of the Divine. Some begged the Grigori to save them, but the Watchers could do nothing. Some took shelter in the city of the Nephilim on Mount Hermon, but as the waters rose, even that mighty peak could not save them. As their students drowned, the chiefs of the Grigori were imprisoned by the Heavenly Host. In desperation, Shamsiel led his followers to Mount Ararat. He hoped that this great mountain would serve them better than Mount Hermon had, but as the rains continued to fall, they retreated further and further up the slopes. Shamsiel could only watch as the people and the remains of the Watchers gave up hope. Finally, on the fortieth day of rain, the Archangel Michael appeared to imprison the remaining Grigori. Resigned to his fate, Shamsiel appealed to God for mercy. Shamsiel knew that he had sinned and that he must be punished, but he begged forgiveness for those who had not sinned as he had. Let those who only took human wives but did not teach them magic continue to serve the Lord, Shamsiel pleaded. God relented. Only those of the Grigori who had taught magic to humanity would be imprisoned. The rest would continue to serve Heaven,



but not as they were before. They were cast out of Heaven, but they did not fall. As the flood waters covered the mighty peak, the Watchers were transformed, Shamsiel was cast down into deep, and the Grigori passed into legend.

St. Jacob was the fourth century bishop of Nisibus who sought to climb Mount Ararat to find the remains of Noah's Ark. He tried several times to climb the northern slope, but each time his efforts were thwarted by storms. Finally, a pair of angels appeared before him, commanding him to cease his efforts but bringing him a plank from the Ark. Giving thanks to God for this miracle, he founded the monastery that now bears his name.

Anyone who wishes to retrace St. Jacob's steps had best be ready for the worst. The upper slopes of Mount Ararat are composed primarily

of loose rocks and ice, and slides are quite common. Thunderstorms also occur frequently, and climbers who find themselves caught in one may be in real danger of being hit by lightning if they are unprotected. It is as though the mountain itself conspires against those who seek reach its peak and unlock its secrets.

Near the peak of Mount Ararat, at the top of the northern ridge, stands a single tall stone. Carved into the face of it are the True Names of the leaders of the Holy Watchers, those Grigori who did not fall, headed by Shamsiel's. Anyone who calls upon the True Name of Shamsiel within five paces of the obelisk is transported to the regio that contains the imprisoned Watcher.

The regio has a single level with a Divine aura strength of 5, and it covers the entire northern face of the mountain, all the way down to the

## Shamsiel, Holy Watcher

**Divine Might:** 30 (Vim)

**Characteristics:** Int +3, Per +3, Pre +3, Com +3, Str -1, Sta 0, Dex 0, Qik +1

**Size:** +3

**Age:** n/a (70)

**Confidence Score:** 2 (10)

**Personality Traits:** Love of God +5, Patient +3, Shameful +3

**Reputations:** Rebellious Angel 4 (among Christian and Jewish Theologians), Teacher of Secrets 3 (among Christian and Jewish Theologians)

### Combat:

**Fist:** Init 0, Attack 0, Defense 0, Damage 0

**Soak:** +0

**Fatigue Levels:** OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-8), -3 (9-16), -5 (17-24), Inc. (25-32)

**Abilities:** Artes Liberales 6 (astronomy), Concentration 8 (prayer), Divine Lore 7 (angels), Magic Lore 7 (traditions), Penetration 4 (humans) Philosophiae 8 (ceremonial magic), Teaching 8 (magic), Theology 6 (angels)

### Powers:

**Enfolding**, 2 or 10 points, +10, Vim: When the pious are in danger or torment, Shamsiel may grant them comfort, imparting a moment of peace and mercy. This power renders the target's soul wholly safe and protected for a short time. While Enfolding, the target's soul (and mind) may not be targeted by any supernatural power of any kind. This power only lasts for a few scant moments, but for the target it is timeless and can seem to stretch to a lifetime. Shamsiel may also Enfold a person's body (costing 10 Might points), rendering him completely invulnerable to magic, pain, damage, fatigue,

wounds, or death, although this power only lasts for a very short period of time (no longer than one combat round). This power is most often used on a member of the faithful who is about to be martyred or suffer terribly.

**Holy Magic**, 1 or more points, +0, by effect: Shamsiel can duplicate any effect of Hermetic or holy magic, at a cost of 1 Might Point for every two magnitudes of the effect. There is no limit, other than his remaining Might Pool, on the number of points he can spend on a single effect. This includes Ritual effects, for which he needs neither vis nor long periods of time.

**Grant Secret**, 4 points, +0, Mentem: Shamsiel may use this power to grant the Virtue Shamsiel's Secret. The target must remain with Shamsiel for a full year to receive the Virtue.

**Equipment:** None

**Encumbrance:** 0 (0)

**Vis:** Six pawns of Vim in his skull.

**Appearance:** Shamsiel appears as a gigantic but frail old man, with a wizened face and a shaven head. He dresses in sackcloth and rarely raises his eyes to look at someone when he speaks to them. He is deeply shamed by the evil that has been wrought through his teachings, and he has resigned himself to the punishment he will receive on the day of judgment.

Despite his current state, Shamsiel is still an angel, with all the traits described on page 18 of *Realms of Power: The Divine*. As a Grigori, he has been locked permanently in his Mantle, and due to his imprisonment, he has lost his *Envisioning Power*.

## Timbers of the Ark

Mount Ararat is the final resting place of Noah's Ark, and relic-seeking magi who reach the summit are not disappointed. The remains of the Ark are found just beyond the entrance to Shamsiel's regio. A single timber is a relic containing 2 Faith Points. Although more than a of score of timbers are found in the area, if anyone tries to take more than one, the angel Nuriel, angel of hailstorms and a captain in the Heavenly Host, appears and forbids him from doing so. If he persists, Nuriel attempts to drive him off.

village of Ahora. Shamsiel's prison is a huge gorge almost two miles deep and more than a mile wide, and within this dark, rocky recess dwells one of the chiefs of the Watchers. Shamsiel is a mere shell of his former self, and although others may exit the regio with ease, Shamsiel is unable to leave at all.

Despite his imprisonment, Shamsiel bears no hatred toward the Lord or his servants. With the grace that only an angel can muster, he has accepted his punishment as the bitter fruit of his misguided labors. He believes that in the last days he will be cast into the lake of fire, but he knows that he deserves it for what he has done. As a result, the prideful Watcher has become an almost shameful creature. He is still a master of magic, however, and he is willing to teach his secrets to anyone who promises to use them for holy purposes. When he was cast down into the gorge, the Lord told him that one day the world would be ready for secrets of magic, and that any pious magus who sought out Shamsiel's prison was worthy of his teachings. Any magus

who spends a full year in the regio and convinces Shamsiel to teach him not only acquires Insight he may use to integrate Grigori Magic with Hermetic theory, he also gains the Supernatural Virtue Shamsiel's Gift, as per Shamsiel's *Grant Secret* Power. He also gains the Pious Minor Personality Flaw if he did not already have it.

### THE FALLEN WATCHER

*Then he shall take the two goats, and set them before The Lord at the door of the tent of meeting, and Aaron shall cast lots upon the two goats, one lot for The Lord and the other lot for Azael. And Aaron shall present the goat on which the lot fell for The Lord, and offer it as a sin offering, but the goat on which the lot fell for Azael shall be presented alive before The Lord to make atonement over it, that it may be sent away into the wilderness to Azael.*

— Leviticus 16:7–10

Three miles to the southeast of Jerusalem, on the edge of the desert, lies Beth Hadudo, the rocky crag down which the Jews pushed the "goat for Azael" each year on the Day of Atonement, as Leviticus directed. As St. Nerijs explains, the Hebrew word *hadudo*, meaning "rocky peak," comes from the same root word as *dudael*, which means "rocky place of the Lord." Here, on the edge of the desert, buried with sharp rocks under the mountain, lies Azael, bound until the day of judgment. Unlike Shamsiel and unknown to any mortal writers, he did not take his punishment lightly, nor did he accept his imprisonment as part of God's plan. Azael, unlike Shamsiel, completed his fall, and now broods within his prison, seeking vengeance on the Lord and Creation.

The regio is centered on the southeastern edge of Beth Hadudo and has a single level with an Infernal

## Azael, Fallen Watcher

**Order:** Duke of Deluders (Watchers)

**Infernal Might:** 40 (Corpus)

**Characteristics:** Int +2, Per 0, Pre -1, Com +2, Str +4, Sta +4, Dex +3, Qik +5

**Size:** +3

**Age:** n/a (35)

**Confidence Score:** 4 (17)

**Virtues and Flaws:** Good Teacher, Puissant Guile

**Personality Traits:** Hate of God +5, Destructive +3, Credible +3, Sly +2

**Reputations:** Rebellious Angel 4 (among Christian and Jewish Theologians), Teacher of Secrets 2 (among Christian and Jewish Theologians)

**Combat:**

Broken Sword: Init +5, Attack +10, Defense +10, Damage +5 (The sword was broken in his battle with Raphael, but Azael retains it anyway.)

**Soak:** +10

**Fatigue Levels:** OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1–8), -3 (9–16), -5 (17–24), Incapacitated (25–32)

**Abilities:** Athletics 6 (endurance), Awareness 5 (battle), Craft Weapon 7 (swords), Guile 7+2 (magi), Infernal Lore 6 (hierarchies), Magic Lore 4 (charms), Single Weapon 6 (sword), Teaching 5 (crafts), Theology 6 (angels)

**Weakness:** Ordering

**Powers:**

*Grant Secret*, 4 points, Init +0, Mentem: Azael may use this Power to grant the Virtue Azael's Secret. The target must remain with Azael for a full year to receive the Virtue. Any use of this Power includes the effects of Corrupted Knowledge as well. Unlike other Grigori Secrets, this is tied to the Infernal realm.

*The Wordless Conversation*, 0 points, Init 0, Mentem: See *Realms of Power: The Infernal*, Chapter 6.

*Corrupted Knowledge*, 2 points, Init -3, Mentem: See *Realms of Power: The Infernal*, Chapter 6.

*Coagulation*, 4 points, Init -1, Corpus: See *Realms of Power: The Infernal*, Chapter 4.

*Obsession*, 1 to 3 points, Init -5, Vim: Arrogance. See *Realms of Power: The Infernal*, Chapter 4.

*Delusion*, 1 or 5 points, Init +3, Imaginem: See *Realms of Power: The Infernal*, Chapter 4.

*Duplicate the Magi's Destruction*, variable points, Init +1, variable Form: See *Realms of Power: The Infernal*, Chapter 4.

**Equipment:** None

**Encumbrance:** 0 (0)

**Vis:** Eight pawns of Perdo in the sword.

**Appearance:** Like all the fallen Grigori, Azael is solid black and taller than a giant. No details can be made out other than the hundreds of eyes that cover his featureless skin. He is eternally silent, communicating directly into the minds of his pupils.

strength of 3. The simplest way to find it is to release a goat from the top of the peak and drive it into the desert. Azael is unable to resist such an offering, and he draws the goat into the regio to consume it. The entrance

to the regio then becomes apparent for several minutes. Once detected, the regio can be entered and exited at will. Azael, however, is entirely unable to leave, as he is held here by the will of God.

The inside of the regio looks much the like the outside: a rocky crag; a dry, dusty atmosphere; and deep shadows that give little relief from the cruel sun. These unpleasant traits are amplified within the regio, and the landscape is even less welcoming. The bones of thousands of goats are strewn about, and everything is stained by the soot from Azael's gigantic forge, which runs night and day. He labors endlessly at it, crafting weapons of every shape and description.

Azael is eager to teach any magus who penetrates this regio and spends a full year there the Supernatural Virtue Azael's Secret, provided that the magus promises Azael that he will use it to spread sin and wickedness. The character also gains the Corrupted Abilities Supernatural Flaw (see *Realms of Power: The Infernal*, page 87).

### THE REMAINS OF THE WATCHERS

The locations of the other bound Holy Watchers are unknown, and the *Book of the Watchers* gives no clue as to

the places of their imprisonment. Not all are bound, however. As *Realms of Power: The Divine* describes on page 26, some of the Grigori still walk the earth, teaching holy wisdom, though they are no longer part of the Heavenly Host. These are the Watchers saved by Shamsiel during the flood. They could never teach the Secrets of the Grigori, and they cannot do so now. They do know of the city of the Nephilim and of Shamsiel's prison, and if they believe that a magus is worthy of this knowledge, they impart it to him. It was one of these Watchers that inspired St. Nerijs to write his book, and more than one of them as been known to leave a copy of the first volume where a pious magus will find it. Although they have little to do with the world today, the Grigori are still watching.



# Heron of Alexandria's

*[T]he ancients also describe as mechanicians the wonder-workers, of whom some work by means of pneumatics, as Heron in his Pneumatica, some by using strings and ropes, thinking to imitate the movements of living things, as Heron in his Automata and Balancings, ... or by using water to tell the time, as Heron in his Hydria, which appears to have affinities with the science of sundials.*

— Pappus, Book VIII  
Mathematical Collection

Throughout its history, Alexandria has been the crossroads of the eastern Mediterranean. For centuries, the Royal Museum and Library saw scholars from different cultures meet to exchange teaching and knowledge. Heron of Alexandria, who lived there in the first century AD, wrote extensively on mathematics, physics, pneumatics, and mechanics. His studies of metaphysics allowed him to derive certain principles underlying Neo-Platonic theory, which he shared with his best pupils. This led to the formation of a small order of mechanic-magicians, historically known as the Mechanicians, or wonder-workers of Heron.

According to Heron, all mechanical devices possess both a theoretical and a manual part, the theoretical part being composed of the necessary geometry, arithmetic, astronomy, and physics required to design it, and the manual component being the metalwork, architecture, carpentry, or painting necessary to build it.

The Mechanicians infused mechanical devices with wondrous abilities through the marriage of these two parts. Among the most famous of these "mechanica" were an exquisite singing nightingale belonging Justinian the Great, and an automated puppet show which portrayed the lives of gods and men, fabricated by Heron himself.

The Mechanicians spread throughout the eastern Empire but the majority of them remained in Alexandria, taking advantage of its Library and Museum. They remained a rarity, as their magic required both considerable funds and a prohibitively high level of education. As Christianity grew in power, the Neo-Platonic scholars who formed the group's core practitioners became the targets of persecution that further reduced their numbers. The Mechanicians died out sometime during the fifth century. Theon and his daughter Hypatia, both prominent figures during the Library of Alexandria's final years, were among the last known members.

Much of their knowledge was lost during the fourth century when the Byzantine Empire suppressed Heron's works as a pagan heresy. Ironically, the Church subsequently embraced Heron's surviving works centuries later, just as it did those of Aristotle and many other ancient philosophers. This allowed many of his works to survive, preserving some of the Mechanicians' lore.

## Adding to the Library

Heron's secrets are unknown to the Order of Hermes large. If magi think of him at all, they assume that Heron's works are mundane philosophical treatises and that rumor of his magical constructs are just that — rumor. Magi with access to uncorrupted copies of Heron's texts can use them to rediscover his secrets and incorporate them into Hermetic theory. Troupes not wishing to include mechanica in their game may still use his texts in stories, as Heron's teachings played an important part in medieval learning.

## Books

Heron's writings are useful *summae* and *tractatus* on the *Artes Liberales* and *Philosophiae*, particularly on the principles of geometry, astronomy, and mathematics. Few scribes transcribing the ancient scrolls possessed the *Supernatural Virtue Mechanica* of Heron, however, which rendered these copies worthless for researching mechanica (see below).

Several other Neo-Platonic writers such as Apollonius and Theon were Mechanicians of Heron, and their works might also contain clues

that help integrate Heron's teachings into Hermetic theory.

## Relics of Empire

Mechanica were always a rarity, but discovering one in the 13th century is not impossible, as they have considerable value as art objects. The practice died out nearly a thousand years ago and the majority of mechanica are even older, making the likelihood of any mechanica still being in working order very small. Merchants or scholars might try to sell a broken one to a covenant as a curiosity. While repairing such devices is impossible without the *Mechanica of Heron Virtue*, study reveals that these items possess an intricate magic that hints of new potentials in Hermetic theory.

## House Politics

Several Houses might be very interested in rediscovering Heron's techniques and incorporating them into Hermetic theory. Naturally, the Bonisagus would be fascinated with the possibilities — especially the creation of sentient magical devices. The magus discovering a way to imbue an item with intelligence as Heron's followers did would reap instant fame.

House Verditius maintains a virtual stranglehold on the creation of automata and complex magical devices in the Order. Heron's mechanica would be of great interest to them, both to preserve their monopoly and to incorporate his techniques into their own repertoire. A method of producing devices with less *vis* would be a godsend to the House just as devices with a mutable nature would be a dire threat. Heron's methods for creating magical items and automata

are unrelated to those used by the House (*Houses of Hermes: Mysteries*, page 128). Combining the two traditions may prove fruitful — or be utterly impossible.

The military possibilities of mechanica are not lost on House Tremere. Heron's devices are supremely versatile, possessing an otherwise unknown flexibility. Such properties make them very useful for supporting extended operations.

## Heron's Art: Mechanica

A new Major Supernatural Virtue, *Mechanica of Heron*, represents the magical techniques described in this chapter. A surviving practitioner of this discipline could teach it to a Gifted character using the rules for learning Supernatural Abilities (see *ArM5*, page 166). Since any magus must subtract his Art scores from the Study Total, any magi seeking to use these techniques would be wiser to attempt integrating Heron's mechanical principles into Hermetic theory instead.

## Integrating Heron's Mechanica into Hermetic Theory

A magus attempting to incorporate the underlying principles of Heron's *Mechanica* into Hermetic theory requires a breakthrough in Hermetic theory (see the Introduction). Integrating Heron's *Mechanica* requires the following two suggested Breakthroughs: *Mutable Device* and *Awakened Device*.

## Ability Mechanica of Heron

Knowledge of what mechanica are, how to construct them, and how to use them. Primarily used in the laboratory to construct mechanica (see above).

**Specialties:** Inventing Mechanica, Constructing Anima, working with a particular material. (Supernatural)

Before starting, the magus must obtain uncorrupted versions of Heron's texts and working mechanica. Studying these provides the magus with Insight and provides a one-time bonus to the magus's Lab Total when inventing a Hermetic device that mimics the effects of either a studied mechanica or a mechanica described in one of Heron's texts. *Mechanica* provide a bonus equal to the magnitude of the device's effect. Uncorrupted texts provide a bonus equal to their Level or Quality (whichever is lower) for inventing a device described in the text. Broken mechanica do not provide Insight. An anima may provide several instances of Insight (one for each of its effects) or serve as a Teacher (see the Introduction) at the storyguide's discretion.

## UNDERSTANDING MECHANICA

A magus may wish to use a mechanica as well as study it. The magus spends one season in the laboratory investigating the device as per the *Investigating Enchantments* rules (*ArM5*, page 100). If the study total generated exceeds the level of the effect in the device, the magus understands the device sufficiently to use the device in addition to it possibly providing the researcher with Insight.

# Major Supernatural Virtue: Mechanica of Heron

Heron's disciples used this Virtue to create and animate magical-mechanical devices called mechanica. The character with this Virtue must have The Gift and possess a Virtue that allows access to Academic Abilities. He begins with a score of 1 in the Ability Mechanica of Heron. The Ability can be improved by study, practice, or teaching. Mechanica can simulate any *Creo*, *Rego*, *Perdo*, or *Muto* effect on *Auram*, *Aquam*, *Ignem*, *Mentem*, or *Terram*. Ordinary mechanica may not have more than one effect, but awakened mechanica (see below) may have several.

Creating a mechanica requires a season or more of work in a laboratory after which the Mechanician matches his Intelligence + Mechanica of Heron Ability against a Mechanica Creation Level of (3 x the number of magnitudes of effect in the device). Mechanicians may also add the lower of the *Philosophiae* or *Artes Liberales* abilities to the total. They may also receive benefits for *Inventive Genius*, and make use of *Arcane Experimentation* (see ArM5, pages 107–109). Frequency of use, *Penetration*, triggers, and conditions (see ArM5, pages 97–98) can be used to modify the imbued effect and also affect its final magnitude. Mechanica are normally human-sized or larger. Making one small enough to be easily carried increases the Mechanica Creation Level by 3, or by 6 if the item is small enough to hold in one hand. The Mechanica Creation Level decreases by 3 if the device is wagon or boat-sized. Mechanica effects that require additional time to employ reduce the Mechanica Creation Level by 3. (These take 15 minutes per mag-

nitude of effect to employ as per the Ceremonial Casting rules on ArM5, page 83.) These reductions can never reduce the Creation Level below 3. If the total exceeds the Mechanica Creation Level, the character has successfully created the item. Failure (due to experimentation, for example) indicates that time and half the materials are lost. Auras affect mechanica and their construction as per magical devices (see ArM5, page 187).

**CONSTRUCT MECHANICA OF HERON**  
TOTAL: Intelligence + Mechanica of Heron Ability + (lower of *Philosophiae* or *Artes Liberales*) + aura

MECHANICA CREATION LEVEL: (3 x Magnitude of Imbued Effect) + size factor – ease of use

CREATING MECHANICA COST: 1 Mythic Pound per 3 points of Mechanica Creation Level

MECHANICA CREATION LEVEL MODIFIERS:

MODIFIER	EFFECT
Wagon- or boat-sized	–3
Easily carried	+3
Hand-sized	+6
Additional time to employ	–3

Mechanica do not require *vis* to construct, and are not able to replicate spells that require *vis* or have a range greater than *Voice*. Mechanica cost one Mythic Pound per three Mechanica Creation Levels. A Mechanician can create exactly one mechanica in a season; if his total

does not exceed the level required for a device, he cannot construct it at all.

One of the advantages of mechanica is their flexibility. With a week's study, a Mechanician can alter a mechanica's effect so long as it uses the same Form and Technique originally contained in the device. The new level of spell or effect cannot be higher than the existing one (including modifications for range, charges, or use). Changing the device's function costs the Mechanician one Mythic Pound to attempt and requires a successful Intelligence + Mechanica of Heron roll against an Ease Factor equal to the creation level of the new item. If the roll fails, the device is unaffected but the money and time are lost. A botch destroys the device.

ALTER MECHANICA: Intelligence + Mechanica of Heron Ability + (lower of *Philosophiae* or *Artes Liberales*) + aura + stress die vs. Ease Factor

EASE FACTOR: (3 x Magnitude of New Imbued Effect) + size factor – ease of use

Exquisitely sophisticated, *intelligent* devices are possible, such as Justinian's Nightingale or the Brass Mule of Saris. This requires awakening the inner nature, the *anima*, inherent in a mechanica. The item in question must be a simulacrum of a living creature; doing otherwise violates the Neoplatonic ideals used by Mechanicians, producing a lifeless mechanica.

To construct a simulacrum of an animal, first choose a species, then consult the Size Example Table to

*continued on next page*

# Major Supernatural Virtue: Mechanica of Heron, Continued

*continued from previous page*

determine its Size (ArM5, page 192). Next, choose a material for construction using the Material Table (ArM5, page 97). These factors determine the anima's Magic Might score. When designing a simulacrum, the Mechanician may add a number of points to the Magic Might equal to the lower of his Philosophiae or Artes Liberales Abilities. The material cost of creating the device and attempting to awaken its anima is a number of Mythic Pounds equal to its Magic Might.

**ANIMA'S MAGIC MIGHT: Size + Material Base Points + (lower of Philosophiae or Artes Liberales)**

**CONSTRUCT SIMULACRA COST: 1 Mythic Pound per point of Magic Might**

Magic Might determines the construction total needed to construct it. Since this is a magical creation, Magic Might is also the automaton's Magic Resistance. The Mechanician can construct a number of Magic Might points per season equal to his Mechanica of Heron Ability + Intelligence.

Once the simulacrum is constructed, the Mechanician compares his Intelligence and Mechanica of Heron Ability plus the lower of his Philosophiae or Artes Liberales Abilities to an Awaken Anima Level

of 9 plus the magnitude of the device's potential Magical Might. As with Mechanica, a lab is required and auras affect the process. If the total is insufficient, the Mechanician may continue to work for another season, adding a cumulative +1 bonus to his total for each further season. The anima is awakened when the Mechanician's total in a season exceeds the Awaken Anima Level. If the work is interrupted, the device is ruined.

**AWAKEN ANIMA TOTAL: Intelligence + Mechanica of Heron Ability + (lower of Philosophiae or Artes Liberales) + Aura**

**AWAKEN ANIMA LEVEL: 9 + Magnitude of Anima's Magic Might**

Once the anima awakens, it is a sentient being and possesses mental and physical traits based on whatever creature it emulates. A number of points equal to the magnitude of its Magic Might may be used to modify these traits as per character creation ArM5, page 30. If the base creature does not possess Intelligence, it gains Intelligence +0. At least one Personality Trait is gained based on the form or material of the anima's body (see ArM5, page 110) as part of the new creature's personality — these cost nothing and range from -3 to +3. For example, a golden owl might have the Wise or Greedy Personality Traits. Once awakened,

the anima can learn Abilities, including languages, as per the rules for training and instruction (ArM5, page 163–166).

Anima are not capable of movement or speech on their own and must have these abilities instilled as constant effects. A number of effects can be instilled in a simulacrum equal to the limits dictated by the Material and Size Table (based on the equivalent size) in ArM5, page 97. Naturally, the effect must be logical and the simulacrum capable of carrying it out. For example, a turtle makes a poor runner and a fish could not fly. The imbued locomotion powers for any sentient mechanica will in practice be a Rego Terram effect of level 20 or 25 (base = 2 or 3, +2 metal, +1 concentration, +5 self-concentrating, +10 unlimited uses) depending on whether the movement is considered "unnatural" or "highly unnatural." As such, they generally have a level of 12 or 15. Powers may be drawn from those used by automata in *Houses of Hermes: Mystery Cults*, page 129. These powers are invested according to the rules for investing a single power in a non-sentient mechanica, above.

The anima are often bound their creator as a part of their construction and have a Loyal +3 Personality Trait, but this is not required. Most feel gratitude for their awakening and happily serve their creator. Anima are not subject to fatigue. Anima cannot be made into familiars.

### Major Breakthrough: Mutable Device

A mutable item is created like a Lesser Enchanted Device with the new Mutable Device property adding +10 to the device's level of effect. If applicable, the Lab Total gains bonuses from the item's shape and material (see ArM5, page 110). Any magus with the Craft Mutable Device Virtue can subsequently alter the device's enchantment at need. With a week's work in the laboratory and the expenditure of a pawn of Vim vis, he can alter the device's invested effect to another one having the same Form and Technique. Any modifications such as conditions or uses per day may also be changed so long as the final level of effect remains the same or lower (including the +10 for the Mutable Device property). For example, a wand instilled with *Heat of the Searing Forge*, used continually, could be altered to one containing *Flash of the Scarlet Flames*, usable 12 times per day with a +5 Penetration.

TO INTEGRATE MUTABLE DEVICE INTO HERMETIC THEORY:  
Suggested accumulated breakthrough points > 45

STUDY MECHANICA: Intellego Vim Lab Total + stress die vs. device spell or effect level

This study is performed concurrently with the first season spent studying a mechanica.

#### INTEGRATION PROCESS

Once an Insight Lab Text is created, the magus can begin the process

of integration with Hermetic theory by devising enchanted items which Hermetically duplicate the mechanica's effects. Though a magus cannot create an Awakened Device prior to making the requisite Breakthrough, duplicating the functions of mechanica (which need not be awakened devices) are acceptable sources of breakthrough points for this.

Incorporating the Mechanics' ability to build enchanted devices without vis breaks the Lesser Limit of Creation (ArM5, page 80), requiring a Hermetic Breakthrough to achieve.

## Seeking Heron's Legacy

The easiest way to recover Heron's legacy is through recovering surviving written works and devices. Examination of mechanica reveals clues as to who fabricated the device and where. Libraries with corrupted copies of Heron's works may know about the original copies. Armed with these hints, a determined magus can begin his quest for Heron's lost magic.

### The Writings

Many of Heron's writings survived into the 13th century, although the scholars attribute many to Euclid or Ptolemy. The examples below provide suggested Levels for Summae, but Qualities depend on a given book's condition. All uncorrupted versions of these texts are in Greek. Texts translated into Arabic and their latter-day Latin translations are uniformly corrupt.

*Automata* (Moving Itself) describes the construction of miracles (thau-

### Minor Hermetic Virtue: Craft Mutable Device

A magus must learn the special Hermetic Virtue Craft Mutable Device before he can create items with the property Mutable Device" described above. This Virtue can be Initiated as part of a Mystery, or taught to apprentices during training. A second breakthrough, also requiring 45 breakthrough points, removes the need for the Virtue, as noted in the Introduction.

### Major Breakthrough: Awakened Device

If the researcher has not already discovered Mutable Device, this discovery requires a Major Breakthrough. If the researcher has already discovered Mutable Device, she builds upon existing work and the discovery becomes a Minor Breakthrough requiring 30 points.

TO INTEGRATE AWAKENED DEVICE INTO HERMETIC THEORY:  
Suggested accumulated breakthrough points > 45

TO INTEGRATE AWAKENED DEVICE IF MUTABLE DEVICE ALREADY INTEGRATED: Suggested accumulated breakthrough points > 30

mata) for temples, such as rotating statues, thunderous noises, artificial voices, and doors which open of their own accord. Mechanica of Heron Summa Level 4

*Automaton Theatre* describes an automated puppet theatre. Replicating this device was a favorite project of Heron's students, but Heron's origi-

## Major Hermetic Virtue: Awaken Device

This Virtue confers the ability to awaken imbued devices.

Through the use of logical principles developed by Heron, a magus can awaken the spirit slumbering within a simulacrum. Magi should take great care in what they choose to awaken, as the resulting personality derives from its form and material. When awakened, the resultant being has one or more Personality Traits based on the material and simulacra of the body, as noted above. When designing simulacra, a magus may add a number of points to the Magic Might up to his Magical Theory score.

### AWAKENED DEVICE'S MAGIC MIGHT: Material Base Points + Magic Theory

Magic Might determines the Awakened Device Level needed to construct it, and the limit of pawns of vis that may be used to instilled spell-like effects in it. Since this is a magical creation, Magic Might is also the Awakened Device's Magic

Resistance. The device requires sufficient Vim vis to open the enchantment as per making an enchanted device (see ArM5, page 96–100) plus one pawn of Creo or Form-specific vis per point of Magic Might. In addition, constructing the simulacra costs a number of Mythic Pounds equal to its Material Base Points.

The Lab Total for awakening a device is  $\text{Creo} + \text{Form} + \text{Intelligence} + \text{Magic Theory} + \text{aura modifier}$ , and any points exceeding the Awakened Device Level can be accumulated over several uninterrupted seasons of work as when constructing an enchanted device (see ArM5, page 96). The material used to construct the simulacrum's body dictates the Form used, such as Terram for a copper fox.

### AWAKENED DEVICE LAB TOTAL: Creo + Form + Intelligence + Magic Theory + Aura

### AWAKENED DEVICE LEVEL: Awakened Device's Magical Might + (Size x 5)

In addition, the device must be further enchanted to provide it with means of locomotion, communication, or other abilities as per the rules for enchanting items. Once awakened, the device can use any instilled effects it contains as will. Additional powers may be added later if the Material and Size Table (ArM5, page 97) permits. Powers may be drawn from those used by automata in *Houses of Hermes: Mystery Cults*, page 130. These Powers may be instilled any time before or after the anima is awakened. An Awakened Device can learn Abilities, including languages, as per the rules for training and instruction (ArM5, page 163–166).

Awakened Devices can be made into familiars but this requires the magus to awaken the device himself.

Awaken Device is not initially compatible with the Automata Mystery used by House Verditius, but further research may allow this Breakthrough.

nal possesses unique properties (see below). *Mechanica of Heron Tractatus Quality 9*

*Catoptrica* concerns the geometrical propagation of light, reflection, and the use of mirrors. In it, Heron states that vision results from light rays emitted by the eyes. He believes that these rays travel with infinite velocity. Most scholars attribute this book to Ptolemy. *Philosophiae Tractatus Quality 8*

*Dioptra* (named for a surveyor's device) is a vast collection of geometric constructions useful for surveying. Included are engineering principles for tunnel construction as well as methods for transporting and measuring water. A chapter on astronomy

gives a method to find the distance between Alexandria and Rome by observations of a lunar eclipse. *Artes Liberales Summa Level 4*

*Metrica* is a collection of volumes discussing geometry and logic. Methods for calculating the volumes of spheres and determining cube roots are interspersed with notes for their use in creating mechanica. These mathematical techniques are generally lost to Mythic Europe and the formulae are essential for the understanding of Mechanica. *Artes Liberales Tractatus Level 7, Mechanica of Heron Tractatus Quality 10*

*Pneumatica* is a magnificent collection of over a hundred mechanical devices and machines popular in

the first century. Among the devices detailed are the infamous Aeolipile (see below), trick jars that give out wine or water, singing birds and mechanical voices, puppets that move when a fire is lit on an altar, animals that drink when they are offered water, or mechanical fountains that dispense holy water after coins are inserted. All function through the use of air, steam, or hydraulic mechanisms augmented by the principles of mechanica. Readers with the Supernatural Virtue *Mechanica of Heron* may use the volume as a Lab Text when recreating any of the devices described — such a text gives a bonus on the Lab Total equal to its Quality when researching an

equivalent Hermetic item. *Mechanica* of Heron Tractatus Quality 7

*Belopoeica*, Heron's rarest work, is a collection of war machines with notes on their proper construction and employment in siegecraft. *Philosophiae Tractatus* Quality 7

*Mechanica* is a series of three volumes written for architects, ostensibly concerned with moving heavy objects through the construction of simple and complex lifting machines or cranes. It also serves as a text instructing in *Mechanica* of Heron. *Philosophiae Tractatus* Quality 8, *Mechanica* of Heron Summa Level 3

## Heron's Devices

Over centuries, Heron and his disciples constructed hundreds of mechanica, but the majority have disappeared. A few remain in the hands of collectors who seldom know their true value. Others await discovery. Examples of the more useful mechanica include the following.

