

Ars Magica

# Transforming Mythic Europe



by Ferguson,  
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## Chapter One

# Introduction

Hermetic magi have enough power to change the structure of Mythic Europe forever. *Transforming Mythic Europe* is about what happens when they decide to exercise this power. Three chapters in this book propose different ways in which the characters can cause such a transformation.

**Chapter Two** discusses the full integration of the Order of Hermes into medieval society. While the Order's existence is by no means a secret, it tends to distance itself from

those who rule, those who pray, and those who toil. This chapter explores what happens when the Order comes out of the shadows and participates in medieval society.

**Chapter Three** takes an opposing position: what if the Order abandoned Mythic Europe altogether? It is within the power of the Order of Hermes to create a new land in the middle of the sea, a realm in which they could rule as they wish without fear of interfering with the institutions of Mythic Europe.

**Chapter Four** recasts magi as inventors, and the enchantments that they create as analogs of technological advancement. Transformation of Mythic Europe is effected through the distribution of these devices to nobles, clergy, and peasants.

## Planning for Long Sagas

The process of transforming Mythic Europe is not something that is possible to complete in a few short adventures. It may be the life's work of one or more magi, and may take longer still to reach fruition. Any transformation is usually gradual, but once it has begun it is probably inexorable. The speed of integration depends very much on the innovation involved — there are historical examples that ably demonstrate the capacity for ideas and inventions to catch on fast, and these can be used as templates. Political or religious movements such as Catharism or Lutherism, or the Shepherd's Crusade, could inspire ideas for the spread of an idea among a sector of Mythic Europe. The speed at which inventions such as the padded horse collar, the waterwheel, and the printing press took off might provide inspiration for the spread of a physical innovation of great worth.

Since transformation can be slow, integrating such story lines into a saga perforce lengthens the expected

### Assumptions about Mythic Europe

Depending on the type of transformation involved, you need to be clear about certain aspects of Mythic Europe and its inhabitants (in particular, the Order of Hermes) that are left flexible in the canonical setting of *Ars Magica Fifth Edition*. These include, but are not limited to: the laxity that the Order permits in interpreting the Code of Hermes; the spirit of cooperation within the Order; the availability of vis; and — if playing in a long-term saga — the size and growth of the Order.

Of these, the interpretation of the Code of Hermes is perhaps the most important, and is the purview of House Guernicus. Two factions exist within the house (*Houses of Hermes: True Lineages*, page 41); neither is canonically dominant. The Traditionalists prefer that local Tribunals only have jurisdiction over their own local Peripheral Code. The rulings of the

Grand Tribunal supersede local law, and the Oath of Hermes supersedes both. Furthermore, they believe very much in the Order as a loose society of equals, with no kings, justices, or police. The Transitionalists on the other hand hold that local laws should be more adaptable and capable of overruling the conclusions of higher authorities, particularly regarding interference with mundanes. They would also like to grant policing powers to the Quaesitores and their agents in order to limit corruption. The dominance of either faction in a saga could affect the manner in which any attempted transformation is received. Traditionalists likely oppose the idea of magi forming a Fourth Estate, whereas it might be welcomed and encouraged by the Transitionalists. The reverse might be true for magi wishing to build their own nation out of the ocean.



span of that saga. This is especially true if the transformation is the brainchild of player characters, who want to see their work reap tangible rewards. However, it might not be player magi — or indeed, magi at all — who begin the process of change, and these characters might get caught up in it later on. Under this scenario, the process of transformation could have already begun when the saga starts, and its burgeoning spread poses challenges to the player characters from the start. This option also allows the player characters to oppose the change — for whatever reason — and try to turn back the tide of social pressure favoring its further spread.

## Saga Speed

Altering the speed of the saga (ArM5 page 218) affects the manifestation of any transformation during play.

If you have a slow saga then the troupe need not consider the lasting impacts of their transformations, because it is unlikely that they will ever be seen in game time. Instead, stories focus around the process of change itself, and their attempts to overcome obstacles in their way.

In fast sagas, on the other hand, the troupe needs to get a clear picture of the wider implications of their efforts, because the world could change dramatically in a few game sessions. Here, the focus could very much be on the impact of the innovation as much as the process that leads to the change.

Sagas involving transformations are ideal for pulsed sagas, where the characters' world-changing intervention and the resistance offered are dealt with in detail, followed by the passage of several years in which the transformation becomes established. The next game session then tackles the implications that arise from the early stages of transformation, and how these are resolved, and so on.

## TO THE FUTURE

As an option, it might be interesting to run a few stories — or perhaps a mini-saga — set in the future, when the transformation of Mythic Europe is complete or almost complete. It is necessary to either advance the characters who could still be alive, or create new ones to fill in the gaps. Depending upon how much change the storyguide can envisage, the players might be shocked at the change wrought by their innovation, but remember that the characters have lived through the transformation, and it is no great wonder to them. This sort of story has the greatest impact if the effect wrought is different from that expected by its initiators.

## Saga Style

Introducing a transformation into an *Ars Magica Fifth Edition* saga can change the feel of the game, and the style of the saga. Of the three concepts in this book, the Order of Hermes as the Fourth Estate perhaps has the least dramatic impact on the feel of the game. The themes of such a saga include mundane interaction combined with politicking within the Order, both at Tribunal and Grand Tribunal level. While the characters are attempting to enact a major change to the manner in which the Order of Hermes is treated by mundane society, they are doing so within the established setting.

Creating an island of magicians, on the other hand, is a major working of magic, and suitable for a high fantasy style. The characters are proposing to use their Arts to carve out a whole new realm for the Order from the very fabric of the earth. If they succeed, then they are on par with the major nobles of Mythic Europe and can approach them as equals. The tone of the saga is similar to medieval fables like the *Kingdom of Prester John* or the *Voyages of John de Mandeville*.

A world where enchanted items replace technological developments can be very similar to the canonical setting or radically different, depending upon the number, distribution, and impact of the devices. At one end of the scale, a magical invention such as a device that duplicates books can have an important impact but not one that makes Mythic Europe radically different. However, lots of individual inventions such as instant transportation, distant communication, and magically powered carts and chariots could make Mythic Europe resemble a steampunk or alternative science-fiction world. The changes can be as big as you want them to be.

## Future Events

If you are planning a long-term saga you should consider the impacts that the players' characters — and the Order as a whole — could have on these events if they felt like getting involved. Mythic Europe in 1220 is designed to be a recognizable medieval world. Any saga for *Ars Magica Fifth Edition* can change the future course of Mythic Europe, but sagas involving elements from this book are guaranteed to do so. Troupes with an interest in alternative history may wish to explore in detail the impacts of their actions on wider events in Mythic Europe. There are plenty of sources of historical information available about the 13th and 14th century; for each major historical event consider what affect the saga's transformation can have. A simpler approach is to allow the saga to diverge from history early on, so that the storyguide need not worry about tracking events. Something to bear in mind is how the Order of Hermes might be transformed in the attempt to transform Mythic Europe. Such processes are rarely one way, and the Order must actively resist change if it wants to remain unaltered by a transformed Mythic Europe.



# The Fourth Estate

Having sworn an oath to the Order, magi are forbidden from interfering in mundane events. There are seemingly as many definitions of "interfering" as there are magi, and because of the political nature of Hermetic law and justice, most magi err on the side of caution and remain withdrawn even where their power could make a positive difference.

There is another way, however. Magi of the Order of Hermes are the most powerful workers of magic that the world has known. For all their slight limitations, they are able to cast rituals of staggering power and craft the most sublime of enchanted devices. Such things would surely benefit the world if only the Order would leave its self-imposed exile.

What if the Order threw off its protective cloak of secrecy? What if

the Order chose to rule lands as the mundanes do, to demand rights and concede responsibilities? How might the world change and be improved, and what might the Order gain and lose in the process? This chapter explores the arguments for closer integration with the mundane world, the challenges that characters face in trying to move the Order towards that goal, and the stories that arise in a world where the Order of Hermes becomes the Fourth Estate. And in doing so, we see the Order of Hermes change at least as much as the world around it.

## The Four Estates

Mythic Europe can be roughly divided into estates: those who pray,

those who rule, and those who toil. In essence, these are the Church, the nobility, and the peasant and town classes. None of the three can live without the others; the Church provides spiritual guidance and moral authority, the nobility provides governance and security, and the working classes provide wealth and sustenance.

The Order of Hermes does not fit easily into these existing estates. They do not rule, except in their own affairs; they do not toil, except in their own insular studies; and they do not provide services normally associated with the Church, such as patronage, education, and spiritual protection. So what space is there for them?

A fourth estate cannot interfere with the nobility's need to rule. Nor can they usurp the Church's position as God's representative. And as





educated individuals able to wield considerable power, the Order cannot reduce themselves to mere servants. As a new estate, they must find a niche at least the equal of the Church, while maintaining a position that is non-threatening to the nobility.

## The State of the World

Some might argue that members of the Order of Hermes are already integrated into Mythic Europe. But in reality, they frequently avoid mundane justice, choose not to pay taxes that are due, shun feudal obligations, and withhold their power from those in need. How many times has a magus waved his way past a tollgate without paying, or refused counsel to a noble whose lands are in danger? And what of the covenant grogs? To whom do they owe military service? And what right allows a magus to raise a tower overnight through ritual magic?

Magi of Hermes currently do as they please, within the boundaries set for them by their Tribunal.

## Transformation

This chapter guides troupes through the process of integrating the Order into the rest of Mythic European society; finding a place for it where the power that the Order wields can be used to benefit all, and ensuring that the Order gains legally-recognized rights where it currently has none.

This is done through a combination of politics, both internal to the Order to gain consensus, and externally with the nobility of Mythic Europe and the Church. Unfortunately, society being what society is, the peasantry gets very

little say in the matter, although in regions where cities are growing in importance their voices are now beginning to carry more weight.

## The End State

While individual sagas are free to go only as far as they need to, this chapter has a particular end state in mind: namely, the integration of the Order of Hermes into Mythic Europe as the de facto fourth estate, where magi have the legally-enshrined right of rule over their own lands and the ability to influence the governance of all Mythic Europe. At the conclusion of this grand political project, magi of the Order of Hermes become recognized members of society. Not only that, but their covenants become legal entities too, and both magus and covenant alike gain the benefit of important rights at the cost of new obligations and responsibilities.

While each magus gains responsibilities as well as rights and benefits, individual covenants may gain a certain independence from Hermetic rules and politics. The stage is broadened and covenants can foster political relationships with mundane allies to better support their positions. Once magi integrate into the world, questions of land, of income, of inheritance become central to the magus' mind set.

Magi working within society, freed from the constant worry about how their actions will be perceived by their peers, are able to make a more prosperous world as they use their magic not only for their benefit but for the benefit of their new liege lords and vassals. Their unique perspective can ensure that the mundane and magical worlds continue to coexist without threat to either. Their wisdom and power influences the course of war, either to prevent it outright or bring it to a swift and decisive conclusion.

## Using Antagonists with this Chapter

*Antagonists* presents a number of well-developed characters who act to bring stories to the player covenant, usually by opposing the covenant's aims in some fashion. While this chapter changes the relationship of the world to the Order of Hermes, those antagonists can still be used as the face of many of the challenges described in this section.

In particular, the Barons Giraud Le Cornu and Geoffroi D'Arques represent the drawing of the Order closer to the mundane and the nobility's rising interest in the supernatural. Bishop Orris represents the strong distrust of magic and the Order that some in the Church feel, while Joseph of Napoli is a reforming character keen to bring the Order into the Church. And all the while, Galatea of House Guernicus may be watching the covenant's actions, looking for signs of crimes to be answered for.

### THE MORAL AUTHORITY

At its heart, this change to Mythic Europe recognizes the moral authority of the Order of Hermes to deal with certain situations. The nobility have the moral authority to rule the land as kings and emperors, the Church has the moral authority to hold those rulers to account, and the peasantry has the moral obligation to support society through their toil. So the Order must seize the authority to deal with the supernatural, principally the worlds of faerie and magic as and when they touch upon the mundane world. This is something that covenants do all the time, but this change forces society to rec-

ognize that contribution and give it the authority it deserves.

This moral authority comes about when the nobility and the church, and by extension their vassals the peasantry, bow their collective knees to the magi of the Order when certain situations arise. It allows magi to leverage their power in a way that the Order has never done before. And once the Order is part of the societal machine, rather than outside of it, that authority widens to other matters. This can be achieved through compromise: the exchange of rights and authority for obligation and responsibility.

### RIGHTS OF THE FOURTH ESTATE

Through its members at the local level and through diplomacy and politics at the highest level, the Order gains a say in the running of the world. The Order gains influence over those who truly rule Mythic Europe by becoming advisors, by making decisions about the lands they control, and by guiding their liege lords just as any other temporal ruler does.

The Order only has the ability to run its own legal affairs through its relative obscurity. Currently existing outside normal society, should a magus be the wounded party in some crime the current order of things may

see revenge as the only recourse. This turns the magus into a criminal, however, as he has usurped the ruler's right to preside over judicial matters. So the magus only becomes legally protected when Mythic Europe recognizes the Order's right to try its own members in its own courts. Complaints against magi may be made by mundanes and justice be seen to be done, which is again another key protection. The model for this is the right of clergy to be tried and judged by clergy, and this right is then extended to the Order.

Hermetic apprentices are often separated from their birth families and many rarely return to them once they have been inducted into the Order. While few may see it such, this is a loss to the magi concerned and certainly to the families. For some magi, this may impede rightful inheritance of land and title, so the Order gains rights to both. Magi are not members of the clergy and should not be sidelined when questions of inheritance are raised. This allows magi to own and dispose of land, including any resulting income, under their own name and potentially hold title with the concomitant influence and obligation that entails.

Once integrated into society, magi and covenants are more likely to gain landholder rights over feudal

lands and will not have to rely upon finding increasingly rare allodial land, that is land held independent of any superior landlord, as covenants of old were able to do. The world is changing, becoming more populous, and competition for resources is increasing. Where the Order finds itself outside of the society it cannot take advantage of society's legal protections, but gaining rights over feudal lands implies obligation, which we will look at below.

If magi and covenants are to provide counsel to Church and crown alike they will expect dominion over magical and faerie matters. While local arrangements can be made with individual landowners over individual resources, promoting the Order such that it has recognized rights over auras, regiones, vis, beasts, and so on works for the benefit of all. This can only be achieved at the highest levels, in politicking with kings and ultimately the Pope. For this, the Order needs to appoint people authorized to negotiate on behalf of the Order. Relations with kings, princes, bishops, and cardinals become formalized. Magi are free to engage with city and guild alike.

Covenants become liege lords in their own right with authority over vassals of their own. In most cases these are simply peasant farmers working the land to provide for the covenant much as they do now. In other cases knights will hold land from the covenant and owe service to magi.

### Optional Guideline: The Cost of Breaking Convention

A magus entering town in clothing not befitting a clerk or academic, trailing armed and armored men, and accompanied by an animal, is going to attract more attention than may be desirable and find cooperation harder to come by. Where a magus breaks convention, by dressing in a way that is above his station or according to no fashion, or by

flaunting his familiar in public, he suffers an additional -1 social interaction penalty. This applies to the Gifted and Gentle-Gifted alike. Magi can avoid this penalty by making a conscious effort to follow convention. It is worth noting that any character adorned or attired other than according to his station should also receive this penalty.

### OBLIGATIONS & RESPONSIBILITIES

Nobody within Mythic Europe has the freedom to do as they will. Every member of society is constrained by rules and convention and when the magi of the Order gain the benefit of rights, they must also concede certain responsibilities and obligations.



Magi will owe service to those from whom they hold land. Traditional military service is 40 days per year, which essentially represents the time that a magus can leave his studies through the year without incurring a penalty. This raises questions, however, where the Order's attitudes to women and the elderly are concerned. Given Mythic Europe's attitude to women, can a maga be considered to owe the same service as a magus? How about the elderly? A magus under a longevity ritual may retain his youthful vigor for many more years than a mundane.

Acting as counsel to a liege is not counted as part of the service and is a standing expectation. The wisdom and insight that a magus might give is going to be much valued, even where there would be some distrust at first. This is a key obligation that draws the magus into the mundane political sphere. Following the example of Normandy, where the presence of magi within cities is a recognized fact within the Tribunal, magi are freed from the need to work behind proxies and may take positions of influence and governance.

The magus gains legal responsibility for his vassals, both in terms of how he must behave towards them and in taking responsibility for their actions. The magus will be expected to arbitrate between conflicting vassals, to ensure that justice is done, and to keep his vassals in line against the threat of disharmony.

## Why the Order Would Want to Change

The Order of Hermes sits outside Mythic Europe's legal structure and yet its members have the power to exert influence upon the world in several ways. First, magi of the

Order take their apprentices from the world around them. In days gone by, when the world was a simpler place and workers of magic were closer to that world, their presence alone was enough to intimidate a child away from its parents. Things are perhaps not so easy now. More and more people are living in cities, and many people have become more worldly-wise. Every trade has need of apprentices and while parents are rightly happy and relieved when their son is taken on by a craftsman, they at least expect to maintain contact with the child, and some might expect to enjoy the fruits of his labor when they reach their dotage. Simply taking a child from his or her parents is criminal and the magi open themselves to charges, something that was once unconscionable.

Second, the Order has a nominal "join or die" policy that it occasionally extends to other workers of magic, and this could be seen as problematic. While the Order may see this as acting within the bounds of matters that concern it and it alone, the mundane authorities are unlikely to see it in quite the same way. The slaying of another, outside of judicial process, is murder and for a number of reasons the nobility cannot allow such things to occur.

Third, covenants generally occupy lands outside of the feudal structure but within feudal kingdoms. There's an argument that nobody truly *owns* the land, but that argument carries little water with kings and princes who all expect some kind of deference if not outright fealty and service. There is barely an acre of land in Mythic Europe that isn't claimed by someone. So when a covenant claims a newly-discovered vis source, who are they claiming it from? The covenant is interested in the magical harvest, not the mundane ownership, but if the duke, the rightful owner,

has need of the land what recourse does the covenant have?

Even something as simple as sumptuary laws determining what class of person may wear certain fabrics and adornments, while they don't become particularly prescriptive until later in the 13th century, may cause magi trouble. Being accustomed to dressing how they wish and perhaps not keeping abreast of fashion or convention, it is easy for magi to transgress local laws, codes, and customs without realizing it.

As for familiars, leaving aside the possibility of having to pursue a particular beast within lands not under Hermetic sway, there are questions around whether a magus is permitted to own certain beasts. Birds of prey are a fair example, with increasingly powerful and symbolic birds being restricted to certain social standings, none of which accommodate the magus, who is of no particular standing.

By leveraging their influence with the nobility, the Order is able to establish rights in all the areas

### The Provision of Laboratory Texts

Laboratory Texts become important to an Order attempting to change its ways and engage with society. By ensuring that Laboratory Texts for practical magic, as opposed to yet another wand capable of spouting fire, are made available one particular barrier is removed. A Laboratory Text puts the creation of powerful devices within reach of younger magi, which allows them to pass the benefits on to those they interact with. So folios of useful and practical magic become more common as the effort to integrate goes on.

described above: protected legal status, their own courts, jurisdiction over areas of magical interest, and grants of lands. So the Order slowly becomes a *de facto* Fourth Estate, separate from the clergy, the nobility, and the commoners, but an accepted and vital part of the world. Importantly, and this cannot be ignored, they gain a natural authority by stepping out of the shadows and embracing the world in which they live.

### The World on Hermetic Terms

The Transylvanian Tribunal represents a Hermetic state that exists *beside* the mundane world, but always slightly distant. While other Tribunals, such as Normandy and Thebes, may enjoy a well-defined structure, under House Tremere's influence, the Order in Transylvania has acquired the trappings of statehood, with Coeris at its head, taxes paid by magi under its purview, and magi stratified by status. However, these taxes and tithes are of *vis*, the service owed is spent as the Tribunal dictates, and the Tribunal imposes rules upon covenant membership and the rights and obligations of its magi.