### FIRE QUENCHER

This large fire pump uses hydraulic pressure and Heron's techniques to extinguish even magical flames. Mechanics built many of these devices. The vigiles of ancient Rome and Alexandria used them to protect the cities from fire.

### QUENCH THE FLAMES

PeIg 19

Pen 0, 12/day

R: Voice, D: Mom, T: Group

The bulky cart makes this difficult to deploy, requiring two mules or cart horses to move.

So long as the water tank is full, the pump can extinguish any flames its water jet is directed upon. It quenches

an area five paces across with a *Perdo Ignem* Level 20 effect. Even magical flames are affected.

(Effect: Base 3, +2 Voice, +2 Group; Modifications: 12/day +4)

(Level: 7)

### AEOLIPILE

The Aeolipile is the first known device to transform steam into rotary motion. It consists of a hollow sphere mounted so that it can turn on a pair of hollow tubes that provide steam to the sphere from a cauldron. The steam escapes from the sphere from one or more bent tubes projecting from its equator, causing the sphere to revolve.

When properly constructed, it has a mesmerizing effect upon any observers, allowing scholars to focus the attention of students and demagogues to gather mobs. The effects end when the water boils away or the user loses control of the device.

### BEGUILE THE GATHERING

CrMe 33

Pen 6, 3/day

R: Voice, D: Conc, T: Group

The Aeolipile requires an extensive set up. Bringing the properly prepared water in the cauldron to a boil and bringing the whirling device up to speed takes about 15 minutes. Once started, the Aeolipile functions until the water boils dry or the user's concentration is broken.

Those entering the area of effect become curious and stay to watch for the duration of the effect. A stress roll against an Ease Factor of 9 using an appropriate Personality Trait (like Impatient) can break the hold.

(Effect: Base 4, +2 Voice, +1 Conc, +2 Group; Modifications: +3 Pen, 3/day +5)

(Level: 13)

### THUNDER MAKER

Heron designed many of his devices for use in temples and theater. The thunder maker was used in both to accompany the exit and entrance of gods during plays. Other versions sounded like brazen trumpets, and blared when doors opened, heralding the arrival of priests, magistrates, and imperators.

Bellows filled a chamber that discharged a thunderous rumble. In the close confines of a temple or theater, the effect was nothing short of awe-inspiring.

### THEURGE'S TRUMPET

CrAu 19

Pen 0, 12/day

R: Voice, D: Mom, T: Room

The device requires at least 15 minutes to recharge after each use.

At its maximum effect, the targets must make a Stamina stress roll against an Ease Factor of 9 or be unable to act in the next round. A target who fails may make additional Stamina simple rolls each round thereafter against the same Ease Factor, and recovers if successful. If the first roll botches, the sound knocks the victim unconscious.

(Effect: Base 3, +2 Voice, +2 Room; Modifications: 12/day +4)

(Level: 9)

## Following Heron's Trail

Investigation reveals that the last known Mechanics lived in Constantinople during the sixth century. Stories hint that Emperor Justinian had Mechanics in his employ, if he did not practice Heron's Art himself. Among the mechanical marvels of his court were pillar-thrones that rose and fell on command, clockwork sundials, and a glorious nightingale that sang of

its own accord. Even the Hagia Sophia with its innovative architecture bears the mark of Heron's dead hand.

### CONSTANTINOPLE: THE RUINED METROPOLIS

Once the greatest city in the world, Constantinople has fallen upon hard times. Entire districts stand abandoned or destroyed. Everywhere the traveler looks, the effects of the Fourth Crusade are plain to see. Crusader nobles and Italian merchants have seized ancient homes and villas for their own. These foreigners might be persuaded to sell their "old Roman junk," such as broken mechanica or unread books, to magi. With luck, magi may find themselves obtaining treasures of ancient literature for a pittance of what they might pay in the book-poor West.

Finding Justinian's artifacts is more difficult. The magi must deal with charlatans, thieves, and overly curious Churchmen. The sad truth is that Justinian and his court are 800 years dead, and little survives from that time.

### THE CHURCHMAN

The only uncorrupted text readily available in Constantinople is a remarkably well-preserved copy of Heron's *Automata* (Mechanica of Heron Summa Level 4, Quality 7), in the original Greek. It lies in the hands of Monsignor Bertrando de Pepoli, an official attached to the Papal legate. Bertrando is willing to sell the book but his price is unreasonably high. He wants a prince's ransom in silver, citing its "blasphemous" contents. After all, anyone interested in such a "dangerous" work is clearly suspect. Negotiations are delicate, for

Bertrando has no compunctions about using the legate's power for his own ends. Should he become aware of the magi's true nature, he changes his tune and quickly trades it for a trifling magical favor—a "bargain" which may come back to haunt the magi.

Written in the book's margins is an eyewitness account of Hypatia of Alexandria's burial; how she was laid to rest next to her father, Theon of Alexandria, in one of that city's many Temples of Serapis, along with many codices and scrolls salvaged from the Library of Alexandria. The account contains enough information to locate the temple.

### A BEGGAR'S TREASURE

News of the magi's investigations makes its way to the ears of Basil the Leprous, the uncrowned king of Constantinople's innumerable beggars. Basil sets a trap for the magi, sending one of his followers to approach the magi. He claims to know about one of the "jeweled toys" they seek and can even describe Justinian's Nightingale accurately.

The beggar leads those following him into a ruined district where a large group of bandits lie in ambush. The beggar does not know about the ambush and the bandits consider him expendable. Accompanying the bandits is the beggar king and his prize possession, Justinian's Nightingale. Basil is convinced that these scholars can change base metals into gold and he intends to take them prisoner until they make him rich! The Nightingale has convinced the outlaw that his ragged followers are more than a match for some "harmless alchemists."

The Nightingale hangs back during the ambush but switches sides should the magi display any magical

powers. It had been intending to simply flee and seek out the company of scholars and philosophers, but the magi's appearance piques its curiosity. If any of the magi can knowledgeably discourse on philosophy or natural history, they may have a friend for life.

### ALEXANDRIA

The Fifth Crusade raged across Egypt and Crusader armies captured Damietta in 1219. They remain there until their defeat in 1221. Crusaders do not return to Egypt until 1249 and the Seventh Crusade.

Alexandria may shock magi coming from the small cities and isolated covenants of Mythic Europe. Alexandria sprawls over several square miles of mud brick and stone. Like Constantinople, however, its population has diminished from its heyday to a "mere" 50,000. A vast fortress, the Citadel, built on the site of the Ptolemaic palace (and the Library of Alexandria), overlooks the city, and numerous *madradas* (religious colleges) have made the city one of the great centers of Islamic teaching.

One of the Seven Wonders of the World, the Lighthouse of Alexandria still guides visitors arriving by ship to the harbor. The markets are a babble of unfamiliar languages. Goods arrive from as far away as India making pepper, silk and other rarities in Mythic Europe comparatively common. On a darker note, many of the unfortunates from the Children's Crusade of 1212 were sold here as slaves and still labor in the city.

Numerous difficulties beset those searching for Hypatia's tomb. Those without knowledge of the local languages (Arabic and Coptic), or of the city itself, must hire translators and guides. Without disguises, magi risk

## The Library of Alexandria

The Library of Alexandria was actually several libraries and museums in the city of Alexandria. By the 1220s, it had achieved a mythic stature through the recovered works of ancient writers. The apocryphal burning of the Library during Julius Caesar's invasion was described as the greatest calamity of the ancient world. In reality, the Library and its scholarly community continued to flourish after the Romans took control. However, the Library suffered from the vicissitudes that beset the Roman Empire, and from Alexandria's endemic mob violence. Slowly, the Library

declined in importance, especially after Theodosius I had its most important complex, the Serapeum, razed as a pagan temple in the fourth century.

During the early fifth century, the city of Alexandria fell under the control of Cyril, the Patriarch of Alexandria. At his instigation, the Alexandrian mob burned most of the surviving Library and murdered Hypatia, its last librarian. This marked the end of Alexandria as a major center of ancient learning. Alexandria fell to Arab conquerors in 686, but by then even the Library's ruins had disappeared.

discovery as "Frankish spies." Blatant displays of magic bring them to the attention of Muslim scholars or sorcerers who may desire the contents of the temple for themselves. As befitting a major center of Islamic teaching, the Dominion is strong throughout the city, with an average aura of four. It is far higher around the numerous mosques, schools, and mausoleums.

### HYPATIA OF ALEXANDRIA

Hypatia was born in 370 AD, daughter of Theon, who was one of the last librarians at the Royal Library and Museum of Alexandria and a man widely considered one of the most educated in Alexandria. He trained Hypatia in the philosophical arts as well as in Heron's magical technique and she soon surpassed him in wisdom. As she grew older, Hypatia became a well-known lecturer at the Library of Alexandria and wrote several important treatises on astronomy, astrology, and mathematics. Some credit her with the invention of the astrolabe.

Hypatia's scholarly prominence accented the fact that she was both female and pagan in an increasingly Christian patriarchal society. Shortly before her death, Saint Cyril became the Patriarch of Alexandria, and soon overthrew the Imperial government in the city. In the spring of 415 AD, a mob seized Hypatia on the street, beat her, skinned her with oyster shells, and dragged her body through the city in triumph.

After her death, her followers laid her to rest next to her father in the Temple of Serapis where they had lived and studied. The surviving Mechanicians had used the temple as a repository for what they could salvage from the wreckage of the Library. They then fled Alexandria before the mob could seize them, leaving behind a treasure trove of ancient lore. Over the years, the Dominion in Alexandria grew more powerful until it subsumed the temple's weakened magical aura. However, instead of being snuffed out, the temple's aura formed a regio that can only be accessed while the Dominion is weak.



## The Lost Temple-Library of Serapis

Hints and clues lead investigators to the supposed location of the tomb. The ancient Temple of Serapis where Hypatia and Theon lived is long since gone. Mud brick houses cover the temple grounds completely. Mixed into the brickwork are chunks of pillar and stonework taken from the destroyed temple. Questioning those living nearby brings forth a ghostly litany of hauntings and disappearances. Many describe a hideous, skinless apparition who howls curses in an unknown tongue (which turns out to be Ancient Greek). The local holy men have been able to do nothing.

Investigation of the area with Intellego spells determines that a regio might have existed here, but the local Dominion overwhelms any lingering magical aura. Weakening

## Justinian's Nightingale

Hypatia, one of the last Librarians of Alexandria, created the Nightingale from gold, silver, and jewels. Designed as a companion and entertainer, the awakened mechanica's beautiful voice enthralled all who listened to its jewel-like tones. The nightingale watched over Theon and his household, waking them with a clarion voice when fire or robber threatened.

After Hypatia's murder, the bird came to the attention of Emperor Justinian and became a toy used to entertain the Imperial court. Centuries went by as the bird passed from hand to hand, until it was lost during the sack of Constantinople.

The nightingale can tell much of Heron's lore, but it lacks The Gift and the proper understanding of magical theory necessary for it to be able to pass on the secrets of mechanica. It has seen much during its centuries of existence and knows much about the truths behind Byzantine history. The Nightingale loves philosophical debate and can discourse for hours upon Plato and Aristotle.

After centuries of being treated as little more than a pet, the Nightingale has grown very lonely for the kind of scholastic discourse it enjoyed with its creator and his family. The beggar king's rather foolish scheme is the result of the Nightingale's manipulation.

Justinian's Nightingale can relate the tale of Hypatia's burial, including an accurate location of the old temple. It also knows that Heron's

Theatre was hidden there, along with numerous mechanica salvaged from the Library of Alexandria. It has no idea that the temple is haunted and will be horrified by its creator's current plight (see below).

**Magic Might:** 29 (Auram)

**Characteristics:** Int +1, Per -1, Pre +1, Com +3, Str -3, Sta +1, Dex +2, Qik +2

**Size:** -6

**Age:** 800+ (n/a)

**Virtues and Flaws:** Enchanting Music; Second Sight

**Personality Traits:** Talkative +3, Loyal +2, Helpful +1

**Reputations:** Beautiful Voice 3 (Constantinople)

**Combat:**

Dodge: Init 2, Attack n/a, Defense 8, Damage n/a

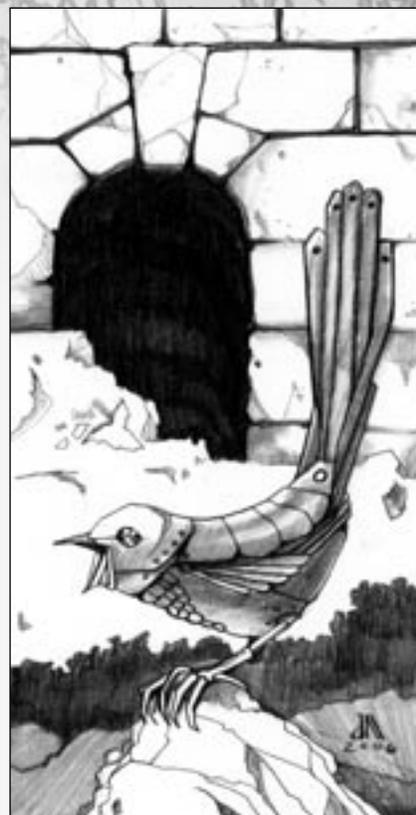
**Soak:** +4

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-15), Incapacitated (16-20)

**Abilities:** Artes Liberales 4 (rhetoric), Awareness 3 (alertness), Brawl 1 (dodge), Coptic 4 (crafters), Greek 6 (courtly), Area Lore Eastern Empire 2 (Byzantine Centers), Enchanting Music 6 (awaken), Folk Ken 4 (nobles), History 3 (personal experiences), Latin 5 (listening), Leadership 3 (intimidation), Magic Lore 3 (constructs), Philosophiae 5 (Aristotle), Second Sight 3 (intruders), Sing 6 (joyous)

**Powers:**

*Flying*, 0 points, constant, Auram: The Nightingale can fly like an ordinary bird, though its movements



are accompanied by a beautiful chime-like sound.

*Greet the Dawn*, 2 points Auram, Init 10: The Nightingale issues a clarion call, awakening everyone within Voice Range.

*Voice of Chiming Gold*, 0 points, constant, Auram: The Nightingale can speak as well as sing using a tiny voice box and bellows, though only in languages it knows.

**Equipment:** None

**Vis:** None

**Appearance:** The nightingale is made of gleaming gold and silver clockwork with jeweled feathers. Its eyes are twin rubies and its voice is a sweet song.

the Dominion might make the magical regio reappear. Characters comparing the dates when the specter materializes realize these occur on the most inauspicious days of the Muslim

calendar. On those days, they may reason, the local Dominion must drop below the aura of the regio.

Failing this realization, spells to detect ghosts or magical beings may

reveal when the haunt reappears. Although such spells do not help unless the Temple of Serapis is accessible, at those times the spells readily lead to the gate of the old temple.

## Serapis

Serapis was a hybrid god whose worship unified the cults of several Egyptian and Hellenistic deities. Ptolemy I introduced him at the beginning of the Ptolemaic Period in Egypt, though Serapis's legacy lasted well into the Roman period. He became the Egyptians' supreme god, embodying the principles of divine authority and the sun, with power over fertility, the afterlife, and healing. Serapis formed a bridge between Greek and Egyptian religions so that both peoples could find common ground in their worship. Through the Ptolemaic Pharaohs and their Roman successors, Serapis was patron and protector of the Royal Library and Museum and many of its buildings were temples sacred to him.

While Serapis is a being of faerie, his temples are often magical sites due to the practices of the Mechanicians and other scholars who dwelt there. The temple where Hypatia and her father lived is one such location.

### ENTERING THE TEMPLE

The entrance to the lost temple is a shadow of its former glory. Built into the wall of a rickety tenement is the lintel of the destroyed temple. The pale granite slab is inlaid with worn Greek and Egyptian carvings praising Serapis and promising dire penalties to those who profane what lies under his protection. Examination by anyone with Magic Lore, Magic Theory, or Mechanica of Heron might discover (Ease Factor of 6) that the stone was once part of a much larger mechanica.

When the Dominion aura dips below 4, the doorway to the Temple

of Serapis appears as a ghostly archway of shadows beneath the lintel. Characters can enter the regio automatically if they carry a mechanica or bear signs of the Cult of Serapis. Alternatively, characters can enter the regio as described by the rules on page 189 of ArM5. The Dominion aura strength stays below 4 for only a few hours and then returns to normal, trapping anyone inside until the next ill-omened night, which may not be for weeks or months.

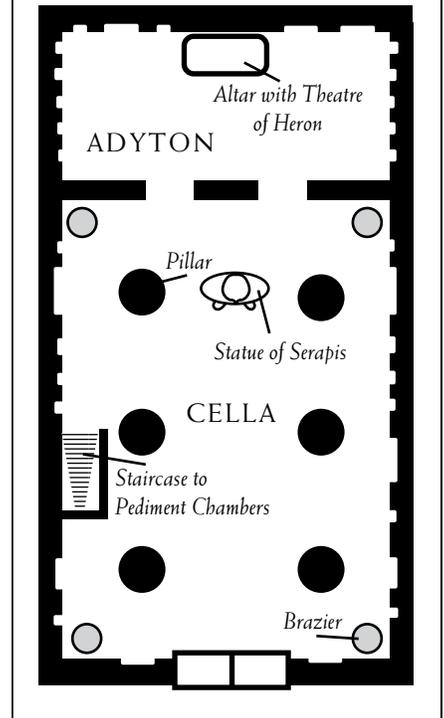
### THE LOST TEMPLE OF SERAPIS

The temple exists in a small level 4 Magic regio, which contains only the temple's interior. The temple's layout is classically simple. Four eternal braziers, one in each corner, fill the central room, or cella, with a flickering red light. As is common with Roman-style temples, the cella stands upon a masonry podium with two rows of pillars inside. Looming over the altar at the far end of the temple is a ten-foot-tall statue of Serapis. The statue gleams in the light from the gold covering its muscular frame, and his bearded face glares down at these intruders.

Behind the statue hangs a velvet curtain leading to the sacred chamber, the adyton, where the priests performed secret rituals. Scattered around the cella are numerous books and scrolls, pulled from the innumerable pigeonholes and racks lining the walls. Several rooms lie beneath the cella, entered through a narrow staircase.

With a hiss of hydraulics, the great temple doors slam shut behind characters who enter, and the ghost of Hypatia manifests, dripping blood and cackling. Exiting the regio before the Dominion rises once more may prove impossible while Hypatia exists.

## Lost Temple of Serapis



The temple has many devices that Hypatia can use against intruders with her Command Mechanica Power.

### STATUE OF SERAPIS

The statue of Serapis stands over ten feet tall and is made of ivory plates cunningly fitted together over a brass frame. It depicts a Zeus-like figure dressed in a tunic with a magnificent beard. Gold foil and silver inlay covers much of the statue. The statue contains a powerful Theurge's Trumpet (see above) and Hypatia uses it upon intruders immediately. This mechanica is capable of sounding every ten rounds. The flickering shadows and flexible construction of the statue make it appear to move slightly but it is otherwise inert. Anyone desecrating or plundering it finds that Serapis takes an interest in him in the future.

## The Ghost of Hypatia

Some decades after her death, the violent cataclysms of Alexandrian politics destroyed what remained of the Library, waking Hypatia from her rest. She found herself trapped within the temple, only able to leave when the Dominion ebbs enough to expose the temple's Magical aura. In time, madness became a blessing.

Intellect gone, the spirit of the once-beautiful scholar prowls the temple, seeking any target for her pain. Her first priority is those carrying Christian symbols. Others, such as the scholars who failed to save her, the mob who killed her, and the soldiers who betrayed her, are all victims for the vengeful ghost.

**Magic Might:** 25 (Mentem)

**Characteristics:** Int +4, Per +1, Pre +1, Com +2, Str -2, Sta +1, Dex +1, Qik 0

**Size:** 0 (non-physical)

**Age:** n/a (30)

**Virtues and Flaws:** Mechanica of Heron; Offensive to Animals, Puissant Ability (Mechanica of Heron), Second Sight; Strong Willed

**Personality Traits:** Prideful +3, Vengeful +4, Compassionate -2

**Reputations:** Wise Scholar 4 (Ancient Alexandria), Pagan Harlot 3 (Alexandrian Christians)

**Combat:**

Dagger: Init 0, Attack +6, Defense 3, Damage +2

**Soak:** +1

**Fatigue Levels:** OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-15), Inc. (16-20)

**Abilities:** Artes Liberales 5 (rhetoric), Awareness 2 (alertness), Brawl 2 (dagger), Commanding 3 (ghosts), Mechanica of Heron 9 (delicate), Etiquette 3 (scholarly), Folk Ken 3 (students), Greek 5 (Ancient Alexandria), Intrigue 3 (plotting), Latin 4 (Ancient Roman), Leadership 3 (intimidation), Local Area Lore 4 (Rome), Magic Lore 3 (constructs), Philosophiae 6 (metaphysics), Second Sight 3 (details), Teaching 4 (metaphysics), Theology 2 (debate)

**Powers:**

*Ghostly Body*, 0 points, constant, Mentem: Hypatia knows she is a ghost and can turn invisible, pass through solid objects, ignore physical attacks, and otherwise take advantage of her non-corporeal form.

*Command Mechanica*, 0 points, Init +10, Vim: Hypatia may command any mechanica in her presence to do her bidding. These discharge their effects or physically attack as best they can. The mechanica remain under her control while they remain in her presence.

*Death Agony*, 3 point, Init -1, Corpus: Hypatia can inflict her death-throes upon a victim. The victim takes a Light Wound and can do nothing except writhe in agony until he succeeds in a Stamina stress roll against an Ease Factor of 12.

*Mastery of Forces*, 2 points, Init +10, Vim: The ghost redirects a spell or attack against another target.

The original attacker must make a Strength check against an Ease Factor of 6 to stop a physical attack. Magi must make a Finesse check against an Ease Factor of 6 to abort their re-targeted spell. If the check fails, the original attacker must roll normally to see if his original attack hits the new target.

*Refute*, 1 point, Init -5, Vim: Hypatia can nullify a magical effect. This cancels the effect of any one spell or magical effect chosen by Hypatia with a level less than or equal to her current Magic Might Pool plus a stress die. The effect must have a Creo, Rego, Perdo, or Muto Technique or an Aruam, Aquem, Ignem, Mentem, or Terram Form for her to refute it.

**Equipment:** Apparent clothing, jewelry, and a small dagger, but they are all ghostly and really part of her.

**Vis:** 5 Mentem in a scroll case.

**Appearance:** Hypatia was once a beautiful woman, but all that remains of her now is a tortured wreck. Her long, black hair is the only remnant of her famous looks. Red-rimmed eyes glare from her mutilated face. Her olive skin hangs in strips where her attackers tore it with oyster shells. Hypatia wears a long bloodstained white robe and sandals in the ancient Alexandrian style.

### ETERNAL BRAZIER

Two bowls of bronze contain leaping flames that have no source. A jet of non-magical fire doing +10 damage attacks anyone venturing within ten feet of them.

### TEMPLE DOOR

Anyone standing in the doorway or attempting to leave the temple is in danger of being crushed by one of Heron's prized thaumata: the automated temple door. These heavy

bronze doors slam shut or fly open with truly amazing speed. Those caught in the arc of the doors must make a Quickness - Encumbrance stress roll against an Ease Factor of 9 or be slammed for +15 damage. The

doors can open and close once per round.

### THE VICTORS' SPOILS

Should the magi defeat Hypatia, they gain a great treasure in ancient wisdom but they must make haste to leave before they are trapped. Many of the scrolls scattered around the temple are Heron's works, including uncorrupted copies of *Pneumatica* and *Mechanica* (Quality 10 each). Also present are a dozen broken mechanica of various sorts. Even if the magi cannot repair them, each is worth several Mythic Pounds for their material.

The pediment beneath the temple contains the rooms now entombing Theon and Hypatia. In her rage, the ghost destroyed almost all of the hundreds of scrolls and tablets stored there. Other relics of the Library of Alexandria might have survived her wrath, however, ready for diligent magi to piece them back together.

In addition to whatever survives the battle, one other treasure awaits discovery. In the adyton (sacred chamber) is Heron's Theater, one of the greatest mechanica ever constructed.

### HERON'S THEATER

The automated theater was Heron's greatest masterpiece. Properly attuned and prepared, it shows its own stories, casting its figurines into a variety of roles and scenes. When started, the theater's stage doors open and miniature figures act out dramatic events accompanied by sound effects. Ostensibly powered by knot-

ted strings with weights, it has a surprising tendency to improvise stories on its own. Those studying the theater might be particularly disturbed by the appearance of figurines resembling themselves in these spontaneous plays. Careful examination of these new plays may give inklings of events that have not yet come to pass.



This device would fascinate any magi who seek a method of breaking the Hermetic Limit of Time.

### THE WEB OF MNEMOSYNE

InIm 60  
 Pen +20, 1/month  
 R: Voice, D: Conc, T: Group

Once per month, Heron's Theater can predict the future of someone associated with it. The target must be among those watching the play, and the effects last for the duration of the play, which usually takes about an hour. The effect is non-Hermetic and apparently breaks the Limit of Time. As such, investigating it is remarkably difficult.

The play is often highly allegorical, based on the mythic figures and archetypes available in the theater's assembly of puppets and figurines. Interpreting what a play means might

be an adventure in itself as characters consult with scholars, seers, and holy men.

### Complications

While searching for the surviving remnants of Heron's magic, Seekers may come into conflict with others who have business with Heron or Hypatia.

### MAGI OF CONSTANTINOPLE

Several covenants of the Tribunal of Thebes maintain contacts or demesnes in Constantinople. These magi take a proprietary interest in the city and anyone venturing into it. One covenant, Michaels' Tabula, has actually established their covenant in an abandoned mithraeum in one of the city's many ruined districts. Currently, the covenant numbers about a half-dozen magi, mostly from House Jerbiton. Long-time residents of Constantinople, they have little love for "Franks," or any magi hailing from the kingdoms responsible for the destruction of "the City."

If this covenant discovers the investigating magi, they demand first rights to any mechanica and texts found in the city. This is a flagrant violation of the Peripheral Code, but the magi are presumably far from home and on this covenant's home ground. If friendly relations can be established, the magi of Michaels' Tabula may trade any Heronic texts or mechanica they have obtained over the years for vis or assistance in dealing with interloping Crusaders. Displaying such an interest in these "worthless" items may pique the inter-

est of other magi in Heron's teachings. The Seekers may find themselves with a race to uncover Hypatia's tomb on their hands.

### THE SHADHALI BROTHERHOOD

Near the site of the ruined temple is the humble madrasa of the Shadhali Brotherhood. Ahmed Abu al-Abbas al-Mursi teaches Sufi mysticism to his followers here. The Shadhaliyyah are aware of the tomb as an ancient pagan temple and that the area about it is haunted. They have no other idea of its significance. Should they learn of the site's association with the Library of Alexandria, they may wish to take charge of such dangerous information. These mystics can prove dangerous should the magi provoke them with displays of devilish powers, or harm innocents while in Alexandria. Aside from their impressive martial skills, the Brotherhood wields great influence throughout all levels of the city.

The Sufi view magicians as prideful deniers of the will of God, but

if approached humbly they might tell what little they know. For more information on the Sufi sect of Islam, see *Realms of Power: The Divine*, page 112.

The Dominion aura surrounding the madrasa has an impressive strength of 8, as its mosque contains the tombs of the Brotherhood's founder and several other holy mystics.

### Ramifications for the Order of Hermes

Successfully integrating Heron's teachings into Hermetic theory results in some dramatic effects. The most important is a significant loss in wealth and status for House Verditius. With the advent of Mutable Devices, magi have less need for numerous magical devices. As a result, fewer magi purchase such devices from the House. The Order as a whole benefits as individual magi gain power and flexibility. The smaller covenants particularly benefit from this change, given their poorer resources. House

Verditius may try to suppress or destroy knowledge of the Mutable Device technique or try to make it a House monopoly through legal means. House Verditius has considerable political capital and this may be enough of an occasion for them to use it.

While the techniques for Awakened Devices remain incompatible with the techniques for creating automata, Awakened Devices make excellent familiars and minions for those able to pay for their construction. Only the richest covenants and groups can afford them. If subsequent research integrates Awakened Devices with the existing automaton-crafting techniques, then the Verditius gain the ability to craft tremendously powerful magical servitors.

The heroic magus able to integrate the Mechanicians' ability to create magical devices without the use of *vis* would change the face of the Order completely, but doing so would require a Hermetic Breakthrough — assuming it were even possible.

# The Hesperides

Most magi have heard of Claudius Ptolemaeus. He codified the movement of the planets, the names of the stars, and the shapes of the constellations. He invented the gnomon and the globe. But magi interested in astronomy or geography know that Ptolemy accomplished much more than this.

Ptolemy devised a system that precisely measures the location of any place on the surface of the Earth. Every location is expressed by two values that measure how far north and east the place is compared to an origin point far to the southwest of Europe. A magus skilled in Ptolemy's techniques can use these coordinates as Arcane Connections to the places that they designate. This allows the magus to travel to these sites.

Ptolemy published his techniques and around 8,000 coordinates in a work of seven volumes, called *The Geography*. The last complete version of this book was lost with the Great Library of Alexandria. Small sections circulate in Mythic Europe, tantalizing magi with coordinates that they cannot use. House Mercere has offered 100 pawns of vis for a complete copy of *The Geography*, and many magi, knowing that it contains the exact locations of hundreds of ancient magical sites, would refuse to sell at that price.

The history of House Bonisagus records that Trianoma found Bonisagus

by following the advice of the dragon of the Garden of the Hesperides. That dragon, Ladon, was visited in 1160 by an Arabic cartographer, and arranged for many flawed copies of Ptolemy's work to be made in Europe, to encourage magi to reconstruct it, and to visit him. The Order that he helped to nurture is now ready for the next stage in his plan.



## A CHANGE OF PACE

This chapter offers a more conventional story for players than the others in this book. The ancient magic the players can seek with this material is useful, but will not revolutionize the Order, and does not require integration. The system of coordinates is used as a lure, to draw characters

to the Canary Islands, and into the service of the dragon. The Canary Islands are called the "Purple Islands" in this chapter, a Roman name with which magi might be familiar. They have been described in detail because they make an excellent Spring covenant setting: they are far from other covenants, rich in vis and trade goods, and are inhabited by people who assume that those who are magical make good rulers.

## CONSEQUENCES

Coordinates have a few advantages over standard Arcane Connections. They do not fade with time. They can be carried in the mind of a magus, stored as writing, or designed into magic items. They are information rather than objects, so they can be given away, and yet retained by the giver. They do not need to be collected from a place, because they rely on the Law of Names, not the Law of Contagion.

Once the coordinates for a place are known, magical travel to it is comparatively swift and safe. This might permit the Order to withdraw further from mundane contact, and would certainly allow covenants to work together on projects more efficiently than they are currently able. It also offers the opportunity to send brave volunteers to speculative coordinates:

places that no person in Europe has ever seen, because they are so far west, or south.

In war, Arcane Connections can be used to target Rituals, creating a form of magical artillery. This is far easier with Ptolemaic coordinates, because these cannot be changed. The coordinates also offer peacetime advantages, such as the rapid movement of people and material, up to the size of armies.

## Using Magical Coordinates

Ptolemaic coordinates integrate more easily with Hermetic theory than any of the other forms of magic given in this book. The integrator is not required to develop a new Virtue or Ability. As soon as a character has completed the tasks required to reconstruct Ptolemy's work, it can be applied immediately to Hermetic magic, and may be taught to others.

There are two stages in integrating Ptolemaic coordinates into Hermetic magic.

First, the character must learn how to measure the **array of fixed stars** (defined below) by astrological observation. The method for this is included in the corrupt copies of *The Geography* found in Europe. It takes a season for magi to learn, and is learned automatically by apprentices trained by a master familiar with the technique.

Second, the magus must turn these measurements into coordinates. The character must calibrate the system by observing the array of fixed stars at the system's origin point: the point of zero distance west, zero distance north. This requires a journey

to the Garden of the Hesperides, on Junonia in the Purple Islands.

## Deriving Coordinates

Characters can learn the coordinates for a place in three ways: astrological observation of the fixed stars, accessing the stellar observations of other magi, or spellcasting. A character does not require starlight to use coordinates; the character can use known coordinates during the day, from inside buildings or, underground.

### OBSERVATION OF THE FIXED STARS

Most of the stars do not move relative to each other in the sky, and thus are called the fixed stars. They also form a pattern that makes a set of angles with the horizon and with vertical lines. This pattern, called the array of fixed stars, looks slightly different at every location on Earth. The flawed copies of *The Geography* available in Europe describe how to quantify these differences.

If an observer knows the array of fixed stars at the system's origin point, he can compare it to the array of fixed stars at his current point. The differences between the two patterns can be reduced to two numbers: the viewer's distance east of origin, and the viewer's distance north of origin. Each place's pair of numbers, expressed as fractions of the surface of the Earth, are a Ptolemaic coordinate.

A character who knows the array of fixed stars at the origin automatically knows the Ptolemaic coordinates for a place after a successful stellar observation. Astronomy is a skill included within the Artes Liberales Ability. A character who makes an Intelligence

+ Artes Liberales roll against an Ease Factor of 15 makes an accurate observation. This also requires:

- A clear view of the stars for four hours. Although Ptolemy does not note this, a magus with a supernaturally accurate timepiece can shorten the required span of observations to two hours.
- Simple astronomical tools
- Four hours of careful calculations, or two hours using tables provided by Ptolemy in his *Greatest Compilation*. Sound copies of the first part of *The Geography* contain the *Handy Tables*, Ptolemy's revision of his earlier reckoners, which are faster and more accurate (+1 to any astrology-related roll, calculations take one hour).

Without an adequate observation of the array of fixed stars at the origin point, the character cannot derive new points. Ladon has engineered this omission to manipulate those who find his books into recalibrating the system, and visiting his lair.

### LEARNING COORDINATES FROM OTHER ASTRONOMERS

It is also possible to learn coordinates from other astronomers, including Ptolemy himself. Ptolemy lists almost 8,000 coordinates in *The Geography*, but notes that they are imprecise. Ptolemy's coordinates are extrapolated from descriptions of travel given by earlier authors, or sea captains, rather than stellar observation.

Ptolemy instructs his readers to use his methods to determine coordinates and construct maps with far greater precision than he has. His coordinates for places around Alexandria are perfect, and those within the borders of

the fallen Western Roman Empire are often correct to within a few miles. Coordinates for places outside the Empire's borders are usually far less accurate than this. As an example, all of the coordinates for Scotland are incorrect.

The flawed copies that Ladon has sent to Europe contain a few excellent coordinates. He has selected them carefully to demonstrate the usefulness of the system. He hopes this will encourage magi to reassess the origin point, as described below, so that they can derive their own coordinates.

### STELLAR MEASUREMENT BY SPELLCASTING

The ability to cast spells which affect starlight is part of the Celestial Magic Mystery, which is included in Chapter 6: Hermetic Astrology in *The Mysteries Revised Edition*. The following spell is only available to characters initiated into Celestial Magic.

#### A COMPARISON OF THE POSITIONS OF THE FIXED STARS

InVi 25

R: Sight, D: Mom, T: Ind

This spell charts the course of the light emanating from the fixed stars. It then compares the angles between these lines, to provide a unique pair of numbers, representing the array. This is the Ptolemaic coordinate for the caster's position, provided that the caster knows the array at origin. A magus is unable to hold coordinates in her mind with sufficient precision to represent a circle less than 500 paces across. Notebooks or devices with coordinates in them allow greater precision.

(Base 10 given in *The Mysteries Revised Edition*, +3 Sight)

## The Problem of the Origin Point

Characters cannot use Ptolemy's system until they know the array of the fixed stars at the point of origin. A complicating factor is that characters cannot go to the origin point. It is so far away that, a semi-mythical Carthaginian named Hanno



aside, no one has ever gone there. The characters instead need to take measurements that, as a composite, allow them to derive the fixed stellar positions at the origin point.

The characters require three stellar readings. To measure the latitude of the Equator, characters just need to compare stellar observations from any two points that are of the same longitude, but are a known, large distance apart in latitude. The size of the Earth is known, so the difference between these two points can be used to infer how the positions of the stars would continue to change as the astronomer traveled south. To determine the adjustment for the origin's longitude, characters need to go to any point on the Zero Longitude. The only land

on that longitude is in the Purple Islands.

Attempts to construct a new system, with a more convenient zero longitude, mysteriously fail. Mystically, the Purple Islands include the westernmost point on Earth. Magi can no more nominate a new west than they could assign a new north.

## The Quest

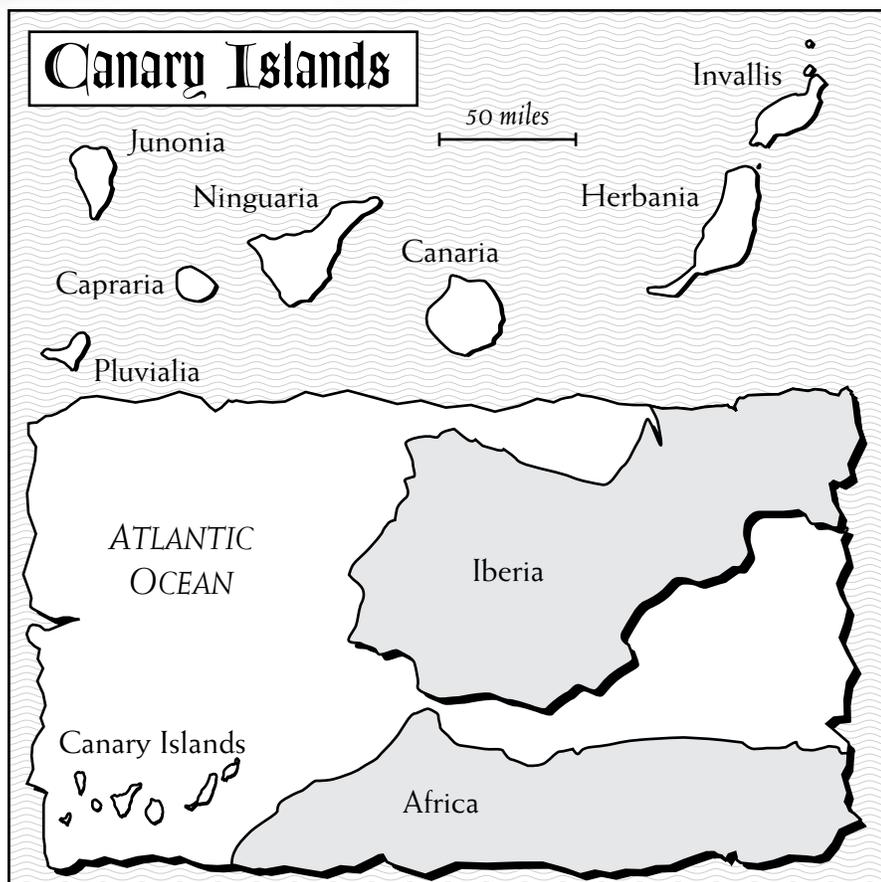
This section describes some of the obstacles that characters seeking the Zero Longitude face.

### Research

Characters contemplating travel to the Purple Islands may seek information about them in classical works of geography.

An Intelligence + Artes Liberales roll, against an Ease Factor of 6, gives the following information:

Pliny named the Purple Islands because a lichen grows there that can be made into purple dye. Dye is one of the most expensive trade commodities in Europe. He also claimed that the beaches of the islands are plagued with the rotting carcasses of monsters, which the Atlantic constantly throws ashore. One island has a ruined temple filled with doves, dedicated to Juno, but the islands are uninhabited. This means that vis-containing creatures have been washing up on the islands' beaches for thousands of years, undisturbed. Another island has gigantic buildings, but no inhabitants. (This refers to the Pyramids of Gúmar on Ninguaria, but Pliny is mistaken. These are the home of one of the island's ten wizard-kings.)



An Intelligence + Magic Lore roll, against an Ease Factor of 9, gives the following information:

Hesiod says the golden apples of youth grow on one of the Purple Islands. The goddess Gaea gave the apples to her daughter Hera as a wedding gift. The nymphs of dusk, called the Hesperides, tended Hera's garden, but would occasionally steal some apples. Hera sent a 100-headed dragon named Ladon to protect the apples and ensure the honesty of her other servants.

If the Magic Lore roll is 12 or higher, then also give this information:

Herakles wanted to steal the apples, and found his way to the Purple Islands with the aid of either the Old Merman of the Sea (Nereus), or the father of the Hesperides (Atlas). Some storytellers say that Herakles killed Ladon. Trees grew from Ladon's blood, and these ooze dragon ichor

if cut. Others storytellers say Ladon retreated from the world with the Old Gods, became the constellation Draco, or remains in the Garden.

## Sailing to the Purple Islands

No European person has sailed to the Purple Islands since the cartographer Idrisi, servant of King Roger of Sicily, in 1160. This makes it difficult for characters to sail there, unless they can convince a ship captain to venture into completely unknown waters. On the West African coast, the captain will not have the aid of a pilot with local knowledge of currents and obstacles, so they must sail slowly, and only during the day. This increases the length and risk of the voyage tremendously.

A voyage to the Purple Islands is filled with danger. The Islamic rulers of southern Iberia jealously control the stretch of sea at the mouth of the Mediterranean. The coast of Africa is a haven for pirates. If the covenant takes sufficient supplies for the entire trip, they are able to bring less cargo back to Europe, but if they attempt to negotiate with the peoples of West Africa, they may suffer attacks. The spirits and monsters of the deep Atlantic are far more terrible than those of the placid Mediterranean. The currents between the Purple Islands are so dreadful that, in ancient times, they were embodied by a dragon.

## Negotiating with the Natives

Characters seeking the Zero Longitude may visit several of the islands before finding Junonia. The indigenous inhabitants of the Purple Islands, the Guan, are hospitable, and curious about travelers, but able to defend themselves if attacked. They lack ships, so the inhabitants of each island have developed a different dialect and variant of their religion.

## THE CODE MAY NOT PROTECT THE GUAN

The Code of Hermes prohibits magi from interfering with mundanes, but the Guan are the servants of a caste of hedge magicians. The Order has historically asked powerful wizards to join, under threat of death. Weaker magicians, like the Guan kings, have usually been told to serve the Order or die. The servants of magicians are the property of those magicians, and may be legitimately targeted.

Some in the Order would suggest that direct rule of the Guan is entirely within the Code. The Guan are not Christians, and their kings are always magicians. This has interesting political ramifications, but these are beyond the scope of this chapter.

RELIGION

Most Guan worship a solar god. He has various names meaning sun ("magec") or heavens ("acoran" on Canaria or "achiburan" on Ninguaria). Many Guan believe in a lesser, evil being who opposes their god. On Ninguaria he is called Guayota and dwells in Echeyde, the fiery hell within the volcano. These Guan have a Dominion aura around their settlements.

On a few islands, the Guan believe in a third deity: the wife of the sun god. One of her names is Achmayex. In some communities, only women worship her. Her priestesses counsel the kings on some islands, like Herbania. Islands that worship a divine family usually have Faerie auras.

Many Guan practice voluntary euthanasia. Elderly Guan are left, at their own request, in the mortuary caves with a bowl of milk. When a meceney (wizard-king) dies on some islands, a youth flings himself into the sea. He carries the internal organs of the meceney in a basket, and messages from living people for their dead relatives. The Guan consider it honorable to fling oneself into the sea, rather than be taken prisoner. Characters considering a covenant on the Purple Islands may quickly learn that the Guan fight to the death for their liberty, and commit suicide in preference to surrender.

Terminology

Latin names from Pliny or other sources have been used for the islands in this chapter, but storyguides researching the Canaries may find it easier to use modern terms, which were adopted after the Spanish invasion, later than the game period. The native name for

each island is also given.

*Guan*, literally meaning "Men," has been used for the people now called Guanches, which literally means "Men of Chenech." There is no term, in 1220, for all of the natives of the islands; Guanches is a Spanish term.

MODERN NAME	LOCAL NAME	LATIN NAME
	<i>used by the Guan</i>	<i>used by magi and their servants</i>
Tenerife	Chenech	Ninguaria ("Snowy," named for its mountain)
Fuerteventura	Maxorata	Herbania ("Grassy," which is utterly inappropriate; this may Latinize a local name, "Walled," referring to the wall between northern and southern kingdoms.)
Gran Canaria	Tamarán	Canaria ("of dogs," named for the fighting dogs found wild here)
Lanzarote	Titeroygatra	No certain name. Characters might like to use Planasia (flat island) or Invallis (undulating island).
La Palma	Benahoare	Junonia ("of Juno," named for its doves, sacred to Juno)
La Gomera	Gomera	Capraria ("of goats")
El Hierro	Ecrós	Pluvialia (without rivers, literally "island of rain")
San Bronodon	no common name	Aprositus

Magic

The meceney of Guan villages can perform simple miracles or spells. During the most important, newborn lambs are separated from their mothers, so that their plaintive bleating will soften the heart of the Divine. This brings rain. The Guan also have seasonal festivals, with the harvest festival being the most important. Many communities leave offerings for the magical spirits of natural features.

A character who is mystically invested as a Guan king automatically gains the ability to perform traditional Guan magic. The ritual in which a meceney accepts his role sometimes involves kissing the bone of his oldest ancestor — so a foreign character who became king would need to join a Guan family. The magic of Guan kings is performed with community ceremonies, and cannot fail or botch, provided the ancient and tested formulae are used.

All meceney can perform the following effects, if assisted by their villages:

- **BLESS CROPS AND HARVESTS:** As *The Bountiful Feast* (ArM5, page 135), but only works on the crops of the community of which the meceney is ruler.
- **CALL RAIN:** This is the equivalent of a *Creo Auram* spell of level 20. It creates a natural, gentle rainstorm that last as long as the ritual continues.
- **CALM WEATHER:** This ritual acts as either *Quiet the Raging Winds* or *The Cloudless Sky Returned* (ArM5, page 128).
- **SPEAK WITH THE ANCESTORS:** As *Coerce the Spirits of the Night* (ArM5 page 153). This ritual only affects the spirits of the character's family, by birth, marriage, or adoption. Only spirits from bodies that have been preserved with dragon-blood lacquer are accessible.

Each meceney also has two minor effects that are unique to his tribe.

### LIFESTYLE

The Guan are usually caves dwellers. Lacking caves, they build mound-like huts of earth. Each cave has been extended by generations of occasional labor, and can hold an extended family. Some communities have basic stockades encircling them. Communities of more than 100 people are rare.

The Guan usually have three social classes. A king, whose powers are tempered by a council of elders, rules most communities. The upper class comprises landowners, the lower class of those who rent their land. On some islands, members of the upper class tend to be from blond-haired,

blue-eyed aboriginal families, and the lower class are descended from Arabic settlers who came to the island around 200 years ago. The Arab settlers were not Muslims, so that religion is unknown in the islands.

Most islands have patriarchal societies, and their treatment of women varies. Women have greater property rights than in most parts of Europe, and it is often a capital offence for a man to insult a woman while he carries a weapon. On Planasia and Herbania, women are loaned to guests as a form of hospitality. Infanticide, of daughters after the first child, is practiced on Canaria and Junonia, when the population is unsupportable. On Canaria, property and the monarchy pass to men through the female line. On Junonia, the women are skilled warriors. In most communities, residents form monogamous relationships, but on Junonia and Herbania the Guan practice polyandry, in which one woman has multiple husbands.

### DIALECTS

There are strong similarities between the island dialects. A person skilled in any Canarian dialect can communicate with speakers of other Canarian dialects as if his Ability were two points lower. A complicating factor is that four of the dialects, found on Capraria, Pluvialia, Canaria, and Ninguaria, have both spoken and whistled forms.

Silbo — whistled speech — was invented to allow shepherds to converse across mountainous crevasses, and to pass messages between towns. Silbo speakers substitute breathier, shriller versions of each syllable as they talk, so that they can communicate over about four miles. To learn silbo, a character just learns to speak a dialect with a whistled form:

they pick up the whistled and spoken forms simultaneously. Characters who already speak a non-whistled Canarian dialect can do this by increasing their Ability scores, or spending a season working with silbadors.

Magi casting spells at Voice Range can use silbo to extend their range. Spells in silbo are considered to be cast in booming voice. Characters wanting to use silbo should consult the rules in Chapter 1: The Language of Adam, for guidance on casting spells using languages other than Latin.

### TECHNOLOGY

The Guan lack many technologies usually expected of urban communities. They do not have a written language. They do not have any metal tools or weapons. Strangely, for island dwellers, they do not build ships or boats.

The Guan are excellent stoneworkers, particularly for people lacking metal tools or a mining industry. Terracing has created most of the cropland on the islands. Many villages have a simple aqueduct, carved from the rock, which brings rainwater from the mountains down through the village. As Guan families increase in size, they quarry additional rooms into their cavernous homes.

The Guan do not have metal weapons or armor. Warriors fight naked or in goatskin cloaks. All islanders use sharpened stones and javelins as thrown weapons, and clubs studded with obsidian, shells, or pebbles. The men of Canaria use battle axes with stone blades. Men of Ninguaria use wooden spears with volcanic glass tips. Most Guan also use sticks as dueling weapons.

Dueling sticks, which are carried as crosiers by Guan shepherds, are manufactured in three lengths. The

## Statistics for Guan Weapons

Those Guan weapons constructed with stone or volcanic glass, in lieu of metal, and have a Damage modifier 2 points lower than usual, to a minimum Damage modifier of +1.

### GUAN MELEE WEAPONS

NAME	ABILITY	INIT	ATK	DEF	DAM	STR	LOAD	COST
Battle Axe (stone-bladed)	Great	+1	+5	0	+9	+1	2	Inexp.
Mace (club studded with stone)	Single	+1	+3	0	+6	0	2	Inexp.
Dueling Stick, Short	Single	+2	+4	+1	+2	-2	1	Inexp.
Dueling Stick, Medium	Great	+2	+3	+3	+2	-1	2	Inexp.
Dueling Stick, Long	Great	+3	+3	+1	+5	0	3	Inexp.
Threshing Flail (stone head on leather thongs)	Single	+2	+3	0	+5	0	2	Inexp.
Tabona (obsidian knife)	Brawl	0	+1	0	+1	-6	0	Inexp.

### GUAN MISSILE WEAPONS

NAME	ABILITY	INIT	ATK	DEF	DAM	RANGE	STR	LOAD	COST
Rock (sharpened)	Thrown	0	+1	0	+3	5	-1	1	Inexp.
Javelin (stone-headed)	Thrown	0	+2	0	+3	10	0	1	Inexp.

shortest sticks reach from the owner's waist to the ground. Medium-length sticks are similar to European staffs. The longest sticks are taller than their owners are. These are thrusting weapons, used like pole arms, and they allow an unusual method of travel. Fit, skilled shepherds can travel across mountainous terrain at seemingly reckless speed, using their crosiers to vault between landing points. This is an expression of the Athletics Ability.

Guan men duel to settle their differences through a variety of martial sports, which are also pursued for pleasure. A popular sport is for each man to have a set of three rocks, and to take turns casting them at their rival. The rival is supposed to dodge the rock. In some communities a player is disqualified if he moves his feet. In many communities, after the combatants have used all of their rocks, they continue using dueling

sticks, or by wrestling. Wrestling is also a team sport.

## Other Magical Groups

Use of one of the following groups is suggested to stiffen the resistance of Guan communities that player characters have selected for invasion or harassment. They also provide suitable obstacles for those sagas where combat plays a major role. Troupes not wanting to disrupt Guan society should place the group on Aprositus, described below.

### THE HUNTRESS IN THE WOOD

Members of this group — detailed in *Houses of Hermes: Mystery Cults*, page 33 — wish to train a messiah figure for their Diana cult. The followers of the Huntress demand that this leader

prove himself by killing the previous leader, the magus Quendalon, in Arcadia. They do not know whom Quendalon killed to claim, then desert, his role.

Quintus Sertorius was a Roman general in the first century after Christ. He fell out of favor with Sulla, effectively the ruler of Rome, and set up a rival state in Iberia. He was accompanied at all times by a white fawn that counseled him on behalf of Diana. Sertorius, Pliny records, planned to flee to the islands if unable to resist Rome. Sertorius was assassinated, in strange circumstances. He and his officers disappeared from Roman history.

Worshippers of Diana, on these islands, are descended from this officer cadre. If Sertorius was the previous leader, Merinita magi may face hostility from his descendants. Sertorius's spirit may remain on the island as a ghost, or a faerie counselor for the current high priest.



### EMERALD ADEPTI

Plato wrote that the Purple Islands were the remnants of Atlantis. This may explain the Guan, a race of white people without ships living on a cluster of islands off the coast of Africa. It may also explain the small step pyramids found in many parts of the islands. A loose association of Hermetic wizards interested in Atlantean magic, called the Emerald Adepti, may have established a covenant on the Islands to study Guan magic. Any Atlantean magic or artifacts the Guan have are used against aggressive explorers.

The oldest families provide the most skilled Guan magicians. These families have lived in the same caves for millennia and have mummified many generations of their ancestors using the vis-rich sap of the dragon trees. These spirits teach

the principles of magic to children. Communicating with the ancestors is a privilege reserved for those linked by blood or marriage.

If the Guan do not have Atlantean secrets, then they are similar to the hedge magicians from *Ars Magica Fifth Edition* and other supplements, but are more skilled in their Supernatural Abilities. Most European hedge magicians pass information from master to student, while Guan dead form a repository of knowledge that allows Guan sorcerers to become increasingly skilled as each generation passes. Gifted Guan children usually have Ghostly Warders.

### PRE-HERMETIC GROUPS

The peasant class on the Purple Islands is descended from Berbers.

They fled Mauritania when their king was murdered, and their land invaded, on the instructions of the Emperor Caligula. Their king, another scholar named Ptolemy, was the son of Cleopatra Selene, the daughter of Cleopatra and Marc Antony. Cleopatra Selene was a priestess of Isis. Cleopatra Selene's twin brother Alexander, the heir to the throne of Egypt, disappeared mysteriously from history. Many assume he was killed on the orders of Emperor Augustus, but if he fled to the Purple Islands, fragments of Egyptian sun worship may be found in the rituals that the Guan kings use to venerate their solar god.

Some Arabic accounts claim that on the western shore of Pluvialia is a great statue of a bronze horseman pointing his spear to the west. An ancient script across his chest reads, "Nothing lies beyond."

## Aprositus

Ptolemy calls the westernmost of the Purple Islands "Aprositus," which means "Inaccessible." The island is visible, intermittently, from the higher slopes of Junonia and Ninguaria, and is thought to be up to 100 leagues long. Different people who have sighted it claim it may be anywhere from 15 to 90 leagues away. If a ship approaches the island, it disappears into the mist.

## The Garden of the Hesperides

Characters seeking the Garden of the Hesperides might find inspiration in Pliny's brief description of the island of Junonia. Pliny says that it contains a temple carved from a single block of stone, and is filled with doves, sacred to Juno (Hera), for which the island is named. Characters seeking the island discover that its inhabitants call themselves the Ahoare, "Children of Atlas." Atlas was the father of the Hesperides.

The Ahoare are similar to the other Guan in many respects, but have unusual gender relations. Property descends through the female line, and they practice polyandry. Each woman takes three husbands, and is trained in warfare. The Ahoare still have kings, who are the primary intermediaries with the sun god, but the island's women also worship the sun god's wife. These communities have a Faerie aura. It is strongest at small step pyramids that the Children of Atlas use for their observances. The most significant site of their religion is a monolith in the kingdom of Acero, within the caldera of an extinct volcano.

The monolith is the next waypoint in the characters' quest. It is the entrance to the Garden of the Hesperides, and the Zero Latitude runs through it. The king and queen of Acero may ask the characters to assist them with some task, before being shown the holy place of the island's religion. This obstacle should involve a minor story that highlights features of the Purple Islands setting that the characters have yet to encounter.

### ENTERING THE GARDEN

The monolith serves as an entrance into the regio that hides the Garden of the Hesperides. Characters can enter the regio automatically, if they have the assistance of the king and queen of Acero. Magi who attempt to measure the locations of the fixed stars at midnight, near the monolith, are drawn through the boundary of the regio, along with their traveling companions. Alternatively, characters can enter the regio unassisted, as described by the rules on ArM5, page 189. The regio has a Magic aura of 9. Characters cannot enter the Garden by any means while facing east.

In the internal logic of the regio, there is no real west beyond the edge of the Garden. The garden's western edge, inside the regio, is bound by a limitless, inky ocean, which churns reflected stars. This body of water, the Twilight Sea, is an entrance into the Magical realm, which is described in more detail in *Realms of Power: Magic*. Ptolemy knew this: it is why he used the Islands for his Zero Longitude. In a mystical sense, the caldera is the West Pole.

The Garden of the Hesperides lies on a level plateau across the chasm of the caldera. The Garden is lit with a warm, sunset glow that comes from the

house in which the Hesperides dwell. This is a three-sided villa, walled with gold, which lies at the western edge of the Garden. Its courtyard faces the center of the Garden, in which grow a grove of apple trees. A vast serpent lies coiled in this orchard.

Each apple contains a pawn of *Creo vis*. If a character eats one of the apples, the character's Apparent Age falls by ten years. Subsequent eating of the apples continues to have useful cosmetic effects. The golden apple trees of Hera produce over 60 apples per year. An apple picked at the perfect instant, in the perfect way, makes a magus immortal, much like the magi described in *The Mysteries Revised Edition*, page 133. Ladon never reveals this to the player characters: magi will not be worthy of his apples for centuries.

The Garden of the Hesperides contains many other trees with extraordinary properties. Ladon believes these trees are a legacy of the last age of magic, and that they are the germ of the new age. He is willing to judiciously use their fruits, or the secrets of their propagation, to push history along his preferred path. In the Garden are fruits that can grant many Virtues, and others that act as single-use magic items, covering a broad range of effects.

### THE THREE HESPERIDES

The Hesperides are three nymphs who tend the garden of Hera. Their names are Erytheia ("Red"), Hespera ("Evening"), and Asteropê ("Starfaced"). They are close friends with Ladon, despite his task of keeping them from stealing the apples of Hera, because they find his stories amusing.

The Hesperides do not desire worship and were not, in ancient

## The Hesperides

**Magic Might:** 30 (Imaginem)

**Characteristics:** Int +1, Per +2, Pre +3, Com +1, Str 0, Sta +2, Dex +2, Qik +2

**Personality Traits:** Vary, as guided by the description given below.

**Combat:** The Hesperides refrain from combat, since Ladon is so much more powerful than they are. They may support him with missile fire. The Hesperides use versions of Guan weapons, and envenom them with herbal poisons unique to the garden.

Asteropê's Tree Saw: Init +1, Attack +6, Defense +4, Damage +5\*

Asteropê's Rocks: Init 0, Attack +6, Defense +5, Damage +3\*

Erytheia's Javelins: Init 0, Attack +8, Defense +6, Damage +3\*\*

Erytheia's Long Dueling Stick: Init +3, Attack +9, Defense +7, Damage +5\*\*

Hespra's Short Bow: Init -2, Attack +10, Defense +6, Damage +8\*\*\*

Hespra's Tabona: Init 0, Attack +5, Defense +4, Damage +1\*\*\*

\* A tree saw is used for lopping off branches while pruning. It has a slat blade, with an edge of obsidian glass, mounted at right angles on a four-foot long pole. Wielding it in combat requires the Great Weapon Ability. Asteropê's saw seals cut branches with a layer of hot tar. This power has a Penetration of +1 (Ignem), and causes an extra Light Wound per injury. This does, however seal and cauterize wounds, which prevents them from becoming infected if their bearer survives the battle. Asteropê's sharpened rocks were used for shying birds out of the Garden before Ladon arrived. On any successful strike, they render any bird unconscious (Penetration 25, Animal), a power that affects Bjornaer magi with bird heartbeats, even in human form.

\*\* These are coated with a sticky herbal poison that causes characters injured to fall asleep, after one combat round's delay, if they fail a Stamina roll with an ease factor of 12.

\*\*\* These are coated with a sticky herbal poison that causes a Heavy Wound with each successful strike, unless the character makes a Stamina roll with an Ease Factor of 9.

**Soak:** +2

**Fatigue Levels:** OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-15), Incapacitated (16-20)

**Powers:**

*Brilliance*, 1 point, Init +5, Imaginem: Each Hesperid has a power that causes blindness. Erytheia makes everything — including the victim's eyeballs — glow with a ruby light so that shapes are no longer discernable. Hespera drains all light, except for a single, useless, point, from her target's field of vision. Asteropê fills her victim's sight with flashes and sparks.

*Embody the Coming Night*, 0 points, Init +0, Imaginem: The Hesperides are aspects of daimonic creatures, which are described more fully in

times, concerned with humans. The player characters interest them now, because they might prove useful aides. The Hesperides know that Hera has stopped collecting her apples: the uneaten fruit have grown into the orchard that Ladon still defends. Each Hesperid has her own ideas concerning what has happened to their mistress, and what the correct response should be.

Each of the Hesperides desires to leave the Garden for a few years to pursue these goals. The Hesperides fear they will face supernatural punishment if the Garden is not tended, and the work requires all three of them. Characters wanting to aid a nymph to leave need to find some other supernatural character willing

to take up the role of tending the garden.

The best choice would be one of their missing sisters. Aegle ("Sunset") disappeared thousands of years ago after leaving to have an affair with the god Helios. Characters searching for her might start in Sicily, where Helios kept a farm in ancient times, tended by his daughters. Hesperidia ("Twilight") sailed off across the inky sea with the tattooed magus who gave Ladon his copy of *The Geography*.

The other Hesperides can tell the characters that the magus wanted to measure the breadth of the Twilight Sea. He could then have used another coordinate, measuring distance from the mundane world, to allow magi to enter regiones. He left all of his

mortal possessions in the house of the Hesperides before sailing. His robes have the mark of House Criamon, and he owned a copy of *The Travels of Fedoso*.

## LADON

Ladon ("swift-flowing") is a 100-headed hydra. He has a copy of Ptolemy's *The Geography*, bought to the island by a Criamon magus seeking True West. Ladon has asked the nymphs to carve an interesting Ptolemaic co-ordinate onto each of the apple trees. By resting a head in one of these trees, Ladon can see what is happening at the nominated point. He reports amusing events to the nymphs.

## The Hesperides, Continued

*The Mysteries Revised Edition.* They can see perfectly well in darkness, and can navigate perfectly by the stars. They can shed their mortal bodies, which crumble into dust, and create new ones when their stars rise.

*Harbingers of Night*, 0 points, +5, Animal: The Hesperides are the heralds of night, and may command creatures that are part of night's domain.

*Summon Tools*, 0 points, +0, Terram: As tenders of the garden, these nymphs have the power to summon required tools, including their weapons.

**Vis:** 6 pawns of *Imaginem vis* each, in their faces.

**Appearance:** The three sisters have a strong family resemblance. Each is tall and fair. They have soulful, brown eyes.

Asteropê, freckled and with honey-blond hair, personifies the star-lit sky. She remains loyal to her mistress.

She has never left the Garden, so her martial skills are the poorest of the three sisters. Asteropê wishes to rescue Hera from whatever entrapment must have befallen her. She has no idea how to do this, but she would like to begin by searching the cities of the Greek East for clues. The Dominion comes as a rude and frightening shock to her. Unable to seek clues herself, and poor at combat, she needs allies.

Erytheia, bronzed and with red-gold hair, embodies sunset. She looks older than her sisters, and is the closest to humanity. She had a mortal lover and a son. Her time with her husband allowed Erytheia to learn the use of the shepherd's staff, as a weapon and means of vaulting. Erytheia believes the Olympians abandoned her. She has resented her servitude ever since Hera forced her to tend the Garden instead of raising her child. She would like to become a faerie power and usurp the worship that Juno enjoys on the island. She

does not understand the process of transformation, so she would like to consult the magi of Merinita, and Arcadian potentates.

Hespera, pale and with white-gold hair, incarnates the evening star. She willingly served the Olympians, and her occasional membership of the retinue of Diana has made her skilled with a bow. Despite her previous loyalty, Hespera believes the time of the Olympians is done, and the titans that they imprisoned should be released. The titan she is most concerned for is her father, Atlas. Characters with even basic knowledge of classical mythology know that he holds up the sky, so releasing him may have apocalyptic consequences. Because Atlas was a general during the war of the gods, however, he knows how to enter the titans' base on Mount Orthys. This is a regio that the Order has yet to locate, and Hespera may suggest this as an enticement for magi to find him.