Of course, House Tremere argues that this is for the greater good, that the House simply provides the *structure*, and that the Tribunal itself provides the *authority*.

Questions of interference, always divisive at Tribunal, are judged somewhat differently in Transylvania. Intent and result are more important than the actions undertaken or the individuals interacted with. A magus who arbitrates between two warring nobles and brings peace to lands under Hermetic control may be adjudged a wise diplomat rather than an interfering Hermetic criminal. That is, the magus is judged on how well the action pleased the Tribunal rather than by a strict interpretation of the code.

This model, though appearing authoritarian to outsiders, does allow for efficiencies. In particular, *oppida*, what other Tribunals may recognize as covenants, are able to specialize to a greater degree, secure in the knowledge that their other needs will be met by the state. The Tribunal is able to provide a single point of negotiation with those mundanes whose lands they walk upon. Finally, the taxation of magi allows the Tribunal to apportion resources to projects to the benefit of all.

But this is *not* some grand power-

play by House Tremere nor is it the nightmares of Tyltalan magi come true. This is simply how the Transylvanian Tribunal has implemented its own form of societal change and this is how they implement the moral authority that they have claimed for themselves. They have the power and influence to avert conflict, to alleviate suffering, and ensure that justice and right is done by the mundane peoples of the Tribunal. The aims are the same, but the methodology is different. And this is a key difference between the Transylvanian Tribunal and the aims of the Hermetic Fourth Estate; Transylvania has seized the moral authority to act for the good of the Transylvanian people from outside society, while this change sees the Order take it from within.

### What Prevents the Order from Bettering the World?

With a change to the Code that governs the Order, the proscription against interfering in mundane matters can be lifted or clarified, and magi can act as open advisors to mundane nobles, to churchmen, and to all who come to them for help. Currently, there tends to be an assumption that interaction automatically means interference. This is not enshrined in the Oath sworn by magi but in the interpretation of the Oath in a history of cases brought to Tribunal — the Peripheral Code.

Once the Code has been clarified, and consensus built within at least a Tribunal, then magi experience more freedom to interact and improve the world around them. And in doing so, there are considerable benefits in store.

### The Process in Brief

- Introduce the difficulties of living close to yet apart from society (see *Leveraging Hooks, Boons, and Story Flaws* and *A Growing Awareness*)
- Determine the rights and responsibilities in society that the magi want to take on
- Support test cases at Tribunal and push for lenient and good judgment (see *Supporting Test Cases*)
- Undertake the business of politics to persuade others to the cause
- (see *The Tools of Politics*)
- Return to Tribunal to seek *clarification* on the Peripheral Code in favor of integrating with society
- Negotiate with the nobility and the Church to secure the intended rights (see *The Tools of Politics*)
- Take the results to another Tribunal to gain wider support.
- Attend the Grand Tribunal and argue the case for integration (see *The Grand Tribunal*).





through the various stages that may need to be completed before the Order can be fully assimilated.

## The Process of Change

The process of change begins with engaging the player characters and showing them where magi could make a difference to the world, and revealing the opportunities to effect change. The detailed sections below provide suggestions for leveraging individual Story Flaws and covenant Hooks and Boons to bring Mythic Europe right to the covenant gates.

The player characters then decide upon the particular legal rights that they want, including those they want to secure from the rulers of Mythic Europe and those they want to secure from the Order. For instance, they may want to secure right and title over areas of magical interest

## How to Bring About Change

As with any arc introduced to the saga, the player covenant is key, so it is recommended that this change starts at a local level with the player characters. The magi of the covenant are confronted by a number of challenges and scenarios where their power could easily help but their Oath makes for a difficult moral decision. These stories are discussed in more detail below and this section principally discusses the means by which the covenant can be drawn into this plot, including how to leverage Story Flaws and covenant Hooks and Boons to give the characters and their covenant a stake in mundane peace and prosperity. It also draws a rough line from the start of the transition

### A Life's Work

Bringing the change about is a significant saga thread and many stories will be devoted to preparing for the change, implementing it, and then living with the consequences. The pace of change is left for individual sagas to determine, but as a general rule it is suggested that progress be measured in the passing of Tribunals. With Tribunals held every seven years and a Grand Tribunal every 33 years, this saga thread could easily take four or five regional Tribunal meetings before the player magi have enough support to raise the issue at the Grand Tribunal.

A fair pace might see the reasons for integration introduced leading up to the first Tribunal, where test cases can be examined. Clarifications and changes to the code come at the

second. Persuading a second regional Tribunal happens at the third opportunity, followed by bringing the case to the Grand Tribunal.

Characters can expect to spend many seasons writing and distributing texts, while stories will revolve around gaining the support of allies and fending off attacks from enemies both known and unknown. Engaging with mundane rulers and the Church also forms a significant thrust of the player character's activities.

Such a project provides political characters with a cause to pursue, and one that will bring them either fame or notoriety, and with politics required across the Order, the nobility, the Church, and the supernatural realms, there are story opportunities for most magi and companion characters.

from the nobility and the Church, while clarifying the Peripheral Code such that they may sit in parliaments and councils, and provide counsel to the lords they hold the magical land from. These rights need not be exhaustive, but each case consists of a series of rights that need to be secured, balanced by obligation or responsibility. And where those responsibilities appear at odds with the Peripheral Code then the agreement of the Order must be gained.

This agreement is gained by influencing the Tribunal. To begin with, the Tribunal could be persuaded to vote leniently and exercise good judgment in cases of interference brought before it. Storyguides can use such cases to highlight the opportunities that magi have to make a positive difference in the world while showing the difficulties of treading a fine legal line. This phase also gives the player characters a view on their potential allies and enemies and allows them to build political will.

New rules are provided for the writing of persuasive texts that help magi to prepare their audience ahead of arguing their case at Tribunal, as the next stage is to persuade the Tribunal to clarify or change the Peripheral Code. These changes allow the magi of that Tribunal to engage with the mundane world more freely for the benefit of magus and mundane alike.

The same is done at foreign Tribunals to build wider support before bringing the matter to the Grand Tribunal. This gives the player character the opportunity to politic at the highest level of the Order and persuade the *primi* of the Houses to their way of thinking.

This is the path to persuading the Order of the need for change, but there other opinions to be won over. The player characters must engage with the mundane world, principally

the nobility and the Church. The world must be prepared before the Order formally introduces itself and picks up the reins of responsibility.

With such a change across Mythic Europe, the world's other inhabitants must be engaged. With one of the key aims being protecting supernatural places from mundane encroachment, it is important for the Order to find representatives of the supernatural realms and negotiate with them.

Once done, however, the Order of Hermes is freed from its self-imposed exclusion and is able to engage with the mundane world, mediate between magical and mundane, and bring a growing prosperity to the everyone.

## Leveraging Hooks, Boons, & Story Flaws

Covenants and individual characters alike provide means and motives for closer integration with the mundane world than some in the Order might be comfortable with. The sections here take a brief look at these story hooks and how they force covenants to interact and integrate with wider society. These are the kind of situations and dilemmas that most covenants face and most likely remain quiet about at Tribunal.

### COVENANT HOOKS AND BOONS

The following sample Hooks and Boons provide motivations for covenants to engage with the mundane world and they tend to make that case that covenants cannot simply exist in isolation; circumstances are thrust upon covenants and they must cope with the situations they are given.

**Alienable Land** (*Covenants*, page 19): Covenants supported by alienable land may see it sold or mortgaged to outsiders formerly unconnected with the covenant. This immediately draws the mundane world into a direct relationship with that covenant. The new owners of the land may want to leverage the particular abilities of their neighbors, or the land or property may already have some kind of magical effect in place. So the covenant, through no action of its own, must engage with or confront the mundane world. It must set terms or withdraw whatever magical advantage the newcomers might gain from their new acquisition.

**Beholden** (*ArM5*, page 73): Both Minor and Major versions of this Hook allow for the covenant to be beholden to nobles or clergy. This relationship is ideally reciprocal and on agreeable terms, but this could be used by the covenant's political enemies to cast aspersions on the covenant's activities, which in turn prompts the player magi into defending a position of integration at Tribunal.

**Castle** (*Covenants*, page 12): Many covenants are built within what could be described as castles, and occupying such an overt statement of influence and power is automatically of concern to nobles in that region. It may be important for the covenant to enter into agreements with neighbors as to the nature of their actions, or to define clear boundaries of influence. This kind of negotiation, and particularly the building of trust between magical and mundane, could be important when the Order looks to do the same with the nobility and the Church.

**Dumping Ground** (*Covenants*, page 19): While covenants could be persuaded to provide care for old



and infirm members of the nobility, allowing their heirs to move them sideways while they take up the reins of power, with Hermetic magic there is often little reason for the old and infirm to stay that way. Magic can restore health; it can also restore strength to mind and limb alike. And so, covenants that have taken in elder members of the nobility may soon face charges of interference if they do restore these elders to a state where they could return to power and thereby move their heirs aside.

**Fosterage** (*Covenants*, page 19): Magi given responsibility for the education and well-being of a young noble have the opportunity to start a new philosophy within the nobility: specifically, that magic as practiced by the Order of Hermes is something to be accepted and leveraged. This understanding is a double-edged sword. This young noble is by turns friendly towards the Order and then demanding of the magical aid that he knows is easily within the Order's power. A character whose origin is in Hermetic fosterage could be a strong catalyst, pleading the case for the Order to intervene and benefit society.

**Heavy Cavalry** (*Covenants*, page 18): As with the Castle Hook, any covenant that maintains heavy cavalry, or any recognizable military force, must maintain good relations with neighbors for fear of the obvious distrust escalating into conflict.

**Mundane Politics** (*Covenants*, page 21): A covenant deeply embroiled in mundane politics — by blood, inclination, or position — must either keep their activities from the Quaesitores or gain political support across the Tribunal for their involvements.

**Protector** (*ArM5*, page 73): The Protector Hook, when applied to a village or other mundane place, implies that some agreement or responsibility is already in place and that the covenant must make good on that commitment. This again provides something that may need to be defended at Tribunal and is something that could provide the case for beneficial intervention. If this Hook is applied to a magical or supernatural place or resource it provides the catalyst for agreement to be reached between the covenant and a mundane power that intentionally or accidentally threatens that resource. A good example might be the home of a woodland spirit. The covenant has promised to protect the spirit and its home, but the land belongs to the Church and it wants to clear the woodland for farmland. The covenant must now not only engage with the Church but also find an accommodation.

**Road** (*ArM5*, page 74): The Minor version of this Hook places the covenant on a major road, river, or sea route and guarantees the covenant contact with the mundane world. And, for the most part, those mundanes they meet want something. As an example, imagine a covenant on a large river. When that river floods, does the covenant help those nearby to save their lost crops? Or to rebuild the homes swept away in the deluge? If so, does this not assist one group of mundanes to the detriment of others not fortunate to be so near a covenant? This is the kind of moral challenge that is inherent to the theme of this transformation. The covenant may indeed be interfering in the natural order of things, but arguably justifiably so.

**Tame Nobleman** (*Covenants*, page 18): This Hook is probably the closest that many covenants can get to outright breaking the Code without actually crossing the line. The tame nobleman provides the front for the covenant's rule over some or all of their lands and this raises a number of questions. How is this defined by the laws of the land? If the nobleman actually has legal title to the land and is able to dispose of it according to law, then surely the covenant can be said to be little more than a council of court wizards. But if the covenant's position is enshrined in law, is the noble not simply reduced to the status of a bailiff or reeve? And if this noble has a right to his own lands elsewhere, could magical aid given to him be seen as further interference? A situation like this begs for the Order to find some way to protect its members from magi and nobles alike who might try to exploit this dubious legal position.

**Urban** (*ArM5*, page 74): For covenants based within towns and cities, any action designed to protect themselves from mundane or magical assault is likely to automatically extend to their mundane neighbors. So is this provision of magical advantage accepted or condemned by the Tribunal and the Order?

**Writ of Crenellation** (*Covenants*, page 15): As with the Castle Hook discussed above the covenant, or their legal front, has gained permission to fortify their residence. Apart from the statement that makes, it does raise the question of what has been granted in return. This may be the source of the Beholden Hook and the finished fortifications used as leverage against the covenant. A covenant forced into this position,



with an unscrupulous mundane political opponent on one side and the Oath on the other, would do well to seek advice from the Tribunal. Such a session could clarify what kind of interactions that covenants can engage in.

### CHARACTER STORY FLAWS

Individual magi or companions also draw the mundane world towards the Order of Hermes and confront covenants with difficult decisions.

**Black Sheep** (ArM5, page 51): While estranged from his prestigious family, this character can still be used to bridge the gap between the Hermetic and mundane worlds. Enemies of the character's family may choose an apparently easy target only to find him protected

by greater powers. Does the covenant interfere by protecting a member of one faction from another? Could this contribute to an escalation where hedge wizards or even other Hermetic magi become involved? In any case, this hook speaks very much to those who would see greater *separation* from the mundane world rather than integration.

**Close Family Ties** (ArM5, page 52): Applicable to magi and companions alike, close family ties often draw the covenant closer to the mundane world than its members may like. This kind of connection is ideal for bringing home the reality of a harsh world to a community, in the covenant, that can very effectively shelter itself from hardship.

**Dependent** (ArM5, page 53): While many of the other hooks have re-

lied upon a noble or church connection, the Dependent Story Flaw is considerably more open. The dependent character is usually weak, which is an opportunity to show the poorer strata of Mythic Europe's society. Such a dependent can be used to demonstrate the effects of failing harvest, illness and plague, and the effects of poor governance. And this is the moral background against which the Order's non-interference can be judged.

**Enemies** (ArM5, page 53): Nobles and senior clergy make for effective enemies, but the resolution of these stories does not need to involve violence or death. Presenting a character with an enemy and letting them find common ground is just as rewarding. In the context of this transformation, it forms proof that differences can be set aside and the Order and society can find common ground.

**Favors** (ArM5, page 54): There are few Story Flaws that can so directly engage the covenant in mundane affairs as the Favors Flaw. Having benefitted from the actions of others in the past, the character is now beholden to respond in kind. Whether magus or companion, the fulfillment of the debt may include the use of magic, either directly or indirectly. In any case, it will most likely involve covenant resources, which immediately implicates the covenant.

**Feud** (ArM5, page 54): Another clear example of the covenant being dragged into mundane business through the familial obligations of its magi or companions. By favoring one faction over another, the covenant is interfering, but there's an opportunity to use the covenant's influence to find an accommodation between the feuding factions, which may be families,



guilds, religious orders, or almost anything else.

**Heir (ArM5, page 54):** Any covenant that shelters or supports an heir is by default committing the sin of interference, but they are not necessarily committing the crime of bring ruin on their sodales. In fact, often quite the opposite. As with the Fosterage covenant Hook, the magi have the opportunity to shape the heir's thinking towards the Order and the supernatural world as a whole.

**True Love (ArM5, page 59):** There is nothing one would not do for one's true love, no matter the consequences. So, here again is an opportunity for characters to become involved in the mundane world, in ways that have significant impact, while retaining the sense of moral right. And that is important. The Order does not wish itself brought into conflict with mundane society, but resolving stories that arise from Story Flaws such as True Love shows that there may be a need to become involved and, perhaps, that there is a need for a new philosophy.

## A Growing Awareness

The covenant must first see the inherent benefits of engaging with the mundane world over staying withdrawn and the problems of continuing to buck convention. The following events highlight the problems that society may have with the actions of magi.

- Some time after the characters rid a parish of its corrupted priest, the priest's bishop and the parish's lord try to bring charges of murder against those responsible. Do the magi fight the case, try to prove just cause, or do they ren-

der up a scapegoat?

- Having been seen collecting vis in woodland near to the covenant, the magi receive summons to explain why they have been thieving and to then make recompense. The woodland does not belong to the covenant and is, in fact, owned by an influential knight who grants rights of forage to his tenants. The magi must negotiate for the right to collect vis in the woods, ensuring that they limit their obligations.
- The new bishop of the covenant's diocese exerts his control over the region, which for the covenant involves greater scrutiny over taxes and even a request to see the charter granting permission to found and maintain the covenant.

Importantly, once the player covenant has experienced the above events and navigated its way through them, they are able to advise other covenants suffering similar problems. This helps to show how close society is getting to the Order, and reinforces the need to find an accommodation.

The following story suggestions show the good that a covenant can do if it is prepared to weather accusations of interference and the benefits of formalizing relations with the nobility. The hooks into the following stories should be tailored according to the covenant Hooks and character Story Flaws currently in play.

- When all the harvests from farms owned by a local knight fail for three seasons running, the knight is on the brink of selling land to his rival in order to maintain his family and their estate. The knight and his tenants are enduring increasing poverty while the rival noble enjoys the prospect of running the knight into the ground. The covenant

becomes involved when its own costs rise as local markets have less to sell. At the heart of the story is a vengeful faerie queen testing the knight's loyalty to his wife; she wants him to be her king and is punishing him for his rejection of her by stealing his fertility and that of his lands. The covenant can very easily deal with the situation; they destroy or banish the queen, or otherwise lift her curse, which then restores the knight's fertility. Doing so aids one noble to the detriment of his rival however who would, it should be remembered, have expanded his own holdings.

- Reports of a strange dead creature reach the covenant. The body of a flying serpent has been recovered and is being kept at a priory, on whose land it fell. It was apparently killed during a fight between the serpent and a bird with feathers the color of fire. Investigating, the magi discover that the serpent is an iaculus, a large venomous snake with feathered wings that it uses to fly from trees onto its victims. The body contains neither vis nor blood. The witnesses can take the magi to the site of the battle and describe how the bird sliced the serpent with its razor-sharp wings and that all the iaculus' blood drained into the field where it fell. Could this spot, where the iaculus fought with the fabled alerion and died, become a recurrent source of vis? If there's a chance, how does the covenant go about securing the right to gather vis from the prior's land? What might he ask in exchange?
- A nobleman, aware of the Order and the longevity of its members, approaches the covenant to request that they use their magic to prolong his life and that of his

wife. In return, he is willing to sign over the income from a moderate fief to the covenant while he and his wife live. It is a simple request with potentially a large monetary reward. But should the magi do it? While the income has been signed over, what happens if the nobleman changes the use the land is put to and the income falls? What if the income generated by the land actually increases, but this is not considered part of the bargain by the nobleman?

- A famous knight and tournament champion is accused of disgracing a noblewoman while her husband was away. The noble and his wife want justice but both plaintiff and accused owe fealty to the same lord, who suspects there is more to the case than either side claims. He asks the covenant to divine the truth of it and tell him which side is lying to him. It is a task easily done by the magi, but can they turn away and allow justice to fend for itself? If they do become involved, they effectively determine the lord's judgment, thereby interfering in the natural order of things.

The sample encounters above are simple enough, but they introduce the two key questions that face the Order: what kind of help is appropriate, and how does the Order secure agreement with the mundanes? All of the story seeds above, depending upon the actions taken by the covenant, have the potential to be raised at Tribunal as charges of interference in mundane affairs, which provides the covenant the opportunity to defend its actions and promote controlled integration.

## The Tribunal

While preparatory work may be done through the writing of texts de-

signed to educate the Tribunal, House, or Order, the final debate must be held at Tribunal. For this, the debate rules presented in *Houses of Hermes: Societates*, page 91 are very useful. If an argument bonus has been generated prior to Tribunal, it can be applied to any debate which encompasses aspects of the polemic philosophy. As far as this chapter is concerned, any case touching upon the interference in mundane affairs is suitable as is a debate on clarifying the Peripheral Code itself.

### BUILDING SUPPORT BEFORE THE TRIBUNAL

The following story seeds directly introduce elements surrounding cases brought to Tribunal.

- Having lost a case at Tribunal and faced with the imposition of a fine, the covenant is secretly approached by a bound spirit. The spirit has been sent by a magus of the Tribunal with an offer to pay any fine resulting from the case. The conditions are simple; the covenant continues working towards integration with society, and the donor remains anonymous. Can the covenant trust the offer? Is this a sign that they have support, or is someone trying to manipulate them into committing more crimes?
- A magus from a nearby covenant visits, bringing a retinue with him. The talk is amiable and agreements are made to exchange Laboratory Texts and vis, but during the evening's feasting it becomes clear that there is an ulterior motive. One of the nobles in the retinue needs aid. His lands are suffering under a plague and he cannot fulfill his feudal obligations to his own liege or feed his tenants. It turns out that he has been told that this covenant

can help him and that he should put forward his case.

- A magus asks the covenant to support him in rebutting a case of mundane interference to be heard in a special council. He has been charged with aiding a minor mundane noble in killing a rival over the love of a woman. The magus makes a strong and reasoned case that the knight he assisted is a long-time companion and that he gifted him only with such magic and support as might be expected. That his dread rival died is incidental, and only good can come of it. But the covenant bringing the case received the income from some small plot of land as long as that knight lived. They charge that the magus' interference caused the death of the knight and thereby deprived them of due resources.
- The covenant receives representation from a local landholder demanding that the murderer of one of his tenants be handed over so that justice may be done. It becomes apparent that the victim of this murder was a hedge wizard known to the landholder. Nobody within the covenant knows anything of any murder, but when the landholder describes the appearance of the killer and the manner of the death it is clear that a magus of the Order was behind it. Investigating further, the covenant finds the killer who simply says he offered the hedge wizard the option to "join or die." The wizard's decision was final. Literally. So what happens now? The magus' actions seem to be within the Code but he has brought an angry noble looking for justice and recompense to the gates of another covenant.

The story seeds described above help the player magi to look deeper



into questions of interference and integration, where are the lines drawn and how far can one covenant go on their own? They also introduce other magi and covenants wrestling with much the same questions, only, as they are not the covenant at the center of the saga, they are not in a position to deal with matters head-on. So this phase should allow the player covenant to build some support by assisting others.

### SUPPORTING TEST CASES

Whether the rulings in any cases resulting from the above stories (or those you use in their stead) go against the covenant or for it, other magi and covenants in the Tribunal look to the player covenant for advice on engaging with the mundanes and in presenting their cases at court. These are likely to be less-influential covenants, perhaps those with few members or very few resources.

Helping these covenants with their own entanglements allows the player covenant to support peers and build a political faction around themselves, a faction inclined to greater integration.

- One covenant uncovers plans by another to disrupt the assarting — or clearing — of woodlands by a noble intending to expand his agricultural holdings. The woodland concerned includes a Magic aura and is home to a small woodland drake. Should one covenant succeed the Magic aura will be lost and a vengeful drake unleashed, but should the other succeed then the Tribunal condones disrupting the rightful actions of a landowner. Is there a third way? Can an accommodation be made to protect the landowner's rights and the drake's home?
- Charges of bringing ruin to one's



sodales are brought against a magus who liberated a powerful enchanted item from a landowning knight. As a result, the knight has accused a nearby covenant of theft and demands the return of the item and recompense made. There was no evidence that the item was a danger to the knight, his neighbors, or the Order, but the magus insists that magical power is not for the use of mundanes.

The next stage is to go back to Tribunal and clarify the local Peripheral Code with regard to interference.

### CLARIFYING THE PERIPHERAL CODE

After having proved the point with test cases, the next stage is to seek some level of amendment to that Tribunal's Peripheral Code. Magi

could seek *clarification* of the Peripheral Code, for instance where the code uses language such as "without due cause" or "without excess," to describe mundane interactions, the Tribunal can be asked to clarify in favor of the looser interpretations. The Tribunal could be asked to make *amendments* to the Peripheral Code. These amendments can take the form of adding new clauses, removing restrictions already in place, and changing certain provisions now viewed as too restrictive. The Tribunal could even vote in extremis to suspend certain provisions of the Code for a time. A region damaged by flood, famine, or drought may require intervention either on moral grounds or at least on the grounds of protecting Hermetic interests, but doing so is a clear intervention. The Tribunal may decide that such intervention is permissible but only for a year or two years.

The nature of these amendments is best driven by the player magi and saga events. For instance:

- A Verditius may want to clarify the number of devices that can be sold to mundanes in the Tribunal or the number of pawns that may be used to enchant such devices.
- A Jerbiton may want to act as patron to an aspiring artist, giving him an advantage over the competition, so he may need the Code to confirm that as the artist has no political influence, assisting him is permitted.
- A Flambeau may argue for the right to use his magic freely at tournament and to provide service to the highest bidder. The elder magi may balk at the prospect of such service, but if the magus can successfully argue that he favors no particular noble he may win the amendment.

### MUNDANE TESTIMONY

Few Tribunals have restrictions against mundanes attending Tribunal and offering testimony. It may be

considered far from regular, but their presence and their insights may be useful. In purely mechanical terms, as per *Houses of Hermes: Societates*, page 93, the testimony adds +1 to the argument strength, but there is inherent story potential in bringing a mundane to the Tribunal in order to support a case or proposition. The following suggestions may be useful.

- Opponents to the change bring a number of witnesses to testify and each is a worker of some minor tradition or other. None of them are Gifted, but they all make a living through the working of their magic: a blacksmith touched by the magic realm here, a folk healer there, and so on. They all complain that they would have no living to make if the magi took their jobs, but when the magi are anonymously informed that the blacksmith's talent springs from the Infernal, do they attempt to use this information against their opponents, or is this some new mischief?
- A priest, understanding of the Order and its workings, stands before the council and calls for the magi to involve themselves. He recognizes that there is wis-

dom within the long years that magi enjoy and he argues that such wisdom should be used to guide and advise those who rule the land. He is hiding a secret, however. His superiors knew of his attendance at Tribunal and have stripped him of his office. Can the opponents of change use this to discredit his testimony or is it an example of selfless sacrifice for a cause?

As far as the debate rules go, bringing mundane testimony does not add a huge bonus, but it does present a roleplaying opportunity.

### LOCAL CUSTOMS

Most Tribunals are resistant to change, which can make it difficult for a magus to bring the debate on integration to the Tribunal in the first place. But Tribunals have their own identity and their own factions. Normandy accepts that magi must sometimes live within cities and their Peripheral Code contains clauses that provide guidance on how these magi should conduct their business. The Rhine Tribunal is at the heart of the debate between those who want to shape the Order's relationship with the mundane world. The conflicting Ash and Apple gilds seek a bold presence in the world and an accommodation respectively. Tremere-dominated Transylvania already provides a strong structure that closely resembles a Hermetic state, and the magi of recovering Thebes and war-torn Iberia each have their own view on relations with mundanes, shaped by ongoing occupation and conflict.

Regardless of the prevailing wisdom, or the specific clauses of the Peripheral Code, the Tribunal is *the* place to negotiate agreements with like-minded magi. There is much

### Story Seed: Charges in a Foreign Court

Magi from a neighboring Tribunal where the Code has not been clarified to allow magi to act as counselors to mundane rulers cross the border to bring charges of interference against a covenant in this Tribunal. They allege that the magi influenced the inheritance of substantial estates on both sides of the Tribunal border, which in turn dispossessed the plaintiff covenant of lucrative sources of income. They charge that this interference has brought ruin

upon them and that without funding they cannot pursue their studies as they would like. The case is complex as it involves two distinct interpretations of Hermetic law. In truth, the foreign magi would be content with recompense and are not vindictive. But it would not occur to them to engage with the mundane nobles in their own Tribunal. Perhaps the player magi can intercede on their behalf and teach the neighboring Tribunal a new way of thinking.



to be said for forming a coalition of magi who all agree to turn a blind eye to misdemeanors of interference. If enough magi adopt the policy then charges of interference and bringing ruin that appear before Tribunal are unlikely to succeed; the code, in this respect at least, becomes unenforceable. And on the back of that, the Tribunal develops its own local customs not covered by the Peripheral Code.

In the sweep of the saga, this puts the player characters at the heart of a power struggle with the Quaesitores and other traditionalists attempting to rein in these local customs, with the player covenant the driving force behind them. If your story takes this route, just getting the matter debated at Tribunal is a major victory. If the debate does not take place, as long as the coalition holds then the customs prevail.

Once this way of life starts to normalize within the Tribunal, foreign Tribunals start to take an interest. Houses start to make unilateral rulings, perhaps applying pressure to the player characters to cease their actions or providing tacit support. And with the player magi at the heart of the action, other covenants come to view them as useful resources when forced to defend their own actions.

## FOREIGN TRIBUNALS

If the magi have successfully supported test cases, built a coalition, or even managed to move their own Tribunal's Peripheral Code to a more accommodating place, it is time to take the message further abroad. All the considerations discussed above still stand when visiting foreign Tribunals, but there is the added problem of needing some kind of sponsor. It is not politic to simply attend a Tribunal uninvited, so the magi need to connect with like-

minded magi and use them to spread their message.

If the aim is to change the Order's attitude, then success in more than one Tribunal is needed; the actions of one Tribunal alone may be overlooked, even those of two or three outlying Tribunals, but if there is a suggestion of a determined political change then the Grand Tribunal cannot ignore it.

If you want to short-cut to the Grand Tribunal, you may want to consider whether to use some of the Tribunals not yet covered by *Ars Magica Fifth Edition*, such as Loch Leglean, Iberia, or Rome, as places where interference is rife and goes unchallenged. Doing so allows the player Tribunal to be the one that finally escalates the issue to the Grand Tribunal.

## HOUSE POLITICS

Hermetic politics is a complex affair. Covenants may be expected to reach consensus among their members, but this consensus may differ between covenants of the same Tribunal. The prevailing opinion in one Tribunal may be anathema to their neighbors. The Houses of Hermes have their own political leanings, which one could expect to transcend Tribunal boundaries. But it doesn't stop there. Houses have divisions, such as the Bjornaer sept or the ideological split within House Merinita. And Tribunals often have loose political factions, such as the gilds found within the Rhine Tribunal. In particular, the Apple Gild in the Rhine is particularly in favor of closer integration with the mundane world and significant allies could be gained through approaching them. The Encroaching Dominion scenario presented in *Tales of Power* is particularly apt for use or adaptation in this respect.

Keeping track of these for each Tribunal is an unwieldy task but the general character of each House suggests the default response. The descriptions below provide these default positions, while later in this chapter we will look at the motivations of the *leaders* of each House in the context of the Grand Tribunal.

- **House Bonisagus** is undoubtedly one of the most resistant to change from a political perspective. The Oath and its provisions are deeply linked to both Bonisagus and Trianoma. The Oath, as with the Code that derives from it, is a work of genius and it has served the Order well for nearly 500 years. To change it would be disrespectful and dangerous.
- **House Bjornaer** is able to view the argument from another perspective. While some Houses oppose or endorse integration for idealistic reasons, House Bjornaer is able to ask "what's in it for us?" With its connection to the animal world, the House can see the threat that mundane expansion poses to the magical and the wild places of the world. If agreements can be made with the nobility and the church, then certain lands can be protected. A change to the Oath and to the Code may be a worthwhile compromise.
- **House Criamon**, as might be expected, is a complex balance. The House philosophy does not elevate magi above the rest of humanity and the House sees abandoning humanity to its fate as a sin. This might then suggest support for greater integration with the world, but the House is dominated by a quest to grasp and understand the Enigma and its members are unwilling to be distracted by lesser concerns. If anything, the most likely out-

come of approaching House Criamon is that the House is roused into affirmative inaction.

- It is too easy to categorize **House Ex Miscellanea** as being apolitical, and maybe the House as a single entity is, but many of the traditions and lineages within the House have a deep bond to the mundane world. By the terms of the Oath and the Peripheral Code, many of the Ex Miscellanea traditional roles would be frowned upon at best and invite potential censure at worst. Change could be welcomed by many within these traditions.
- **House Flambeau** demonstrates the coming together of idealism and pragmatism. On the one hand its members are all too ready to hunt down those Marched by the Order, but on the other they stand by their principles even where this leads them to break the terms of the Oath. Loosening the restrictions with regard to engaging in mundane affairs would benefit the House by providing causes that the House can swing behind.
- From the founding of the Order, **House Guernicus** has placed the Oath and the Code at its heart. While there are factions within the House that call for stricter or looser interpretations of the Code it seems unconscionable that provisions of the Oath would be removed. Similarly, the House would object to the Peripheral Code being so clarified as to effectively trivialize the Oath, but the House is not concerned with tradition, simply good governance leading to a protection of the Order. Thus, suggestions that promote this good governance and seek to protect the Order may be enough to sway the House.
- **House Jerbiton** already actively defends the rights of magi to in-

teract with the mundane world. Jerbiton magi frequently reconnect with their mundane birth families, which are often drawn from the nobility, and they often support or sponsor other mundane organizations. These Jerbiton magi, acting as a bloc within Tribunals, can make charges of interference very hard to enforce.

- With very few Gifted members, **House Mercere** already has arguably the closest relationship with the mundane world of all the Hermetic Houses. The red-caps live and work in the mundane world. They see the effects of hardship upon the world as they travel between covenants, and then they see the magically-maintained comfort and riches in which the Order keeps itself. If there is a moral case to be made, House Mercere is able to argue it.
- **House Merinita** shares much with House Bjornaer. Though perhaps distrustful of the mortal world, Merinita magi recognize the vitality that mortals give to the fae. And they also recognize the loss of lands given over to faeries and the continued encroachment of the Dominion. If, like Bjornaer, they could use integration with the world to protect these places then they could be persuaded to lend support.
- The Transylvanian Tribunal dominated by **House Tremere** provides a model for a Hermetic state, which shows that House Tremere is broadly supportive of magi taking responsibility. Indeed, the notion of an exchange of rights for responsibilities is central to the Tremere mindset. And, as Transylvania shows, the House judges interference with mundanes leniently, preferring to judge the venture by its outcome rather than according to a set of rules. If the change is presented

well, House Tremere could be a very supportive ally.

- The opinions of **House Tytalus** are likely to be somewhat fractured and votes at council are probably available in return for favor in other matters, but the magi aegroti — or leper magi — found in House Tytalus may provide the most consistent view. They are skilled healers and usually specialize in Corpus magic or Longevity Rituals, and these gifts are not restricted to magi and their companions. As lepers, afflicted with a dread disease, they are usually treated with distrust and disdain, which gives them a unique perspective on the lives of the downtrodden.
- Many view **House Verditius** as a greedy and venal House only interested in the profit and acclaim that their craft can generate for them. In many cases this is entirely justified. Their work is effectively held back by the conventions of the Order and they are held at arm's length from the mundane craft guilds that could further their collective crafts. Of course there would be more profit if certain constraints were lifted, but every device has a purpose and at present too few can be put to use where they are most needed.

The characterizations above are broad and do not reflect the feelings of each individual, which are of course all determined by both the storyguide and the players. They do at least provide default starting positions from which individuals must be persuaded, and this should be useful when dealing with such characters within stories. Storyguides should determine how widely understood these opinions are but any Order of Hermes Lore rolls required should be against an Ease Factor of 6, or 9 at the outside.





The leanings of covenants, guilds, septs, lineages, or cults are for individual troupes to determine but given the increasingly secret nature of these organizations rolls against Order of Hermes Lore will require higher Ease Factors, and rolls against specific House or Cult Lores may be required instead.

## The Grand Tribunal

Eventually, the matter is brought to the Grand Tribunal, likely not for the first time, and the player characters once again become central to the cause. Political alliances need to be forged and arguments need to be won, as changing or clarifying the Code is not done lightly.

This being the Grand Tribunal, the politics of the event should be paramount. No matter how good the preparatory work, the decisions here are made essentially by the seniors of the Houses. It is these senior magi, archmagi, and primi that the player magi must influence.

As described in *ArM5*, page 14, three representatives from each Tribunal attend the Grand Tribunal held at Durenmar, in addition to the twelve Primi. Either the player

magi must get themselves selected to attend the Grand Tribunal or they must find a champion in one of those magi who are to attend. If they can find this champion, they may appear before the Grand Tribunal to argue their case.

If the player characters can gain admittance to the Grand Tribunal, they may succeed in convincing the most senior of their Order. And if they do, the Order changes.

### IN FAVOR OF CHANGE

- **The Flambeau Primus Garus:** Garus is a leading member of the milites, a Flambeau faction that promotes chivalry and service to the Order. He was also a mercenary and tournament champion in his youth, but his grip on his own House is loose as it does not have a unifying goal. If Garus could win concessions on the role of House Flambeau in mundane warfare, thereby offering his House a purpose, he could be a valuable ally.
- **The Jerbiton Primus Andru:** Andru and his House are already involved in the mundane world, albeit through clandestine activi-

ties. Any measure that would allow Andru to continue making the world a better place, protecting works of art and promoting good governance, while reducing the risk to those in his House would have Andru's support.

- **The Verditius Primus Stouritus:** Stouritus' concern is for the wealth of his House, something that can be vastly improved by allowing magi to increase the number of enchanted items that can be sold to mundanes.

### AGAINST THE CHANGE

- **The Bonisagus Primus Archmagus Murion:** Unscrupulous, scheming, and conservative, Murion seeks little but to re-establish House Bonisagus's power and reputation among the Houses. She will not do that by being the primi who tore down the guiding principles upon which Bonisagus' Order was founded.
- **The Criamon Prima Muscaria:** Muscaria understands her role within the House to be removing anything that might distract other Criamon from the continuing quest for the Enigma.

What greater distraction would there be than being at the beck and call of a mundane princeling? Though young, she is pragmatic and politically astute enough to see through lies.

- **The Guernicus Prima Archmaga Bilera:** An arch negotiator, Bilera is currently trying to heal the rift between the Traditionalists and the Transitionalists within her House. Any change that reduces the power of the Peripheral Code or the Oath would be explosive to House Guernicus, and she cannot support the measure.

### UNDECIDED

- **The Bjornaer Prima Falke:** Young and struggling with the responsibility of leadership, Falke tends towards an isolationist policy, more through apparent indecision than a strong ideological position. She of course would want to see the wilderness protected from mundane encroachment, but there is a large faction within her House that would resist formally engaging with those same mundanes. For more information on Falke, see *Guardians of the Forests: The Rhine Tribunal*, page 96.
- **The Ex Miscellanea Primus Ebroin:** Ebroin is in truth a Magus Orbus, though his House of origin is left for each saga to determine, so his loyalty may still lie with his former House and its primus.
- **The Mercere Prima Insatella:** Insatella is concerned only with the running of her House, its obligations to the Order, and its commercial activities. As an unGifted member of the Order she sees her House's role as important but separate from the affairs of magi. She is likely to abstain from any vote but can provide opin-

ion on whether the mundane world can be trusted or not.

- **The Merinita Primus Handri:** Handri has a problem that he may not have noticed. He is a secretive man, more concerned with faeries than magi, and surrounded by a cadre of trusted advisers. However, Vinaria, the former prima, has returned to the scene and has begun working on her relations with the other primi. In truth, it may be Vinaria that the player magi need to court as her influence over the Grand Tribunal may be greater than Handri's.
- **The Tremere Prima Poena:** Poena is an advocate of a Hermetic state existing within the mundane world just as has been implemented in Transylvania. She would be supportive of other Tribunals adopting the same model, but would she support a vision different to that demonstrated by House Tremere?
- **The Tyalus Primi Buliste and Harpax:** House Tyalus may have two primi, but they have a single vote between them at the Grand Tribunal. The task may not be to persuade either to a given cause but maneuver both into agreeing a proxy able to vote on behalf of the House.