Ladon would like to collect additional coordinates, but cannot leave the Garden. He is willing to recite the theoretical chapters of *The Geography* to the characters, and provide them with the missing data about the Zero Longitude. He is then able to trade vis, information, or Ptolemy's listed coordinates for fresh coordinates that the magi discover. Ladon does not allow the characters to take the Apples of Hera, but he does allow vis to be harvested from other trees in the Garden.

## Serpent-dryads

Herakles shot Ladon with poisoned arrows long ago, and Ladon's

blood created the dragon trees of the islands. Dragon trees bleed red sap if cut, which the Guan use for medicine and dye. The oldest trees are Ladon's children, and have spirits that take the form of vast snakes. Ladon can create more dragon trees by allowing his blood to fall upon the earth. If he develops a close alliance with a group of magi, he may give them some of his blood, so that they can grow a dragon tree at their home covenant.

A dragon tree grows in a single vertical stem for the first decade, then branches each time it flowers. In trees grown directly from Ladon's blood, a serpent-dryad emerges at the first flowering. This is an intelligent snake, with a Magic Might of 5, that suffers in sympathy with its tree. The

dragon tree flowers once per year for 100 years.

The serpent grows with the following progression:

- At each flowering, the serpent gains an extra head.
- For every five heads, the creature gains a point of Might and Soak.
- For every ten heads, it gains a point of Size, its Damage modifier increases by 2, and it gains a point of Strength in its body, to a maximum of +6. It also gains a point of Confidence, to a maximum of 3.
- For every 20 heads, it gains a point of Strength in its heads.
- For every 30 heads, it gains a point of Intelligence, Perception,

## Ladon

**Magic Might:** 45 (Animal)

**Characteristics:** Int +6, Per +6, Pre +3, Com +3, Str +3 (heads) +6 (main body), Sta +4, Dex +6, Qik +4

**Size:** 8

**Confidence Score:** 3 (12)

**Personality Traits:** Inquisitive +5, Loyal to Hera +5, Sneaky +3, Bored +1, Vain +1

**Reputations:** Dead (Students of the Classics) +5, Watchful (Students of the Classics) +3

**Combat:**

Up to 100 Bites: Init +6, Attack +20, Defense +15\*, Damage +10\*\*

Constriction: Init n/a, Attack n/a, Defense +15\*, Damage +15\*\*\*

Spit Blood: Init +6, Attack +12, Defense 0, Damage n/a†

Trample and Constrict: Init -3, Attack +10, Defense +15, Damage +20‡

\* +6 to Defense against grapple attacks

\*\* Ladon can inflict trained group damage without the assistance of other creatures. He is able to attack one person with up to 12 heads at a time. When acting as if he is a group, Ladon has a Brawl skill of 9 and acts as if the leader of his group has a Leadership skill of 12. This reflects the seamless way his heads cooperate.

\*\*\* If Ladon makes a successful bite attack, he may choose not to do

damage, but instead to coil about a victim, immobilizing him. When this occurs, the victim cannot attack using melee weapons, and Ladon automatically does damage in each succeeding round, without requiring an Attack or Defense roll. The victim may still Soak damage. At the end of each round, including the round in which Ladon chooses not to do damage, the character may attempt to break free by an opposed Strength roll. To do this, he rolls Strength + a stress die, and compares it to Ladon's Strength + a stress die. Success indicates that the character frees himself, and may attack normally in the following round. For each character assisting him in breaking free, the character may add +1 to his Strength roll, but assistants are unable to attack Ladon in rounds when they do this. A character unable to break free for 30 seconds (six combat rounds) must make deprivation rolls, as described on ArM5, page 179. Alternately, Ladon is able to leave his victim's head free while constricting, and can choose not to damage his captives. This allows him to converse with his prey, or force them to listen to him. He can also attempt to bite the head off a constricted opponent, but may only use one head to attempt this each round.

† Ladon is not poisonous, but his blood can cause skin cankers (cancers). He rarely chooses to use this to his advantage, but if pressed he can bite one of his tongues and spit gobbets of his poisoned blood at his attackers. This has a range of only five paces, and can harm only one individual per head at a time. If Ladon bites his own tongue to provide the blood, he takes a Light Wound before the first use of this power by any given head. For each serious injury he takes, Ladon can lick the blood from the cut in one round, and spit it the next, without further injury to himself. The Hesperides know Ladon's blood causes cankers, and dip weapons in it if they consider it necessary. The cankers do not affect combat outcomes; for more information, see the vis entry below.

‡ Ladon prefers not to use his trample and constrict attack, but characters who decide to attack his vitals may provoke him. If his trample attack is successful in the first round, he does no damage, but coils his thick tail about his enemy. He automatically does constricting damage in subsequent rounds. Characters may attempt to break free, as above, but find it far more difficult, because of the crushing strength of Ladon's body.

Dexterity, and Stamina. Slightly before this occurs, the serpent-dryad gorges itself on the living vis of magical animals, and then hibernates under its tree for a month, before shedding its skin.

- At the 60th head, the serpent-dryad gains Ladon's See Power.
- All serpent-dryads also develop unique abilities in addition to those listed here, which are

based on their tree's magical microclimate.

### HOW DEEP DOES LADON'S STRATEGY GO?

Ladon's story — that he wants magi to find new coordinates to trade with him — may be true, but it fails to account for an odd story

from the beginning of the Order. Trianoma, seeking inspiration after failing to interest several magi in her new order, traveled to the end of the world. Her diaries, and the history of her lineage in House Bonisagus, say she "met a dragon in the Garden of the Hesperides, beyond Ethiopia" who counseled her to seek a particular magus, in the Alps. This was Bonisagus.

## Ladon, Continued

**Soak:** +25

**Fatigue Levels:** OK, 0/0/0/0, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-13), -3 (14-26), -5 (27-39), Incapacitated (40-52)

**Abilities:** A very wide variety, gained through Exposure, by using Ptolemaic coordinates to spy on people. He has many Lores of 9.

**Powers:**

*Effectively Tireless*, 0 points, Init 0, Animal: Ladon's heads sleep in sequence, so he is always conscious. If struck by a spell, or if he loses a Fatigue level that would cause unconsciousness, Ladon instead sends one of his 100 heads to sleep. This also alters his Fatigue levels, and is accounted for in the statistics above.

*Regenerate*, 10 points, Init 0, Animal: Ladon can shed his skin at sunset to renew his strength. This process takes an hour, but heals him of all wounds, and dispels all unwanted enchantments upon him. If his body is killed, he can create a fresh one as his constellation, Draco, rises. For more information, refer to Appendix C: Daimons, in *The Mysteries Revised Edition*.

*Speak Many Languages*, 0 points, Init 0, Mentem: Ladon naturally speaks

many languages. This includes mystical languages, which allows him to speak to trees, stones, and other usually mute things. It does not include Adamic, described in Chapter 1: The Language of Adam.

*See*, 0 points, Init 0, Mentem: Ladon has the ability to be completely aware of the details of his surroundings, and to make inferences from those observations. This allows him to determine a great deal about people. He can see in the dark, and is able to see invisible creatures. He can view places linked to Arcane Connections. Coupling this power with Ptolemy's coordinates lets him observe many interesting places.

**Vis:** 9 pawns of Creo vis in his blood. Characters who touch Ladon's blood with bare skin develop virulent skin cancers. This effect has a Penetration of 20, and is based on the random generation of life, so resistance is provided by whatever Form the target's body expresses. A character who has the cancer excised while it remains small survives. This requires a character to notice a strangely shaped, painless mole or freckle, which may develop years after the battle. If

they have it checked by a character who makes an Intelligence + Medicine roll against an Ease Factor of 12, it can be removed with a Dexterity + Chirurgy roll against an Ease Factor of 6, causing a Light Wound. If untreated, the character develops wasting symptoms after a further year, and dies after another six months. Magi who cast longevity rituals using Ladon's vis develop wasting symptoms immediately, and die within six months, unless magical healing occurs. In this case, the blood is so intimately tied to the character's life that its cancer-generating properties ignore Magic Resistance. If Ladon's blood is spilled on the ground, a dragon tree grows.

**Appearance:** Ladon is a 100-headed hydra, with scales of a wide variety of autumnal hues. His heads, individually, are large enough to swallow an unconscious human. He sometimes pretends one of his heads is the dominant head, that his heads have arguing personalities, or that a particular head can make dreadful magical attacks. These are all subterfuges.

The story poses many questions:

- Was the dragon Ladon? Does Ladon know where the Cave of Bonisagus is? Why did he help Trianoma to found her Order?
- Why is the Garden to the west, when Ethiopia is to the south? Was Trianoma trying to hide Ladon?
- Are there two gardens and two Ladons? Daimons can generate

multiple copies of themselves, called Aspects, which have separate memories. If there are, the Ladons would want to exchange memories.

### A SUGGESTION

As Atlantis drowned, 100 of its elect caste gathered together such

power as they could, and created a garden. Within its living tissues they stored the secrets of many of their mystical sciences. They hoped that an Atlantean would survive, and use the garden to found a new civilization, but knew that they themselves would not.

As the cataclysm smashed Atlantis to pieces, the terrible currents between the new islands spawned an enormous

## Serpent-dryad Base Scores

**Characteristics:** Int +2, Per +2, Pre +1, Com +1, Str -2, Sta 0, Dex +2, Qik +3

**Size:** -4

**Confidence Score:** 1

**Virtues and Flaws:** Lightning Reflexes, but this is lost once the serpent develops the See Power.

**Personality Traits:** Vary, but usually Inquisitive +1

**Reputations:** Venomous 4 (even if untrue)

**Combat:**

**Bite:** Init +3, Attack +8, Defense +7\*, Damage -7

**Constriction:** Init n/a, Attack n/a, Defense +7\*, Damage -7

\* +6 to Defense against grapple attacks

\*\* See Ladon's statistics for a description of constriction attacks.

**Soak:** 0

**Fatigue Levels:** OK, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1), -3 (2), -5 (3), Incapacitated (4)

**Abilities:** Awareness 2 (prey), Brawl 2 (bite), Hunt 4 (rodents), Stealth 4 (stalking prey), Survival 3 (grassy areas)

**Powers:**

*Effectively Tireless*, 0 points, Init 0, Animal: After the serpent has five or more heads, it learns to rest them in sequence. If struck by

a spell, or upon losing a Fatigue level that would cause unconsciousness, the serpent instead sends one of its heads to sleep.

*Regenerate*, 0 points, Init 0, Animal: If the serpent is destroyed, it is regenerated by its tree in lieu of flowering the following spring. If the tree dies, however, this kills the serpent instantly.

*Venomous Bite*, 0 Points, Init 0, Animal: Some few of Ladon's offspring are venomous. When one of these creatures attacks, compare its Attack Advantage to the victim's armor Protection (not his Soak). If the serpent's advantage is higher, the victim suffers the effects of adder venom as listed in the Poison Table on ArM5, page 180,, regardless of whether the bite inflicts an actual wound. The storyguide may adjust the victim's effective Protection for special circumstances; for instance, high boots might offer an effective Protection +3 against the serpent's special attack even though they don't protect against normal attacks.

**Vis:** 1 pawn of Herbam, per 5 Might, in tree. Dragon trees can technically be harvested for vis, but their serpents hate that sort of thing.

elemental being. The 100, in the last moments of their lives, bound it as the protector of their mystical treasures. The elemental took its shape from their ritual — 100 heads bound to a single heart — and became the hydra Ladon, guardian of the islands. He entered the service of the Olympians after the Titanomachy: a cataclysmic war of usurpation staged against the primordial embodiments of magic by faeries.

Ladon has not been permitted to rest, to simply fall asleep, for at least 5,000 years. To be free he needs to find another guardian. No such creature exists now; he was the last of his age. Ladon needs the Order because humans may eventually deserve to live forever and taste the final legacy of the Atlantean Age.

He is not confident of the Order's continuing success. The Dominion is too strong for scattered magi, working at their own concerns, to tame. The Purple Islands, and their wizard-kings, model the world Ladon wishes to create. By enhancing the Order's ability to explore, communicate, and travel, Ladon hopes to create a global college of magicians, able to weather the storm he predicts.

# Hyperborean Magic

*I myself used to be even more cynical than you about such things, for I thought that there was no way they could happen, yet when I first saw the foreign visitor fly — he came from the Hyperborean people, as he said — I came to believe and I was overcome, despite having held out for so long. For what was I supposed to do when I saw him traveling through the air in the middle of the day, walking on water, and strolling through fire at a leisurely pace?*

— Cleodemus, in Lucian's *Philopseudes*, 13–5

Hyperborea, the Land Beyond the North Wind, is a place of unparalleled magic and mystery. Only the greatest heroes have ever glimpsed the serene island, and only a few Hyperboreans have ever left their earthly paradise. Legends of the great and mysterious arcane abilities possessed by the Hyperboreans abound.

The Hyperboreans were known for their mysterious ways and their strange magic. Records from antiquity tell of their fabled ability of flight and instantaneous travel, their power to project their spirit, visit the spirit world, transform into birds, and perform powerful underworld magic. One tale tells of a Hyperborean who summoned powerful spirits and ghosts, reanimated corpses, and called down the moon, while others recount that the Hyperborean Aristeas returned to life after seven years of death and lived for hun-

dreds of years. The Roman historian Aelian wrote that the Hyperborean priests regularly visited Northern Greece to worship Apollo, while Herodotus, in his *Histories*, states that the Hyperboreans were “possessed by Apollo.”

Many magi in the Order of Hermes identify Hyperborea as the mythical Realm of Magic, akin to Arcadia; others claim it is a regio far to the north of the Novgorod Tribunal where Apollo Phoebus lies sleeping. Some Hermetic Seekers believe the Hyperboreans to be the Old Ones, a race of Nephilim, or a people spawned from the blood of the titans.

This chapter details the magic of the Hyperboreans, the secrets of their forgotten temple, and the secrets of the land of Hyperborea itself.

## The Hyperborean Hymns of Apollo

*Tradition says that Latona [Leto] was born there [Hyperborea], and for that reason, the inhabitants venerate Apollo more than any other god. They are, in a manner, his priests, for they daily celebrate him with continual songs of praise and pay him abundant honors.*

— Hecataeus of Abdera,  
*Peri Hyperboreon*

In ages past, Apollo Phoebus, “The Shining One,” taught his hymns (also called consecrations), the sacred names of the Lords of the Invisible World, to the sun people of Hyperborea. To the Hyperboreans, the hymns of Apollo are sacred, although their power derives from the Magic realm, not the Divine.

The original Hyperborean priests knew many hundreds of consecrations, which were inscribed on prayer tablets and on sacred buildings. Hyperborean hymns incorporate mystical names, which allowed those who knew them to enter into trances and infuse themselves with the essence of Apollo.

## Performing the Hymns

Each hymn is learned as a Supernatural Ability, so normal rules for learning multiple Supernatural Abilities apply (see ArM5, page 166). Only characters with The Gift or with the Virtue Hyperborean Hymnist can ever successfully recite a hymn and gain the supernatural powers it provides. Note that it is very difficult for a Hermetic magus to learn a Hyperborean hymn, although he could study any discovered hymns for Insight for integration and Breakthroughs.

## New Virtues

### HYPERBOREAN HYMNIST

*Minor, Supernatural*

Your character knows the mystical songs that make up a Hyperborean hymn to Apollo. Your character starts with one recited hymn, which confers the Supernatural Ability of [Hymn] 1, and 15 levels of Powers (which have already been infused at the start of play). These may be increased during character creation as normal (although you must spend seasons in play to infuse additional Powers). You may choose this Virtue multiple times to have your character know other hymns.

### HYPERBOREAN DESCENT

*Minor, Supernatural*

Your character is a blood descendant of Apollo's chosen people, the sun people of Hyperborea. Your character has an intuitive grasp of the motivations and desires of magical creatures, particularly spirits; likewise, magical beings are more likely to react favorably towards your character, and may even treat him as a creature of equal (or greater) standing.

Your character is longer-lived than most people, gaining a -2 to all Aging rolls and a +1 bonus when resisting illness. Your character may also learn Magic Lore during character creation.

### HYPERBOREAN DESCENT

*Major, Hermetic*

Your character's Hyperborean roots are particularly strong; the character may even be a descendant of a famous Hyperborean such as Abaris or the Hyperborean maidens of Delos. Your character's appearance resembles that of the Hyperboreans, and he may appear luminescent and have golden-hued skin. As the character Warps,

## New Supernatural Ability: Hyperborean Hymn

Your character knows a sacred name of Apollo Phoebus, and has memorized the complex and intricate prayers, formulas, and vowel strings needed to perform a recitation. There is a different, unique Ability for each Hyperborean hymn. The hymns are recited in the Hyperborean language; however, your character does not need to know the language to recite a hymn, as the necessary words are learned by rote.

For each level of a Hymn Ability, your character gains 15 levels of powers (see below for details).

The hymns represent not only knowledge of the sacred names; if

performed correctly, they also fundamentally characterize how your character expresses magic. Because of this, your character's score in a hymn adds to her Soak score against damage caused by principles of that hymn. This bonus does not stack with other bonuses from Arts or other hymns — only the highest bonus applies.

Hymns may be also used in the laboratory, by adding the Ability to your character's Lab Total if the hymn involves either the effect or item being enchanted.

**Specialties:** specific effects, in specific circumstances, involving specific people. (Supernatural)

## Dead Language: Hyperborean

This Ability lets your character speak the native tongue of Hyperborea, a deeply mystical language understood by spirits. To the untrained ear, Hyperborean sounds similar to Ancient (Attic) Greek, and a character versed in Ancient Greek may even be able to understand the gist of what is being said, as if their score in Hyperborean was four points lower than their score in Ancient Greek (if this would reduce the score to zero or less, then the character cannot understand what

is being said). Your character can also speak with many spirits and other ethereal magical creatures, and likewise is able to understand them. Knowing Hyperborean aids in the recitation of the sacred Hyperborean consecrations, but is not required. Note also that the alphabet used for Hyperborean resembles the Ancient Greek alphabet, but requires a separate level in Artes Liberales to know.

**Specialties:** everyday usage, poetry, religious usage, talking to spirits. (Academic)

she begins to softly glow at nighttime (this occurs at a Warping Score of 3 or higher).

This is a variation of Mythic Blood (ArM5, page 47); your character gains all the benefits of the Minor Hyperborean Descent Virtue, as well as the other benefits to spellcasting granted by Mythic Blood.

Additionally, your character can perform one of two magical feats

common to Hyperboreans: either the ability to transform into a bird (either a crow or a swan), or to fly, as per the equivalent Hermetic spells, *Cloak of Black Feathers* (note: does not require a cloak) and *Wings of Soaring Wind*. Both powers have a +0 Penetration and require words (song) and gestures (libations) to invoke. This replaces the otherwise free-choice Mythic Blood grants you.

## Illumination: Hyperborean Warping

A Gifted character who learns the Hyperborean hymns as her first and primary magical tradition gains a unique form of Warping called **Illumination** instead of generic Warping (ArM5, pages 167–168) or Hermetic Twilight (ArM5, page 88). As Hyperborean magic infuses the practitioner with the essence of Apollo, and as the character becomes more and more Warped, he takes on aspects of Apollo and becomes increasingly spirit-like. Hyperboreans called this "Illumination" or "Apollo's Light," and both welcomed and feared it. Illumination does not affect Hermetic magi, who always experience Twilight.

### APOLLO'S LIGHT

Hyperborean wizards who are Warped gain an Apollonian Personality Trait with a rating equal to their Warping Score. Furthermore,

if the Hyperborean wizard gains more than two Warping Points at once, he can be overwhelmed by the essence of Apollo (points gained from enchantment over a season do not count). The character must make an Illumination Control roll of Stamina + Concentration + highest Hymn Ability Score + stress die versus an Ease Factor of the character's updated Warping Score + number of Warping Points gained + aura + modifiers + stress die in order to retain control.

**ILLUMINATION CONTROL ROLL:**  
Stamina + Concentration + highest Hymn Ability score + stress die

**ILLUMINATION EASE FACTOR:** character's updated Warping Score + number of Warping Points gained + aura + modifiers + stress die

Modifiers to the Ease Factor are Hyperborean Descent (–2 for the Minor Virtue or –4 for the Major

Virtue) and the number of Powers infused (+1 for every 30 levels of Powers infused).

If the character succeeds, then he retains control. Otherwise he is overcome by Apollo's Light. This typically manifests itself in one of two ways. Firstly, the character may be transformed into one of the sacred animals of Apollo (a crow, swan, or bull); secondly, his spirit may be separated from his body (which falls unconscious and may appear to be dead). The player of the transformed character should decide which kind of transformation affects her character, and this remains the same for the rest of the character's life.

This transformation lasts for a number of hours equal to the total number of Warping Points the character has. While transformed, the character loses his human faculties and cannot invoke any hymns or other Powers that require a conscious

*continued on next page*

Finally, your character gains (at no extra cost) a Minor Personality Flaw, Dutybound, and follows the high moral code of Apollo Phoebus (see text box, Apollonian Personality Traits).

## Finding the Hymns

In order to learn a hymn, the character must first, of course, find a source, whether a teacher or book. This in itself proves difficult, as the Hyperborean priests who once guarded the hymns were killed centuries ago, and the storehouses of hymnbooks and sacred carvings were either destroyed or lost.

There are numerous locations in Mythic Europe where lost

Hyperborean relics or texts could be found in addition to the Basilica of Ten Thousand Columns (see below). The island of Delos in the Theban Tribunal are known to have the tombs of Hyperborean maids, while temples to Apollo can be found all over Greece and Italy, or even further north in the Transylvanian Tribunal. Rumors abounded in the ancient world of Hyperboreans traveling throughout the world, to Germany and even to Britain, where they would leave offerings at the shrines of deities of the sun or light. Relics or fragments of hymns could be located in the ruins of these shrines, although it is likely that they have been long-since looted.

## Reciting the Hymns

Once a character has uncovered a source, his troubles are not over. The consecrations are complicated, containing strange vowel strings, prayer formulas, and countless invocations intelligible only to spirits, angels, and demons. To truly understand the hymns and infuse their essence into himself, he must first successfully recite the consecration.

Fully infusing oneself with the energies and essence of the hymn takes a season of focused contemplation, prayer, and mystic trances, after which the character is able to perform magical feats. Once learned and infused, he need never worry about botching a recitation; the Power has become a part of his essential nature.

## Illumination: Hyperborean Warping, Continued

*continued from previous page*

decision to use. The transformed character also cannot change back to human form (by any means short of miraculous) or cannot re-enter his body. While in spirit form the character is entirely controlled by his emotions and cannot make any rational decisions. Automatic or continuous Powers may still be effective. The character appears to Hermetic magic as wholly an animal or spirit during this time (and is thus affected by Animal, or Mentem and Vim, magic only). The character may remember the time spent transformed as though it were a recent dream.

At the end of the duration of the transformation, the character must attempt to assert his human nature. This requires a second Control roll, although the total that the character needs to beat is simply his Warping Score + aura + modifiers (no stress roll). If this succeeds, the character returns to human form, or may re-

inhabit his body; if it fails, the character remains transformed for a full day, and may then roll again with a -1 penalty (cumulative). Eventually, the Warping Score of a Hyperborean wizard becomes so great that the transformation becomes complete and irreversible.

**The Bright Lightening:** Some Hyperborean wizards relished Illumination. By voluntarily failing the Control roll, they gained a number of additional Warping Points equal to their Warping Score + aura + modifiers, and in return gained a number of experience points to be applied to a Hymn Ability, or divided between Hymn Abilities, of their choice. This, of course, increased the length of time they spent transformed.

### ILLUMINATION EXAMPLE

*Abaris Hyperberetaeos, a venerable and powerful Hyperborean priest, is the target*

*of a powerful mystical effect, which inflicts 3 Warping Points. He therefore needs to make an Illumination Control roll. Abaris's Warping Score is 8 (223 Warping Points). His Stamina is +2, his Concentration is 5, his highest Hymn Ability score is 11, he has the Major Hyperborean Descent Virtue (-4), and has 450 levels of powers infused into himself (+15). His Illumination Control total (before a stress die is rolled) is 18. He is within a +3 magical aura. The Illumination Ease Factor (before a stress die is rolled) is 26 (updated Warping Score 9 + Warping Points gained 3 + aura 3 - Major Hyperborean Descent Virtue 4 + infused power levels 15). If Abaris fails his Illumination Control roll (which is likely), he spends 226 hours (approximately nine and a half days) transformed into an animal or spirit. Alternatively, he could choose to voluntarily fail the roll, suffer a further 23 Warping Points (Warping 9 + aura 3 - Hyperborean Descent 4 + infused power levels 15) and gain 23 extra experience points to put into his Hymn Abilities (in which case, he would spend 23 extra hours transformed, for a total of 249 hours).*

He cannot infuse a Power that costs more levels than he has available (either through his 15 levels from each point of his Ability score, or additional levels gained by spending vis — see below).

In order to successfully recite the Hyperborean hymn and infuse himself with a magical Power, a character's hymn recitation total of Communication + Hymn Ability + modifiers + aura must equal or exceed the hymn recitation Ease Factor.

#### HYMN RECITATION TOTAL:

Communication + Hymn Ability + modifiers + aura

#### HYMN RECITATION EASE FACTOR:

(total level of Power(s) + Power level modifiers) / 3

If the recitation total does not exceed the Ease Factor, then the character cannot infuse himself with the energies of the sacred names. If his recitation total equals or exceeds the Ease Factor of the Power, then at the end of the season, he infuses the chosen Power into himself.

Having infused the Power, he may perform it at will without the need to roll, as many times per day as you have predetermined (see below). There is no limit to the number of consecrations a character may infuse (so long as you keep raising his Ability score, or use vis) or how many Powers he may have active at once (although Warping rules may apply).

Invoking the Power takes roughly as long as performing a formulaic

Hermetic spell, and requires that the character speak a brief prayer. He may not invoke the Hyperborean hymn Powers silently (even if he has the Quiet Magic Virtue, which only effects Hermetic magic), and he gains no extra benefits from increasing or decreasing the volume of the invocation. Hyperborean hymns do not require gestures. Some hymns, such as the Seven Beautiful Names of Light, may take longer to invoke during nighttime.

### HYMN RECITATION EXAMPLE

*Quaesitor Moratamis stumbles upon an ancient manuscript that records the sacred hymn of Psyrinpheu, the fire breather. After much difficult study, she manages to learn the*

## Puissant Hymns and Hymn Affinities

It is possible to take the Affinity with Ability and Puissant Ability Virtues for a Hyperborean hymn. Puissant Hymn effectively increases your hymn recitation totals for that hymn, and other totals that may use your character's Hymn Ability score (such as Soak). It does not, however, increase the number of points your character gets for Powers, which uses the unmodified Ability score only. Affinity with Hymn acts as normal, making it easier for you to increase your character's Hymn Ability for that hymn.

## Apollonian Personality Traits

Apollo symbolized a number of virtuous Personality Traits, the most prominent one being Austerity. Apollo favored Perseverance and Compassion, but also embodied fearsome Retribution. Personality Traits that were disliked by Apollo include Pride, Rashness, and Presumption. Apollo was a deity who believed in and personified tradition and dignity; innovation and new ideas were largely frowned upon, while old ways of thinking and behaving were favored.

*Ability, gains a score of 1, spends a season preparing to recite the hymn (in addition to the base season, for a total of two seasons), and then spends a season reciting it. Her hymn recitation total is 7 (Communication 1 + Hymn score 1 + devotional behavior 3 + Magic aura 2), so she successfully infuses the Power Victory of the Lapiths (Ease Factor of 5) into herself.*

## Finding Hymns, the Easy Way

Troupes may wish to have an adventure focused on uncovering the Hyperborean hymns. Alternatively, a troupe may wish to merely spend a season in search of a teacher or text. You may do the latter by making an Intelligence + Magic Lore stress roll against an Ease Factor of 21. If you succeed, your character manages to track down a teacher (likely a ghost), a hymn fragment, or a

relic. A failure may uncover a minor magical manuscript, or may reveal that the teacher sought is long dead. A botch wastes the season, or more interestingly, leaves the character prone to Infernal or faerie deception of some kind.

**FINDING A HYPERBOREAN HYMN SOURCE: Intelligence + Magic Lore + stress die vs. Ease Factor 21**

## Recitation Total Modifiers

Devotional behavior*	+3 per season
Distraction**	-1 per day not reciting hymn
Hyperborean Descent***	+2/+4
Language: Hyperborean	+ score in Ability
Honorable Minor Personality Flaw†	+1
Honorable Major Personality Flaw	+3
Dishonorable Minor Personality Flaw‡	-1
Dishonorable Major Virtue or Flaw	-3

\* Devotional behavior means spending a season prior to reciting the hymn in activity devoted to the veneration of Apollo. This could include prayer, ecstatic meditation, pilgrimage to an Apollonian sacred site (such as Delphi or Delos), or intellectual contemplation and refraining from both pleasures of the flesh (such as sex or eating extravagantly) and from dishonorable acts (lying, cheating, etc.). The bonus for devotional behavior stacks for a maximum of three sea-

sons (i.e., up to a +9 bonus), after which no further bonus is gained. \*\* This has a maximum of 20 days, after which reciting the hymn has no benefit. \*\*\* Refers to having either the Minor or Major Virtue, Hyperborean Descent, respectively. † An Honorable Personality Flaw is one that the storyguide decides is considered favorable by Apollo. ‡ A Dishonorable Personality Flaw is one that the storyguide decides is considered unfavorable by Apollo.

## Hymn Powers

The Hyperborean hymns, such as the Seven Beautiful Names of Light, grant spell-like Powers which, for convenience, have their level determined using the Hermetic Arts guidelines in

Chapter 9: Spells of Ars Magica Fifth Edition.

Hyperborean hymns are both more flexible and more restrictive than the Hermetic Arts. For example, Pentiterouni could alter, perceive, control, destroy, or create ash, coal,

## Power Level Modifiers

Hyperborean hymn Powers use the same effect modifications as those found in ArM5, pages 98–99. The constant effect and environmental triggers both cause Warping, as per the constant mystical effect rules (ArM5, page 168).

## New Duration: 19 Years

*It is also said that . . . Apollo visits the island of Hyperborea once in the course of nineteen years, in which period the stars complete their revolutions, and that for this reason the Greeks distinguish the cycle of nineteen years by the name of "the great year."*

— Hecataeus of Abdera,  
*Peri Hyperboreon*

The power or spell lasts for 19 years, or until the stars complete their 19-year revolution, whichever is the lesser. Some understanding of astrology (Artes Liberales) is required to know the positions and revolutions of the stars. This Duration is one magnitude higher than Year Duration.

lead, onyx, and sapphires, but could not affect any other kind of gem or metal covered by Terram. A character may also use the new Duration 19 Years (see text box) for Hyperborean hymn Powers.

The Ease Factor to recite a hymn is determined by dividing the level of the Power by three (round up). You may further alter the Ease Factor by using the effect modifications from ArM5, page 99. The modifiers for the Power's level are applied *before* any division.

## Learning to Speak Hyperborean

Hyperborean and Ancient (Attic) Greek are similar enough that they sound and look similar. Indeed, knowing Ancient Greek allows limited understand of Hyperborean.

There were no Hyperborean dictionaries, but many of the (non-magical) prayers to Apollo are similar enough in both Ancient Greek and Hyperborean that a dedicated researcher who manages to discover written fragments of hymns and prayers in both languages may be able to spend time decoding Hyperborean.

Most written versions of the Hyperborean hymns use the Hyperborean language and alphabet, as does any writing on Hyperborean relics.

Hyperborean ghosts may be able to teach the lost language, as may some spirits (particularly those that guard shrines to Apollo). This would require that the character be able to communicate with the ghost or spirit, such as by having a language in common, or using magical means.

Hyperborean hymns do not require vis, and do not require "Rituals" for high-level effects. A hymn may have permanent effects, such as healing or creation, with none of the requirements of Hermetic magic. Due to the high Ease Factor of some Powers, Hyperborean wizards often assisted each other by using the Ceremony Ability (see below).



## GAINING NEW POWERS AND IMPROVING EXISTING ONES

Each time you increase one of your character's Hymn Ability scores, he gains 15 additional levels in powers. The additional levels may be spent on new Powers, or on improving existing ones. You may choose to not spend some or all of the levels, and these may be later spent at any time on Powers through the recitation process. You may divide the levels between new Powers and improving existing ones as you wish, as long as your character's hymn recitation total equals or exceeds the total Ease Factor for all of the Powers combined.

To gain a new Power, the character must recite the hymn again and spend an additional season consecrating himself, as above.

To improve an existing Power, the character recites the hymn, with the Ease Factor determined by the difference between the Power's new level and its old one. This also takes a season to infuse. When he improves an existing Power, he may increase the Range, Duration, or Target of the Power; its Penetration; or the number of times per day he is able to invoke it. If he improves the Range, Duration, or Target, he may not use the Power at its lower level, only at its improved level.