## How Politics Affects Change

We have looked at the need to change attitudes within the Order and later we will look at some of the magical effects that can be leveraged in negotiations with mundane society. Now, however, we look at the negotiations with those mundanes and with the denizens of the supernatural realms.

## Mundane Allies & Enemies

To be clear, leaders of the mundane world are unlikely to support any move by the Order of Hermes to integrate itself into society without there being some clear benefit to them and their heirs. Openly acknowledging members of the Order means affording them the respect they are due, recognizing certain rights and relationships, and ensuring that their political inclinations are accommodated. All in all, it is potentially too much effort even before the thought of entertaining magi as guests at the feasting table.

What might the commoners, rulers, and priests of the mundane world want?

### KINGS AND NOBLES

There are few problems that a king can't solve through the application of manpower and money. They have been building near-impregnable castles for generations, they have sponsored chapels and cathedrals alike for the preservation of their immortal souls, and they have but to command it to set several thousand men on the path of murder. If they want to increase their revenues, they tax their populace harder. If they want a fleet of ships before winter sets in, they hire more shipbuilders, who hire more carpenters, who buy more lumber. All these things they have, and if they take these roles away from their populace, by using magic to gain them for instance, then their populace starves.

What kings and nobles may value more is guidance. They need to know whether the path of murder is justified. They need to know whether the fleet of ships is needed to defend their coast or to reclaim their foreign



estates. Magi are able to divine the answers to many such questions and that makes their service highly valuable to the nobility. Persuade such a noble of the benefit of having direct and true information, of avoiding misunderstanding and of knowing the real motivations of his rivals, and mundane testimony can be gained for the Tribunal.

Ultimately providing that service is a politically tricky thing, however. Who in the Tribunal should advise a king? What about the sheriff of a county or shire? The older that magi get the more warped they tend to become, and this is likely to be more unsettling than even the effect of The Gift. Thus, such advisers are likely to be relatively young (for magi) and bear a Gentle Gift. Advisers to prominent figures, such as kings, princes, or archbishops, should be appointed by the Tribunal with agreement from those they are to serve. The egalitarian ways of the Order may suffer as it would break social convention for a woman to serve on a council, so the Tribunal may need to compromise on its values.

Of course, there are regional differences. The kings of Christian Spain may look to magic for the means to accelerate their reconquest of the Iberian peninsula, or to defend against duplicitous allies. The English nobles in Ireland may ask for the means to secure their hard-won lands against the Irish. And the kings of far-off Novgorod may soon be looking for defense against the oncoming horde.

Moneylending is something that is looked on unkindly by the Church and relied upon by the nobility. Traditionally the purview of Jews, moneylending — in the sense of providing loans with interest — funds much of the large-scale activity of knight, noble, and king across Mythic Europe. When those in debt decide that repayment is too onerous, the money lenders are frequently dispossessed

and expelled so that the noble does not need to repay.

Magi can provide an alternative, however. It is known that creating too much silver can overbalance a local economy, lowering the relative value of money by putting too much into circulation. However, funds could be created temporarily. A noble could approach magi for a loan of certain funds, which the magi can provide by conjuring an amount of silver. They take payment for the vis used in the summoning and then the money is given to the noble. As the noble pays the silver back the magi have the option to destroy it, taking it out of circulation. They don't need it and it was never theirs to begin with — they just conjured it up. Doing this allows money to be spent as needed, and then to be removed from the economy when times are better.

But would doing so make a mockery of the economy? Such a service creates an endless supply of money but with the danger that costs associated with goods and services become meaningless.

## THE CHURCH

Across Christendom and the East, learning and education is principally the preserve of the religious class. Cathedral schools and universities alike are staffed and run by those who have at least taken minor orders. They excel at teaching worldly topics: philosophy, the liberal arts, law, theology, and medicine. Magi, however, can reveal the wonders of the *supernatural* world. They can supplement theological study with experience of the

### Story Seed: The King's Favorite

The Tribunal has decided upon a new counselor to the king, and he is due to take up his position in the spring. The king, however, is displeased; he appoints one of the player characters to his council.

How did the king even know of the characters? And why would he appoint them? What political game has the character found themselves involved in and how can they get themselves out of it?

### Story Seed: The Proctor of Hermes

*The Church* supplement introduced this story seed. It is reproduced here given its relevance:

Quaesitors approach a player character (ideally a senior magus with the Gentle Gift) and explain that they want him to act as proctor for The Order of Hermes in the papal curia. The character will become a Quaesitor and travel to Rome. His task is to ensure smooth relations between the Order and the Church. He can do this by intercepting inappropriate petitions from magi,

presenting petitions on behalf of magi to the curia, and ensuring that no petitions that negatively impact on the Order are successfully brought by other parties. The position requires a magus so that he may resist both the Commanding Aura of church officials and any efforts of other magi to interfere in church processes.

Father Joseph of Napoli, presented in *Antagonists*, would make an ideal counterpart to seal the relationship from the Church's side.

celestial on Earth. They can explore the philosophy of the created world through reference to the kosmokrators, the great magical spirits set to govern the turning of the world. And they can give deeper insights into medicine through the use of direct applied magic.

Magi can increase the scope of human experience much more here than they can through barons and princes. The magi educate the students, who become masters themselves and educate yet more students. And so the Church, or at the very least its instruments the schools and universities, must be persuaded of the benefits. If they can be, if the world can be shown to be so much more, then mundane testimony can be gained for the Tribunal.

As learned men, magi of the Order should have little difficulty in making it clear to the Church that they are not trafficking with demonic forces when they cast their magic and that in fact there is common ground. Most magi, as tenuous members of — and drawn from — the society around them, follow the faith of their birth. As such, they are under the spiritual protection of priests, imams, and rabbis. And while God has seen fit to create Magic auras that help magi cast their spells and practice their arts, God also grants them humility by showing them the power of the Dominion. There is extensive material in *The Church* supplement to support this position.

### GAINING THE SUPPORT OF THE POPE

The kings of Christendom, though they may balk at the thought, hold their position by the grace of God. God's representative on Earth is the pope. If the pope himself can be persuaded as to the wisdom of soci-

ety embracing the Order of Hermes, then surely the Order would have greater weight in their negotiations with the nobility.

Securing the pope as an ally is potentially a saga thread on its own, complete with its own antagonists, protagonists, and challenges.

### USING GUILDS AS A MODEL

Guilds may provide an attractive model and an easy way to explain covenants to society. They exist for the benefit of their members, they take and teach apprentices, and they have the capacity to provide services for payment.

Towns and cities may be welcoming to covenants if they understand them to be like guilds, especially as it allows them to regulate their activities by the granting of charters. The Order is used to setting the prices for its services (House Verditius acts as a guild for its members ensuring that no magus undercuts another), but they may now need to compromise and have its prices influenced by mundanes.

The quality of any enchantments may also be enforced: charged items must not spoil, enchantments must last a lifetime, and so on. In return, of course, a covenant gains freedoms within its towns or city, including rights on dress, familiars, the taking of apprentices, the keeping of laboratories, and to any vis that might be found in lands controlled by the town.

### A NEW BREED OF CRAFTSMAN

Hermetic magic is hugely flexible and it does many things adequately, but it rarely does anything entirely well. Rego Craft Magic (*Covenants*,

page 49) allows a magus to imitate the skill of a mundane craftsman, but doing the work of days, weeks, or months in an instant is very difficult and the results can often disappoint.

In game terms, this is because the quality of the produced item is dependent on a Finesse roll against an Ease Factor that is always at least 3 points higher than that needed by a mundane craftsman.

If the Order allows for more magical tools to enter circulation, jobs become easier and quicker but as the quality is almost wholly dependent on the Finesse Ability score of the item's user, suddenly Finesse becomes an important skill for a new breed of craftsmen.

Mundanes can learn Finesse from all the usual sources — teachers, practice, books — and it is conceivable that rather than tending to magical crafts themselves, magi would introduce specialists in the use of magical items to serve them.

Given the inherent difficulty of matching mundane craftsmanship with craft magic, magi may seek out those with an affinity for using enchanted devices and those who show a natural flair (represented by the Affinity with Finesse and Puissant Finesse Virtues respectively). They would be an educated class, able to study Finesse from books as well as from a tutor and perhaps even write their own tractatus that could be of benefit to others that may not have as much experience with enchantment.

Additionally, enchanted tools may allow craftsmen to express their creativity like never before. An adze that allows two great oaks to be spliced together as firmly as if they were a single tree might allow for taller and strong ship masts, and stone could be crafted as fine as glass without losing its strength by enchanted hammers and chisels. As these tools spread outwards from



covenants and craftsmen learn their use, Mythic Europe starts to take on a fantastical appearance.

## The Supernatural Realms

One of the principal reasons for the Order becoming the fourth estate is the protection of magical and faerie spaces. It seems prudent then to engage the representatives of those realms in the project. If a noble or a city is to preserve ancient woodlands under its control it will expect something in return.

### SERVICE, TRIBUTE, & FOSTERAGE

The simplest transaction is one of service or tribute; the woodland spirit, or the faerie king, or the grey lady of the river provides something of value to the mundane rulers in return for dominion over their supernatural auras and regions.

Most magical entities of power are able to reason somewhat objectively and make their own minds up with regards to alliances. Faeries are more problematic, however, as they are usually constrained by the role they inhabit. A mischievous robber faerie is probably powerless to offer safe passage along his road because conflicts with his nature. It would certainly be within the roles of most faerie kings and queens to act as kings and queens should, however, and enter into treaties and agreements. It may be too early to consider dynastic matches, but ultimately this is possible if relations between the faeries and mundanes mature.

It is common to seal alliances through fosterage, entrusting a son or daughter to the care of the ally. The act of trust ensures that both

recognize the value of the alliance. The same could be done with magical and faerie entities. Imagine the spirit of the wind offering the fosterage of his son, in the form of a swift horse, to a prince in return for dominion over a certain mountain or range. The prince gains a horse beyond compare who may become a life-long and loyal companion, and the spirit of the wind protects his domain.

Magi would be instrumental in brokering these agreements and mediating when things go awry. If favorable terms can be arranged between a supernatural entity and a mundane, terms that result in the protection of a magical or faerie space, then the magi earn both supernatural and mundane testimony for the Tribunal.

Vis sources, however, may become more contentious as mundanes start to understand their value to those who work magic. Mundanes could misapply their knowledge with dangerous results, destroying sources rather than nurturing them or withholding access in order to gain leverage over magi.

## Rivals Outside the Order

*Rival Magic* presents a faction of Gifted wizards who have already ensconced themselves in the service of Mythic Europe's nobility: The Augustan Brotherhood. Although not present in every court, they may be present in *any* court. Operating as they currently do beneath the notice of the Order, they are unwilling to share their influence. While the player characters forge links with cities, nobles, and the clergy, the Augustan Brotherhood likely work against them, spreading lies and misinformation.

However, those followers of Virgil who operate openly as court wizards, while still keeping their true allegiance secret, find it hard to hide the magical

nature. This may be the covenant's first step in learning of a threat that the Order is unaware of.

Discovering the Brotherhood actually provides an incentive for the Order to place their own agents within the courts of Mythic Europe in order to monitor their actions, learn their motives, and oppose them where they run counter to the interests of the Order.

On the other hand, the Brotherhood may reveal themselves, placing themselves openly under the protection and influence of their mundane allies in order to protect themselves against the Order's ultimatum to join or suffer the consequences.

## The Tools of Politics

This section introduces two new activities: the writing of politically persuasive texts, and the recording of agreements in binding charters.

## Writing and Responding to Polemic

It's a difficult thing to go to Tribunal and secure a shift in the understanding of the Order's place in the world. It is unrealistic to expect such a change to be accepted when it goes against everything that those magi at Tribunal have known. Any magus attempting such a foolhardy case is likely to gain a poor reputation. So what can be done?

The seeds of change need to be sown early. The arguments must be publicized and discussed prior to the council or Tribunal. The magus needs his argument to be heard, discussed,



and for others to be persuaded to his cause. This can be done on a story-by-story basis for individual magi, but while debates play themselves out at Tribunal, to effect such a change across the Order is the job of long-term persuasion. This can be done through publishing argument and counterargument in a series of texts.

There are three forms of writing that should be taken into account: polemic, diatribe, and apologia.

### POLEMIC

The object of polemic is to explore and explain a philosophical position such that it is shown to be superior to its logical counter position. This is the bedrock upon which the magus looking to incite change builds his arguments. These works provide the basis for new thinking and it is through these works that the wider Order is most likely to experience this new thinking.

Polemic is written as a *summae* or *tractatus* on a knowledge Ability. In the case of influencing opinion with regards to the Order and its place in the world either Code of Hermes or Order of Hermes Lore would be appropriate. Area Lore appropriate to a given Tribunal may also be used with the agreement of the troupe. As described in *ArM5*, page 165, texts have a Quality and a Level. For the purposes of these rules, *tractatus* have a Level of 5. These take on special significance as described below when these works are used to persuade others.

### DIATRIBE

Diatribes take a critical look at a position and then deconstruct it in order to point out its flaws. Such works are usually direct and scathing in their approach, and they can often be seen

as inflammatory. The intent behind diatribes is to damage a philosophical position, discredit the position's proponents, or frequently both. Diatribes are the most immediate and effective response to polemic texts and their use is discussed further below.

Diatribes are written either as *summae* or *tractatus*, as per *ArM5*, page 165, on the same Ability as the polemic they have been written to refute. Each *tractatus* counts towards the normal limit on the number of *tractatus* that the author may write.

### APOLOGIA

If diatribes are the attack, then apologia form the defense. The apologia are the rebuttals written to refute the attacks of others, to show up the lies, misinformation, or inaccuracies evident in diatribes aimed at either the author or her philosophy. In showing the weaknesses of the opposing argument, the author intends to strengthen the original proposition.

Apologia are written as *summae* or *tractatus*, as per *ArM5*, page 165, on the same Ability as the diatribe they have been written in response to. Each *tractatus* counts towards the normal limit on the number of *tractatus* that the author may write.

### Like Father, Like Son

We all tend to learn from our parents, and in the case of the Hermetic apprentice he leans from his parents. Opinions held by the teacher are most likely passed to the student at least until the student is advanced enough to explore further. To represent this, it is safe to assume that any character gaining his first level in a knowledge Ability through reading polemic shares the author's views on that subject.



THE PREVAILING WISDOM

The Order holds certain opinions more firmly than it does others. Opinion may be relatively easily swayed where it concerns a single magus or a covenant, but ideas concerning the governance of entire Houses or the Order itself are much harder to move.

You should first determine the level of change that the character are looking to effect by taking a view on the breadth of the effect and comparing it to the nearby table. The number determined by the level of change provides the base difficulty of altering opinion through the written word.

WINNING THE ARGUMENT

The object of polemical texts is to persuade an audience to a way of thinking ahead of a given debate. It is an opportunity to flex and explore the ideas behind the polemic and ensure that arguments and counterarguments are prepared. The success or failure of a particular argument or philosophy can only be determined in open debate (as per the rules in *Houses of Hermes: Societates*, page 91), but a well-prepared argument that has gained sufficient recognition can provide bonuses to the standard debate totals.

To write a polemic, the author writes a text on the knowledge that sets out their position. Authors have some flexibility in the level they choose to write to and the level should be high enough that readers are enticed to read it; few magi are prepared to waste a season reading something beneath them. Polemical tractatus are treated as level 5 for the purposes of circulating them. However, the quality of the text contributes a bonus to debates on the subject, so it is important for the author to find the right balance.

Prevailing Wisdom Table	
REACH	LEVEL
Concerning a Magus	The higher of 3 or the magus' reputation
Concerning a Covenant	6
Concerning a Tribunal	9
Concerning a House	12
Concerning the Order	15

Prevailing Wisdom Examples		
TOPIC	EASE FACTOR	REASON
Existence of a secret mystery cult	6	Larger than a single magus, but smaller than a Tribunal
Origin of Magic Theory	6	Largely concerning Bonisagus, but involving more than one magus
Provisions of the Peripheral Code	9	As this is restricted to a Tribunal
Existence of the Order of Odin	12	Treated as another House
Existence of the Order of Suleiman	12	Treated as another House
The Corruption	12	Principally concerning House Tyalus
Provisions of the Oath	15	As this concerns the oath taken by every member of the Order
Schism War	15	Central to the Order's history

CIRCULATING THE TEXT

In order for the polemic to be effective, it must first be circulated. Six copies are sufficient for a Tribunal, nine for circulation through a House, and 18 copies for circulation through the Order. Once each season after these copies have been released, the player makes a Circulation Roll vs. Ease Factor 15 if the work is circulated to a Tribunal, 18 if the work is circulated to a House, or 24 for the Order. This roll is based on the highest of the magus' reputations (good or bad), or any applicable House acclaim, plus the level of the polemic summa, plus a simple die. A magus other than the author may work on circulating the text. For instance, a sponsor may take the lead during this phase, which allows him to leverage his reputation.

**CIRCULATION TOTAL:**  
 Magus' Reputation + Summa Level  
 (or 5 in the case of tractatus)  
 + Simple Die

**EASE FACTOR:**  
 15 (Tribunal), 18 (House),  
 24 (the Order)

The book must gain a degree of recognition, through recommendation, or by being referenced in other works, before its message can be heard. Circulating a text in this way involves writing letters of introduction, producing copies, providing translations, and so on. This work is treated as a distraction in each season the magus is engaged in distribution: five days for a Tribunal, ten days for a House, and fifteen days for the Order.

Each season spent circulating a text provides a bonus of +1 to the next Circulation Total.

On meeting the Ease Factor, the

## Correspondences and Other Texts

*Covenants* introduces the use of correspondences, letters written between magi and their associates to explore certain topics. The arguments and vitriol found in diatribe and apologia also find their way into correspondence between the quarreling magi and provide a 1 experience point benefit towards the target Ability each season as described in *Covenants*, page 90.

A magus engaged in such a written debate may also present the letters as supporting testimony, proof of the inaccuracies perpetrated by his opponent, in debate for a bonus of +1 as described in *Houses of Hermes: Societates*, page 92. The effect of this is likely to be negated when the opponent is also

able to refer to his own copies of the correspondence.

Magi may choose to combine their polemic, diatribe, or apologia works with other texts to make the texts themselves more attractive and their distribution easier. A particular volume may contain more than one item, such as a tractatus combined with a laboratory text, or a summa paired with a tractatus that expands the argument, for instance. For each other new item, i.e. one that has not been circulated before, the polemic, diatribe, or apologia gains +1 on attempts to circulate the text. All copies of the work to be circulated must have the same contents in order for this bonus to apply.

## Story Seed: Works of Seditious

A player Quaesitor is approached with a complaint of corruption made against a well-known magus. It appears that the magus in question has been providing books of a seditious nature to impressionable young apprentices across the Tribunal in an attempt to sway the next generation of magi to his political thought. There are enough magi angry at this deceit that the Quaesitor feels pressured to act, but how has the magus broken the Code? What could he be charged with and what would the appropriate punishment be?

## Example Polemical Texts

The following texts are known to the Order and include works that have been influential in its development.

### POLEMIC

*On Alliance with the Offspring*. Hariste of House Tylalus; Summa, Order of Hermes Lore, Lvl 3, Quality 9. In Favor of Admitting the Order Miscellanea to the Order of Hermes.

When Pralix renounced her House and the Order and instead became head of the Order Miscellanea there were many in the Order of Hermes who spoke only of condemnation and punishment. Hariste, however, recognized an opportunity to use Pralix' ambition to strengthen the Order rather than weaken it. This work, distributed throughout every Tribunal, proved persuasive and with the support of Trianoma the Order Miscellanea ultimately became House Ex Miscellanea.