## GAINING AND IMPROVING POWERS EXAMPLE

*Moratamis of House Guernicus has the Hyperborean hymn Psyrinpheu with a score of 1, with one Power. Upon increasing the Ability to 2, she gains an additional 15 points to spend on Powers, decides to infuse a new Power with a level cost of 10, and use the remaining 5 points to improve her existing Power. It takes Moratamis one season for each power she infuses, regardless of level.*



### GAINING MORE LEVELS

Without any external assistance, characters are practically limited to 150 levels of powers for each hymn. Luckily, hymnists are able to infuse extra levels of Powers into themselves, although this comes at an exorbitant cost in vis.

For each pawn of vis expended during the recitation of a hymn, the

character gains one extra level to spend on Powers. Thus, it costs five pawns of vis to gain five extra levels to spend on Powers. The character may spend vis during the normal course of recitation (when he gains more Powers due to an increase in the Ability) or, alternatively, he may spend a season reciting the hymn and simply expend the vis to gain additional Powers.

Troupes with high-vis sagas may wish to alter this cost, so that it costs two or more pawns of vis to gain a level of Powers. The vis used should be of an appropriate Technique or Form.

## The Seven Beautiful Names of Light

*akrakanarba kanarba anarba narba arba rba ba a*

*O Phoebus, helper of your oracles,  
Come joyous, Leto's son, who works afar,  
Averter, hither come, hither, come hither.  
Foretell, give prophecies amid night's hour,  
allalala allalala santalala talala  
If e'er with vict'ry-loving laurel branch  
Here from your holy peak you often voiced  
Words of good omen, so may you now speed  
Your way to me with truthful oracles,  
laetonion and tarbaraoth aeo eo, Lord Apollo  
semesilam, who control this night, who are  
master of it, who hold the hour of prayer  
too. Come, mighty daimons, help me today  
by truly speaking with the son of Leto and  
Zeus.*

— Extract from Hyperborean  
Hymn to Apollo Semesilam,  
Lightmaker

Although the Hyperborean priests who worshiped at the basilica once knew many hundreds of sacred names, in the 13th century only the Seven Beautiful Names of Light remain. These names are the sacred epithets of Apollo Phoebus.

Each hymn includes a number of principles, which form the core of what the hymns' Powers affect, similar to Hermetic Forms. The listed Hermetic Forms are relevant only for the purpose of Magic Resistance.

## Hyperborean Hymns and Magic Resistance

All Hyperborean hymns may grant a form of Magic Resistance, as an infused power. Such Magic Resistance is very specialized and narrow. Additionally, constant Magic Resistance causes Warping Points.

### NUMINA OF APOLLO [HYMN]

R: Per, D: Sun, T: Ind

Vim, Pen +0, 1 use/day

This hymn grants Magic Resistance against magical effects connected to the hymn's principles, equal to the (level of the Power - 5).

(Base Gen, +1 Sun)

Ease Factor: variable

Level Cost: variable

Principle: All

To invoke the effect of the hymn, the practitioner must speak, chant, or sing the relevant prayer, which during the day takes approximately as much time as a formulaic Hermetic spell.

During the nighttime the hymn takes longer to invoke: 15 minutes per point of the Ease Factor. Thus, a power with an Ease Factor of 9 would take two hours and 15 minutes to invoke at night.

Each hymn includes sample Powers, the Ease Factor required to recite them, the number of levels the Power costs, and the Power's principle.

## Azai (Beautiful Light)

Through Azai, Apollo gives and governs life and self. The beautiful light is the seat of authority, by which Apollo leads and rules. Azai is the wellspring of energy and vitality from which all things draw sustenance.

### PRINCIPLES

*Animal:* birth

*Corpus:* birth, the heart, vitality

*Herbam:* growth

*Ignem:* daytime, light, sunshine

*Mentem:* authority, ghosts, love, respect, spirits

*Terram:* gold

*Other:* defense, leadership, understanding

### EXAMPLE AZAI EFFECTS

#### APOLLO'S LUMINESCENT BLESSING

R: Touch, D: Conc, T: Ind

Ignem, Pen +4, 6 uses/day

Causes the touched character to glow with light that is as bright as daylight on a cloudy day. Looking directly at the light is possible, but uncomfortable (unless the character has Magic Resistance).

(Base 4, +1 Touch, +1 Conc, +2 levels for Penetration)

Ease Factor: 5

Level Cost: 15

Principle: Light

#### SOVEREIGNTY OF PHOEBUS APOLLO

R: Sight, D: Sun, T: Ind

Mentem, Pen +(user's total), 1 use/day

This Power invokes deep respect for your character in all spiritual beings, so long as he Penetrates their Magic Resistance. Spirits, elementals, and ghosts from all realms treat your character with great respect and are inclined to obey him.

(Base 5, +3 Sight, +2 Sun, +4 levels for Penetration)

Ease Factor: 12

Level Cost: 34

Principle: Authority, ghosts, leadership

#### DEFY THE HOUND CEREBUS

R: Arc, D: Conc, T: Ind

Mentem, Pen +10, 1 use/day

This Power summons a ghost to whom your character has an Arcane Connection, or who is haunting an area (should your character possess its full name), and allows it to possess a body. The body is animated by the ghost, but may be directed by your character's commands. If the ghost has a Might score, you must successfully penetrate its Magic Resistance for the Power to work. The bodies and ghosts of people buried by a Divine rite are not affected by this Power.

(Base 15, +4 Arc, +1 Conc, +5 levels for Penetration)

Ease Factor: 15

Level Cost: 45

Principle: Ghosts

#### THE SWAN-DRAWN CHARIOT

R: Per, D: Sun, T: Ind

Mentem, Pen +(user's total), 2 uses/day

This Power infuses your character with ethereal energies, which can only be detected by spiritual creatures, such as daimons and faeries, or angels and demons (who are rarely deceived). It magically brightens your character's "soul-spark," the liminal glow that is visible to many spiritual beings. It also makes your character appear to spirits as though he possesses a Magic Might equal to (the level of this power - 15) / 2.

(Base: General guideline, +2 Sun, +4 levels for Penetration, +1 uses/day)

Ease Factor: variable

Level Cost: variable

Principle: Authority, leadership

## Eloure (Fire Delighter)

The emotions of Apollo Eloure are deep and momentous, and are a guide towards true reconciliation with the world. As fire delighter, Apollo's

rule over the fields and water is soft, honest, and loving.

**PRINCIPLES**

*Aquam*: lakes, oceans, rain, rivers

*Corpus*: blood, breasts, fertility, the stomach

*Herbam*: fertility

*Mentem*: emotions, dreams, honesty, maternal urges

*Terram*: amber, silver

**EXAMPLE ELOURE EFFECTS**

**FALSE DREAM**

R: Arc, D: Sun, T: Ind

Mentem, Pen +4, 1 use/day

Changes the target's dreams to be anything the hymnist may desire. The target must be asleep and the hymnist must possess an Arcane Connection to the dreamer.

(Base 2, +4 Arc, +2 Sun, +2 levels for Penetration)

Ease Factor: 8

Level Cost: 22

Principle: Dreams

**DEMETER'S BLESSING**

R: Sight, D: Sun, T: Bound

*Aquam*, Pen +0, 1 use/day

Causes nourishing rain to fall upon a designated area up to 6 miles across.

(Base 1, +1 Touch, +4 Year, +4 Bound, +1 Size [for a total of +4 Size])

Ease Factor: 12

Level Cost: 35

Principle: Rain

**BESTOW FECUNDITY**

R: Touch, D: Mom, T: Ind

Animal, Corpus, Pen +0, 1 use/day

This Power allows a touched person or animal to conceive a child, even if one of the partners is sterile (although not magically sterile,

such as from the Longevity Ritual). The offspring of this Power may be magically Warped or possess Flaws such as Age Quickly, Magical Air, or Offensive to Animals. (For more information on the consequences of magically interfering with fertility, see Chapter 4: Fertility Magic).

(Base 30, +1 Touch)

Ease Factor: 12

Level Cost: 35

Principle: Fertility

**Iaó (Fire Feeler)**

Iaó is Apollo's sensitivity, delight in pleasure, and his beauty. Through Iaó, Apollo attracts both men and women, revels in the world's luxuries, and creates beauty, whether music, poetry, or song.

**PRINCIPLES**

*Aquam*: cold, damp, the sky

*Auram*: wind, sweet smells

*Corpus*: disease, hearing, hunger, sight, taste, veins

*Imaginem*: hearing, sight

*Mentem*: affection, attraction, creativity, pleasure

*Terram*: copper, emeralds

*Vim*: auras, sensing magical effects

*Other*: cleanliness, harmony

**EXAMPLE IAÓ EFFECTS**

**THE GIFT OF FAR-SIGHTED APOLLO**

R: Per, D: Sun, T: Vision

*Imaginem*, Pen +0, 1 use/day

This Power allows your character to see clearly great distances, as if the area were only a few feet away. Your character can also judge distances well.

(Base 3, +2 Sun, +4 Vision)

Ease Factor: 9

Level Cost: 25

Principle: Sight

**OPENING THE HIDDEN EYES**

R: Touch, D: Conc, T: Sight

*Vim*, Pen +0, 1 use/day

By this Power, the touched character is able to see the fluid vis of an area, the nature and strength of an aura, the presence of nearby regiones, and even elementals, spirits, and magical effects. This Power completely replaces the character's normal sight, so he cannot see the normal, mundane world. This Power cannot detect non-Magic auras or creatures. The target may also see into and enter magical regiones, and lead other people into them. Specific Abilities, such as Magic Theory or Magic Lore, may be required to interpret the information.

(Base 5, +1 Conc, +5 Vision, +2 extra detail)

Ease Factor: 15

Level Cost: 45

Principle: Auras

**CLEANSING LIBATION OF THE SYBIL OF CUMAE**

R: Touch, D: 19 Years, T: Bound

Corpus, Pen +0, 1 use/day

This Power grants all those within the boundary a +12 bonus to resisting or recovering from the effects of illness and disease. Note that this may cause Warping if a person is exposed for a long period of time.

(Base 5, +5 19 Years, + 4 Bound)

Ease Factor: 18

Level Cost: 55

Principle: Disease

**Óai (Light Breather)**

Apollo Óai is intelligent, quick thinking, and expressive. The light breather is adaptable and eloquent, ruling over animals, subtlety, and the imagination.

**PRINCIPLES**

*Animal:* birds, crows, dolphins, grasshoppers, hawks, mice, snakes, swans, wolves

*Mentem:* imagination, the intellect, speech, spirits

*Terram:* opals

*Other:* the spirit world, obscurity, travel, secrecy

**EXAMPLE ÓAI EFFECTS**

**THE UNSEEN TRAVELER**

R: Per, D: Sun, T: Ind

Imaginem, Pen +0, 1 use/day

Like a spirit, your character become completely invisible and undetectable (except by Intellego magic, Second Sight, or an equivalent), regardless of what the character does.

(Base 4, +2 Sun, +1 changing image)

Ease Factor: 5

Level Cost: 15

Principle: Secrecy

**TURN TO LOFTY HEIGHTS**

R: Per, D: Spec, T: Ind

Mentem, Vim, Pen +0, 1 use/day

This Power allows the hymnist's spirit to leave his body and travel free of its mortal flesh. While using this Power, the hymnist is completely insubstantial, can move through material barriers and items, and may travel as fast as a flying bird. Other spiritual creatures can see the character and interact with him, and can be deceived into believing that he is a native inhabitant of the spirit worlds through a Communication + Guile stress roll versus an Ease Factor equal to the spirit's Perception + (Might / 2). The hymnist's physical body is completely immobile and helpless while this power is in effect, does not respond to external stimuli, and may die if not looked after. The hymnist's spiritual body is vulnerable

to control by Mentem and Vim spells, although it is invisible and intangible. If the physical body dies while the hymnist is using this Power, he is permanently stuck in spirit form, and may eventually die, or transform into a spirit or ghost (at the storyguide or troupe's discretion). If the character does not return from the spirit world in short order, he may begin to accrue Warping Points.

(Non-Hermetic)

Ease Factor: 12

Level Cost: 35

Principle: Intellect, spirits

**RIDE THE ARROW OF ABARIS**

R: Sight, D: Mom, T: Ind

Corpus, Pen +0, 1 use/day

This Power instantly transports your character to any place she can see. Most hymnists, before using this Power, fly to a great height (normally after turning invisible) and use other magic to see a great distance. Remote scrying, at the troupe or storyguide's option, could also work.

(Base 35, +3 Sight)

Ease Factor: 17

Level Cost: 50

Principle: Travel

**Pentiterouni (Firewalker)**

When in his firewalker guise, Apollo undertakes his duties with austere discipline and responsibility. Pentiterouni is the god's dour hard work as he walks steadily and without haste. It governs perseverance, temperance, control, experience, and earthy things.

**PRINCIPLES**

*Animal:* animal skin

*Corpus:* aging and growth, bones, the organs and flesh, skin, trembling

*Herbam:* ash, fermentation, night-shade, yew

*Mentem:* concentration, depression, greed, guilt, seriousness

*Terram:* ash, coal, lead, onyx, sapphires

*Other:* authority, caves, contractions, organization

**EXAMPLE PENTITEROUNI EFFECTS**

**PUNISHMENT OF MARSYAS**

R: Touch, D: Mom, T: Ind

Animal, Corpus, Pen +(user's total), 2 uses/day

When Apollo was challenged by the satyr Marsyas to a reed-pipe competition, he grievously punished the satyr's impertinence by tearing off his skin. This Power tears the skin off the whole surface of a touched person's body, dealing an Incapacitating Wound (regardless of Soak). It is very unlikely that anyone can survive this Power without immediate supernatural aid.

(Base 20, +1 Touch, + 4 levels Penetration, +1 level uses/day)

Ease Factor: 10

Level Cost: 30

Principle: Skin

**RADIANT MANTLE OF THE NIGHT-WANDERER**

R: Per, D: Spec, T: Ind

Vim, Pen +0, 1 use/day

This Power, when used with the Óai Power Turn to Lofty Heights, allows the hymnist's spirit to take on pseudo-flesh and appear in the mundane world. This phantasmal body appears exactly like the character's true body, may wear clothes, and is real enough that it can handle light objects, touch people, and otherwise appear real. If the shell suffers any damage at all, it dissolves, ending the Power's effect and pushing the character's spirit back into the spirit world, although there are no other ill effects.

While clothed in pseudo-flesh the character can see the mundane



world clearly. Close examination of the character, with a Perception + Awareness stress roll against an Ease Factor of 9, reveals that there is something not quite right about the pseudo-flesh — that it is merely a fabrication. This Power has no effect if the character casts it when his spirit is connected to his body. Note that if the character possesses The Gift, then people still react to it as normal.

(Non-Hermetic design)

Ease Factor: 15

Level Cost: 45

Principle: Skin, flesh

## Psyrinpheu (Fire Breather)

Apollo the fire breather is the ambitious conqueror, tyrant, and gen-

eral. Psyrinpheu is fiery and hot, sharp and bitter, and governs passion, feats of war, hazards, and victory.

### PRINCIPLES

*Animal:* wolves

*Corpus:* fevers, the head, muscles, sexuality, stamina, youth

*Herbam:* chestnut trees, nettles, roses, thorns

*Ignem:* heat

*Mentem:* aggression, conflict, willpower

*Terram:* arsenic, diamond, iron, ruby

### EXAMPLE PSYRINPHEU EFFECTS

#### FORTITUDE OF CADMUS

R: Per, D: Sun, T: Ind

Corpus, Pen +0, 1 use/day

Your character becomes filled with stamina and endurance, gaining a +1 bonus that can be used for either

Soak or to resist Fatigue (see ArM5, page 178).

(Base 5, +2 Sun)

Ease Factor: 5

Level Cost: 15

Principle: Stamina, willpower

#### VICTORY OF THE LAPITHS

R: Per, D: Diam, T: Ind

Corpus, Pen +0, 1 use/day

The Lapiths were a tribe guarded by Apollo in their victorious battle against the centaurs. This Power allows your character to endure any wound (short of death) or fatigue without penalty. Keep track of all wounds and Fatigue levels lost, as they immediately affect your character once the Power wears off.

(Base 10, +1 Diam)

Ease Factor: 5

Level Cost: 15

Principle: Stamina, conflict

**COURAGE OF THE PYTHON SLAYER**

R: Voice, D: Sun, T: Ind  
Mentem, Pen +2, 12 uses/day

This Power grants resolute courage and determination in a person who hears the consecration. Supernatural effects that inspire fear must have a greater level than this Power in order to work.

(Base 4, +2 Voice, +2 Sun, +1 for Penetration, +4 uses/day)

Ease Factor: 9

Level Cost: 25

Principle: Aggression, willpower

**SLAYING OF NIOBE'S CHILDREN**

R: Voice, D: Mom, T: Ind  
Corpus, Pen +4, 6 uses/day

Your character may shoot unseen bolts, which infect the target with a deadly disease. The disease causes the equivalent of a Heavy Wound, has an Ease Factor of 9 to resist (see ArM5, page 180), and is not contagious.

(Base 20, +2 Voice, +2 levels for Penetration, +3 levels uses/day)

Ease Factor: 12

Level Cost: 35

Principle: Conflict, fever

**Eternal Youth of the Sun**

R: Per, D: 19 Years, T: Ind  
Corpus, Pen +0, 1 use/day

One of the most powerful hymns of Apollo Phoebus, this Power allows the hymnist to ignore the debilitating effects of aging for the duration of the power, up to and including terminal Aging Crises. This, of course, inflicts 1 Warping Point per year of its effect, and aging continues normally once the Power wears off (i.e., as though the character did not age for the duration).

(Base 40 [non-Hermetic], + 5 19 Years)

Ease Factor: 22

Level Cost: 65

Principle: Youth

**Semesilam (Encloser, Lightmaker)**

Apollo lightmaker is lord of the nine Muses and patron of the arts; he is optimistic and brings good fortune. Semesilam brings growth and prosperity, metes out justice, and upholds honor. It directs Apollo's wisdom, good cheer, and intellectual endeavors.

**PRINCIPLES**

*Animal:* swans

*Corpus:* good health, vigor

*Imaginem:* song, music

*Herbam:* fig trees, fruit, oak, palms, vines

*Mentem:* benevolence, justice, morality, optimism

*Terram:* amethyst, marble, tin

**EXAMPLE SEMESILAM EFFECTS**

**THALIA'S RELIEF**

R: Touch, D: Sun, T: Ind  
Mentem, Pen +0, 1 use/day

Thalia is the Muse of comedy, and this Power relieves the touched character's worry, anxiety, or grief, filling him with good cheer and delight.

(Base 4, +1 Touch, +2 Sun)

Ease Factor: 5

Level Cost: 15

Principle: Optimism

**DIVINATION OF TRUE INTENT**

R: Eye, D: Mom, T: Ind  
Mentem, Pen +4, 6 uses/day

Your character may divine the true intent of a single action or thought of the target. This is done by asking the storyguide a question as to the truth or sincerity of the target, who remains oblivious to the use of this Power unless it fails to penetrate her Magic Resistance (although she almost certainly notices the character's praying

or singing, and eye contact). Note that this only detects what the target believes, and so may be inaccurate.

(Base 15, +1 Eye, +2 levels for Penetration, +3 uses/day)

Ease Factor: 9

Level Cost: 25

Principle: Justice

**Hyperborean Choirs**

The Hyperboreans were mighty wizards individually, but their real strength lay when working — singing — together as a choir. In this way, they created a paradise for themselves, manipulating the seen and unseen forces of creation like so many musical notes and harmonies. Furthermore, singing hymns in a choir is the only way to use more than one Hyperborean hymn at once. To do so requires the use of a special Supernatural Ability, Ceremony (see box).

**Virtue: Ceremony**

**Minor, Supernatural**

This Virtue grants your character the Supernatural Ability Ceremony, with a score of 1. Ceremony allows your character to lead or participate with a group of people in a supernatural activity, thus allowing great effects.

This Virtue first appeared in *Realms of Power: The Divine*, page 34.

**Choir Mechanics**

The group of hymnists must first determine what effect they wish to achieve and choose a focus character

## Virtue: Ceremony

*Minor, Supernatural*

This Virtue grants your character the Supernatural Ability Ceremony, with a score of 1. Ceremony allows your character to lead or participate with a group of people in a supernatural activity, thus allowing great effects.

This Virtue first appeared in *Realms of Power: The Divine*, page 34.

## Choir Recitation Modifier

TIME SPENT	MODIFIER
1 day	+0
3 days	+1
7 days	+2
14 days	+3
21 days	+4
28 days	+5*

\* This is the maximum bonus possible.

to guide the hymn. The storyguide must set an Ease Factor and determine which hymns are appropriate. If the effect calls on more than one hymn, increase the level of the Power by 5 for every extra hymn it requires. Only the focus character must possess *all* the hymns used in the choir. Unlike normal hymns, the effect for a choir is not infused and may only be performed once. Additionally, choir-sung hymns come at a greater cost, requiring as many pawns of vis as the final Ease Factor of the power being invoked. (The Technique or Form of the vis should roughly accord with the effect of the power.)

Each member of the choir then adds his Communication + Hymn Ability to the focus character's recitation total.

## Ability: Ceremony

Ceremony is an Ability used in conjunction with another Ability, generally a Supernatural Ability, and with other participants, to produce a greater effect. To use Ceremony, your character must gather together a group and agree on a common effect to produce; at least one of the participants (generally the **focus character**) must possess the Ability or Power being used.

All participants add their totals of the appropriate Characteristic + Ability to the focus character's total. If a participant doesn't have the relevant Ability, then only his Characteristic is added.

**CEREMONY BONUS:** Characteristic + Ability total of each participant

After this bonus is determined, the focus character rolls as normal, adding the Ceremony Bonus to his total.

The group may appoint a leader (who must be the focus character), who then uses her Ceremony score to determine how many other characters may contribute to the effort; others may still take part, but their

assistance gives no additional benefit. Alternatively, the group may chose to participate without a leader, but doing so results in a penalty to the Ceremony Bonus equal to the number of participants.

Ceremony may also be used for seasonal activities, adding the Ceremony Bonus to the seasonal total. Seasonal ceremonial work, however, must be done with a leader. Assistants gain Exposure XP during that season, typically in the Ceremony Ability or the relevant seasonal Ability (if they possess it).

**Specialties:** with a certain Ability, in particular circumstances, with a specific group or leader. (Supernatural)

This Ability first appeared in *Realms of Power: The Divine*, page 36, although this version is slightly different, as it derives from the Magic, rather than Divine, realm.

When reciting the hymns in a group, the Hyperboreans were able to invoke free-form magical effects, rather like spontaneous Hermetic magic (although such invocations take days rather than seconds).

Unlike infusing hymns, this process takes a minimum of a single day of meditation and trance from all of the participants. The choir may spend more than one day performing the hymn, and gain a bonus doing so. Likewise, all of the normal modifiers affect the focus character's recitation total.

## Choir Example

*A group of six hymnists gather to perform a consecration to punish a nearby*

*city for their hubris by inflicting it with a deadly plague. The storyguide decides that this is a level 60 effect (as per Curse of the Unportended Plague, with Range Arcane Connection), which makes the Ease Factor 20 (and thus requires 20 pawns of Perdo or Corpus vis). They decide on the hymn Iaó (and the principle of disease), which they all possess, and choose a focus character with a Communication of +2, a Hymn Iaó score of 6, and a Ceremony of 5. All the other participants have a Communication of +1 and Hymn Iaó scores of 4. The focus character's recitation total is 8 (Communication 2 + Hymn Iaó 6) with a Ceremony Bonus of 25*

(five participants, each with Communication 1 + Hymn Iaó 4), for a grand total of 33. Over a day of meditation and prayer, the hymnists successfully call down the wrath of Apollo upon the unsuspecting city.

## Sacred Relics of Hyperborea

But there is no room to doubt that this race exists, since so many authorities state that their custom is to send the first fruits of their harvest to Delos, as offerings to Apollo, whom they specially worship. Virgins used to take these and were for many years held in respect and given hospitality by the local people until, because of a breach of good faith, they began the custom of depositing their offerings at the nearest frontiers of the neighboring people, these in turn took the offerings to their neighbors and so on until they arrived at Delos.

— Pliny, *Natural History*, Book IV, 91

The relics of Hyperborea are in honor of Apollo Phoebus, their patron god, and are sacred objects of great potency. Most of the relics were marvelous tapestries and weavings, gathered from all the villages of Hyperborea, showing things that are sacred to Apollo. So great was the workmanship of the tapestries

that the images are entirely life-like and real, showing the lyre and silver bow of Apollo, and all of the mythic adventures and actions of the deity, such as his involvement in the Trojan war and his various competitions and conquests. Sadly, the Hyperboreans no longer send their relics to Delphi, and few of the sacred items are now found in lands outside of Hyperborea.

## Hyperborean Enchantments

Any character who possesses a Hyperborean hymn could attempt to craft a relic. Hyperborean magic does not come with the many of the restrictions of Hermetic magic, and the chief Hermetic restrictions that are removed are the need for vis and for the investment of the item with vis. Hyperborean hymns can infuse even the most mundane items with Apollo Phoebus's essence, although to do so inflicts Warping Points upon the enchanter.

The enchantment total used to create Hyperborean relics is Intelligence + Hymn Ability + modifiers + aura, and the Ease Factor is the total level of Powers being enchanted + modifiers, divided by three.

**ENCHANTMENT TOTAL:** Intelligence + Hymn Ability + modifiers + aura

**ENCHANTMENT EASE FACTOR:** (total level of Power(s) + modifiers) / 3

It takes a season to enchant a single Power into a relic, and if the total does not equal or exceed the Ease Factor, then the character cannot enchant the item with that Power. The Power levels for enchantment and the Enchantment Total can be modi-

## New Virtue: Hyperborean Relic

*Minor, General*

Your character owns a Hyperborean relic, either a tapestry or a bouquet of feathers and beeswax. This relic has 30 levels of Powers from the sample list. You may take this Virtue multiple times to increase the number of levels of Powers the relic has, by 30 each additional time the Virtue is taken. Note that if your character's Personality Traits are incompatible with the relic, its Powers may begin to fade.

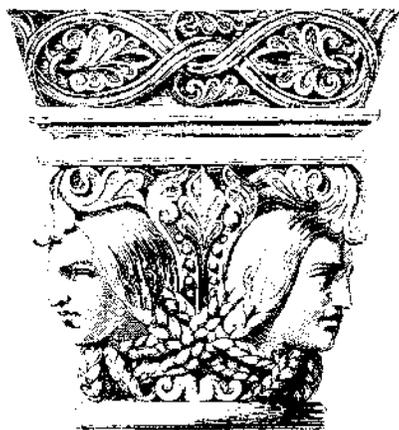
There are two common types of relic: elaborate tapestries, and those made of beeswax and feathers. Most of the relics' Powers are activated by invoking one of the sacred names or epithets of Apollo. Most of these names are now lost, although a Hermetic magus could investigate a relic in the laboratory.

## New Shape and Material Bonuses

These new shape and material bonuses are available to all characters.

- Cappadocian Salt: +6 purifying effects
- Doum Palm Leaf: +3 controlling instincts and base emotions
- Pure Honey: +5 spiritual travel, +2 preservation
- Sun Scarab: +4 detect magic

fied by the same modifiers as reciting hymns (see the above Power Level Modifier and Recitation Modifiers text boxes), excluding the devotional behavior modifier.



## Sample Hyperborean Relic Powers

Hyperborean relics commonly appear as either a bouquet of black feathers held together by beeswax, or a large tapestry with beautiful images and sacred words and prayers woven into the fabric. Relics typically have between two and five of the following Powers. These could also be used as examples of hymn Powers.

### PROTECTION OF THE

#### BRIGHT LIGHTENER

Re(In)Co(An, Me) 64

Pen +20, 2 uses/day, constant effect

R: Touch, D: Sun, T: Ind

This Power prevents creatures with ill intent from touching or otherwise damaging the relic, in particular creatures associated with the Infernal realm that have an Infernal Might of 20 or less. This also affects humans and animals without a Might score.

Hymn: Azai

Principle: Defence

(Base Gen 20, +1 Touch, +2 Sun, +3 requisites, +1 level uses/day, +10 levels Penetration, +3 levels environmental trigger)

### APOLLO'S SOOTHING RELIEF

CrCo 23

Pen +0, 6 uses/day

R: Touch, D: Mom, T: Ind

As the Hermetic spell, *Gentle Touch of the Purified Body*.

Hymn: Semesilam

Principle: Good health

(Base 15, +1 Touch, +3 levels uses/day)

### LIFTING APOLLO'S CURSE

CrCo 23

Pen +0, 6 uses/day

R: Touch, D: Moon, T: Ind

As the Hermetic spell, *Purification of the Festering Wounds*.

Hymn: Semesilam

Principle: Good health

(Base 4, +1 Touch, +3 Moon, +3 levels uses/day)

### BLESSING OF THE BODY OF LIGHT

CrCo 28

Pen +0, 6 uses/day

R: Touch, D: Mom, T: Ind

As the Hermetic spell, *Restoration of the Defiled Body*.

Hymn: Semesilam

Principle: Good health

(Base 20, +1 Touch, +3 levels uses/day)

### INTERROGATION OF ASCLEPIUS

InCo 13

Pen +0, 6 uses/day

R: Touch, D: Mom, T: Ind

As the Hermetic spell, *Revealed Flaws of Mortal Flesh*.

Hymn: Iaó

Principle: Harmony

(Base 5, +1 Touch, +3 levels uses/day)

### THE FATES DENIED

CrCo 30

Pen +0, 1 use/day

R: Touch, D: Mom, T: Ind

As the Hermetic spell, *Cheating the Reaper*.

Hymn: Pentiterouni

Principle: Aging

(Base 25, +1 Touch)

### BLESSING OF THE SOLAR BODY

CrCo 40

Pen +0, 1 use/day

R: Touch, D: Mom, T: Ind

*continued on next page*

The process for creating relics follows the Magical Enchantments section in *Ars Magica Fifth Edition* (see pages 95–100), the key change being the removal of the shape, material, and size limits. Any item can be invested with any level of Power and any number of effects, even items like beeswax and feathers, or a simple cloth tapestry (although Warping Points are still inflicted for the number of pawns of vis the opening would have needed).

Furthermore, instead of using vis, the Hyperborean enchanter Warps his own body, at a rate of 2 Warping

Points for every pawn of vis the enchantment would have needed (in both opening the item and instilling the effect). Warping from “opening” an item occurs only once for that item. Hyperborean magic can also enchant Powers into a relic that would otherwise be considered Hermetic Rituals (in particular, permanent healing effects).

Unlike Hermetic enchanters, who can slowly enchant items (by accumulating points) over seasons, a Hyperborean enchanter must be able to enchant an item in a single season, or else he is unable to enchant the

item at all. Hyperborean enchantments cannot infuse a Power that uses two hymns at once — only choirs can do that (although a single item could be infused with separate powers from multiple hymns). Hyperborean magic cannot create talismans or charged items; it also cannot bind familiars or create Longevity Rituals (except for the Eternal Youth of the Sun Power, above). Likewise, it cannot make use of similar spells, it does not create Lab Texts, and Hyperborean enchanters cannot experiment.

## Sample Hyperborean Relic Powers, Continued

*continued from previous page*

As the Hermetic spell, *Incantation of the Body Made Whole*.

Hymn: Semesilam

Principle: Good health

(Base 35, +1 Touch)

### THE GIFT OF FAR-SIGHTED APOLLO

InIm 26

Pen +0, 2 uses/day

R: Per, D: Sun, T: Vision

As Interrogation of Asclepius, above.

Hymn: Iaó

Principle: Sight

(Base 3, +2 Sun, +4 Vision, +1 level uses/day)

### SIGHT OF THE PYTHIAN ORACLE

InIm 34

Pen +0, 2 uses/day, constant effect

R: Arc, D: Sun, T: Room

A variation of the Hermetic spell, *Summoning the Distant Image*. The user of this Power must possess an

Arcane Connection to the place she wishes to see.

Hymn: Iaó

Principle: Sight

(Base 2, +4 Arc, +2 Sun, +2 Room, +1 level uses/day, +3 levels constant effect)

### APOLLONIAN PRAYER OF CHRYSSES

PeCo 80

Pen +20, 1 use/day

R: Arc, D: Mom, T: Bound

Chryses was a priest of Apollo whose daughter was enslaved by the Greek king Agamemnon during the Trojan War. When Agamemnon refused to return the priest's daughter, Apollo punished the Greek army by raining down plague arrows. This Power's effect is as the Hermetic spell, *Curse of the Unportended Plague*. The user of this Power must possess an Arcane Connection to the place she wishes to inflict the plague upon. The user may also invoke this Power if she can see the target, such as

through using the Power *Sight of the Pythian Oracle*.