Build Points: 18

### DIATRIBE

*The Application of Vim to the Supernatural Humors*. Conciatta of Bonisagus; Tractatus, Magic Theory, Quality 7. Opposed to the researching of new Arts for each of the supernatural realms.

Conciatta of Bonisagus played a crucial role in expanding Hermetic understanding across all four supernatural realms, but she found herself unable to control the argument, forced instead to produce texts that argued against the prevailing wisdom of other theoreticians in House Bonisagus.

This is her first significant work that gained widespread renown, and it did so through a clear point-by-point refutation of works by more senior magi. Other works quickly followed and built upon the principles laid down in this volume, but none ruffled as many feathers as this work.

The work is still highly-regarded, despite its archaic nature.

Build Points: 7

### APOLOGIA

*The Journey not yet Complete*. Trianoma; Tractatus, Order of Hermes Lore, Quality 8. In Favor of Admitting the Order Miscellanea to the Order of Hermes.

Hariste alone could not sway the entire Order in the Matter of Pralix and her followers, but Hariste secured the early support of Trianoma herself. This was the first of several short tractatus that Trianoma wrote in favor of inviting Pralix back into the Order and recognizing her great achievements with status equivalent to a Founder. The argument clearly harks back to Bonisagus and his efforts in unifying the disparate traditions, and effectively paints Pralix in similar colors. The original manuscript can be found in Durenmar and there are rumors that the text there differs from that ultimately circulated through the Order.

Build Points: 8



work has been circulated to the desired audience, which allows its content and the opinions of the author to gain recognition. The author of a successfully circulated polemic gains a new Reputation: Supporter of (ideal) 1 (Tribunal/House/Order), or 5 experience points toward increasing that Reputation if he already has it.

### THE ARGUMENT TOTAL

Once the work has been circulated, the author generates a base Argument Total:

**ARGUMENT TOTAL:**  
Text Quality – Prevailing Wisdom Level

This total is modified by further texts as described below. When the case is brought to Tribunal, the final Argument Total acts as experience points toward buying a debate bonus as per the Art progression table on *ArM5*, page 31. This bonus is used on all Attack and Defense rolls within that debate. A negative value is used to buy a penalty on the same scale. This bonus or penalty is cumulative with those presented on pages 92 and 93 of *Houses of Hermes: Societates*.

If you are not using the debate rules from *Houses of Hermes: Societates*, you should apply the Argument Total as a bonus to Ability rolls you use to model the debate.

### RESPONDING WITH DIATRIBE

In order to counter the opinions put forward in a polemic a magus must first study that work for at least a season, regardless of whether the magus could normally gain benefit from that particular text. The magus then writes a diatribe refuting the material explored in the polemic and makes copies available, using the

## Winning the Argument Outline

- The argument is defined and assigned a level according to the prevailing wisdom it is affecting.
- The proponent of the argument writes the polemic text, determining Level and Quality as usual.
- The author circulates the work, making a check for circulation each season.
- Once circulated, the author generates an Argument Total. Authors can write and circulate supporting apologia, the Quality of which is added to the argument total.
- Rival magi are free to write and circulate diatribes, the Quality of which is subtracted from the argument total.
- The authors and their rivals write further apologia and diatribes to strengthen and weaken the argument respectively. This can be repeated until the parties cease or the matter is brought before Tribunal.
- At Tribunal the argument total is used as experience points to buy a bonus (if the total is positive) or a penalty (if the total is negative). This modifies the proponent's debate scores.

## Example Polemic, Diatribe, and Apologia

Robert de Charteris, sponsored by Protinus of Verditiis, writes a polemic exploring the benefits of his Tribunal integrating with a changing mundane society. Robert has a +2 Communication, Latin 5 (Hermetic use) and Code of Hermes 10. Robert sets the level of the polemic at 4, one less than the maximum he can manage as he wants to focus on the quality of his argument. The polemic has a Level of 4 and a Quality of 11 (based on Communication of +2, +6 as standard, and +3 for reducing the summa Level). It takes Robert a year to write.

Protinus then spends the next season trying to get other magi in the Tribunal to read and understand his argument. Distributing to a Tribunal has an Ease Factor of 15. Protinus has a reputation of Reformer 3 (the Tribunal). So the total is 3 (Reputation) + 4 (polemic Level) + 3 (die roll) = 10. Despite the effort (five days of distraction that season), Protinus needs to work another season. This time he gains a +1 for the

season already spent and rolls 10 for a total of 18. The book is circulated.

Looking at the prevailing wisdom table, influencing something central to the actions of a Tribunal has a base level of 9. The polemic Quality of 11 gives Robert a slight advantage of 2, enough to buy a debate bonus of 1.

When word of the polemic reaches Austerius he is incensed and immediately writes and circulates a diatribe. It has a quality of 11 (Communication of +2 +6 +3 from his Good Teacher Virtue), which reduces the advantage to -9, which translates to a penalty of -3.

With the Tribunal coming up fast, Robert writes an apologia and Protinus prepares and circulates several copies. Given his proficiency as a scribe, book binder, and illuminator, Protinus adds a total bonus of +3 for a total of +2 (Communication) + 6 + 3 (bonuses) = 11. This swings the advantage back to Robert for an Argument Total of +2, a debate bonus of +1 on the day.

## Austerius Trianomae, the Opponent of Change

Austerius is one of the Trianomae within House Bonisagus, a skilled politician and commentator on the history of the Order, the Houses, Tribunals, and factions found within them, and the laws they abide by. He has made a career out of re-educating those with ideas contrary to his view of the Order. He is ruthless in his support of the status quo and unflinching in his criticism of those who stand against him. Austerius makes the ideal opponent for any characters keen to bring about the integration of the Order into Mythic European society.

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

**Size:** 0

**Age:** 130 (75)

**Decrepitude:** 3

**Warping Score:** 8 (20)

**Confidence Score:** 1 (3)

**Virtues and Flaws:** The Gift, Hermetic Magus, Gentle Gift, Book Learner, Famous, Good Teacher, Hermetic Prestige, Puissant Intrigue\*, Quiet Magic, Reserves of Presence\*\*, Subtle Magic,

Difficult Underlings, Enfeebled; Fragile Constitution, Slow Caster, Unpredictable Magic, Weak Characteristics

\* House Virtue

\*\* New Virtue described in insert

**Personality Traits:** Irritable +3, Authoritarian +2, Aggressive +1

**Reputations:** Bonisagus House Acclaim (House Bonisagus) 4, Scholar On The Code 4 (The Order)

**Combat:**

**Dodge:** Init -1, Attack N/A, Defense -1, Damage N/A

**Fist:** Init -1, Attack -1, Defense -1, Damage -1

**Soak:** -1

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

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-15), Incapacitated (16-20), Dead (21+)

**Abilities:** Art of Memory 4 (Tribunal rulings), Artes Liberales 5 (rhetoric), Awareness 2 (alertness), Civil and Canon Law 5 (papal laws), Code of Hermes 10 (mundane relations), Concentration 5 (reading), Dominion Lore 3 (saints), Faerie Lore 2 (faerie for-

ests), Finesse 3 (precision), Folk Ken 4 (magi), Guile 4 (elaborate lies), Infernal Lore 2 (curses), Intrigue 5+2 (alliances), Latin 5 (Hermetic usage), Leadership 3 (intimidation), Living Language 5 (poetry), Magic Lore 3 (magical traditions), Magic Theory 8 (inventing spells), Organization Lore: Order of Hermes 5 (politics), Parma Magica 5 (Mentem), Penetration 4 (Mentem), Philosophiae 4 (moral philosophy), Teaching 3 (Code of Hermes), Theology 3 (heresy)

**Arts:** Cr 25, In 17, Mu 10, Pe 9, Re 16, An 9, Aq 8, Au 8, Co 15, He 12, Ig 10, Im 14, Me 24, Te 8, Vi 15

**Twilight Scars:** Faint smell of funerary incense; Shadow moves on its own; Flames dim and extinguish entering a room

**Equipment:** Austerius does not carry equipment as he has servants and other hangers-on to do that for him. As a senior magus of note he expects access to whatever he needs wherever he goes.

**Encumbrance:** 0 (0)





## Austerius Trianomae, the Opponent of Change, cont'd

### Spells Known:

*Opening the Tome of the Animal's Mind* (InAn 25/+25)

*The Gentle Beast* (ReAn 25/+24)

*Cheating the Reaper* (CrCo 30/+48)

*The Leap of Homecoming* (ReCo 35/+30)

*Converse with Plant and Tree* (InHe 25/+28)

*Lamp Without Flame* (CrIg 10/+34)

*Communication of the Heroes* (CrMe 55/+57) \*\*\*

*Intelligence of the Heroes* (CrMe 55/+57) \*\*\*

*Sight of the Transparent Motive* (InMe 10/+40)

*Frosty Breath of the Spoken Lie* (InMe 20/+40)

*Posing the Silent Question* (InMe 20/+40)

*Peering into the Mortal Mind* (InMe 30/+40)

*Calm the Motion of the Heart* (PeMe 15/+32)

*Aura of Rightful Authority* (ReMe 20/+39)

*Stone Tell of the Mind that Sits* (InTe 30/+24)

*Odor of Lingering Magic* (InVi 30/+31)

*Piercing the Magical Veil* (InVi 20/+31)

\*\*\* Personal versions of spells first presented in *Houses of Hermes: True Lineages*

**Vis:** Austerius has little need for vis

outside of the laboratory as he rarely casts spells. He can draw on considerable sums of vis of all arts when needed, however

**Appearance:** Austerius is a visibly elderly man with spindly veined fingers, sparse white hair, and a prodigious white beard. His bent and bowed frame is far from inspiring but he can occasionally summon up the energy to stand straight, cast aside his walking stick, and throw off the weight of years that holds him down. His robes conform to no mundane convention and while simply cut they are embroidered with what looks like an entire tractatus on the Code of Hermes.

Austerius is perilously close to Final Twilight and his Longevity Rituals are now harder to maintain, and yet he will not concede quietly. He has invented rituals to return his powers of intelligence and communication and it is his intention to use those for as long as he can. He is a bully and refers to people, events, and things as "wearisome," "tiresome," "troublesome," and "meddlesome" in equal

measure. He is a staunch opponent to any integration with mundane society and has not ventured into the world for many, many years. He never created a talisman nor bound a familiar, considering both a bothersome distraction. He took apprentices, the last of whom calls himself Abacus. Austerius treats Abacus like a burdensome and dull student, despite his seventy years. It is a relationship that is manifest in Abacus' Tormenting Master Flaw and in Austerius' Difficult Underlings Flaw; Abacus is always eager to show his master up as the senile fool he considers him to be.

### NEW VIRTUE: RESERVES OF PRESENCE

As with the standard Reserves of Strength Minor Virtue (ArM5, page 48), once per day your character is able to draw on internal strength and add +3 to her Presence characteristic for the duration of a single scene. The effort is potentially tiring and your character must make two fatigue rolls at the end of the scene in addition to losing the +3 bonus.

Circulation Total as above.

The diatribe quality is deducted from the current Argument Total, which may in turn result in a new negative total.

Any number of magi can write diatribes refuting the argument and, while they must be circulated independently, they each modify the same base Argument Total.

On writing or circulating a diatribe, the magus gains a new Reputation: Opposed to (ideal) 1 (Tribunal/House/Order), or 5 experience points towards increasing that Reputation if he already has it.

### Story Seed: The Missing Letters

Preparing for an important debate and planning to confront his opponent with his own words by way of testimony, the magus discovers that the correspondence has been stolen. The magus and his allies must find the stolen letters before debate begins, but when the trail points to someone closer to home the magus must consider whether he's right to pursue the matter further.

### Story Seed: Interception

With the debate due the season after next, Austerius is bound to pull his usual trick of publishing a diatribe close enough to the Tribunal that there is no chance to respond. If he does, he'll take the advantage. And so his opponents resolve to steal the texts, or delay their publication, or intercept them and change them in some way. All they need to do is learn how and when he is circulating the manuscripts.

## Protinus Velox of Verditius, Supporter of Change

Protinus is a rarity within House Verditius: a somewhat selfless magus. Only "somewhat," as he is still concerned about his own well-being, but his principle means of supporting himself is through supporting others. He wants to see the restrictions on interacting with wider society loosened as he can see the market for magical devices and services, and views so much of it as untapped. This would principally benefit those in his House, and if he can claim some of the credit at the vital moment his stock within his House will rise. So he is willing to lend tacit support and encouragement to any who take up the cause. A skilled scribe and bookbinder, his magical crafts are most effectively put to use in Intellego magics, at which he excels, though he does a good trade in his famous "spell books," which contain various enchantments that allow companions to go about tasks without the oversight of magi.

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

**Size:** 0

**Age:** 75 (50)

**Decrepitude:** 0

**Warping Score:** 6 (15)

**Confidence Score:** 1 (3)

**Virtues and Flaws:** The Gift; Hermetic Magus; Major Magical Focus (Books); Affinity with Magic Theory, Personal Vis Source (Vim), Puissant Magic Theory, Reforging Enchanted Items\*\*, Skilled Parens, Social Contacts (magi), Verditius Magic\*; Dark Secret (frequent sale of enchanted books to mundanes), Magic Addiction, Averse to Risk\*\*\*, Hubris, Limited Magic Resistance (Mentem)

\* Free House Virtue

\*\* Verditius Inner Mystery

\*\*\* Flaw gained as part of Mystery Initiation

**Personality Traits:** Generous +2, Hubris +2, Manipulative +1

**Reputations:** None

**Combat:**

*Dodge:* Init +0, Attack N/A, Defense +0, Damage N/A

*Fist:* Init +0, Attack +1, Defense +0, Damage +0

**Soak:** +0

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

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-15), Incapacitated (16-20), Dead (21+)

**Abilities:** Artes Liberales 4 (astronomy), Awareness 2 (alertness), Bargain 2 (magical services), Charm 3 (being witty), Code of Hermes 3 (mundane relations), Concentration 4 (lab work), Craft: Blacksmith 2 (enchanted items), Craft: Bookbinding 5 (books for enchantment), Finesse 5 (craft magic), Intrigue 3 (alliances), Latin 5 (Hermetic usage), Leadership 3 (laboratory work), Living Language 5 (local dialect), Magic Theory 12+2 (enchancing items), Parma Magica 3 (Mentem), Penetration 2 (Corpus), Philosophiae 5 (laboratory work), Scribe 4 (copying Lab Texts), Teaching 1 (bookbinding), Verditius Cult Lore 4 (initiating others)

**Arts:** Cr 13, In 19, Mu 10, Pe 11, Re 11, An 5, Aq 5, Au 5, Co 11, He 5, Ig 15, Im 5, Me 7, Te 10, Vi 12

**Twilight Scars:** His blood has been turned to ink.

**Equipment:** Quills and other writing implements, an enchanted tome which can reproduce most of Protinus' spell effects.

**Encumbrance:** 0 (0)

**Spells Known:**

*The Inexorable Search* (InCo 20/+30)

*Pilum of Fire* (Crlg 20/+28)

*Tales of the Ashes* (InIg 5/+34)

*Ward Against Heat and Flames* (ReIg 25/+26)

*The Ear for Distant Voices* (InIm 20/+24)

*Summoning the Distant Image* (InIm 25/+24)

*The Miner's Keen Eye* (InTe 20/+29)

*The Crystal Dart* (Mu(Re)Te 10/+20)

*Scales of the Magical Weight* (InVi 5/+31)

*Piercing the Faerie Veil* (InVi 20/+31)

*Piercing the Magical Veil* (InVi 20/+31)

*Gather the Essence of the Beast* (ReVi 15/+23)

**Vis:** Protinus has a private supply of vim vis worth four pawns per year, the source of which he keeps secret.

**Appearance:** A tall and confident magus armed with a wry smile and a dry wit, he seems unflappable and shows little emotion, except perhaps an amused detachment. His thinning hair is still dark and his grey eyes still retain a striking presence. He has a somewhat grey pallor though, the result of the magical accident that turned his blood to ink.

Protinus knows that he has crossed the line when it comes to selling devices to mundanes. Across Mythic Europe there are barons and bishops alike with books that allow them to see and hear what is happening in a remote place, there are knights able to read illnesses and injuries into their opponents before tournaments, and there are merchants who seem to have their rivals' ledgers open in front of them. And what's more, each of these books has pages free for yet more enchantments. So Protinus is keen to have the Peripheral Code clarified in favor of integration somewhere and he is willing to support those who will do it for him.

He uses a series of quills as his casting tools. As he casts a spell he draws the quill through the air, which leaves an inky trail that dissipates with the casting. However, his difficulties with actually casting spells means that he normally relies on great tome enchanted with most of his spells. His familiar is a large pristine male swan who is not above surrendering the odd feather in order to make quills for particularly important projects.

Protinus is the kind of man who seems to know everyone and his social contacts may prove useful to those seeking broad support for grand ideas.



RESPONDING WITH APOLOGIA

Apologia may be written in response either to diatribe or to the original polemic to further strengthen the argument. In both cases, the magus spends a season studying the associated work before writing either *summa* or *tractatus* in defense of the original argument, which must then be circulated as described above.

Apologia need not be written by the polemic's original author. If others can be persuaded to actively support the cause their works can be used instead, demonstrating the true value of spreading the word.

By recruiting others to the cause, and persuading them to write in favor of the motion, a potentially higher bonus can be brought to Tribunal. If non-player characters are used in this manner their involvement should be the result of story interactions. Player characters are of course recruited by the usual means, as is appropriate for the player group.

On writing or circulating an apology, the magus gains a new Reputation: Supporter of (ideal) 1 (Tribunal/House/Order), or 5 experience points towards increasing that Reputation if he already has it.

TAKING THE DEBATE TO TRIBUNAL

The cycle of diatribe and apologia continues until all magi involved in the cycle cease contributing or the debate is brought to Tribunal.

The proponent of the argument may choose not to debate it at the next Tribunal, in which case the work of persuading the Tribunal through the written word may continue and any argument total generated so far carries over.

Where the debate is won, indicated by a positive Argument Strength at the end of the debate, any bonus from circulating the

Story Seed: Oath or Contract

A Quaesitor, alerted to a growing closeness between a covenant and the bishop of their lands, finds the magi working closely with the Church. In all respects the covenant appears to be at the bishop's beck and call, but there is no denying the prosperity, resources, and respect the covenant seems to enjoy.

The covenant explains that they have entered into a contract with the bishop: the covenant provides "counsel" and "beneficial action,"

while the bishop concedes right and responsibility over all magical and faerie happenings and places within his diocese. The contract is signed with the covenant's seal and none of the magus' names appear on it.

This may skirt the right side of the Code, but when the bishop awards them the income of a vis source that belongs to another covenant has the contract now deprived another magus of his magical power?

texts also carries over to subsequent Tribunals, including debates held at foreign or even the Grand Tribunal. If the debate is lost however, at either the original or subsequent Tribunal, then the bonus is lost and cannot be applied in future.

Importantly, while the victory may not be enough to have the motion carried at that Tribunal, the percentage of parties neutral and hostile to the motion that were persuaded remains and should be recorded. This becomes the starting position for future debates within that same arena.

There is no special experience point benefit from taking a debate to trial, although winning the debate is certain cause for experience.

Charters

Mythic Europe is a place governed by rights and obligations. The feudal structure is one in which vassal bears an obligation of service to his liege, and the liege grants rights of freedom, support, and justice to his vassals.

Once the Order has determined to change its stance on involving itself in the mundane world, the Order, or more likely each Tribunal or even

covenant, is in a position to agree certain rights granted by the mundane rulers of the region to the Order, and obligations owed in return. As we have seen above, many of the activities that magi take for granted are likely to be of questionable legality if undertaken by mundanes, and these need to be enshrined as rights. This, after all, is at the heart of this change to Mythic Europe: the provision and protection of rights secured from the mundane rules of Mythic Europe.

The principle means of recording agreement between parties is the charter. Most often these charters are written from a position of power (whom we'll call the superior signatory) and grant certain rights to subordinates identified within the charter (whom we'll call the subordinate signatory).

Each charter begins with a formal address, which clearly identifies both the superior and the subordinate signatories. This is followed by a series of declarations, or clauses that outline the rights and obligations of both parties. All charters must be witnessed, so the charter concludes with a list of those present who witnessed the agreement. Finally, almost all charters bear the seals of at least the superior signatory and

## Military Service and Wizard War

Charters of rights and service between mundanes and magi inevitably involve some form of military obligation. It is simply one of the expectations of the liege-vassal relationship. But, for all their power, the battlefield is not generally the place for magi. It is dangerous, sets a deadly precedent, and is likely to cause unearthly carnage, not to mention the prospect of coming face-to-face with a Hermetic opponent assisting the other side. So how does the Order approach this problem?

Firstly, military service does not have to be provided in person. The obligation is to provide service in the form of a number of armed men or to pay scutage to the liege so that mercenaries can be hired. Individual Tribunals may rule that magi must avoid providing service in person. They may also rule on the nature of scutage paid, with some Tribunals mandating silver and others allowing minor enchantments.

But for those magi intent on entering battle, such as certain

members of House Flambeau, the position of the Order may be difficult to determine. The conduct of Wizard War is something for each Tribunal to rule upon in their own Peripheral Code, however the core interpretation is that notice of a lunar month must be provided before hostilities commence.

Despite this, a given Tribunal may view Hermetic participants in battle to have forfeited any protection the Code provides. While this pushes the responsibility to the magi themselves, mercenary magi may attempt to take advantage of this and settle old scores on the battlefield, secure in the knowledge that their actions are legal.

Alternatively, the Order may continue to take a very dim view of such things and may bring charges against any magus attacking another outside of formally declared Wizard War regardless of the situation. It is for individual sagas to determine their preferred approach.

potentially the subordinate. All signatories usually then receive their own copies of the charter as proof of the agreement.

Charters exist between parties with a clear difference in power, such as a king and his barons, or a landowner and his tenants. Examples may be the granting of a market to a town by the king in return for certain taxes, or an agreement by the king to uphold the provisions of an earlier charter. But they also exist between parties of similar influence, such as charters agreed by noble families ahead of a dynastic marriage.

Any agreement, the details of which need to be formally recognized, is written, signed, and communicated as a charter — grants

of land, taxation, commitment to service, betrothal, and so on — and magi increasingly find themselves entering into these contracts with the nobility as the Order engages with the mundane world.

### OPTIONAL RULE: CHARTER STRENGTH

For the most part, once a charter has been agreed and signed by all affected parties the charter is binding, but the astute politician may try to hide weaknesses within the provisions of the charter that allow him more freedom than the charter at first appears to provide. To represent this a charter has two scores: the superior

charter strength, and the subordinate charter strength.

The superior score represents the position of strength gained by the superior signatory to the charter. The subordinate score represents the position of strength gained by the subordinate signatory to the charter.

Development of a charter is a seasonal activity undertaken by one or more notaries or clerks skilled in Civil and Canon Law (or Common Law in England), each representing one of the signatories.

The principle notary on each side generates a charter strength score:

**CHARTER STRENGTH:**  
Intelligence + Civil and Canon Law +  
Stress Die

There is a default of three botch dice for this roll, reduced by one for each notary assigned to the task beyond the first, and a botch reduces the Charter Strength for that side to zero, essentially meaning that it provides no legal defense.

Once complete, the charter is binding. Each side may seek weaknesses in the charter, however, in order to justify acting against certain provisions. For example, a charter agreeing the inheritance of certain lands may not take account of local laws or customs prohibiting females of the line inheriting land ahead of male cousins.

To look for such weaknesses, the signatory or his agent spends a season examining the charter and the supporting legal texts and then makes an Intelligence + Civil and Canon Law stress roll against the opposing side's charter strength. If the roll is higher than the opposing charter strength then a legal loophole has been discovered and the signatory has legal justification for breaking one or more provisions of the contract.



Of course, if a charter is breached too frequently, both sides may start to consider it worthless and then either side may feel the need to renegotiate a new charter.

### GRANTS OF LAND

Charters granting rights or title of lands are common. They are frequently used by the nobility to gift land to the Church, or to some other lay person or organization.

Rather than giving the land in its entirety, the income from certain land or a certain feature such as a mill or a toll gate can be granted instead. This can be granted in perpetuity, for a set number of years, or until some condition has been fulfilled.

These grants may also have certain conditions imposed that the beneficiary must meet, or restrictions upon the grant's use. For instance, land may be given to the Church so that a new chapel may be built upon it, or farming rights extended to the people of a certain village.

For magi of the Order, the grant of right and title over certain lands and resources would be increasingly useful. First, covenants need land

upon which to build and as magi have a preference for land bearing a Magic aura any grant is going to be quite specific. Second, as vis sources are found, magi need to at least secure access to the site and collection rights. They may also want to secure assurances that the land remains in its current state and is not built upon or otherwise harmed.

All of this applies in the same manner to other Magic and Faerie auras. Without agreement as to how certain lands are to be treated, Magic and Faerie auras remain at risk.

### CHARTERS OF RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS

The Bishop of Speyer extended both land and rights to the Jewish community in 1084. In particular, he set aside some land for their use on condition that they paid rent totaling three and a half pounds of silver annually. He also granted the right of rabbis to hear cases between Jews, for the Jewish people to change gold and silver, and to buy and sell whatever they wished. There was even a provision supporting Jewish dietary laws, which allowed such meat as

could not be consumed by the Jews to be sold to Christians.

While the Bishop of Speyer gave away certain rights he also imposed a condition, an obligation to pay rent on the land. In this way charters define the obligations on both sides. The feudal contract, for instance, ensures that the knight provides service to his liege and also that the liege protects the interests of his vassal.

Magi may want the right to take apprentices enshrined in some form of charter. Similarly, magi may want the right to own any kind of familiar to be protected. They may also want the right for allegations of wrongdoing by magi to be heard in their own courts. However, the Order currently restricts what they can offer back.

### EXAMPLES OF CHARTERS

The Concordat of Worms signed in 1122 bound Pope Calixtus II and the Holy Roman Emperor Henry V to a division of rights. Among other terms, Calixtus conceded that Henry had the right to grant secular power to bishops and that they would owe fealty to him on that basis. In return,



## Realm Aligned Spells and Other Techniques

One of the challenges that magi face when attempting to use their magic within society is the deleterious effects of the Dominion. God's grace is prevalent throughout Mythic Europe and the East and all magical powers are affected. Magi may want to find ways around the problem that don't involve the years of self-sacrifice and piety needed to gain Holy Magic.

*Houses of Hermes: True Lineages* provided a number of sample Hermetic Breakthroughs that any research-inclined magus might pursue. One of those was "realm-aligned spells." This allows a spell to be designed such that it ignores the penalty of an aura that might be detrimental to a normal spell. As described in *Houses of Hermes: True Lineages*, page 34, this is a Minor Breakthrough. However, this still does not allow Hermetic spells to overcome the Dominion. Sagas keen to allow this may set this as a Hermetic Breakthrough, requiring a significant investment in time and resources.

There are two likely alternatives. *Legends of Hermes* details the work of the maga Bonisagi Conciatta. Her lost research provides a means of reducing the penalties imposed by auras including the Dominion. If it can be found, her work should provide enough insight to integrate what she learned back into Magic Theory.

Lastly, *Hedge Magic Revised Edition* introduces learned magicians and they, too, have a means of overcoming the effects of supernatural auras through their Entreat the Powers Virtue. This can be investigated and integrated with Magic Theory using the rules in *Ancient Magic*.

Troupes may prefer to concentrate on the political aspect of creating a Hermetic fourth estate, in which case you can assume that some or all of the above initiatives are being worked on somewhere else in the Order. There are stories to be had in dealing with the integration of such effects and they are worth visiting upon your player characters from time to time.

### SPELLS OR DEVICES

Magi are quite used to enchanting devices that they can then give or sell to someone else. Once done, the magus can move onto other projects while the device's new owner can go away and perform their own minor and restricted miracles. But if a covenant, House, or Order wants to build a place for itself in society it must think carefully about such tactics.

If a magus gives a noble a device that can mature a crop in a single day, the magus receives payment once. However, if the noble relies upon the magus attending his fields and casting his magic each time, the magus receives payment each time and the noble becomes accustomed to the dependence he has on the magus.

This does not apply to all devices. After all, a magus does not want to attend every tournament with his patron, so enchanted arms and armor may be appropriate.

Henry conceded that he did not have the power to appoint individuals to clerical office.

Perhaps the most famous charter is the **Magna Carta** signed by King John of England and his nobles in 1215. The intention was to limit the powers of the king and restore proper feudal rights and obligations to the land. The charter very quickly proved unenforceable, however, with even Pope Innocent III releasing John from its obligations. Later versions, produced after John's death, were more successful.

Assuming that history remains the same in your saga, King Henry

III of England grants the university in Cambridge the right to discipline its own members. Tacit in the charter is recognition of its status as a university.

Papal Bulls are types of charter issued by the Pope but they are usually unilateral in nature and concern any matter on which the Pope finds it necessary to make a decree. For instance, Pope Honorius III issued a bull forbidding the study of civil law in Paris, intending to promote theological studies in its stead. The terms of the bull ultimately proved unenforceable.

## Using Magic for Political Leverage

The transformation is principally a political one and does not *directly* rely on magic of any kind; the hardest task is persuading the Order to change. But once the Order does decide to involve itself in the world, there are responsibilities that can be met through magic. Magic can be used as a bargaining tool to persuade the nobility and the Church to support



the development of a fourth estate. For instance, the hardship of a failing harvest can be alleviated through magic. Hospitals can be enchanted or use enchanted tools and materials. Great cathedrals can be made bigger and more impressive through the efforts of magical craftsmen. Courts can determine the truth of events more easily. Magic can permeate the world. All these things can be done through standard Hermetic magic and the opportunities are limited only by the troupe's collective imagination.

The categories below avoid directly engaging with and advising the nobility. They all provide services to the population without forcing any particular governance upon a king or local lord. Given the beneficial effects, however, those in power would do well to take advantage of what their Hermetic neighbors can offer. This provides the Order with considerable political leverage when negotiating rights with the nobility.

Successful displays of magic, wherein the magus makes a positive difference to the lives and well-being of a population, are likely to build his reputation in support of closer integration between the Order and the mundane world.

Once the magus has published a polemic in favor of the Order integrating itself into society, any device containing an effect of sixth magnitude or more given over to a community or noble (or a spell of similar magnitude cast to the same aim) earns the magus one experience point towards his Proponent of (ideal) Reputation.

## Health and Pestilence

Along with war, the threat of pestilence and plague ranks with the prospect of failed harvests as among the biggest fears for a society reliant

## Warping While Under Constant Magical Effects

The following tables show the impact on targets subject to enchantments that have been designed to improve the living conditions modifier by +1. They assume that the effect's targets have no prior Warping Points. The first table assumes two level 20 enchantments.

YEAR	POINTS GAINED	WARPING SCORE	NOTES
3	6	1	Gain a Minor Flaw
15	30	3	Gain a Minor Flaw
38	76	5	Gain a Minor Virtue
53	106	6	Gain a Major Flaw
70	140	7	Gain a Major Flaw

The second table assumes a single level 40 enchantment producing five warping points per year.

YEAR	POINTS GAINED	WARPING SCORE	NOTES
1	5	1	Gain a Minor Flaw
6	30	3	Gain a Minor Flaw
15	75	5	Gain a Minor Virtue
21	105	6	Gain a Major Flaw
28	140	7	Gain a Major Flaw

Note that as per *Realms of Power: Magic*, page 132, matter may spontaneously rarify and form an elemental when that matter reaches a Warping Score of 5.

### APPROPRIATE VIRTUES AND FLAWS

A warped building may gain Virtues and Flaws that affect the building itself, or modify its surroundings in such a way that the effects are passed on to its inhabitants. For instance, the building may become Offensive to Animals (*ArM5*, page 57), in which case animals try to avoid it. Or it could gain Poor Eyesight or Poor Hearing (*ArM5*, page 58), representing a low and clinging mist that dulls sound and is hard to see through. The effects of these two obviously apply to those within and around the building.

When the building gains its Virtue through Warping, Luck (*ArM5*, page 45) may be appropriate, or some kind of Study Bonus (*ArM5*, page 49). Alternatively, magical Qualities (*Realms of Power: Magic*, chapter 2) can be selected. The building may become Gigantic or gain a Personal Power (an effect of Personal Range OR constant duration of up to 25 levels).

on farming. After seeing that magic can alleviate these fears, mundanes start to look upon magi of the Order more kindly.

### THE CARE OF THE SICK

Local priories and chapels across Mythic Europe provide hospitals in some form or other that tend to the sick

and injured. Their success is often limited by the somewhat variable knowledge of those who staff such places, however. Magic can provide a much more reliable means of curing disease and healing wounds by supplementing the efforts of mundane physicians.

While not catered for in this chapter, it is not just mundane healing that Hermetic magi can assist with. There are many minor magical tradi-

## Longevity Story Seeds

The following seeds are appropriate where mundanes have been given longevity potions.

### TOO LONG AN INHERITANCE

The son and heir of one of the covenant's companions brings a complaint against the covenant for depriving him of his due inheritance. They have bestowed a Longevity Ritual upon the noble's father and he sees his inheritance slipping away from him; while he ages, his father does not. He demands recompense from the magi in the form of lands or income equal in value to those taken from him by the magi.

### OIL OF SNAKE AND THOSE WHO TRADE IN SUCH

A bishop approaches a covenant half in anger and half in concern on a matter of some delicacy. He paid a magus handsomely for the secrets of longevity and while he has been carrying out the ritual daily and as instructed, his skin seems to thin, his eyes to line, and his girth to increase. Why has his longevity failed him, he asks? It doesn't take the magi long to realize that the bishop is not under any Longevity Ritual and never has been. Who is the fraud that has cast the Order in a bad light? A faerie come to show up the venality of the rich? A charlatan trading on the Or-

der's good name? Or an angel come to test the bishop? Perhaps the question is, which one would be worse?

### THE NEED FOR AN HEIR

The noble who only four years ago gained his Longevity Ritual suffers the tragedy of losing his only son. He now wants to father an heir in the years he has left for fear of his lands being torn apart by squabbling brothers and nephews. If the magi cannot help him, can they broker a deal with a faerie or some other wizard gifted with fertility magic? If they don't, the Infernal lies in wait to offer a solution to the problem.

tions, such as the Ba'al Shem (*Realms of Power: The Divine Revised Edition*) and the Folk Witches (*Hedge Magic*) who often act as healers to their communities. If the Order of Hermes wishes to engage with mundane society in this way, it would be sensible to embrace these other traditions too for fear of displacing them and causing unwanted resentment.

*Art & Academe* provides a lot of useful information on medicinal magic, including new spell guidelines for the treatment of disease and techniques for magical surgery. Supporting a hospital, or providing cures and treatments for wounds and diseases, may be a politically astute move. It proves that magical power can be applied responsibly, assists others who are engaged in similar work, and addresses a real and present fear.

Though rare, leper colonies can be found across Mythic Europe. These are charitable institutions that show the mercy and compassion of their benefactors. As well as providing funds, those with power often grant rights to the lepers to collect alms on

certain days in order to supplement the colony's income. The Church often grants indulgences to those who help. Magi, if they are to take their place as a fourth estate, should also show willing and can do so through their magic.

### LIVING CONDITIONS

Hermetic magic cannot currently directly improve the living conditions modifiers used in aging roles, except through the provision of longevity rituals. Magic can be used indirectly however and, as *Covenants* pages 111 and 121 describes, it has been used by magi in their own laboratories.

For every 40 levels of spells or enchantments used to improve the target living conditions, residents gain a +1 living conditions modifier.

A magus could create devices that drive away rats, balance out the temperature, dispel foul odors, or keep meat from spoiling. As long as the effects are powerful enough, they all contribute to improving the living conditions modifier.

This, of course, comes at a cost: things under such long-term enchantments gain Warping over time. It is not just people or animals that gain warping, their surroundings do as well. As described in *ArM5* page 168, targets under two level 20 enchantments gain two Warping Points each year. Targets under a single level 40 enchantment gain five Warping Points per year.

The nearby table shows the progression of the Warping over time including the points at which those targets gain Flaws and then a Virtue. Some may view this as an acceptable trade-off. Of course, mundanes unfamiliar with the notion of Warping or its effects may not pay attention to the risks and request such enchantments regardless.

The careful magus ensures that any effects designed to enhance living conditions do not target the individuals themselves but always their environment. An enchantment that makes the castle temperate all year round does *not* affect the inhabitants, but it may affect the castle itself.



LONGEVITY EFFECTS

Longevity Rituals created for those without supernatural abilities from any realm are less effective than those created for magi. The rules on ArM5, page 101 apply for this. In short, the magus needs a Creo Corpus Lab Total of at least 30. The vis cost is one pawn of vis for every five years that the recipient has lived (rounded up) and the benefit is a +1 bonus for every ten points (or fraction) of the Lab Total.

There is nothing to restrict a magus from striking a deal with the wealthy and influential to provide Longevity Rituals, and on the face of it there seems to be no undue political influence. But there are three factors to consider.

The first is the obvious cost of Warping; the beneficiary of the Longevity Ritual gains one Warping Point per year. As discussed under improving living conditions, Warping soon aggregates to form Flaws that could cause real problems to the unprepared. There is no guarantee ahead of time what those Flaws will be and Hermetic magic, at least, cannot control them.

The second problem is that people start to outlive their welcome, or rather the patience of those in waiting grows short as they see what they consider their rightful positions remaining filled by the incumbents.

And the third, of course, is the loss of fertility that comes with extending one's own life. This may not be an issue for magi as they pass their legacy on through their knowledge, but a noble's legacy is passed through blood.

## Harvests and Livestock

Harvests are vital to the economy and the well-being of the population. Magic that can, at least, protect har-

## Can Magi Really Heal Lepers?

Although most are not aware of it, there are at least two forms of leprosy known in Mythic Europe. The first is Hermetic leprosy, which in essence is little more than the symptoms of leprosy. It is created by magic, though the learning of such spells is hard to justify. The second form is true leprosy and is a Divine curse.

It is for your saga to decide whether a magus can cure such a curse, but there

are things that could be done. The magus can improve the living conditions modifier of the colony through magic to keep the air clean, fresh, and of a suitable temperature, or a ward to keep rats and other vermin away. By improving the living conditions, the magus counters some of the effect of the disease, which imposes a -2 living conditions modifier and does most of its damage during aging crises.

vests and potentially increase their yield or frequency is a huge bargaining chip. Increasing yield may not always be a good thing, however. The third estate, those who toil, already toil quite hard to produce what they do. And while it is true to say that there is never as much of anything as some would like, there is always more than enough work that needs doing.

The year of those who work the lands turns with the seasons. They have seasons of hard toil in the fields, and then other times to rest, recuperate, repair what's broken, and then prepare for the cycle all over again.

The following magical effects are useful to both covenants and mundanes alike as they allow the fields and orchards to provide their normal yields out of season and to reduce wastage due to failed crops or illness among the livestock.

### The Unexpected Blossom

ReHe 40

R: Touch, D: Momentary, T: Group

This spell instantly brings a small orchard to blossom regardless of the season or the conditions. This does not bring the fruit, and a further spell of the same design parameters is needed for this. If that spell is not cast, the elements take their natural toll on the blossom, which may mean

that the trees bear no fruit at all.