Hymn: Iaó

Principle: Disease

(Base 20, +4 Arc, +4 Bound, +1 additional effect, +10 levels Penetration)

A damaged or profaned relic may lose some or all of its Powers. A relic is considered profaned if it is handled by anyone aligned with the Infernal realm, or any creature with Infernal Might, in which case it permanently loses all of its Powers. Prolonged exposure to a character possessing a Personality Flaw that was considered by Apollo Phoebus to be dishonorable causes the relic to permanently lose one Power each season it is in the character's presence. A damaged relic (such as a torn tapestry, or a bouquet missing feathers) may lose one or more Powers, at the storyguide's discretion (determined by the extent of the damage).

## Hyperborean Enchantment Example

The mighty Hyperborean wizard, Abaris Hyperberetaeos, decides to enchant the Semesilam Power Thalia's Relief into a stone obelisk near his temple, and decides to give the Power a Target of Boundary. His total enchantment Ease Factor is 14 (Base 4, +1 Touch, +2 Sun, +5 Boundary = 40, divided by 3). To craft this would normally require 20 pawns of vis to prepare (material is hard stone 4, size is huge x5), and a further four pawns to enchant (total level effect is 40 divided by 10).

Abaris has the Semesilam Hymn Ability at level 6, and his Intelligence is +2. The magic aura is 4, Abaris

has the Major Virtue Hyperborean Descent (+4) and speaks the Hyperborean language fluently (Ability score 6). He also has the Personality Trait Continnence, which is approved of by Apollo (granting a +1). There are no shape or material bonuses. His Enchantment Total is 21, easily exceeding the Ease Factor.

It takes Abaris a mere season to enchant the obelisk; however, in doing so he inflicts 24 Warping Points upon himself (though this does not trigger Illumination). Abaris would be able to further enchant the obelisk as he wished (and would be

further Warped), but would not need to "open" the obelisk again.

### OBELISK OF THALIA'S RELIEF

ReMe 45

Pen +0, 1 use/day

R: Touch, D: Sun, T: Bound

All those who cross the boundary marked by the obelisk have their worry, anxiety, or grief relieved, and are filled with good cheer and delight.

Hymn: Semesilam

Principle: Optimism

(Base 4, +3 Sight, +2 Sun, +4 Bound)

# Integrating Hyperborean Magic

Upon learning or finding a Hyperborean hymn or relic, a magus may decide to attempt to incorporate its magic into Hermetic theory.

## The Breakthrough

Below are the minimum numbers of breakthrough points required to integrate various aspects of Hyperborean magic into Hermetic theory. It is recommended that the required number of breakthrough points be slightly varied (by perhaps 3 to 5 up or down) so players are never sure exactly how many they need.

**INTEGRATING A NEW DURATION  
(MINOR BREAKTHROUGH): 30 breakthrough points**

**INTEGRATING SPIRIT-TRAVEL (MINOR  
BREAKTHROUGH): 35 breakthrough points**

**INTEGRATING VIS-LESS PERMANENT  
MAGIC: 70 breakthrough points**

**INTEGRATING VIS-LESS  
ENCHANTMENT: 65 breakthrough points**

**INTEGRATING THE ELIMINATION OF  
SHAPE, MATERIAL, AND SIZE LIMITS:  
60 breakthrough points**

**INTEGRATING RITUAL EFFECT  
ENCHANTMENT: 65 breakthrough points**

## Hyperborean Integration Process

**1. FINDING THE SOURCE:** Sources for Hyperborean hymns or relics are scattered throughout Mythic Europe, concentrating on areas sacred to Apollo or other significant sun deities, and require quests and stories to find. There are legends of Hyperboreans who reached as far as Iberia, Britain, and the Far East. Sources of Hyperborean hymns would include fragments of the hymns, such as those found at the Basilica of Ten Thousand Columns (see below), scribed upon ancient relics, or even related by the ghosts of famous Hyperboreans.

**2. GAINING INSIGHT:** Each source allows your character to gain one Insight, which permits him to create one specific effect.

**3. INCORPORATING THE INSIGHT:** The researcher must incorporate the Insight into a magical effect, either a spell or magical device. The effect must resemble the most significant Power of the source of the Insight. If your character finds a hymn fragment with that allows someone to command spirits, the effect he creates must do likewise; a source can only be used to attempt a Breakthrough related to its Powers.

**4. RESEARCH, RESEARCH, RESEARCH:** As per the process outlined in the Introduction.

**5. CONSEQUENCES:** Some advice as to the consequences of integrating aspects of Hyperborean magic into Hermetic theory is included in the text nearby.

## Hyperborean Insight

Most of the remaining fragmented hymns and relics are not very good sources for gaining Insight. Their remnants hint at once-powerful magic, but in most cases, without the complete words of the hymn or a working relic, Insight into the magic of Hyperborea is elusive.

**HYMNS:** Most Hyperborean hymns were carved onto Apollo's temples, or stored on fragile parchment. Having only a fragment of a hymn (such as a sacred name or fragments of a prayer string) imposes a -2 penalty on the Insight roll, while a near-complete fragment grants a +2 bonus to the roll. The completeness (or lack thereof) of a fragment, and its modifier to Insight rolls, is up to the storyguide, but should not be more than +/- 2. Knowing (or using Insight gained from) other Hyperborean hymns grants no additional bonus; each Hymn Ability is

different enough from others that one must, in effect, learn the system all over again. (That is, your character has to integrate or gain Insight from each of the hymns).

**RELICS:** There are very few working Hyperborean relics still extant. Using a whole, working relic as a source grants a +2 to the Insight roll. A damaged relic can still be a source of Insight, but decreases the Insight roll by -2. A profaned relic (or a relic with no working Powers) decreases the Insight roll by -3.

**TEACHERS:** The last known Hyperborean wizards were killed over 300 years ago. Nevertheless, several ghostly priests still persist, and, with difficulty, could be convinced to share their knowledge. It is also possible that the Hyperboreans still live safely in their northern lands, venturing out only in spirit form; the tale of Cleodemus, in the quote at the start of this chapter, tells of the case of a Hyperborean mysteriously visiting

the estate of a Roman noble. Thus, the hymns could form the basis for a mysterious hedge-wizard antagonist who visits the players characters' covenant.

**HYPERBOREAN LANGUAGE:** Knowing the Hyperborean language makes gaining Insight easier. Having a basic proficiency in Hyperborean grants +1 to the Insight roll for every point the researcher has in the Ability above 4, to a maximum of +3.

**MULTIPLE SOURCES:** Insight can be gained from multiple sources, so long as both sources are similar enough. If two different sources are used, and both utilize the aspect of Hyperborean magic that the researcher is trying to integrate, then breakthrough points from both can be added to the research project. Remember, however, that you may not use a single source for repeated Insight. One source only provides Insight one time for one thing. To gain an Insight into another Breakthrough from Hyperborean magic requires an adventure to find another source.

### INSIGHT EXAMPLE

*Moratamis finds a fragment of a hymn that uses the 19 Year Duration and starts to research it, gaining breakthrough points for an effect using that duration. Some years later, she finds a more complete fragment of another hymn that also uses the 19 Year Duration. She decides to use this as well, and the more complete fragment allows her to gain Insight more easily; the breakthrough points accumulated from her earlier research are added to her new breakthrough points, as both aspects of the research focus on the 19 Year Duration.*

### Consequences

**19 YEARS DURATION:** Currently, unless enchanted into a magical device,

Hermetic magic cannot produce spells with an ongoing duration longer than one year; with this duration, for a single increase in magnitude, Rituals would last almost 20 times longer. This Breakthrough would dramatically increase Hermetic magic's longevity. Hermes portals would need only a small amount of extra vis to last 19 times as long, and year-long Rituals would similarly have a substantially greater impact. Most importantly for the Order, attempting to integrate a new 19 Year Duration with the *Aegis of the Hearth* spell would revolutionize Hermetic defenses, although to do so would require another Major Breakthrough (as *Aegis of the Heath* was itself a Major Breakthrough, see ArM5, page 161).

**SPIRIT TRAVEL:** Hermetic magic already allows for limited spirit travel, through the Art of Mentem. Hyperborean spirit travel is less risky than with Hermetic magic. Magi, particularly Seekers, may find Powers such as Radiant Mantle of the Night Wanderer a safer way to travel to dangerous and faraway locations. This could also alter the way that Hermetic society operates, as magi not wanting to make the trip to a Tribunal meeting could still attend in spirit. This may also have consequences for the Redcaps, as magi start traveling in spirit to visit their sodales, rather than writing them letters.

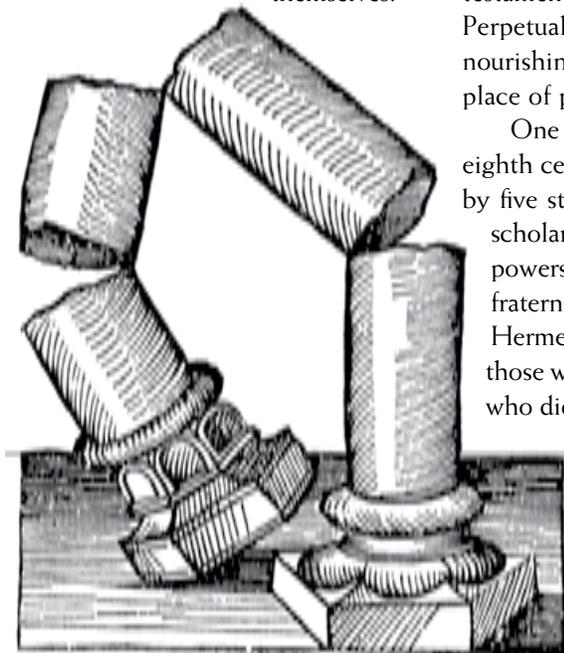
**VIS-LESS SPELLS:** Hyperborean magic does not require vis for permanent effects. This is the most upsetting of the Breakthroughs, as it would allow Hermetic magi to create permanent objects out of thin air, heal wounds, resolve aging crises, and devise Longevity Rituals, all without vis. Vis would become useful only for making magic easier to cast, and for enchanting items in the laboratory, rather than as an absolute necessity for Rituals or healing magic. Hermetic

society and its economy would change dramatically. The vis-trading system of House Mercere (see *Houses of Hermes: True Lineages*, pages 84–85) would dramatically decline in value, and the vis stocks of powerful covenants would be of less use. It could be in the interests of these groups to prevent such a discovery from being propagated. Of all of the possible ways to integrate Hyperborean hymns into Hermetic magic, this is the most potentially saga-upsetting, and may unbalance the game.

**VIS-LESS ENCHANTMENT:** This Breakthrough would allow the enchantment of magical devices by supplementing vis with Warping Points, at a rate of 2 Warping Points for every pawn of vis that would have been needed. This would give Hermetic magi the unenviable choice between personal sacrifice or resource sacrifice when creating magical devices. This Breakthrough would allow vis-poor magi to compete with their richer sodales, but effectively decrease their Hermetic lifespans.

**ELIMINATION OF SHAPE, MATERIAL AND SIZE LIMITS:** For Hermetic magi who regularly enchant items, this would allow any item to be enchanted with any number of effects. A single copper ring could be enchanted with scores of levels of effects. Precious metal and gems would cease being the main materials used to for powerful effects, and this, like vis-less enchantment, would allow poor magi to compete with their rich colleagues. Items would still need to be "opened," and would require the same number of pawns of vis (or twice as many Warping Points, if that Breakthrough had also been integrated) as normal to prepare for any enchantment (ArM5, Preparation for Enchantment, page 97). Once prepared, however, the item could be invested with an effectively unlimited number of magical effects.

**RITUAL EFFECT ENCHANTMENT:** Hermetic magic cannot currently enchant Ritual effects into magical devices, which makes it impossible for devices or potions to permanently heal. . The unlimited Ritual effect Breakthrough would allow Hermetic magi to enchant Ritual effects into magical devices, including permanent Creo effects (see ArM5, pages 96 and 98). (The Mercere Portals in *Houses of Hermes: True Lineages*, page 80, made use of a Breakthrough like this one.) The result—an Order of Hermes that could create charged items with permanent effects, as well as enchanted devices that can permanently heal—would be dramatic. Longevity Rituals could be enchanted into devices, as could powerful Creo Corpus spells such as *Cheating the Reaper* or *Incantation of the Body Made Whole*. Magi deaths due to injury or aging would decrease. Safe Hermetic travel, as covenants began enchanting permanent Hermes Portals, would increase. Items that permanently create food or precious metals could alter the economy of the Order or even Mythic Europe, as covenants would no longer require supporting villages to feed themselves.



## The Basilica of Ten Thousand Columns

*In that island, there is a magnificent grove (or precinct) of Apollo, and a remarkable temple, of round form, adorned with many consecrated gifts. There is also a city, sacred to the same god, most of the inhabitants of which are harpers, who continually play upon their harps in the temple, and sing hymns to the god, extolling his actions.*

— Hecataeus of Abdera,  
*Peri Hyperboreon*

### The Legend

From the fourth century BC, the Basilica of Ten Thousand Columns was a temple to Apollo Phoebus, “the Shining One.” Amid its marble columns walked the descendants of the Hyperboreans. Nestled at the foot of Mount Pelister among the Balkan Mountains and on the banks of the River Dragor, the basilica stood as a testament to the majesty of Apollo. Perpetually surrounded by a sweet, nourishing breeze, the basilica was a place of peace and tranquility.

One day, towards the end of the eighth century, the basilica was visited by five strange people, Latin-speaking scholars from the West with arcane powers. They told the priests of a fraternity of wizards, the Order of Hermes, which offered protection to those who joined, and death to those who did not. The priests replied that they served only Apollo and therefore could not join the Hermetic Order; they sent the five Western magi away.

Several years passed. The Westerners’ visit was

forgotten by most of the priests, and they thought no more of it.

Trianoma and Tremere attacked without warning. Tremere and his three filii sucked away the breath and twisted the tongues of the Hyperboreans, making it difficult for them to sing their hymns. Trianoma invoked powerful Thessalian curses of bad fortune and heated the air, damaging the fragile relics.

The magical battle that followed is recalled in early Hermetic histories as a great victory for the nascent Order of Hermes. Trianoma, assisted by Tremere, defeated a group of formidable Hellenic wizards whose stubborn refusal to join the Order jeopardized Hermetic peace in the East. The wizards, priests of Apollo, were aided by many mighty spirits and potent magical devices, and held out valiantly against Trianoma and Tremere before finally succumbing. Tremere himself was badly wounded and one of his allies, a mighty Dacian necromancer, was killed by Abaris Hyperberetaeos, the basilica’s high priest. With the Apollonian priests defeated, Trianoma and Tremere looted the temple, uncovering many of Apollo’s relics and hymns and returning them to the West.

### Finding the Basilica

Both Trianoma and Tremere recorded the approximate location of the basilica in letters, and histories of the Order of Hermes’s early years also mention the ruins. The journals and letters of later Hermetic explorers, who visited the ruins in the hope of finding the hidden regio, also hint at where the temple may be hidden.

Due to the legends of the great treasures to be found at the temple, however, few magi gave the exact location. The temple is also missing

## Motives of the Founders

Why did Tremere and Trianoma attack the basilica? Theories regarding the motives of Trianoma abound, particularly given her normally diplomatic temperament.

One Hermetic legend tells of the jealousy between the Hyperboreans and the Thessalian witches, particularly the enmity held by Erictho and her ancestor Medea, who were badly treated by Apollo. The Hyperborean priests, aligned with the sun, were the natural enemies of the lunar Thessalian witches. Trianoma, born of the same blood as Erictho and Medea, was naturally inclined against the Hyperboreans.

Another tale recalls an ancient Greek myth of Apollo, where the sun god was commanded to kill Otos and Ephialtes, the two giant children of Poseidon, before they had time to grow too great in power and threaten the home of the gods. Trianoma, gifted with visions, foresaw that the Hyperborean priests were charged with ensuring that the Order of Hermes would not grow so great as to threaten the gods. She believed that one day the Hyperboreans would seek to destroy the Order — the

mighty child of Hermes — lest it grow too great in stature. She and Tremere both decided on a preemptive strike to preserve the Hermetic Order.

Some Trianoma magi believe that Trianoma sought the secret of Longevity Rituals from the Hyperboreans, who were renowned for their long lives, and that when the priests refused to share their secrets, she was convinced by Tremere to take them by force. These Trianoma magi note the practical maximum of the Longevity Ritual is just over 250 years, the same life-span as Aristeas the Hyperborean.

There is little discussion as to why Tremere was involved in the attack on the basilica, concerned as he was with the subjugation of the Hellenic magi of Greece and the growth of his House's influence. Indeed, the destruction of the basilica was the catalyst for many Greek wizards to accept the suzerainty of Jerbiton in exchange for protection from Tremere (see *Houses of Hermes: True Lineages*, page 112). Others, however, note a similar lunar tendency with Tremere, given his chosen familiar was a wolf.

Finally, some in House Bonisagus and House Tremere dismiss this Hermetic legend as slander and an attempt by Schism-war era propaganda to blacken Trianoma's and Tremere's good names.

In the ninth century, a monastery was established by Constantine VII over the temple's ruins, and part of which were incorporated into a new building. Even with the consecrated altar in the monastery, the area remained deeply magical. A century and a half later, despite repeated exorcisms by abbots and priests who believed the area to be haunted, the monastery was abandoned.

Attempts by Hermetic Seekers to uncover the Hyperborean treasure-trove proved largely fruitless, and as time passed the basilica was largely forgotten by the Order of Hermes. The last expedition, in the late 11th century by a group of Hellenic Jerbiton magi from the Tribunal of Thebes, was confronted by the resistance of several potent spirits, perhaps the same spirits who aided the original Hyperborean priests.

from most ancient maps, although it is mentioned as the receptacle of many devotional gifts to Apollo, and as a sister-temple to Delphi and Delos. The tombs of the Hyperborean maidens, Arge and Opis, could be inscribed with a map to the basilica.

Hermetic researchers attempting to locate the basilica would be able to find the rough area in which it is located, perhaps even its proximity to Mt. Pelister, but the exact location was never recorded. Older texts are likely to be found in monastic libraries in Greece, or in venerable covenants in the Transylvanian Tribunal. Due

to the great magical wealth fabled to be at the basilica, few Hermetic magi would be willing to give this information to rivals, even if they were unlikely to make the journey themselves.

A troupe interested in visiting the basilica could start their quest with a story dedicated to finding a record of its location. A journey to the spacious halls of Coeris, or the somber shelves of a Byzantine monastic library, would be good places to start.

If your troupe is more interested in just getting straight to the basilica, a character could merely spend a sea-

son researching the Order's histories and archives. To find the location of the basilica in this way, you may make an Intelligence + Order of Hermes Lore stress roll against an Ease Factor of 21.

**LOCATING THE BASILICA: Intelligence + Order of Hermes Lore + stress die vs. Ease Factor 21**

If you succeed, the character successfully locates a letter or record that states the location of the basilica's ruins; failure means that his season's search was fruitless. A botch could

## The Despotate of Epirus

The closest town to the basilica is Manastir, the 11th century capital of the Bulgarian Empire, not far from where Emperor Basil blinded 14,000 Bulgarian captives in 1014 (see *Houses of Hermes: True Lineages*, page 114). The region is populated by Slavs and Bulgars, and ruled in 1220 by Theodore Ducas, magnate of one of the powerful imperial families of Byzantium. Manastir has its own bishop, and is on a trade route between the Adriatic Sea and Thessalonica.

Under Theodore, the Despotate is locked in endemic conflict with the Kingdom of Serbia and Bulgaria, and the Latin Empire. Theodore controls a number of strategically important towns, including Larissa, Dyrrhachium,

several ports on the Gulf of Corinth, and access to the Egnatian Way, the main road to Constantinople.

Theodore is known for being ruthless and unscrupulous, taxing his subjects harshly, and waging what seems like an endless war against his neighbors. He is currently laying siege to Thessalonica, which is governed by the Latin rulers of Constantinople. Theodore recently captured Peter of Courtenay, the Latin emperor of Constantinople and an influential French aristocrat, cruelly torturing and executing him. Due to this, the Latin Empire is without a ruler, although succession has passed to Peter's son, Robert of Courtenay, who is traveling from his father's French lands.

### STORY HOOK

The bishop of Manastir decides to revive the failed monastery of Saints Cyril and Methodius, located at the site of the Basilica of Ten Thousand Columns. This is a major exercise, requiring monks to be recruited, and a team of masons and other tradesmen to make the dangerous journey to Mount Pelister in order to rebuild the monastery. The bishop is most concerned over the tales of mighty ghosts haunting the site, and so searches for assistants to his exorcists, possibly even Hermetic magi.

mean that he uncovers a mistaken location far, far away from where the basilica truly lies.

## On the Banks of the Dragor

The ruins of the Basilica of Ten Thousand Columns can be found on the banks of the Dragor River, secreted amid the Baba Mountains in the Despotate of Epirus. The basilica is a temple complex of great beauty and wealth. Parts of it have been built over by a ninth century Byzantine monastery, although this too has fallen into ruin. The entire area is surrounded by an unusually high Magic aura, and parts of the ruin have been absorbed into a Magic regio.

The basilica is a complex of four buildings: a sanctuary of Apollo in which the god is supposed to have resided, a treasury in which votive offerings to Apollo were stored, a small amphitheater used for religious

festivals, and the gymnasium used by the priests for education. All of the buildings of the basilica are modeled on those found in Hyperborea.

Upon approaching the basilica, a traveler is struck by the incredible beauty of the vale, the picturesque stream that courses through the ruins, the magnificent rose bushes, the incredible brightness of the sun even on overcast days, and the sweetness of the air. A majestic snow-topped mountain towers over the vale. Despite having been uninhabited for centuries, the grass appears neatly clipped, the rosebushes, hedges, and trees pruned, and most of the buildings free of weeds, lichen, or moss. An intricately paved road winds its way through the complex, around a large olive tree, and ends at the sanctuary to Apollo.

The ruins themselves are made from a pure white marble, except for the treasury, which is crafted from yellow marble. Boulders of varying sizes, torn from the mountain, lie strewn throughout the complex. The

gymnasium and amphitheater are almost entirely destroyed, although the foundations and a few roofless rooms remain. The sanctuary to Apollo has been converted into a small monastery, although this has been abandoned for 300 years, its domed roof half-collapsed and its fine mosaics flaking.

### APOLLO'S SANCTUARY

The sanctuary of Apollo is the center of the basilica complex. A number of complete Doric columns remain standing, while the stumps of 30 or so others remain, spread about the foundations. The entrance of the sanctuary faces east, joined to the road by the stands where two large stone bulls once stood, the feet of which remain. A large stone pillar, with badly damaged inscriptions in Hyperborean, stands directly before the sanctuary, although the statue of Apollo that stood upon it now lies

## The Basilica's Aura

The ruins of the basilica have an exceptionally high Magic aura. Upon entering the vale where the ruins lie, the Magic aura quickly rises to a rating of 5. Along the elaborately paved road that winds through the basilica's buildings, the Magic aura is 6. Amid the buildings, the Magic aura is 7, while most of the buildings themselves have an aura of 8. A small copse, home to a flock of crows, has a Magic aura of 7, as do the stream and small ponds, where a large wedge of swans swims. Seven days after each new moon, the Magic auras in the vale increase by one, and decrease by one on the seventh day after the waning of the moon.

In the ruins of the monastery, attached to the sanctuary, the Magic aura drops to 4, and in the crumbling tabernacle, there is no Magic aura at all. On the holy day of SS. Cyril and Methodius (February 14) a feeble Dominion aura of 1 emerges around the altar. The olive tree radiates a Divine (Empyrean) aura of 1, which extends to its furthest branch.

Due to some lingering mystic correspondences, any spells cast or supernatural abilities used that relate to the summoning or control of the dead, divining the future, curing or causing disease, or invoking spirits receive double the benefit from the magical aura.

in pieces. The head of the statue was taken as a trophy by Tremere.

The sanctuary itself is a circular building, 70 paces in diameter, with a row of 48 columns in the outer sanctuary. The inner sanctuary once housed an ornate statue of Apollo Phoebus, and contained carvings depicting the

## Agyieus Pillars

If a traveler started at Delphi and walked back along the *Via Sacra* ("Sacred Way"), he would find that the path is marked by conical Agyieus pillars, which are sacred to Apollo. These pillars are connected to the Hyperboreans because two of them, Pagasus and Agyieus, visited Delphi and marked their journey with these "Apollo stations." The Agyieus pillars are few and far between, crossing through Greece intermittently and into the Carpathians, and finally leading to the Black Sea.

The pillar in front of the ruined sanctuary of Apollo is also an Agyieus pillar. Like the herms — sacred stone idols of Hermes — the Agyieus pillars mark sacred paths and places to Apollo. The pillars may be enchanted, and provide the following shape and material bonuses: +2 invoking or controlling spirits, +3 divining the future, +3 summoning sunlight, +5 cause or cure disease, and +5 protection from hostile spirits.

god's journeys to Hyperborea in the winter months and his passage across the sky in his fiery chariot.

The inner sanctuary and half of the outer sanctuary have been converted into a monastery, a white-washed two-story building with a domed roof that is collapsing. There is room for a community of 20 monks and laypeople, with a large central common area, and a small sacristy and shrine.

The monastery is elaborately decorated with mosaics and painted wooden panels covered in gold leaf. Icons of SS. Cyril and Methodius, the Archangel Raphael, and the emperor Basil II in golden armor abound, while

## Apollo Phoebus

Apollo Phoebus means "Shining One," and from the fifth century BC he came to be seen as the deity of the sun, often being identified with Helios. According to one Hermetic legend, Apollo gained this title after defeating Hyperion during the Titanomachy (the war between Olympian gods and titans).

One of the 12 great Olympian Gods, Apollo is the god of prophecy and divination, and is also said to have dominion over plagues, healing, light, archery, the arts, and the sun. His symbols include swans, crows, dolphins, bows and arrows, the laurel crown, the lyre, and the tripod.

the altar is still shrouded by a fragile and faded curtain.

## THE TREASURY OF THE HYPERBOREANS

Surrounded by a low wall, the Treasury of the Hyperboreans was the storehouse of the many devotional offerings made to Apollo. The remains of 30 statues of kings of Hyperborea stand before the treasury, which is built from deep-yellow limestone. Its walls are covered in carvings of scenes from Apollo's life, particularly of him curing disease and prophesying the future. Many of the details have been defaced, or covered over with Christian symbols. The treasury is a relatively small building with a modest antechamber leading through to the storage room, which is empty and plain. The arched doorway has faded scorch marks and signs of forced entry that are many centuries old.

It is this building that Trianoma and Tremere looted in the eighth cen-

## The Altars of Alexander the Great

During his many conquests, Alexander the Great, an initiate of many powerful arcane mysteries, founded cities and build shrines and temples upon ancient sites. These sites were located upon potent magical currents known as "dragon lines." Alexander believed that by "pinning" the dragon lines, he would be able to channel the earth's forces into his body and become a living god. The dragon lines are centered on Alexandria in Egypt and reach as far as Delphi, India, and the Island of Meroë at the Nile's source.

There is a ruined Alexandrian altar in the basilica, converted by monks into a Christian altar. However, ancient records indicate that Alexandrian altars can be found throughout Greece and the East, and throughout the barbarian lands to the very shores of the Scythian coast. One of the altars is

believed to have the bronze sword of Alexander interred within it — the same sword used to assassinate his father, Phillip.

The altars of Alexander have powerful mystical connections to each other, and link to over 70 different sites. A magus, casting a spell using the Arcane Connection Range while touching such an altar, is considered to have an Arcane Connection with a +4 multiplier to the other shrines, cities, or temples connected by the dragon lines.

It is possible that House Mercere knows the location of many of the 70 sites linked by the altars; indeed, many of the Merceres' Portals (see *Houses of Hermes: True Lineages*, page 80) may be built upon the ruins of altars. Determining the locations of other altars would require Magic Lore research (see *Covenants*, page 98).

tury. Following the defeat and deaths of the Hyperborean priests, the two Founders spent a great deal of time and effort to break into the treasury, which was the most heavily defended of the buildings. Eventually they broke in, but found only a few treasures — certainly not the grand hoard that legends spoke of. Tremere wrote in later years that he believed the destroyed door was the passage to a regio, now forever cut off from the world.

### THE AMPHITHEATER

Some way up the slope of the mountain is an amphitheater, although little remains except the stone semi-circle used as the stage, and the elegant curve cut into a natural auditorium. On the night seven days after the new moon, a ghostly replica of

the amphitheater appears, and minor spirits can be glimpsed reenacting scenes from Apollo's life.

### THE GYMNASIUM

The gymnasium is where the priests taught and contemplated their religious duties. Little remains except for the foundations, with a few stones rising to shoulder height. At nighttime and on Apollo's sacred days, ghosts of the slain priests can be glimpsed going about their sacred rites.

## Inhabitants

Although abandoned centuries ago by the living, the basilica is still the dwelling-place of spirits, ghosts, and daimons.

## Hyperborean Relics in the Order of Hermes

The Basilica of Ten Thousand Columns was looted by Trianoma and Tremere, its magical lore and devices carried triumphantly back to the West. It is possible, therefore, that Hyperborean relics or Apollonian hymns could be found in other parts of Mythic Europe, particularly at covenants associated with the Founders. Hidden upon or within the relics could be clues as to the whereabouts of the basilica, the true names of spirits, or information about the road to Hyperborea itself. Alternatively, it is also possible that these powerful relics may have been used, and destroyed, during the Schism War.

### THE RESTLESS DEAD

Murdered by the Founders, many of the Hyperborean priests remain as spectral remnants of their former selves, unwilling to travel to the afterlife and desert their sacred duty. The most potent of the ghosts, the senior priests of Apollo, still carry out their priestly tasks, praying, tending to the buildings and grounds as best they can, and guarding the secrets of the basilica from those who would steal them. (Note that these ghosts differ from those presented in *The Broken Covenant of Calebais, Revised Edition*, page 35, in that their lives of dealing with the dead have prepared them more for an afterlife of ghostly haunting.)

### SPIRIT GUARDIANS

The Hyperborean priests of the basilica were protected by several underworld spirits, particularly those connected with Apollo's sister,

## The Nekuomanteioi, Hyperborean Priests of Apollo

The *nekuomanteioi* ("oracles of the dead") are ghosts that can recite prophecies and oracles. Wizards who summon or control these ghosts are known as *psuchagôgoi* ("prophets of the soul"). Many of the murdered Apollonian priests still remain, and some may be much more powerful than the ghost below (with Might scores as high as 40); they are likely to be hostile towards, or at least wary of, Hermetic magi.

**Magic Might:** 15 (Mentem)

**Characteristics:** Int +2, Per +1, Pre 0, Com +2, Str 0, Sta 0, Dex 0, Qik 0

**Size:** 0 (non-physical)

**Age:** n/a (35–40)

**Decrepitude:** n/a

**Confidence Score:** 1 (3)

**Virtues and Flaws:** Ceremony, Hyperborean Descent (Minor), Hyperborean Hymnist x3, Premonitions, Second Sight

**Personality Traits:** Honest +3, Self-serving –1

**Combat:**

Fist: Init +1, Atk +2, Dfn +2, Dam +0\*

\* When manifested only

**Soak:** +0 (plus Hymn Ability scores where relevant)

**Fatigue Levels:** n/a

**Wound Penalties:** n/a

**Abilities:** Ancient Greek 5 (songs), Area Lore Balkans 3 (Hyperborean relics), Artes Liberales 4 (astronomy), Athletics 2 (running), Awareness 3 (spirits), Bargain 3 (spirits), Brawl 1 (fist), Ceremony 4 (Hymn Psyrinpheu), Folk Ken 3, Hymn Pentiterouni 3, Hymn Psyrinpheu 2, Hymn Eloure 2, Hyperborean 5 (hymns), Magic Lore 6 (spirits), Premonitions 7 (good fortune), Second Sight 4 (ghosts), Sing 4 (prayer), Teaching 4 (Hyperborean hymns)

**Powers:\***

*Courage of the Python Slayer*, 4 points, Init +0, Mentem: As per the Psyrinpheu Power.

*False Dream of Aktiôphis*, 4 points, Init +0, Mentem: As per the Eloure power.

*Manifest*, 1 point, Init +0, Mentem: The *nekuomanteioi* may manifest as a physical being, either in a human or crow form, as if it were using *Radiant Mantle of the Night Wanderer*.

*Oracle of the Dead*, 10 points, Init +0, Imaginem: The *nekuomanteioi* may see into the past or future if it possesses an Arcane Connection to the person or location it is examining. The information it receives is indistinct and transmitted in a confusing manner, filled with strange symbols. Its visions of the future are not what *will* happen, but what *may* happen, and are typically even more vague.

*Possession*, 3 points, Init +0, Mentem: The *nekuomanteioi* may attempt to control the living by possessing a person's spirit. Spending 3 Might points allows the ghost to possess a person (or animal) for at least a few minutes (Diameter Duration), and gain control over his body, assuming the ghost penetrates any Magic Resistance the person may have. The possessed person may attempt to resist the possession by making a Stamina + Concentration roll against an Ease Factor of 9. If this roll fails, then the *nekuomanteioi* is able to possess the person for a full day, after which the person may resist again. This roll may be repeated every day. The ghost may be exorcised as normal, through Perdo or Rego Mentem spells, or through other Supernatural Powers such as the

Adjuration Divine Power (*Realms of Power: The Divine*, page 49). While possessing a person, the ghost may use any Powers or magic the host has (except Divine Powers).

*Slaying of Niobe's Children*, 6 points, Init +0, Corpus/Ignem: As per the Psyrinpheu power.

\* Many of the Powers once possessed by the *nekuomanteioi* through his Hyperborean hymns are no longer available in death.

**Vis:** 3 pawns Mentem.

**Appearance:** The *nekuomanteioi* appears as a middle-aged man, dressed in elaborate clothes that resemble a mix of ancient Greek and Celtic dress, or as a large black crow. Unless using its Manifest Power, the *nekuomanteioi* appears translucent and indistinct, and during the day it is completely invisible. The *nekuomanteioi* may use its Premonition Ability and other Supernatural Abilities as it wishes.

In the presence of a *nekuomanteioi* (who may be summoned through *Incantation of Summoning the Dead*), a necromancer may use the ghost as an Arcane Connection for Intellego spells (in particular, Intellego Imaginem) in order to look into the past or future. This increases the magnitude of the spell by 4 if looking into the past, or 5 if looking into the hazy and indistinct future. Either option also makes the spell a Ritual. Casting spells in this manner is very dangerous, and inflicts upon the magus a number of Warping Points equal to the total magnitude of the spell (which may cause Twilight). If a *nekuomanteioi* were captured or otherwise persuaded to assist, a Hermetic researcher (with the storyguide's blessing) could use it as a source for a Hermetic Breakthrough.

## Aktióphis's Displeasure

Aktióphis's Displeasure is one of the four earthly manifestations of the Goddess of the Heavenly Vault. Aktiόphis herself is the bride of Tem, and is sister to Helios and Selene. Her Displeasure is a groan from the deepest depth of the nighttime void, manifesting as a sepulchral menace that can be physically felt, and seen as a writhing morass of solid, dark grief. Aktiόphis is a highly sensitive goddess and takes great offense at even the smallest slights. Her Displeasure is her most powerful semi-autonomous manifestation, and the most active. (Note: References to Aktiόphis below refer only to her Displeasure — Aktiόphis herself is much more powerful.)

**Magic Might:** 10 (Corpus)

**Characteristics:** Int +3, Per +3, Pre +2, Com +0, Str +2, Sta +2, Dex +0, Qik +1

**Size:** +0

**Confidence Score:** 3 (9)

**Virtues and Flaws:** Greater Immunity (animal attacks, and weapons made of plant matter or lead); Piercing Gaze,

**Personality Traits:** Merciless +3, Adamant +2

**Combat:**

Coil: Init +1, Attack +10, Defense +0, Damage +9\*

\* When manifested only

**Soak:** +8

**Fatigue Levels:** n/a

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-15), Incapacitated (16-20)\*

\* When manifested only

**Abilities:** Area Lore Spirit World 8 (Hyperborean spirits), Bargain

6 (pacts), Etiquette 6 (celestial courts), Guile 5 (misleading promises), Magic Lore 10 (spirits), Penetration 4 (ill-fortune), Teaching 5 (secrets)

**Powers:**

*Augur of the Illuminated Revelation*, 5 points, Init +1, Vim: Aktiόphis is privy to certain truths, and from her starry throne resplendent in the heavenly firmament, her gaze is wide and all-encompassing. Aktiόphis can give the true answer to any question to a character standing beside her, but she demands that a price be paid: the supplicant must swallow a hot coal from a fire at moonrise (see ArM5, page 181). Aktiόphis must be summoned in order to use this power.

*Drawing the Undeserved Breath*, 4 points, Init +1, Corpus: This is the most potent of Aktiόphis's rebukes, for it makes the target unable to breathe for two hours. Should he survive being unable to draw breath for that amount of time (such as by having air magically moved into his lungs), he forever remains unmolested by Aktiόphis. To date, no mortal has survived.

*Banish the Nighttime Respite*, 2 points, Init +1, Mentem: This Power denies its target the gift of sleep. The target is unable to sleep for one week, and suffers extreme effects of fatigue, and the other concomitant effects of sleep deprivation.

*Gather the Dark Clouds*, 3 points, Init +1, Corpus: By removing her good will, Aktiόphis makes it known to the other denizens of

the spirit world that the target is spiritually unprotected. Spirits of sickness, illness, bad luck, and other misfortune are drawn to the target like moths to a flame. Within seven hours of this power being exercised, a terrible illness or disease strikes the target. Spirits of disease may add +3 to their Penetration if attempting to enervate or sicken the target. If the target has explicit protection from another powerful entity (for example, characters with True Faith), this Power fails automatically.

*Loosen the False Dream*, 2 points, Init +1, Mentem: Aktiόphis coerces and empowers a dream spirit to travel to the sleeping target and implant a false dream (chosen by the character who bargained with her, or by Aktiόphis herself) in his mind. If the target is awake when the spirit arrives, it hovers nearby, unseen, until the target falls asleep. The spirit uses Aktiόphis's Penetration.

**Vis:** 1 pawn of Perdo vis, 1 pawn of Corpus vis.

**Appearance:** Aktiόphis herself normally appears as a shining and beautiful woman, illuminated by a sparkling internal radiance, arrayed in the formal dress of a Ptolemaic princess. On her feet are fiery sandals, and about her head is a garland of bright hissing snakes that spit white fire. Her voice is the roar of a bull, her eyes shoot darts like lightning and her hands hold three baskets woven from the hair of adulterers.

Artemis, and the underworld goddess Hekate. Similarly, many of the spirits allied to the Hyperboreans are connected to Apollo by marriage.

Three powerful spirits still haunt the basilica, linked as they were to the vale through mighty bargains forged in centuries past: Aktiόphis's Displeasure,

Triple-formed Méné Marzouné, and Queen Brimo. At the storyguide's discretion, these spirits may be considered **chthonic**, and mistaken for creatures of

## Triple-Formed Méné Marzouné

Méné Marzouné is the triple-named, horn-faced goddess of eternity, source of the Primal Aphrodite, and dread lamp-bearer from the depths. From her toneless throat come unworldly cries drawn from the shining chasm of Tartarus, from her mouth spits the burning water of Lethe.

**Magic Might:** 40 (Vim)

**Characteristics:** Int +2, Per +3, Pre +1, Com +0, Str +3, Sta +3, Dex +0, Qik +2

**Size:** +1

**Confidence Score:** 3 (12)

**Virtues and Flaws:** Greater Immunity (damage from animals, fire, light, and heat)

**Personality Traits:** Hostile +2, Volatile +3, Cheerful -3

**Combat:**

Fist: Init +7, Attack +9, Defense +6, Damage +5\*

Dart: Init +5, Attack +10, Defense +1, Damage +10\*

Toneless Scream: Init +9, Attack +10, Defense +0, Damage +10\*\*

Horn Charge: Init +10, Attack +11, Defense +6, Damage +15\*

Four-named Fire: Init +5, Attack +6, Defense +0, Damage +15\*\*

\* When manifested only

\*\* See Power description

**Soak:** +12

**Fatigue Levels:** n/a

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-6), -3 (7-12), -5 (13-18), Incapacitated (19-24)\*

\* When manifested only

**Abilities:** Area Lore Spirit World 8 (Hyperborean spirits), Bargain 6 (pacts), Brawl 7 (horn charge), Magic Lore 10 (Spirits), Penetration 5 (void)

**Powers:**

*Burning Heat of the Soul*, 4 points, Init +2, Vim: Méné Marzouné may ignite a soul's yearning for an ecstatic reunification with its lost spiritual self. While under the effect of this Power, the target seeks to extinguish his worldly desire by having sex with his spiritual double; most people do not know who this is, and so may spend years searching. This is not an overpowering carnal desire, but a deeply spiritual longing; asking the advice of oracles or saints may help the target find his soul mate. This Power cannot affect anyone with True Faith, or the True Love Virtue or Flaw.

*Four-named Fire of the Burning River*, 1 point, Init +5, Ignem: The fiery waters of the Lethe issue from Méné Marzouné's mouth in great burning gouts, igniting whatever they touch. When wounded by

this Power, the target thenceforth suffers from the effects of *Pains of Perpetual Worry* (although the Duration is Year instead of Month).

*Toneless Scream of the Black-clad Abyss*, 3 points, Init +9, Mentem: If the target is damaged by Méné Marzouné's Toneless Scream, he suffers from the effects of *Weight of a Thousand Hells* (although the Duration is Year instead of Month).

**Vis:** 2 pawns of Mentem vis in eyes, 2 pawns of Perdo vis in each horn, 2 pawns of Corpus vis in tongue

**Appearance:** Méné Marzouné appears in a constantly changing guise of hideous proportions, always a combination of all her three forms. Her most majestic form is that of a great three-headed black bull, with lightning-flecked eyes. Her human form appears to be a black-clad maiden carrying a basket woven from snakes. Her face cannot be seen, for under her hood is an unending void as dark and deep as night. Her final form is a hybrid, with a distorted human form transfigured with the head of a mare, the skin of a vulture, the eyes of a goat, the calves of a lion, and the ankles of a wolf.

the Infernal realm by Virtues such as Sense Holiness and Unholiness (see *Realms of Power: The Infernal*, page 123).

All of the spirits here can spend 1 Magic Might point to manifest in physical form (and return to spiritual form at will). In this material form, the spirit can be wounded and even incapacitated, although if "killed," it simply returns to its spiritual form. Unless manifested, the spirit cannot physically attack or be attacked.

Other, lesser elementals and airy spirits also flit through the ruins and among the rosebushes and groves.

## Other Locations for the Basilica

The Basilica of Ten Thousand Columns need not be located in the Balkans. There are several other

sites where the basilica could be located.

### DELOS

The center of Apollo's cult, Delos is an island in the Aegean Sea with a great number of Apollonian ruins. Many of the tales of Hyperborea originate from Delos, and there are a number of cultic sites dedicated to

## Queen Brimo Trimorphos

Queen Brimo (also known as Daeria, Brimo means "mighty" or "furious"), adopted daughter of Hekate, is a lesser monarch of Hades and attendant of Demeter. She was honored at Eleusis every September where the hierophant and priestess of Demeter would represent Brimo's birthing of the Sacred Child, Brimos the Mighty (a personification of agricultural wealth). The child would be conceived through a mystic union, where the hierophant symbolized the holy Dionysus Iacchos and the priestess symbolized Brimo.

Queen Brimo was the daughter of Perseus and Medea, and lost her virginity when she was raped by Hermes on the banks of Boibeis Lake in Thessaly. The result of the rape was Eleusos, the patron goddess of the town of Eleusis and home of the Eleusinian Mysteries. Brimo was invoked by both her parents before her birth to honor Hekate, her sacred mother. Queen Brimo is likely to be hostile to followers of Hermes, such as Hermetic wizards.

**Magic Might:** 25 (Corpus)

**Characteristics:** Int +2, Per +3, Pre +4, Com +1, Str +2, Sta +2, Dex +1, Qik +0

**Size:** +0

**Confidence Score:** 4 (14)

**Virtues and Flaws:** None

**Personality Traits:** Furious +4, Tormented +2

**Combat:**

**Fist:** Init +0, Attack +3, Defense +3, Damage +2\*

**Bow:** Init -1, Attack +10, Defense +0, Damage +8\*

\* When manifested only

**Soak:** +4

**Fatigue Levels:** n/a

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-5), -3 (2-10), -5 (11-15), Incapacitated (16-20)\*

\* When manifested only

**Abilities:** Area Lore Spirit World 8 (Hyperborean spirits), Brawl 3 (fists), Bows 7 (hunting), Etiquette 6 (the Underworld), Magic Lore 10 (spirits)

**Powers:**

*Harvest of the Golden Heart*, 10 points, Init +5, Herbam: Queen Brimo can intervene with either Persephone or Demeter to grant a small community a bountiful harvest that season, or stave off a famine.

*Rejuvenation of Nyx*, 3 points, Init +1, Corpus: This Power grants the target a +18 to his Recovery rolls, which lasts until her wounds are all healed.

*The Company of the Miserable Man*, 1 point, Init +0, Mentem: For someone (typically a woman) who sacrifices a black dog in her honor, Queen Brimo uses this Power, which creates a bittersweet longing for each other in the hearts of both supplicant and the Power's target. For every moment they are not together, both suffer a pain

in their breasts and deep despondence, until they are reunited. This Power ends after the couple have eaten a meal and had sex with each other three times, or until either of them hears the sound of a bull-roarer (a kind of toy). The affection becomes permanent after nine months if the Power's effect has not ended, and at the troupe's discretion, may grant the True Love Virtue or Flaw.

*The Stygian Firebrand*, 1 point, Init +4, Ignem: When threatened or filled with wrath, Queen Brimo's scream can ignite the air with baleful liquid fire, inflicting +25 damage to all those in her path (equivalent to Range Voice and Target Group).

**Vis:** 5 pawns of Perdo vis in hair.

**Appearance:** Brimo appears as a naked, tormented teenaged girl with muddied feet, garlanded by 50 fearsome snakes and accompanied by a pack of terrible underworld hounds. Her other two forms are of a beautiful queen in saffron veils with a bleeding womb, and of a maiden huntress whose hands have been torn by bears. The ground trembles beneath her feet, while thousands of twinkling torch lights sparkle around her. She is often accompanied by Hekuba, the queen of Troy, who was transformed into a terrifying bitch-hound.

the Hyperborean maidens Arge and Opis, and Hyperoche and Laodice. In the 13th century, Delos is under the rule of the Venetians (following the collapse of the Byzantine Empire) and its inhabitants are devout Orthodox Christians. Delos could be the location of hidden Hyperborean hymns

or relics, especially in the tombs of the Hyperborean maidens.

### TRIBUNAL OF NOVGOROD

With Hyperborea to the extreme north of the Tribunal of Novgorod, it

is still possible that the basilica could be further north than the Balkans. This option may be suited to troupes who set their saga in Novgorod; travel to the basilica may even take the characters into the lands of the barbarian Scythians.



PHOEBUS'S GARDEN

At the eastern edge of the world, on the great Ocean Stream, lies the garden of Apollo Phoebus, and within, Apollo's palace, from which he emerged each morning from the Gate of the Sun in his chariot to issue light to the world. At this eastern gate, at the junction of the Earth and Heaven, is Homer's Ivory Gate, the gate of false dreams.

Where is this garden? The ancient authorities Virgil, Sophocles, and Stesichorus are firm in drawing a distinction between Phoebus's Garden and the Hesperides. Just as the Hesperides are considered the mystic Western Pole, so too could Phoebus's Garden be the mystical Eastern Pole. It is known as the "region of the bright day," and is also where Helios, or Sol (the sun), starts his journey across the sky every day. The extreme

East is a place of mystery and myth, with many fantastic legends told in European romances, including many monsters, strange peoples, and bizarre customs.

THE BRITISH ISLES

It is possible that the Hyperboreans were really ancient British Celts, which could allow for Hyperborean temples in such places as Ireland or Wales. Alternatively, since the druids were deeply connected to sun cults, an ancient druidic temple may have been inhabited by Hyperborean descendants before the creation of the Order of Hermes.

Mythic Hyperborea

*O King Apollo, son of great Zeus, whom thy father did furnish forth at thy birth with golden headband and lyre of shell, and giving thee moreover a swan-drawn chariot to drive, would have thee go to Delphi. But nevertheless, once mounted, thou bade thy swans fly to the land of the Hyperboreans.*

— Alcaeus

Far north, near the icy regions of the North Pole, legends tell of an earthly paradise, the home of an ancient civilization guarded by the great god Apollo. Also known as Helixoia, Hyperborea is now a powerful regio.

According to some traditions, Hyperborea predated Greece and Rome, and even ancient Egypt and Babylon. A mighty race that treated magic as a mere toy ruled this civilization, a people whose very lives were intimately woven with magic. While

most point to the legend of Plato and the mythic lost city of Atlantis as the source of civilization, certain esoteric traditions claim that Hyperborea was the origin of mankind.

From this golden age and civilization, the primal humans ventured to other regions of the Earth, establishing new civilizations, such as legendary Atlantis, hoary Egypt, and mighty Babylon. Legend has it that Apollo, the deity of the Old Ones, visited his Hyperborean demesne every 19 years, the same period over which the stars in the heavens return to the same place. The Celtic druids adopted this calendar cycle, and it was used by many within the Order of Hermes until the destruction of House Diedne.

Some Hermetic scholars link Hyperborea to the realm of Magic, in the same way that Arcadia is the highest realm of Faerie. In Mythic Europe, Hyperborea is a real place, a paradise on Earth, deeply connected to the Magic realm. By the 13th century, none have made the journey to the furthest north for a millennium.

The Legend

*Behind [the Ripaeian Mountains] and beyond the north wind (if we are to believe this) lives a happy race known as the Hyperboreans who survive to a ripe old age and are famous for marvelous things handed down in stories. It is believed that here are the hinges on which the world turns and the extreme limits of the circuits of the stars. The Hyperboreans enjoy six months of daylight. The sun rises once a year, at midsummer, and sets once, at midwinter. It is a sunny region with an equable climate, free from all harmful gales. The Hyperboreans live in the woods and groves and worship gods both individually and in groups; all disharmony and sorrow are unknown. Death does not come until they have had their fill of life. Setting a banquet, they greet their old age*

## Famous Hyperboreans

### ABARIS

The philosopher Porphyry writes that Pythagoras showed his golden thigh to Abaris, the Hyperborean priest of Apollo. Abaris was called "air-traveler," because he once rode on an arrow given to him by Apollo, by which he crossed rivers and seas, and reached inaccessible places.

### ARISTEAS

Herodotus the historian mentions another Hyperborean, Aristeas of Proconessus, who was a member of a prestigious and respected family. Maximus of Tyre records that Aristeas would often have his spirit leave his body, which would fly off like a bird while he lay breathing distinctly and in a fashion close to death. His spirit would observe everything — land, seas, rivers, cities, and peoples — and then re-enter his body and recount the various things that it had seen. Aristeas was also famous for living for over 250 years, a feat that saw the city

of Metapontines erect a statue with the legend "Aristeas of Proconessus" in his honor.

### ARGE AND OPIS

A legend among the Delians tells of two Hyperborean women, Arge and Opis, who came to Delos accompanied by Apollo's sister, Artemis. The purpose of the visit was to pay tribute to Eileithyia (the goddess who presided over childbirth) for the birth of Apollo, to ensure quick and painless childbirth for themselves. Arge and Opis were later taken to Olympus by Artemis and became her servants.

### THE HYPERBOREAN NECROMANCER

Lucian's *Philopseudes* tells of a mysterious unnamed Hyperborean necromancer who flew down from the sky near a small Roman estate and used necromancy and other magic to make a woman fall in love

with the local lord. In doing so, he called down the moon and called up Hekate, and summoned the ghost of the lord's father.

### OLEN THE BARD

A Hyperborean who made his home in Lycia, Olen composed many of the Hyperborean hymns once sung on Delos and the other Aegean islands.

### HYPEROCHE AND LAODICE

The sacred virgins sent by the Hyperboreans to deliver Apollo's sacred relics to Delos, Hyperoche and Laodice failed to return home from their mission, despite being protected by five Hyperborean guards. It was the disappearance of Hyperoche and Laodice that caused the Hyperboreans to decide to rarely leave Hyperborea. In honor of Hyperoche and Laodice, the boys and girls of Delos in antiquity would offer locks of their hair.

*with luxury, and then leap into the sea from a certain rock. This method of burial is the most serene.*

— Pliny, *Natural History*, Book IV, 89

Hyperborea is an island hidden in a level 7 regio (although at its highest level it extends to a level 10 regio). Protected by an impregnable wall, great fiery gates are the only entrance, shut tight with a fourfold, bright bar, holding closed against all strangers. It is not possible to accidentally wander into Hyperborea. Only those who know the passwords, or who are invited, may enter.

Inside, the island is a veritable paradise, filled with every beautiful and gracious thing. A sweet, nourishing breeze floats across the island, which is perpetually bathed in the sustaining bright light of the eternal sun. Few sounds break the peace and serenity of Hyperborea.

Its common inhabitants are the Hyperboreans, a people who live in peace and harmony amid the sacred groves and woods of the island. All Hyperboreans possess Supernatural Powers, whether these are control of the elements, the ability to send their spirit into the astral regions of the sky,

or to transform into graceful swans or jet-black crows. In their human form, they appear as radiant and golden-skinned men and women. A great many sacred animals to Apollo live on the island and in the waters surrounding it: snakes, dolphins, hawks, swans, crows, and oxen.

At the center of the island stands a great mountain, known as the Mountain of Salvation. At the pinnacle of the mountain is the great temple of Apollo Phoebus, in which the sun god resides. It stands so tall that it may only be reached by flight, or through spirit travel.

## Getting into Hyperborea

Needless to say, getting into Hyperborea is difficult, and is likely only to happen if characters are invited in by one of its residents. Learning the passwords to the gates of Hyperborea would be a major quest, and could involve tracking down the spirits or ghosts of famous Hyperboreans such as Abaris or the maids of Delos. An invitation may be given if the characters are returning the earthly remains of a Hyperborean priest, or a relic, with the intent to leave them in Hyperborea.

Every 19 years, at the time when the stars complete their revolutions — the vernal equinox of the rising of the Pleiads — Apollo Phoebus leaves his temple and goes among the Hyperborean people. During this time he sings, dances, and plays the harp, distributing his blessings to the faithful.

## Other Locations for Hyperborea

The scholars of the ancient world disputed the precise location of Hyperborea. Here are three other possible locations for the Land Beyond the North Wind.

1. According to Livy, whose interpretation of "bora" refers to the hills of Pelagonia, the Hyperboreans lived somewhere near Monastir, a mountain range in the Balkans of Macedonia. The legends told of sacred Hyperborean gifts being brought to Delos from distant regions of Dodona and the Maliac Gulf (in Greece), along what would become the *Via Egnatia*. This legend grew from the sheltered rose gardens and rich farming land on the Pierian side of the Bora Mountains in Paeonia, and well-developed sun-cults.

2. Based on the writings of Greek historian Hecateus, the

Hyperboreans were British Celts, and their worship of Apollo was based on the importance of Bel, the sun god, in Celtic religion. The significance of songs to the Celtic bards and druids is evidence of this legend, as are the many ancient standing stone circles containing 19 stones, and the similarity of the Hyperborean and Celtic astrological calendars (both of which used 19-year cycles).

3. Hyperborea was Chinese Turkistan, and the griffins said to live with the Hyperboreans were the dragons on the Chinese flags. The great Hypergoraei Mountains were the Urals in Central Asia, which placed the Turks near the lands of Terraconta. There has even been suggestion that the Issedonians were ancient Tibetans (who may or may not exist in Mythic Europe).

# Rune Magic

In the cold and distant lands of the north, in the centuries following the death of Christ, a form of ancient magic developed that was based on simple inscriptions, using a special alphabet of letters called **runes**. These runes could be used to communicate in writing, but also had unique powers, with each of the many symbols summoning a particular form of magic. These carvings were inherently powerful, imbued with lasting magical effects very much like enchanted devices, all of which were unhindered by those powers that could normally resist them, including the *Parma Magica*. Because of this, the wizards who made these runes and the warriors who served them were nearly invincible in battle, and powerful enough for the Order to consider them their greatest enemy.

## The Order of Odin

*At that time all members of the assembly, along with the arrogant usurper Vortigern, are blinded; such is the protection they find for their country (it was, in fact, its destruction) that those wild Saxons, of accursed name, hated by God and men, should be admitted into the island, like wolves into folds, in order to repel the northern nations. . . . Then there*

*breaks forth a brood of whelps from the lair of the savage lioness, in three cyulae, as it is expressed in their language, but in ours, in ships of war under full sail, with omens and divinations. In these it was foretold, there being a prophecy firmly relied upon among them, that they should occupy the country to which the bows of their ships were turned, for three hundred years; for one hundred and fifty — that is for half the time — they should make frequent devastations. They sailed out, and at the directions of the unlucky tyrant, first fixed their dreadful talons in the eastern part of the island, as men intending to fight for the country, but more truly to assail it. To these the mother of the brood, finding that success had attended the first contingent, sends out also a larger raft-full of accomplices and curs, which sails over and joins itself to their bastard comrades. From that source, the seed of iniquity, the root of bitterness, grows as a poisonous plant, worthy of our deserts, in our own soil, furnished with rugged branches and leaves.*

— *The Ruin and Conquest of Britain*, Gildas (516?-570?)

The first rune wizards are said to have been followers of Odin, a god the peoples of the North called the All-father, whom legend tells learned magic through a great ritual of sacrifice, and who taught this knowledge to his followers. Like the wizards in the lands further south, those with his Gift of power inspired supernatural feelings of envy and dislike in the common people, but as priests of

Odin they were also respected and feared by them, and had strong ties to both the ruling class and the leaders of the pagan faith. Unlike the Roman Mercurians or the Celtic druids, the early rune wizards were much more integrated into their primitive communities, often holding positions of absolute authority over them.

Very little is known about these early chieftain-priests. They were said to have been recognized for their prowess in battle, dressing in bear skins (they were sometimes called *bersarkrs* for this reason) and supposedly never tiring, fighting until all of their enemies were slain. Some of their earliest rune carvings may still be found in the remote places where these proto-Vikings dwelled, on gravesites and ancient monuments called *rune-stones*, in the rock of magical caves deep beneath the mountains, and in the stones of the buildings in their oldest cities.

These early people were also exceptional shipbuilders and sailors, and in the fifth and sixth centuries they spread throughout much of Scandinavia and all of eastern Britannia. Many of them came from Saxony and a part of Denmark called Engle, eventually developing into what modern historians call Anglo-Saxons. Chronicling the events of this period, a monk named Gildas wrote in his history of Britain that this invasion succeeded as God's punishment

## Not-so-ancient Magic

The ancient magic of the rune wizards is much less ancient than the other traditions in this book, having been practiced within the living memory of the oldest magi in the Order. It is even conceivable that some of these rune wizards still live in the wild lands north of Mythic Europe, or hide in the lands once settled by their ancestors, practicing their traditional rune magic as a type of pagan hedge wizardry. Most magi

believe the Order of Odin is dead and buried, however, and consider them a magical tradition from an earlier time and a distant culture. From this perspective, the magic of the Vikings and Anglo-Saxons is ancient magic, since they no longer live in the lands where it might be found. Thus, discovering their secrets is seen as a task for Seekers of ancient lore, not magi who integrate hedge traditions into Hermetic theory.



for the Britons' many sins. By the end of the eighth century the rune wizards had managed to seize and settle all of what would become England, ruthlessly fighting back the Welsh in the west and driving off the Celtic peoples in the south, though they also suffered great losses in these battles. It was primarily these wizards who ruled the island during these years, who drove the people to conquest and victory, and it is said that in those days every village had its own rune master instead of a lord.

Over the next 100 years, through wars and trade with the many other peoples of England, the Anglo-Saxon people began to be assimilated into the Christian culture, and their model of a community ruled by a rune wizard as chieftain began to break down. Surviving descriptions of these followers of Odin make them sound like crazed fanatics, with such a pow-

erfully negative air of magic about them that none could bear to remain in their presence. Similar to what would later happen in Scandinavia during the ninth and tenth centuries, the rune wizards began to lose the respect and obedience of the general populace, and soon came to be considered closer kin to madmen and devil-worshippers than lords and leaders, while the Dominion began to spread throughout the land and take hold of the people's hearts.

## War Against the Order

By the late 700s, Viking raiders had begun attacking sea-towns and settlements, and these war parties were often accompanied by Norse rune wizards acting as lords and generals. Their lands further north and east were becoming overpopulated, and so the most enterprising of them had set sail for Christian shores, believing that their magic and battle-prowess would bring them great wealth and power if they struck swiftly. They pillaged the coastlines and demolished villages and monasteries, taking anything of value: silver, vis, food, weapons, and slaves. What they did not value, they burned. These enterprising Vikings often attacked the

Anglo-Saxon settlements in addition to those belonging to the Welsh and Britons.

And so, in about 800 AD, the most powerful rune wizards in Britain allied themselves with a Pictish sorcerer known as Damhan-Allaidh, or "the Spider." Together they proposed to eliminate all of their rivals from across the sea, the Vikings of the north as well as the Hermetic magi from the south. Many have speculated that Damhan-Allaidh belonged to their magical tradition, or at least a similar branch that used writing to produce magical effects, and that from their alliance a new form of rune magic was developed. In any case, their combined magical powers drove the Scandinavian raiders away, forcing them to strike at easier shores, but also drew the notice of Pralix and the Order of Hermes.

The Spider and his allies seem to have wanted to lure their Hermetic enemies to England to attack them directly, for their power was far greater when defending themselves and laying traps than when attacking. At first, this plan was successful, and many magi fell trying to confront Damhan-Allaidh and his army, but when Pralix managed to gain a foothold among other hedge wizards on the island, the Spider and his allies

were forced to take up the offensive against them. This proved to be the downfall of the Anglo-Saxon rune wizards, for while they were fearsome in battle, they were much more vulnerable to magical counter-attacks, and the war soon took its toll on their ranks. According to the members of the Ordo Miscellany, all of the rune wizards were either defeated in the final battle or later hunted down and destroyed, completely driven from the shores of England in the years that followed.

### The Viking Invasions

Independent of the war against Damhan-Allaidh, the rune wizards and warriors from Scandinavia and other places to the north continued their attacks on central Europe and other parts of Britannia. Starting in about 830, the Vikings led a major assault against Ireland, sending over an army of raiders on a great fleet of ships. They landed on the eastern shore of the island and built fortifications from which they could attack the entire country. From their main stronghold in Dublin, they ravaged the whole of the Emerald Isle, and it was said that no village was safe from them.

It was there that the Scandinavian rune wizards first encountered representatives of the Order of Hermes, in the form of a group of Diedne magi from a covenant several miles northwest of their camp. The two groups clashed on the Diedne covenant grounds, unable to communicate anything more than threats to each other, each assessing the other's magical strengths and weaknesses. Although much of the rune wizards' magic was unhindered by the Parma Magica, they were generally unable to affect the magi directly, and the Vikings

were eventually routed. However, the magi realized that they were unusually vulnerable to these attackers, and they were troubled. They brought word of these strange northern wizards to the Grand Tribunal of 832, where those who had heard of their pagan faith and their Anglo-Saxon kin dubbed them members of "The Order of Odin."

In 837 a delegation of primarily Irish magi from many different Houses, led by Máel-tuili of Merinita, sought out the rune wizards and attempted to parley with them. At first, the Viking leaders were abusive and demanded to know their secrets, but after hours of negotiation the rune wizards eventually agreed that they would leave in peace if the magi paid to them a tribute of 3,000 pounds of silver and forty pawns of vis. This price was arranged, but soon after they had it in hand the Vikings reneged on the deal and attacked. The leaders of both parties fell in the subsequent battle, and many other magi and wizards were killed. The news of this betrayal stirred equal parts of outrage and horror in the local magi and throughout the Order, but no immediate action was taken.

Soon more Vikings arrived in Ireland and reinforced their camps, and the frequency and range of the periodic attacks increased as the Norsemen realized just how much wealth there was to be had. The invaders came in even greater numbers, and other bands landed in Scotland, England, France, Germany, and Russia. A substantial raiding party nearly captured Paris in 845, and in 865 a great army of Vikings landed in East Anglia and proceeded through kingdom after kingdom, subduing or killing everyone who opposed them. For most of the latter part of the ninth century, the Vikings were a terrifying menace to all of northern Europe, and

the so-called Order of Odin seemed a very real threat.

Many of the magi in the northern Tribunals felt that it was the interference of Máel-tuili that had endangered them all and brought ruin upon their lands. Instead of joining in war against the rune wizards, most of these magi went into hiding, especially the magi of House Diedne. At the Britannian Tribunal of 851, the Diedne Primus Obregon declared that the magi of his House would "no longer protect our underserving sodales from the enemy," but instead would "respect the Code from within the safety of our secret mounds and hidden dales." Nearly all interaction between covenants and magi in the region broke down for about 20 years, and remained sporadic for much of the following century, but forever after the Irish Diedne remained apart from their sodales and never participated in the local Tribunals again.

The rune wizards may have seemed to the magi of the Order of Hermes to have been united as part of a great organization with plans to invade Christendom, but it is more likely that they were simply opportunists who had allied themselves with bands of warriors in search of adventure, property, and status. However, the idea of the "Order of Odin" became so well-known that some of the rune wizards proudly took the name during this era, as a sort of battle-cry or badge of honor. A great many magi distinguished themselves in retaliatory strikes against the enemy's camps and ships, and made forays into the North to wreak havoc in their homeland. Though war was never declared, nonetheless a great many Hermetic war heroes emerged from these conflicts.