Crops grown from seed, such as roots like turnips and radishes, leafy crops such as cabbage or lettuce, and grains like wheat and barley, do not blossom in the same way as trees. and thus variants of this spell are of limited value.

Such spells are powerful and, unless they are designed with particular orchards or fields in mind, they give each plant within the target group one Warping Point with each casting.

An alternative approach is to put a similar effect into an enchanted device that works on a single tree at a time but with multiple uses per day. This allows a mundane farmer to walk the orchard and bring trees to blossom as he passes. This is another example of how magic can flow down to those who work the land.

(Base 15, +1 Touch, +2 Group, +2 for size)

### A Harvest By Morning

CrHe 50

R: Touch, D: Sun, T: Group

Creo magic brings a thing closer to its ideal, and being a mature plant is more ideal than a sapling, so this spell brings a target group of plants to full maturity over the course of the spell's duration, which must begin as soon as the sun goes down.



While *The Unexpected Blossom* makes a group of trees blossom, it must have mature plants to work on, which this spell provides.

(Base 15, +1 Touch, +2 Sun, +2 Group, +2 size)

Similar spells to these might be used to bring animals to maturity over the course of a single night:

### A Herd By Morning

CrAn 45

R: Touch, D: Sun, T: Group

This spell brings the target group of up to a hundred base individual animals to full maturity over the course of the spell's duration, which must begin as soon as the sun goes down.

(Base 15, +1 Touch, +2 Sun, +2 Group, +1 size)

### PROTECTING LIVESTOCK FROM PREDATORS

The other half of the farming landscape is the livestock out in the fields. There are many threats to the safety and wellbeing of livestock, from illness to predators. Wolves and dogs on the loose are a real threat to sheep and goats, but magic can protect them. Wards may seem an obvious answer; simply ward the sheep in and the wolves out. But circular wards are easily disrupted, meaning they are unreliable unless tended.

The effects suggested below can be enchanted into a device, which is then built into a fence or pen. Variants of the effects below can be invented to protect pig sties and chicken coops, though the prospect of fanged and vicious chickens may cause some concern.

### Sight of the Wolf

InAn 33

R: Touch, D: Sun, T: Special

This effect treats an enclosed paddock or sheepcote as the equivalent of a room and the size increase allows for an area ten times the size of a standard room. The effect detects the presence of wolves within this space, which may then trigger a number of secondary effects.

The Target is based on Room +1, as described in *ArM5*, page 114.

(Base 3, +1 Touch, +2 Sun, +3 Special Target, +1 Size; +3 triggered at sunset)

### The Unerring Slingshot

PeAn 58

Pen: 1/day, +0

R: Touch, D: Momentary, T: Special

Triggered by the Sight of the Wolf effect, and thereby triggered when a wolf enters the enclosure, this effect instantly strikes dead all wolves within the enclosure. Only targets identified by the Sight of the Wolf are affected.

The Target is based on Room +1, as described in *ArM5*, page 114.

(Base 30, +1 Touch, +3 Special Target, +1 Size; +3 triggered by Sight of the Wolf)

### Wolves in Sheeps' Clothing

MuAn 48

Pen: 1/day, +0

R: Touch, D: Diameter, T: Special

As an alternative to simply striking the wolf dead, this effect, also triggered by Sight of the Wolf, changes the sheep within the enclosure such that they each gain the fangs, claws, and ferocity of a wolf.

The target is based on Room +1, as described in *ArM5*, page 114.

(Base 15, +1 Touch, +1 Diameter, +3 Special Target, +1 Size; +3 triggered by Sight of the Wolf)



## Castles and Cathedrals

*Hermetic Projects* provides extensive material supporting the construction of large buildings. This includes a number of device effects that allow masons to build faster and to a higher quality. These could be leveraged by magi to follow a profession as an architect or mason, or as a supplier of tools and services to the same.

This allows magic to influence the look and structure of towns, castles, cathedrals, and even smaller settlements and buildings. With construction made easier and quicker, buildings can become taller and more impressive with the same outlay on labor. This changes the skyline as buildings compete. City walls also become taller and thicker, beyond even the needs of defense: indicators of status and power.

Parish churches, at least those surrounding covenants providing such assistance, become larger. This may serve to influence the piety of the parishioners and strengthen the effect of the Dominion in the local area.

Using *Creo* rituals, or *Rego* craft magic, castles and cathedrals can be built in moments, creating structures instantly where investments of years would have been necessary. The quality of such buildings suffers as with any magic reliant on *Finesse* rolls (see *ArM5*, page 77 for details on the *Finesse* Rolls used for *Creo* magic), but there is nothing stopping a magus creating the base structure so that mundane craftsmen can complete the work. Indeed, making the structures simple yet sound actually reduces the complexity of the spell.

### AEGIS OF THE HEARTH

The Aegis of the Hearth ritual can be cast annually, offers protection against many magical and fa-

erie threats, and importantly it does not Warp those living within it. Extending the offer of the Aegis of the Hearth to those of influence is certainly a way to build trust and can be used as leverage in future bargaining. Protecting a castle with the Aegis is a trivial matter as most covenants are of similar size to mundane castles or manor houses. Protecting anything larger, such as a village, town, or city, requires additional size modifiers to be designed into new variants.

## Peace and Governance

The Order cannot take on the role of governance as the fourth estate, but it can lend its magic to make the decisions behind governance easier. There are three main areas that magic can assist with: the deliverance of justice; the enforcement of agreements and contracts; and the verification of inheritance.

### TRUTH AND JUSTICE

There are many *Intellego* Mentem spells that a magus can use to determine the truth of an individual's statement. That is, there are many spells that can be used to determine whether the individual considers his statement true, which is not always the same thing. With the ability to converse with trees, spirits, ghosts, animals, and even stones, a magus increases the number of witnesses that they can call upon to when making their own judgment as to the facts of a given case.

But as members of the fourth estate, separate from those who govern, magi do not themselves hold court (unless so appointed by the legitimate rulers of their lands). At best their talents can be called upon to provide additional testimony or to pass opinion

### Story Seed: Who Will Rid Me of This Troublesome Magus?

After many disagreements over the rights of magi within his kingdom, the king rages against the Praeco, culminating in the rhetorical question "who will rid me of this troublesome magus?" These private words reach the ears of both the player companions and a trio of ambitious and loyal knights. Can the companions safely assume the words to be the product of harmless frustration, or are the players now tasked with foiling a murder that nobody wants or the death of three knights seemingly acting on the orders of their king?

as to the truth of certain statements. The social effects of *The Gift* cannot be underestimated, however, and magi would do well to consider means of countering it, such as providing written testimony.

Compelling a witness or the accused in any way would certainly seem to be against the laws of natural justice to us, but in *Mythic Europe* it

### Story Seed: The Disagreement of Kings

After the death of the Praeco, two kings with lands in the same Tribunal clash over who they want as the next praeco. This is not how the Order does things; the position of praeco is granted by right, not elected. Can the player magi, acting as envoys to the kings, come to an accommodation? Does this issue risk breaking the trust that had been so hard-won? And what has the pope to say on the matter?

is likely to be seen as entirely appropriate. While doing so opens the magus to accusations of undue influence (nobody but the magus knows what spells he has cast), courts may pay handsomely to know the thoughts of those before them and devices with such powers could fetch high prices.

### BINDING AGREEMENTS

Unlike the detection of lies and deceit, most Hermetic magic has no direct way of *enforcing* oaths and agreements, but there may be Mysteries known to cults of Houses able to place conditional curses on their targets.

There are faeries known to have such powers (*Binding Oath* in *Realms of Power: Faerie*, page 56), and the Gruagachan hedge tradition are able to enforce Geasa (*Hedge Magic Revised Edition*, page 63). Perhaps the investigation and integration of this magic might make for an interesting breakthrough (as per *Houses of Hermes: True Lineages*, page 26, or *Ancient Magic*, page 7). Researching or integrating a particular faerie power might be a Minor Breakthrough, while allowing freedom to vary the parameters and create similar spells may be a Major Breakthrough.

Alternatively, magi of House Merinita may be called upon to bring human and faerie together and allow the faerie to extend its power over all parties, or for a Gruagach to be similarly employed. How this would be received, though, is for the story to decide and there is a risk of offense to all involved.

### INHERITANCE

Inheritance is a deadly serious matter for those of noble blood as questions of blood can decide between wealth and servitude.

Potential heirs can swear upon relics and give testimony and account of why they should stand next in line to inherit, but the final decision is usually a matter of judgment. However, assuming the mundane parties choose to trust in wizards, Hermetic magic can assist even here. The following spells are designed specifically with questions of inheritance in mind and additional variants may be possible for Merinita using the Bloodline target (ArM5, page 92).

#### From This Line Descended

InCo 30

R: Arcane Connection, D: Momentary, T: Individual

This spell reveals whether the target represented by the Arcane Connection is descended from a particular bloodline also represented by either a further connection or a known member of that bloodline in the caster's presence. The connection or member of the bloodline is treated as the root of the family tree and the caster gains knowledge of how strong that blood is within the veins of the target. This helps the caster to judge the validity of any claims to inheritance. What it can't do is confirm a target's right to inherit, as this is dependent on other factors, not least the existence of other claimants and the inheritance laws in question.

(Base 5, +4 Arcane Connection, +1 complexity)

#### Divining the True Heir

InCo 20

R: Touch, D: Momentary, T: Group

With the various claimants present the magus casts the spell upon the group and learns the relative relationships between the targets of the spell and the target bloodline as represented by an Arcane Connection or known member of the familial line.

The caster learns how many gen-

erations separate the individuals, who are cousins, and how much of the line's blood runs in their veins.

Again, this spell is limited as it cannot differentiate between legitimate and illegitimate children, nor can it gain any information about those not present, a crucial part of inheritance law. So this spell is useful for assisting in determining a potential heir from within a group rather than identifying one outright.

(Base 5, +1 Touch, +2 Group)

#### Summoning the Ancestor Spirit

ReCo 45

R: Arcane Connection, D: Ring, T: Individual, ritual

One way of determining the rightful heir to an inheritance is to defer to someone or something that already knows the answer. The magic realm is replete with spirits representing every aspect of God's creation including, conceivably, spirits of a given bloodline.

Magical spirits of blood can be summoned through the form of Corpus using a base 15 effect as explained in *The Mysteries Revised Edition*, page 28. This is something that all magi can do and is not reliant on any Mystery initiations.

The caster often prepares a warding circle and then summons the target spirit into that circle. The Arcane Connection used must intimately relate to the target bloodline; a crown for a royal line, a sword passed from father to son, earth from a family estate, and so on. Once summoned, the spirit can be questioned or commanded as normal and if it is powerful enough it should have knowledge of the true heir to the line.

Should the magus wish it, he may also be able to command other information from the spirit concerning those who share its blood.



(Base 15, +4 Arcane Connection, +2 Ring)

## Protection from Invasion

Hermetic magic allows for powerful warding effects that can protect places and individuals from harm.

## The Impassable River

ReCo 60

R: Touch, D: Moon, T: Special, Ritual

This ritual turns a river into a magical boundary that cannot be crossed by man, woman, or child. It cannot be crossed from either side and those who try may reach mid-way before they are turned back. Neither bridges nor fords offer any opportunity to cross. They are, however, left unharmed by the magic and they may be used once the spell ends. Variants can be created with the Until (condition) duration or Year, though both of these increase the level by one magnitude.

Magi can create spells with non-standard Targets quite freely, though they are generally not as optimized as if they had first researched the required Target parameter. In this case, a river is a special form of boundary and the target is particular to this spell so the parameter is treated as Boundary +1, as described in *ArM5*, page 114.

This ritual is designed to protect lands from invasion or to place a barrier in war's path by disrupting the ability of one side or the other to travel. Magi working with nobles involved in the dispute may cast such things, even uninvited, to prevent the loss of life and to give parties the opportunity to talk. The unscrupulous may use this to cut off lines of retreat, hemming enemies in and preventing their escape.

(Base 15, +1 Touch, +3 Moon, +5 special based on Boundary)

## Deny Them the Bridge

ReTe 30

R: Touch, D: Concentration, T: Structure

This spell lifts a stone bridge, including its foundations, clear of the river and places it in some spot that the magus can see.

A Perception + Finesse Stress roll is required against a base Ease Factor of 9. Larger bridges, up to the maximum size manageable with this variant, increase the Ease Factor by +3. Failing the roll means one check for damage as per *City & Guild*, page 77, for each point by which the casting roll failed.

Use of this spell allows the magus to withdraw major bridges from the enemy, controlling their ability to cross rivers in numbers.

(Base 3, +1 Touch, +1 Concentration, +3 Structure, +1 Stone, +1 size)

## The Wizard's Chevauchee

PeHe 50

R: Sight, D: Momentary, T: Group  
Wizards should not be angered.

With this spell, the caster lays waste to any and all living plants that he can see, for around sixty acres. As a free cosmetic effect the plants are consumed by a magical fire that races across the ground as the caster shifts his gaze. The fire is selective and leaves dead plants, wood, and all other things untouched.

There can be little excuse for casting this spell and even less for enchanting it into a device and giving it to mundanes. However, the threat of it may be enough to keep covenant lands free from the interference of others.

(Base 5, +3 Sight, +2 Group, +4 size)

# Stories of the Fourth Estate

The achievement of a fourth estate is not the end of the story; it is the beginning of a new paradigm. As such, the saga continues with the same mix of stories as before with the addition of those that arise from the Order engaging with society and a more relaxed attitude on questions of interference.

## Interest From Other Magical Traditions

While the local environment and political situation can be made better through magic, there are wider considerations. Magical traditions from elsewhere in the world — such as the sorcerers of the Levant and the

### Story Seed: The Gifted Student

The covenant becomes aware of a student studying at a nearby cathedral school who, from all accounts, exhibits signs of The Gift. Investigating, they find that the student is indeed Gifted but that he has apprenticed himself to one of the cathedral school masters, who is an un-Gifted learned magician.

It is clear that the student isn't aware of his own potential, but he's glad to finally find someone who appears to understand what's wrong with him. What right does the covenant have to take the student against his wishes and those of his master?

CESSATION OF HOSTILITY



East or the Scandinavian traditions of the North — may see the Order combined with the mundane world as a stronger threat. This increases the danger to the Order from these forces and sagas may play out this escalating tension.

Here are some guidelines for including this in your sagas.

HOSTILITY

The reconquista in the Iberian peninsula is likely to take on a new dynamic. Christian kings may expect more from their magical allies now that they can act more openly. The retreating Muslim sorcerers may seek more dangerous bargains with the spirits they summon. Some may fall to corruption as demons take advantage of their need. Other

covenants of Hermetic magi may see the Muslim cause in Iberia as their calling, which in turn sets up a Tribunal divided.

Elsewhere, thanks to its newly-won closeness with mundane society, tales of the Amazons (see *Rival Magic*) reach the Order with more immediacy. With alliances at stake, magi are pressed into action to protect those near Amazon territory. And far to the East, a dark cloud is gathering, and soon the Mongol horde will bear down upon Mythic Europe and a mundane population, powerless before it, will call for aid.

These options provide for action-oriented sagas where the Order has a responsibility to protect the mundane population and in doing so faces mundane armies, magical enemies, and the politicking of the mundanes they are trying to help.

All hostilities, God willing, come to an end. Who better to negotiate peace than the player characters who negotiated a fundamental change to the Code? If the Amazons are defeated, if Iberia is surrendered, and if the horde is stopped in its tracks then peace accords must be drawn up.

This phase allows the player characters to flex their negotiating and political prowess as they look for common ground with their enemies, prepare for betrayal, and watch for treachery from within their own ranks.

In extreme cases, such as the defeat of Amazonia, or the absorption of the Augustan Brotherhood, the Order may find new recruits.

- With the fall of Amazonia and final end of Viea, the defeated Amazons agree to join House Flambeau. The player magi are dispatched to negotiate terms between the warrior sorceresses and the Flambeau. But there are elements within Houses Tremere and Bonisagus with grave misgivings. A new and secret vexillation has been formed and its members have no thought but to wipe out every last Amazon or die trying. How high up does the conspiracy go and can the player characters put an end to it?
- It is a decade since House Tyalus absorbed the Augustan Brotherhood and it comes as a surprise to everyone when the House decides to move its domus magna to the Rhine Tribunal and elect a former Virgilian the new primus. Has the Order been outmaneuvered? Looking back through the records, a number of prominent opponents to the Brotherhood's joining the Order have died in the last ten years.



## Mundane Engagement

### RESPONSIBILITIES

The question is, is there a pattern?  
If so, who is next and what is the  
Brotherhood planning?

## The World of Academia

The world of academia is changed. As magic is now so central to the world, academia starts to explore the realms, both intellectually and physically. Philosophers and adventurers seek out strange new worlds within the Magic realm, or look for long-lost loves in the Faerie realm. And they all need magical assistance.

Perhaps more insidious, it occurs to more than one noble that the lands of magic are untouched by man and that any man may make a kingdom in such a place.

- The noted Franciscan scholar Walter Van den Zande asks the player magi to accompany him on a voyage to the Magic realm. He produces some notes that he found in Paris, which he understands shows a place where the world of men and the world of magic touch. He pleads with the covenant to assist him. Having opened the eyes of men to the wonders of the world, can they refuse him?
- A jealous and disaffected noble seeks a way into the Magic realm where a man such as he can carve out a new kingdom. But his arrogance and greed have been snatched up by a faerie, who has driven the noble to the Faerie realm. There he has been granted a kingdom, a queen, and subjects. In his deluded state, the noble sends his army to attain yet more land. Only this time, the land is in the mundane world. And it belongs to the covenant.

In return for magical aid and the benefit of their wisdom, mundane nobles start to treat covenants more like abbeys, bequeathing lands, granting fiefs, and providing patronage. Covenants and magi start to acquire "parishes" that they have a responsibility for and magi become embedded into the world around them like never before. At a local level this does two things. First, there may be resentment from the hedge wizards who have served that area for years without being noticed by their noble masters. And second, these parishes, with the increase in the overt use of magic, develop new places where magic or faerie powers flourish.

- A pack of Nightwalkers (*Hedge Magic Revised Edition*, page 103) succumbs to the sin of envy and becomes corrupted. They turn from protecting the land to letting their spite run free upon it. The magi are faced with failing harvests and spirits that steal the fertility from the land, from the beasts, and from the very population itself. Can the magi discover the cause of the malaise? Can they help the Nightwalkers find redemption? And having been corrupted, can they ever be trusted to protect the land again?
- A noble chances upon a clutch of dragon eggs in magical woodland within his estates. He approaches the covenant for help in raising the creatures when the eggs hatch. He intends to ride the beasts and needs help training them. In the old days, this would have been unconscionable, but now that the rules have changed the knight and his men may become the first to tame and ride these fantastical mounts.

Covenants are used to managing estates and businesses alike, though day-to-day affairs are usually left to trusted consorts. But the charters that grant the magi rights over lands may stipulate their involvement. Suddenly, the overseeing of local justice is a distraction from their studies. The entertaining of nobles is more frequent than the visits of redcaps. And attendance at tournament is a mandatory political gesture.

- A strange thing happens to one of the covenant's magi. In letters from his neighboring landowners he finds references to jokes he did not make and advice he did not give. The notes are all warm and gracious, however, so he thinks little of it. Until one day at tournament, in a trough of boredom, he looks across the arena and sees himself conversing merrily with a number of mundanes who appear to be hanging on every word. Whoever it is, who is it and what is he doing? It seems that it is a faerie who is trying teach the magus the art of fitting in. Does the magus undertake to learn from the master or does he find just the right spell to make him stop?
- Dispensing justice tends to be easy when with a glance and a hushed utterance a magus can determine who is lying and who is the aggrieved party. But when an innocent man is accidentally revealed to be the victim of possession, the magus is suddenly forced to rethink what he's been doing. How many of those who have appeared before him were possessed? If it becomes known that the magus has been fooled in his own court, his judgment may never be trusted or respected

again. There's only one thing to do; raise wards around the court and sit through every case again and judge each upon its merit.