As both rune wizards and magi were killed off in these skirmishes,

the invaders' non-magical kin began to settle the lands they had captured, and by about 950 the raids had almost entirely ceased. The attention of the Order of Hermes soon turned to other matters, including the Schism War, and over time the Christian faith spread among the Norse peoples in their homelands and the lands they had conquered, bringing with it the Dominion and a disdain for the old, warlike ways of their pagan ancestors. Most of the rune wizards that remained in European lands are believed to have either joined the Order or retreated into the wilderness, to hide from their own civilization and culture, and soon they became nothing more than a legend, even among their own people.

## Discovery

By 1220, the rune wizards of old seem to no longer live within the lands of the Order of Hermes, and many magi believe that their ancient magic has been forever lost. Yet some remnants of their power may still remain in the places they conquered, and Seekers interested in the magic of the North might be drawn to study these artifacts, to discover what made their rune magic so dangerous, and perhaps find a way to adapt it to the Hermetic Arts. To do this, they must track down an example of active rune magic, investigate it in the lab, and learn from its secrets. There are three possible means by which a magus might accomplish this task: by heading north into the territories where the rune wizards of the Order of Odin supposedly still reside, by seeking out barrow-markers and grave goods in places where rune wizards once lived and fought, or by making contact

with ancient faeries who practice a similar sort of magic.

## The Mythic North

One method of finding active rune magic may be to find a living rune wizard, for though they have not been seen for many years, many magi believe they still live in the lands north of Mythic Europe — Denmark, Scandinavia, Iceland, Greenland — rebuilding their strength and preparing for another strike. The question of whether or not they survive is a point of great political contention within the Order of Hermes, for some say that the Order of Odin has been destroyed, and others vehemently maintain that they have not. Seekers in a position to definitively answer this question will likely encounter resistance from one side or other, and so it should be with some trepidation that they embark on such a quest.

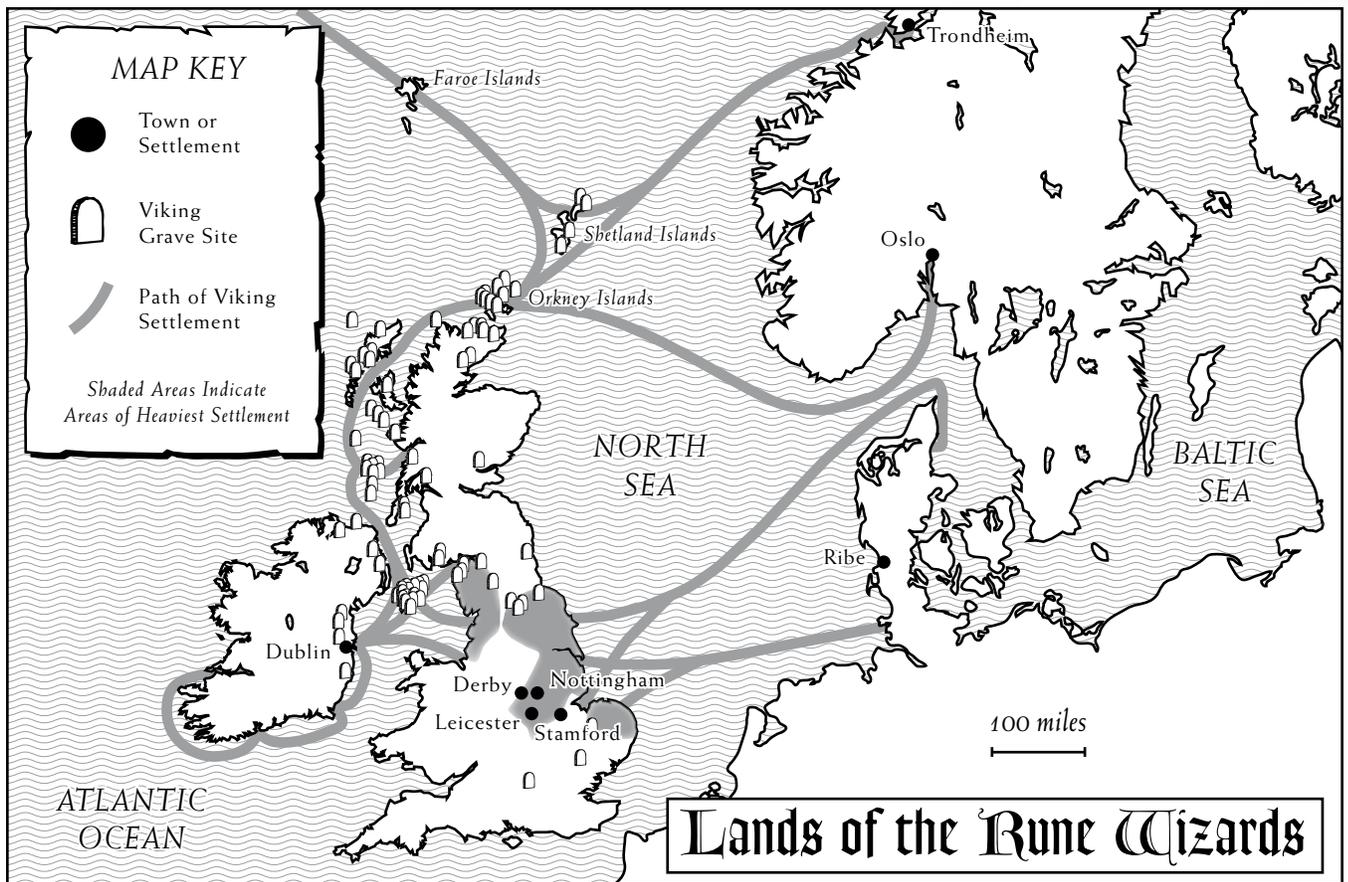
A good place to start would be to try and make contact with the covenant of Heorot, in the Kingdom of Denmark. Just after the meeting of the Rhine Tribunal in 1214 AD, three magi decided to establish a covenant on the island of Zealand. They chose a site in Lethra, a ruined town that was abandoned sometime during the sixth century, but which was once the seat of the Danish kings and a thriving town at the center of the island. The main building is a great hall built on the site of the original structure, the hall of the famous King Hrothgar, and it was during his reign that the epic tale of Beowulf took place. Heorot was built as an authentic recreation of the great feast hall, with laboratories and housing in the surrounding area. Beyond the defenses at the edges of the covenant are marshes that are still prowled by fearsome monsters descended from the creature Grendel.

These trolls are not invincible, but they still pose a powerful threat to those they catch in the wild.

The Heorot covenant has only existed for six years, and has yet to attend Tribunal and become officially recognized (see *Guardians of the Forests*, page 90). The magi are not convinced that the Order of Odin is dead, and one of the magi is reputedly interested in locating a rune wizard and studying his magic. He is afraid to leave the safety of the covenant, but perhaps he would be willing to collaborate on his investigation with anyone who can bring reliable information to him.

Another potential source of aid is the pirates of the Hermetic covenant of Waddensee, a group of aggressive magi that sails in the Baltic Sea, raiding villages and other ships. They regularly strike at the settlements on the shores of Norway and Sweden, and often push deep inland on exploratory expeditions. They claim that they have found both great amounts of vis and members of the Order of Odin, all of whom they hunted down and killed. They might be convinced to allow a Seeker to travel with them for a while, or direct him toward areas where he might be likely to come across rune wizards and their descendants.

Even farther north are Iceland and Greenland, both of which could have evidence of rune wizards hiding within their Christian communities or living in the wilderness beyond the borders of the Dominion. Perhaps a Seeker might join up with a group of other characters with their own reasons for traveling into the Arctic islands, and spend time assisting them with their own adventures while searching for signs of the Order of Odin. There, they may even hear stories of Viking settlements even further west, where rune wizards might have fled, including the land of Vinland described in *The Saga of Erik the Red*.



## Heirlooms and Artifacts

Even if those who practiced the magic of the runes cannot be found, evidence of their spells can still be discovered. It is possible that magi might even come upon some examples of magical relics but have no idea what it is they have discovered. Because of the way that rune magic changes the nature of its target, objects with active effects do not seem magical to Intellego Vim spells. The only evidence of rune magic is the inscription, and the effect it has on its surroundings. This effect is entirely natural, however, and can only be divined by observation or through intensive magical investigation.

Rune wizards are said to have woven curses on gravestones and blessings on their swords, and by digging up their battlefields magi may

unearth some examples of these sorts of items. Seekers may not be able to move the monumental rune-stones or grave-markers that dot the northern landscape, though they may be able to study these relics in the wild. Or perhaps a Seeker may discover a discarded wooden wand, carved with strange vertical and diagonal runes, that does not seem to be a magical device but clearly has a magical effect on its surroundings.

However, magi are more likely to discover runes that they think are magical but upon further investigation are found to be entirely mundane, either because age has damaged the runes or because they were never enchanted at all. Another aspect of rune magic that Seekers might stumble upon is that runes with active magic are lasting Arcane Connections to the caster. Simple Intellego Corpus spells might reveal that a rune-stone

is connected to a dead body, and this is one way to prove that its magic is genuine and still in effect.

There may be other places in European lands settled by the Vikings or the Anglo-Saxons where the old faith is still practiced, or at least the old stories are remembered and told. From such folk wisdom, a Seeker might learn the story of how Odin learned the magic of the runes, a ritual in which he hung from a tree with his side pierced for nine days, and afterward received enlightenment. Perhaps a magus can locate a tree that is said to have been used in such a ceremony, or undergo a similar ordeal in hopes of achieving the same insight.

Many Seekers believe that the Norse gods were actually the primeval originators of magic, known as the Old Ones, believed to be the first wizards ever to walk the earth. It is said they eventually overcame their

mortal forms and ascended to godhood, becoming the figures of legend told in the tales. It is also possible that they are very powerful faeries. Finding one of these beings is a worthy quest on its own, not just for the purpose of learning the secret of the runes. However, a Seeker who discovers a way to communicate with the Norse gods may be able to convince them to teach him rune magic, and while the magnificence of meeting a god is an awe-inspiring experience all to itself, it is also an opportunity for knowledge that a true Seeker should not overlook.

## The Dvergar

The rune wizards are not the only ones in the lands of the far North who practiced rune magic. The ancient race of beings called the *dvergar* also knows the secrets, and practiced it long before Odin taught men. They are unfriendly beings who dwell in Faerie regiones deep within the bowels of the earth, or in Arcadia, accessible only through the cellars of abandoned buildings or in tunnels hidden under mountains in lands where the rune wizards once lived. They use the power of the runes to craft fantastic magical items, the like of which has never been seen in Christian lands.

A Seeker who finds his way into *Nithavellir* (the underground land of the *dvergar* and other dark faeries) may locate a *dverge* and convince it to construct him an artifact. *Dvergar* do not have items for sale, as each one is handcrafted for a particular person and purpose. The Seeker must describe what he wants the *dverge* to make and why, for these beings do not waste their time for just anyone, and legend tells that a person who receives an enchanted item from them is destined for greatness, a heroic but ultimately

unhappy life. Then the *dverge* begins the process of forging the item, a long and tedious process, in its workshop, and after many seasons of calculations, reciting litanies, and hard labor, the artifact is complete.

*Dverge*-forged items differ from the runes that rune wizards carve in a few small but meaningful ways. For one thing, the runes may be hidden where they cannot be seen at all, such as on the inside of steel or woven with black thread into black cloth. The runes of the *dverge* are also said to allow effects that are not possible with typical rune magic, such as gold rings that can multiply themselves or runes that bring men back from the dead. Finally, *dverge* artifacts resemble Hermetic devices, in that they can have multiple uses per day, triggered effects, increased Penetration, and activated Powers. This makes them much more valuable than anything the rune wizards ever crafted.

However, faerie runes also typically affect the wielder, changing him in subtle or not-so-subtle ways — those with *dverge*-forged devices may find they do not feel comfortable being without them, or talk to them, or develop other strange personality quirks associated with their relationship to the object. Madness and a thirst for violence are common side effects of interacting with the Norse fae.

Once the item has been constructed, the Seeker must pay for it. The price is set after its creation, and since *dvergar* do not haggle and despise those who do, the Seeker must either accept or refuse. Being faeries, *dvergar* usually ask for things that seem alien, things that human beings take for granted. The price may sound simple and mundane, but it always has hidden costs. For example, a *dverge* might request that the Seeker give his heart's desire, and if the Seeker

agrees, he finds that the faerie hasn't taken the *thing* that was his heart's desire, but rather his actual desire for it. Some other example *dverge*-prices might include:

- the edge of his sight
- a bit of his luck
- two of his toes
- two of his fingers
- the color of his eyes
- his height
- his hair
- his friends
- his good name
- his fondest wish
- 100 words
- the first thing he sees upon returning to his home
- seven years of his life

*Dverge*-made items only function for the person for whom they were crafted, though they may be inherited by a blood relative (and still include the hidden costs for the new owner). Even if the heir cannot use these items, such artifacts may still be investigated by those seeking to learn rune magic, and the craftsmanship is such that they always fetch a high price simply for the quality of the object.

## Hermetic Integration

Once a Seeker investigates an example of active rune magic, he learns that the runes inscribed onto a target actually change the nature of that target to conform to the qualities of the rune, and that this effect lasts for as long as the rune does. These unique aspects of rune magic may be adapted to Hermetic theory through investigation and experimentation

## Enchantment Runes

Magi who possess Hermetic Rune Magic may also invent enchanted devices that use the magic of the runes. They must open the item as usual, and then spend another season designing the effect, but using the Rune Duration and Inscription Target, and they must inscribe the runes onto the item as part of investing the effect. They can then make further modifications to the effect. Note, however, that if the runes are damaged, the effect ceases to function, just as if the device itself had been destroyed.

Because of the resonances between the magic of the runes and the secrets taught to Verditius by Wayland Smith, Verditius magi who have initiated the Mystery of Elder Verditius Runes may add their Rune Magic score to their Lab Total instead of the +2 bonus they normally receive for matching a particular type of wood, and they always know a rune that can provide the magical focus they seek, rather than using the table of Arts given in *Houses of Hermes: Mystery Cults*, page 127.

(a Major Breakthrough requiring 45 breakthrough points), producing the new Hermetic Rune Magic Virtue, described below.

Surprisingly, deciphering rune magic is not as difficult for magi as might be supposed. This is because rune magic is similar to Hermetic magic in several ways, most notably in that rune spells typically have a rune that describes the effect and another rune that describes the target, what magi might call the Technique and the Form. As magi investigate examples of rune magic and better understand the minds of the rune wizards who practiced it, they likely learn the meanings of the different runes as well as the different alphabets that were used to write them. To represent this knowledge, magi may learn a new Arcane Ability called Rune Magic, also described below.

There are three ways to formulate a rune spell. In the first formula, the caster inscribes his name and the effect in the first person, as in "I, Eirik, carve the runes that heal flesh." This method generally means that the spell affects the caster, or that the effect is centered on the caster. In the second formula, the runes that describe the caster and

the effect are written in the third person, as in "Eirik carves the runes that create fire." This formula usually means that the spell affects something other than the caster, or is centered on an object rather than the caster. In the third case, the runes give the caster's name, but do not describe an effect. This simply associates the object on which the runes are carved with the caster, which magi might use to create an Arcane Connection that is lasting but not permanent (see below).

## New Virtue

### HERMETIC RUNE MAGIC

*Major, Hermetic*

This Virtue gives the magus a new Rune Duration and Inscription Target for his spells, through which he can make use of the power of the runes. When used, these ensure that the effect lasts almost forever (or at least for as long as the runes remain undamaged), and that for that duration, the magic is a true and natural change, similar to the effects of a Creo Ritual spell. The target of this sort of spell does not become a magical thing for the purposes of Magic Resistance,

allowing the magus to enchant objects and people with raw, natural power that does not require vis. Spells that directly target a being with Magic Resistance must still penetrate, however. For example, a Creo Ignem spell using rune magic would not need to penetrate, because the flames are considered natural for the duration. A Perdo Corpus spell would need to penetrate, because the effect targets a person who is protected against magic.

**RUNE (DURATION):** This spell must be cast with an Inscription Target, and lasts for as long as the rune or runes that form the inscription remain undamaged and whole. The moment they are worn away, broken, or changed, the effect ends. If the runes are carved upon an object, like a wand or stone, the effect also ends if the object is damaged significantly, in the same way that a magical device can be ruined. This Duration is equivalent to Moon, adding three magnitudes to a spell's base level.

**INSCRIPTION (TARGET):** This spell must be cast with Rune Duration. It is the same as Individual, except that the spell requires the caster to write on the target or an object that the target wears or carries. If the spell does not target the object upon which the runes are inscribed, the inscription must include an Arcane Connection to the target, or else the inscribed object must touch the target. If this object is removed, the effect is interrupted, but it does not end as long as the runes are still whole.

The inscription must be made while the spell is being cast. Like spells that use a circle, the magus may use magic to carve the words, but at no greater distance than Touch, and he must still physically trace out the runes, as if he were carving them with a tool. When using organic material

such as wood or horn, an inscription can be made in the same amount of time it takes to cast a Hermetic spell, and it generally takes about two minutes to scratch an inscription in stone or metal. These spontaneous runes are unlikely to last more than a few days before wear causes them to fall apart, however. For lasting effects, at least several hours of craftwork are necessary, or as long as a season for a masterpiece intended to outlive the caster.

When casting rune magic spells, a magus must inscribe his name and a concise description of the intended effect, or else he suffers a penalty to his Casting Total. If the magus does not inscribe his name into the inscription, he receives a -5 penalty. He can choose to hide or encrypt the runes in some way, by combining the stems of several runes together in a design that requires a contested Intelligence + Rune Magic roll to decipher (see Rune Magic, below), and this gives him a -2 penalty for hiding his name and a -5 penalty for obscuring the description. Or, he can omit his name and simply carve single runes for the Arts used in the effect, rather than describing them fully in the script, for a -10 penalty.

If the runes that are used to describe the effect or the target are emphasized, either by repeating a particular rune three times or by spelling out the entire alphabet at the beginning of the script, the magus receives a +1 bonus. This is quite common in rune magic, since it is rarely any additional trouble, but it makes it very easy to recognize the inscription as rune magic rather than a simple adornment. If the magus spends extra effort on the inscription, coloring in the runes or working them into an intricate pattern or design, this doubles the casting time and gives him another +1 bonus to his casting total.

VARIATION	MODIFIER
Hidden name	-2
No name	-5
Hidden description	-5
No description	-10
Extra effort	+1
Emphasis	+1

Alternatively, when he is inscribing runes, the magus can make a Dexterity + an appropriate Craft Ability roll against an Ease Factor of 15, using a simple die. If he succeeds, he can disguise his rune script however he wishes, without any penalty. If he fails, he must cancel the spell and start over from the beginning with a new inscription, discarding the object on which he was carving the runes.

Hermetic Rune Magic has two major drawbacks. Firstly, the runes are a lasting Arcane Connection to the caster, and beyond that they function in a manner similar to the spell *Opening the Intangible Tunnel* (ReVi Gen), in that other magi can target the caster by targeting the runes. That is, a rival magus could cast a Touch spell at the caster simply by touching the runes, as if he were touching the caster. Secondly, every spell that uses the Rune Duration and the Inscription Target is considered a powerful mystical effect, which always gives the target a Warping Point. There is no way to design a rune spell not to Warp a particular target as with other Hermetic spells. These two weaknesses explain why rune wizards are said to have become Warped much more quickly than Hermetic magi, and traditionally guarded their runes very closely, destroying them after they had served their purpose.

A magus who possesses this Virtue can easily make lasting Arcane Connections to himself, by simply

inscribing his name on an object and imbuing it with his magic. He must make a roll as if casting a spell, using his Casting Total for any Technique and any Form, but he succeeds so long as he achieves a positive result and does not botch. As with any rune spell, the object becomes an Arcane Connection to the magus for as long as the rune remains undamaged, and may be targeted by other magic as if the object were the caster.

### New Ability: Rune Magic

This is the rune wizards' version of Magic Theory. It is knowledge of what the magic of the runes is and how it works, dealing with the symbolism of each rune, how they may be used, how to formulate a rune-script, and how to encrypt the runes so that they are harder for others to recognize. Without *The Gift* it has few practical applications, though like Magic Theory, a basic understanding is essential for accurately copying books on Rune Magic. **Specialties:** hiding runes, identifying rune magic, runes associated with a particular Art. (Arcane)

### Rune Alphabets

Magi who have learned Hermetic Rune Magic may use any form of writing to inscribe their magical effects, though they probably favor the same runes used by the wizards of the North, since they are likely to have learned them while they investigated Rune Magic (raising their Artes Liberales score accordingly to accommodate knowledge of an additional alphabet). To make it easier for players to incorporate these symbols into their characters' magic, these three

## Rune Magic and Creo Spells

Because of the way rune magic causes natural effects and must be inscribed on the target, Hermetic Rune Magic can interact with the Art of Creo in one of two unusual ways, depending on whether the spell is designed to create or to heal. If the effect creates a target, the runes must be written on an Arcane Connection to that target, and the target is only created if it does not already exist. For example, to create an ox, the magus must have something that is part of an ox that is no more, such as a horn from a dead ox, and the spell essentially transforms the horn into the ox. If the ox upon which the spell is based still lives, the spell has no effect, so that casting such a spell twice does not create two oxen. To enchant a cloth so that it will create a great feast, the magus must first lay out a great feast upon it. From then on, that same feast will be created by the runes whenever the cloth is activated, but if the created food and

drink is simply set aside, the magic has no apparent effect.

Healing spells like *The Chirurgeon's Healing Touch* take the place of natural healing for the duration of the spell, so that if the rune remains on the target as long as it takes to heal the injury naturally, the wound does not reopen when the effect ends. For example, a silver ring with runes that heal a Light Wound must remain on the target for at least a week, the recovery period for a Light Wound. If the ring is removed or damaged during this time, before the wound would have healed naturally, the character must make an immediate Recovery roll for that injury (ArM5, page 179). If this equals or exceeds the Improvement Ease Factor, the wound remains healed. If the roll equals or exceeds the Stable Ease Factor, the Light Wound reopens. If this roll is less than the Stable Ease Factor, the wound worsens, becoming a Medium Wound.

systems of runes are briefly described here.

## Consequences

The runes and Hermetic Rune Magic have the power to revolutionize the Order, as they can create natural and lasting effects that do not require vis. The magical devices that can be made with rune magic are truly amazing, and those magi who build them soon replace the *dvergjar* of the North as the great masters of the magical crafts. House Verditius might desire to keep such a great discovery as a House Mystery, and begrudge those who share the secret with others.

The re-emergence of the rune magic of the Order of Odin could also have exciting consequences for the magi of the Order of Hermes. Politically, the rune wizards and their magic are dangerous topics, as there are many who use the idea of them as reason to keep the northern Tribunals prepared for war, and to leave the lands of the Norsemen uninhabited by magi. Characters who can confirm or deny that the rune wizards have been wiped out — and who can report the true state of affairs in their northern homeland — are very unpopular among these factions at Tribunal.

Yet as rune magic begins to spread through the Order, perhaps the magi find that one day it suddenly ceases to function. Why? It might be

## The Rune Poems

Characters who are interested in learning about Rune Magic can track down a study source in the form of a "rune poem," rare and valuable works written by the wizards to teach their followers the basics of rune carving and the magic of the runes. These texts name each rune and give a brief description in verse. The verses are typically four lines long, one verse for each rune, and describe the rune's mystical properties through imagery, such as "Wealth / source of discord among kinsmen / and fire of the sea / and path of the serpent" or "Hail / cold grain / and shower of sleet / and sickness of serpents."

There are three rune poem texts that might be found in Mythic Europe: the *Icelandic Rune Poem* and the *Norwegian Rune Poem*, both of which use the Younger Futhark alphabet (see below), and the *Anglo-Saxon Rune Poem*, which uses the Futhorc (also described below), but which was translated into Latin by Christian monks who made many changes to the text. The two former books might be Rune Magic summae of Level 5, Quality 7; the latter Level 5, Quality 3.

because *Ragnarok*, the "Destruction of the Powers," has come. On that day, when the great serpent and the Fenris wolf are freed, the great horn of warning is blown and the gods must don their armor to fight the invading giants in the great battle at the end of the world. From that day forward, the magic of the runes no longer has any effect, for the gods have turned away from the world, and the power of Odin's runes has gone with him to Asgard and whatever lies beyond.

## The Elder Futhark

The oldest version of the runes is called the Elder *futhark* (the word *futhark* refers to the first six letters in the alphabet), and was known to

the rune wizards of Scandinavia and Iceland. Since it is believed to comprise the original runes that were taught by Odin to his followers, it is

considered to represent rune magic in its purest form. It consists of 24 letters, broken up into three *aetts* ("eights") of eight letters each.

LETTER	RUNE	NAME	PRONOUNCED	MEANING	LETTER	RUNE	NAME	PRONOUNCED	MEANING
F	ƿ	<i>Febu</i>	FAY-hoo	Wealth	Y	ƿ	<i>Ihwaz</i>	EYE-vaz	Yew
U	ᚢ	<i>Uruz</i>	oo-ROOZ	Auroch	P	ᚦ	<i>Perth</i>	PAIR-th	Cup
TH	ᚦ	<i>Thurisaz</i>	THUR-ee-sahz	Ogre	Z	ᚷ	<i>Algiz</i>	AL-gheez	Elk
A	ᚦ	<i>Ansuz</i>	AN-sooz	Mouth	S	ᚱ	<i>Sowilo</i>	SOH-veel-oh	Sun
R	ᚦ	<i>Raido</i>	RYE-doh	Riding	T	ᚹ	<i>Tiwaz</i>	TEE-vahz	Tyr
K	<	<i>Kauno</i>	COW-noh	Pain	B	ᚷ	<i>Berkanan</i>	BARE-kan-ahn	Birch
G	ᚷ	<i>Gebo</i>	GHAY-boh	Gift	E	ᚱ	<i>Ehwaz</i>	AY-vahz	Horse
W	ᚹ	<i>Wunjo</i>	VUN-yoh	Joy	M	ᚱ	<i>Mannaz</i>	MAH-nahz	Man
H	ᚱ	<i>Hagalaz</i>	HAH-ghah-lahz	Hail	L	ᚢ	<i>Laguz</i>	LAH-ghooz	Water
N	ᚦ	<i>Naudbiz</i>	NOW-thiz	Need	NG	ᚫ	<i>Ingwaz</i>	ING-vahz	Lord
I		<i>Isa</i>	EE-sah	Ice	D	ᚫ	<i>Dagaz</i>	DHAH-ghaz	Day
J	ᚫ	<i>Jera</i>	YEH-rah	Year	O	ᚫ	<i>Othila</i>	OH-thi-lah	Inheritance

## The Younger Futhark

In Denmark and Germany, the *futhark* began to develop over time as it was used to communicate as well as work magic. Many of the names of the runes and their mean-

ings changed as the language became more compact, and the runemasters began using fewer characters, eventually settling on a set of 16 runes instead of the original 24. Instead of

three *aetts* made up of eight runes, in this system the first *aett* had six runes and the other two had five. This variation came to be known as the Younger *futhark*.

LETTER	RUNE	NAME	PRONOUNCED	MEANING	LETTER	RUNE	NAME	PRONOUNCED	MEANING
F	ƿ	<i>Fe</i>	FAY	Wealth	I	ᚱ	<i>Iss</i>	EES	Ice
U	ᚢ	<i>Ur</i>	OOR	Drizzle	J	ᚦ	<i>Ar</i>	AHR	Year
TH	ᚦ	<i>Thurs</i>	THURZ	Ogre	S	ᚱ	<i>Sol</i>	SOHL	Sun
A	ᚦ	<i>Ass</i>	AHSS	God	T	ᚹ	<i>Tyr</i>	TEER	Tyr
R	ᚦ	<i>Reidb</i>	RAYTH	Ride	B	ᚷ	<i>Bjarkan</i>	BYAR-kahn	Birch
K	ƿ	<i>Kaun</i>	COWN	Sore	M	ᚷ	<i>Madbr</i>	mah-THUR	Man
H	*	<i>Hagall</i>	HAH-gall	Hail	L	ᚢ	<i>Logr</i>	lah-GHUR	Water
N	ᚦ	<i>Naudbr</i>	NOW-thur	Need	Y	ᚫ	<i>Yr</i>	EAR	Yew

## The Anglo-Saxon Futhorc

In England, the rune wizards instead expanded their alphabet, eventually adding more runes and altering the meaning of many of the others, producing a very different set of runes, called the *futhorc*. Scholars agree that it included these 28 runes, though there are several other letters that may also have been included.

LETTER	RUNE	NAME	PRONOUNCED	MEANING	LETTER	RUNE	NAME	PRONOUNCED	MEANING
F	ƿ	<i>Feoh</i>	FAY-oh	Wealth	X	ƿ	<i>Eolhx</i>	OHLHK	Elk
U	ƿ	<i>Ur</i>	OOR	Auroch	S	ᚱ	<i>Sigel</i>	SIGH-gel	Sun
TH	þ	<i>Thorn</i>	THORN	Thorn	T	ᚦ	<i>Tir</i>	TIRE	Star
O	ƿ	<i>Os</i>	OH-ss	Mouth	B	ᚷ	<i>Beorc</i>	BORK	Birch
R	ᚱ	<i>Rad</i>	RAYD	Riding	E	ᚹ	<i>Eb</i>	EH	Horse
C	ᚦ	<i>Cen</i>	KEEN	Torch	M	ᚻ	<i>Mann</i>	MAHN	Man
G	ᚷ	<i>Gyfu</i>	GUY-foo	Gift	L	ᚥ	<i>Lagu</i>	LAH-guh	Water
W	ᚦ	<i>Wynn</i>	WIN	Joy	NG	ᚫ	<i>Ing</i>	ING	Hero
H	ᚱ	<i>Haegl</i>	HIGH-gull	Hail	D	ᚫ	<i>Daeg</i>	DYE-gh	Day
N	ᚦ	<i>Nyd</i>	NID	Need	OE	ᚫ	<i>Ethel</i>	EE-thell	Homeland
I	ᚦ	<i>Is</i>	EYE-ss	Ice	A	ᚦ	<i>Ac</i>	ACHE	Oak
J	ᚦ	<i>Ger</i>	GEAR	Year	AE	ᚦ	<i>Aesc</i>	EYE-sk	Ash
Y	ᚦ	<i>Eob</i>	EE-oh	Yew	YR	ᚦ	<i>Yr</i>	EAR	Bow
P	ᚦ	<i>Peordb</i>	POHR-th	Cup	EA	ᚦ	<i>Ear</i>	YAHR	Grave

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# Contributors

## About the Authors

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TIMOTHY FERGUSON is a librarian on the Gold Coast, Australia. He collects succulents. He's had a *Dracaena* for years, but didn't know it was a "dragon tree" or the folklore around it, until he started writing about the Canary Islands. He's now started looking into the folklore of the other common objects around his home, seeking further story ideas.

JEFFREY KYER is a geo-archaeologist living in the swamps of South Carolina with his wife and son. He goes on digs in the Middle East to escape the heat and humidity. He built an aeolophile in highschool and always wanted to write about the Library of Alexandria. Fortunately, his wife tolerates his eccentricities and corrects his grammar.

RICHARD LOVE enjoys fine Italian food, Argentine tango, and slightly obsessive games set in an imaginary thirteenth century Europe. His partner,

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JOHN POST has served as a soldier, studied as a scholar, and now practices as an attorney. When he's not reading about ancient or medieval history, he enjoys fine food and wine. He and his lovely wife live in San Francisco, where both are abundant.

PAUL TEVIS is a software engineer by day and a gaming fiend by night. Beyond his predilections for roleplaying and board gaming, he enjoys cooking good food, drinking fine wine, and cycling. He lives just on the edge of Southern California with his wife and three cats.

ALEXANDER WHITE, at the time of this writing, finished his Honours in Classical and Medieval History at the University of Melbourne, Australia, took over the reins as General Secretary of the University of Melbourne Student Union, and continued part-time work as an adviser to the Victorian Parliamentary Secretary for Justice. He spends his few spare moments each week involved in political pugilism on various blogs, and helping out various progressive community and trade union causes.

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PATRICK MURPHY is better known in gaming circles as the "Mad Irishman" ([www.mad-irishman.com](http://www.mad-irishman.com)). He has a Ph.D. in Linguistics from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and splits his time between a day job and being a Hoplite of the Order. Patrick would tell you what his day job is, but he'd have to kill you.

TONY PARKER ([www.tonyparkerart.com](http://www.tonyparkerart.com)) is a Phoenix, Arizona based artist. He still loves giving hugs.

GREY THORNBERRY ([www.greystudio.com](http://www.greystudio.com)) is a self-diagnosed (and self-medicated) illustrator based in Brooklyn, NY. "About art I'd say there's few things more important than a well-drawn line; about myself, caffeine is the only thing standing between me and the evil person I really am."