Of course, the goal in making the huge compromise in the Code is to arbitrate between the magical and the mundane. Stories should arise showing how the world and the Order fulfill the contract.

- A Magic aura is waning, as with nothing to anchor it the aura is losing its power. Already, one of the regio levels has collapsed, perhaps lost forever. With a responsibility to husband the aura, the covenant persuades a hippogriff to make its nest in the aura as a way to anchor it and stem the loss. When it starts to hunt on the estates of a certain knight, however, the magi must find a way to keep the peace. And then the hippogriff comes into season and the males arrive, hungry and ardent.
- The covenant receives a request from a knight living as a vassal of a neighboring covenant. He claims that they have been derelict in their responsibility to protect his land and his family from harm. It seems that a small dragon has taken to eating his cattle and the covenant has allowed the situation to continue. He asks that his liege covenant be held to account.

### The Old Guard

Achieving the fourth estate does not instantly quiet the defeated skeptics. If anything, they may become more active in rooting out failures, finding cases where integration has damaged society or the Order. As the drivers behind the change, the player characters can

expect to be called to account and dragged into cases that ultimately they have little connection with.

Such encounters should be infrequent, but there is a backdrop of political briefing against the player characters and they are aware of their enemies before they strike.

### A New Kind of Politics

Each Tribunal has its own take on politics, the Rhine has its guilds, the Theban Tribunal its phylai, and Hibernia has its own cultural divide. But they all have a Praeco, generally the most senior magus in the Tribunal. And Tribunals all tend to employ some form of democratic process, however differently it may operate.

Integrating with society across Mythic Europe and the East may prompt some changes to this, however, and entertaining mundanes at Tribunal may only be the start of it.

- A priest, given leave and supported by his bishop, brings charges of wounding against a magus. As is proper, the priest accepts that the magus is given his right to hear the charges at Tribunal, but the priest is unwilling to wait three years for the next gathering of magi. The Quaesitors must be seen to address the case, but the Code says nothing about wounding, much less what the punishment should be. So is the magus to be charged with "bringing ruin"? Or is the case dismissed out of hand?
- With the Tribunal meeting mere months away, the king has let it be known that he intends to be there. This is a break with protocol and something that the Tribunal has never seen before. The Praeco, a man known to both dis-

like the king and appreciate his own status, leaves the arrangements in the hands of the player characters. How do they entertain a king at Tribunal?

## Similar Kinds of Change

The aims of turning the Order of Hermes into the fourth estate are threefold: allow the use of magic to make the world better, secure rights for the Order in society that is rapidly changing, and improve the world's understanding of the supernatural world and thereby protect it.

The following changes do not take the Order all the way to the fourth estate but they each address at least two of the above aims.

### Spread Understanding of the Supernatural World

The Order could increase awareness and knowledge of the four realms; it only takes an understanding of Magic Lore to be able to enrich objects of Virtue, which is a strong accompaniment to the experimental philosophy practiced by academics. These enriched objects could become more common and their use potentially improve the lives of those living in Mythic Europe, or at least improve the lives of those with wealth and power enough to afford such items. But such a change, though raising the profile of magic in the world, does little to protect the activities currently carried out by those in the Order.

As an alternative, magi could



also use their experience with Mystery Initiations to empower companions with various supernatural abilities, acting through these proxies to achieve similar aims to those presented above. Empowering their trusted companions reduces the need to actually be involved in working with mundanes, as the companions have a greater capability to act on behalf of the magi.

The cost of this of course, however, is the identification or the development of a means to grant companions autonomous power of their own or supply them with suitable enchantments. And there is the added danger that once the companion has the power or the devices needed to effectively guide or support a mundane faction, the reliance on the Order is reduced, which may dilute the influence that the Order is able to exert.

## Work Within the Church

While interfering in the mundane world or serving as a court wizard may push the Order too far, perhaps accommodations can be made with the Church. This is a classic idea that comes up quite frequently, so it's worth spending some time looking at the options.

It is too simplistic to characterize the Church as a single organization with a single set of aims, given the all too frequent rivalries between orders and even the occasional schism. But there is usually a single figure of authority in the pope, and his proclamations and bulls are noted across Mythic Europe. If members of the Order of Hermes could work closely with the Church, they would inherit a pre-existing hierarchy of influence in terms of archbishops, bishops, priests, and their associated

dioceses and parishes. And with them come relationships of influence with the nobility and direct contact with the peasant classes.

In short, the Church already has the top-to-bottom social connection that could be beneficial to the Order. If a House or a series of dedicated covenants took holy orders, began to work alongside and within the Church, could they form a bridge between the Order and the Church? What would the ramifications be?

Holy magic is known within the Order, so a lack of piety is not an issue, but it would mean ceding members of the Order to the Church, losing direct influence and governance over their actions. Though they may be useful as a bridge between the two organizations, it may show that a magus cannot serve two masters.

The chapter describing Joseph of Napoli in *Antagonists* provides more material that may be of use to magi looking to work with the Church.

## Use Gifted Proxies

The organization known as the Augustan Brotherhood described in *Rival Magic* is already embedded within the courts of Mythic Europe, and they already provide intelligence and service to the nobility. It may be politically more palatable to leverage these existing relationships, but the question is one of approach.

The Augustan Brotherhood know of the Order, but the reverse is not generally true, which means that this option is difficult to exploit. However, should the Order gain sufficient knowledge of the Brotherhood, they could exert pressure in a number of ways:

- They could push to bring the Brotherhood into the Order as a new House and give that House

a specific mandate. The Oath already carries a precedent for granting certain rights to one House and not to others: the rights of House Bonisagus with regard to apprentices allows them to do something that would arguably be against the code if attempted by a magus of another House. If this new House of Augustus could be tasked with, and coerced into, implementing the will of the Order, then the nobility could be influenced without the majority of the Order getting their hands dirty.

- The Order could take an active interest in individual members of the Brotherhood and apply pressure directly upon them to ensure that their messages are conducive to peace and stability. Clearly a dangerous prospect given the little that the Order currently understands of the Brotherhood.
- Hermetic magi may inject themselves into the Brotherhood in an official capacity, extending an offer to work with the Brotherhood to realize their aims in exchange for a reciprocal agreement.

Implementing this kind of change, while aiming at the same goal, is a very different prospect to internal political change. It requires the Order to make contact with the Augustan Brotherhood and persuade them, through any means possible, to place themselves under the Oath in some fashion. A certain degree of resistance can be expected so diplomacy is important. *Rival Magic* contains more information on the magic, structure, and aims of the Augustan Brotherhood as well as inspiration on encountering and building a partnership with them.

## The World Changes Around the Order

The Order is not the only magical tradition in Mythic Europe and, as the Augustan Brotherhood has shown, it is only a matter of time before one or more traditions take their places at the side of those who rule. Even unGifted hedge wizards, such as learned magicians and elementalists, can use their talents to advise those in power and to grant them some measure of dominion over the magical world in return for certain rights.

What recourse does the Order have if the vis source they assumed was secret and safe is suddenly granted to a learned magician, a member of prince's court? Does the magus need to bow before the elementalist when he acts on behalf of the archbishop on magical matters? And if the Augustan Brotherhood extend their reach into academia, what happens to any Gifted students that might be found there?

Society is changing. No man nor covenant can exist within a vacuum, but if the Order will not take its place in society, those of lesser traditions will. And from the concessions they wring from their masters they may slowly take what the Order considers belongs to it by right.

## Taking the Lonely Stand

Most of the options that we have looked at involve collaboration across covenants, Tribunals, and Houses. This need not be the case, however. Covenants have effective free rein on how they manage their affairs locally and as long as their actions do not affect others of the Order they may be free to act as

they wish. We have already seen that there are a number of Story Flaws and Covenant Hooks that embed magi and the covenant deeply within mundane affairs, so some degree of involvement is inescapable. So what is the cost of favoring one noble over others? Why should not a magus support his cousin or agree a charter giving favorable terms to both sides? And if that ally is threatened in some way, perhaps by the need to provide martial service, or by financial difficulties, what is wrong in ensuring their well-being? And in return the covenant might be afforded a place at the noble's court. If a covenant can ensure that their activities do not bring ruin to their sodales, then they can defend their position at Tribunal.

The Peripheral Code differs from Tribunal to Tribunal, which means that what might be acceptable in the Roman Tribunal is deemed irresponsible several miles to the north in the Tribunal of the Greater Alps. Each region can set its own emphasis on mundane involvement. Each Tribunal can determine what is right and wrong for itself. Effecting the change across the Order most likely goes through a phase of local change, of having persuaded the Tribunal that integration is better than detachment, and if the magi driving the change do not have designs upon the Order then this is the level at which their ambitions rest.

Perhaps the most dangerous change to the Order would be that of a single House opting to flout convention and embrace society. Houses Mercere, Jerbiton, and Verditius are the obvious candidates, and Bjornaer and Merinita may see opportunities to further their own House aims. A single House or a coalition of like-minded Houses determining their own rules of engagement with society could see a new schism. Un-





like covenants or Tribunals, which are geographically distinct from the rest of the Order, the Houses have members all across Mythic Europe. The following story suggestions help describe how such a withdrawal may take place:

- The House meets and decides that not enough is being done to find and train apprentices. Officially, the concern is that the House is losing its identity through not following closely the traditions of the Founder. However, the player characters learn that something else is at work.
- After a magus Bonisagi exercises his right to take up a student apprenticed to one of the House, members of the House in the Tribunal are privately urged to make their displeasure known. It isn't long before a mercenary magus from outside the Tribunal is engaged and declares Wizard War against the Bonisagus. Thinking the player covenant an ally, the Bonisagus and his apprentice ask for sanctuary.
- Ahead of the Tribunal meeting, the House holds its own council. The Primus is asking his magi in each Tribunal to seek out House covenants, or create them where there are none. The House is asked to stand together at Tribunal and request leave to found a new covenant. What does this mean for the player characters? Does it affect their members or their resources?
- With dedicated covenants now in place across Mythic Europe, the House declares its rejection of those parts of the Peripheral Code that seek to separate magi from society. The Tribunals are given an ultimatum; clarify the code in favor of freedom of self-

governance or see the House withdraw from the Order.

## Opposing Integration

Having spent much of this chapter looking at how the player characters can influence the Order and bring about a change in favor of integrating with the mundane world, this section places the player characters in the roles of those, just like Austerius described above, who are opposing the change. But why would they oppose such a change? Most *players* tend to be fairly progressive in their outlook, which often carries over to the characters they play, and there's barely a troupe playing today whose characters haven't bent the non-interference rules to some degree.

## A Change for the Worse

Becoming the fourth estate brings with it obligations. The player magi may recognize these as the thin end of the wedge, small concessions that soon build towards servitude and debt. They may also recognize that engaging with the mundane world will cause the Order to lose what focus it has; the pursuit of magic for magic's sake will be the preserve of a few fortunate or senior magi, while others are forced to contend with the difficulties thrown up by their new mundane peers.

Perhaps worst of all, in moving closer to political animals such as bishops, archbishops, counts, and princes, magi and their covenants will lose affinity with the Order and slowly gain affinity with their mundane paymasters. In seeking to control the spread

and influence of the mundane world, in seeking to protect the last areas of magical power, the Order could sacrifice itself.

Outside of politics, a population accustomed to magic may feed Hell's ambitions; when the mundane world sees the advantages available through magic, corruptible individuals may accept the false powers granted by demons, learning how to wield their own magic in an attempt to raise themselves to the level of magi. Just as the Order begins to operate more openly, so Hell's influence may follow.

## Running Stories on the Verge of Change

The player characters are, or should be, the heroes of the saga. That means that they will tend to occupy the most reasonable ground in a world that confronts them with extremes. So the key is to make the change an *unreasonable* one and to have the player characters protecting the Order from itself.

The following story seeds subvert some of those we looked at earlier as reasons *for* integration with society:

- A hedge wizard adviser to an archbishop has identified a considerable source of vis on his lands, amounting to a rook each year, and the archbishop has decided to accept offers for collection rights. Having received notification, the covenant appoints someone with authority to negotiate and sends the delegation to the meeting. The other interested parties include a second Hermetic covenant, a representative of a council of hedge wizards active in the court of a nearby noble,

and an enigmatic man of wealth who clearly exudes The Gift.

- When the local parish asks the covenant to pay its tithe on all properties and incomes, including vis, the covenant has two choices: pay and be saved, or refuse and be damned. If they concede the tithe, do they open themselves for more taxes from nobles keen to fill their coffers? And if they refuse how do they deal with the eventual escalation? How does the covenant make clear to those around them that they will not play these games?
- Having seen little of their redcap for the last few seasons the covenant discovers that the unGifted redcap has been acting as an adviser and informant to the bishop, a man known for his intolerance of those of lapsed faith and contempt for those outside the faith. In confronting him the magi learn that his traditional red cap is not the protection it once was; the Order is little more than a story and its members seen as distant and ineffectual. What, he argues, was he

supposed to do? By working for the bishop he gains free passage and recognition in the estates across the diocese. The argument seems reasonable, but the redcap's loyalties have been called into question and members of the Order that he is bound to serve have suffered. What can be done with him?

- A pious magus arrives at the covenant, the covenant of his apprenticeship many years before, to divest himself of all his magical assets. Everything he has worked for, all the books he has accumulated, the devices he has made, the vis he has stored, he gives back to the covenant that gave him his path. His reason? He is turning his back on the Order and entering the Church. This is not some idle dotage to be spent in retirement and contemplation; the magus is still vigorous and feels that his faith and his experience belong in the Church. After ritually shedding himself of the trappings of magic he renounces the Order, just as the Quaesitor arrives to discover the truth of the rumors she has heard.

Perhaps the Order does need to integrate more with society. Perhaps there are advantages of working with mundanes rather than pretending that such concerns are immaterial. But the Order must tread carefully if it is to avoid losing itself. The answer to a changing society may not be in acquiescing, but in standing aloof and ensuring that nobles and clerics alike know that the Order is not to be trifled with.

### THE EXAMPLE OF THE NORMANDY TRIBUNAL

The Normandy Tribunal is poor in vis, with much of it in the Tribunal's gift and its magi forced to engage in contests to earn their share. Many magi of the Tribunal live near or within cities and the Normandy Peripheral Code makes provision to help magi skirt their Oath to the Order. Some may view the proximity between magi and mundanes as responsible for the loss of magical resources and some of those may seek to reverse the situation.

In this case, player characters may take a stance opposed to further integration, opposing any new





covenant that seeks to establish itself near a city, and arguing against changes to the Code that allow magi to openly associate with cities. They could promote rulings that try to return magic to the world and give magi the guidance they need to foster new auras. Ultimately, magi could be prohibited from siting their covenants in or near cities, with some being given the support they need to relocate. They may even seek to have a covenant dedicated to the cause of re-establishing Magic auras in key locations, thereby proving that the Order is not at the mercy of mundane society.

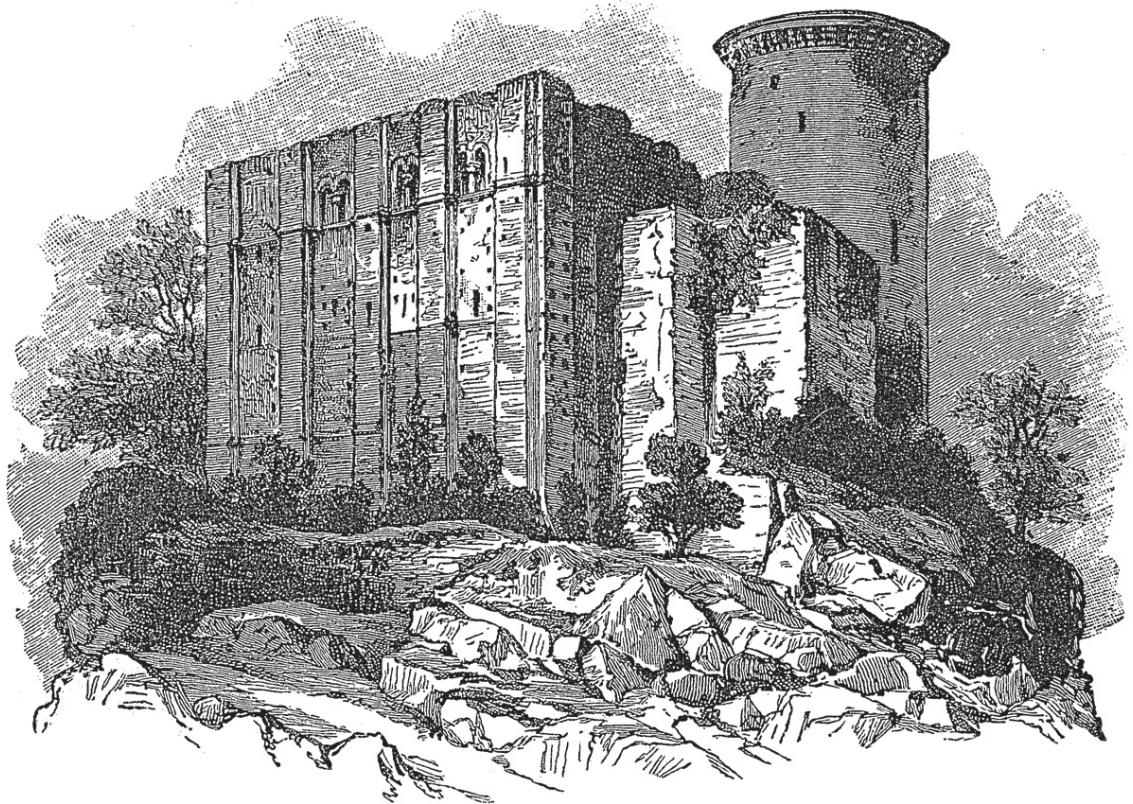
Politics with the mundanes and the Church need not be abandoned, but the content of any charters is

robustly argued in the Order's favor. Land, authority, and immunity can all be secured, ensuring that the Order is recognized by the world and its position respected, but without the onerous responsibilities.

With these measures, Magic auras can rise once more, drawing magical beasts from the Magic realm to the world for a time, and faeries will be able to feed upon the fresh vitality of magi regaining their heritage. The example of the Normandy Tribunal shows that closer integration with the mundane world, including aping its knights and tourneys, has done nothing to preserve magic, and it could be the responsibility of the player characters to pull the Order back from complacency.

## Conclusion

The need for Hermetic magi to be granted and enjoy certain rights is something that can be introduced into most sagas. Not every saga will want to follow the full path detailed in this chapter, but it does provide for covenants that want to integrate more closely with society, to protect themselves from the jealousy of nobles and churchmen alike, and to argue in defense of their actions at Tribunal. Magi following this course gain officially recognized rights from those who rule the lands around them, new respect and recognition, and are able to better influence the good governance of the region.





# The Island of the Magicians

The Code of Hermes does not prevent magi ruling land; it prevents them from contesting its sovereignty with noblemen, and thereby harming other magi. In some parts of Mythic Europe, like England, this means that magi cannot own land, for all land belongs to the King and is held in vassalage. In other places, like southern France or Hungary, covenants which predate the current royal houses hold their land free of royal claim. There is nowhere in western Mythic Europe, however, that a magus can claim suffi-

cient land to establish a country without angering a king, risking war, and defying the Code.

In this saga seed, a group of magi sidestep this restriction by creating a country for themselves, not by claim or conquest, but through *Creo Terram* rituals.

This chapter describes in detail the creation of one such land: an island in the North Sea, made from a circular stone wall that jackets an infill of earth.

## Construction: Earth Jacketed In Stone

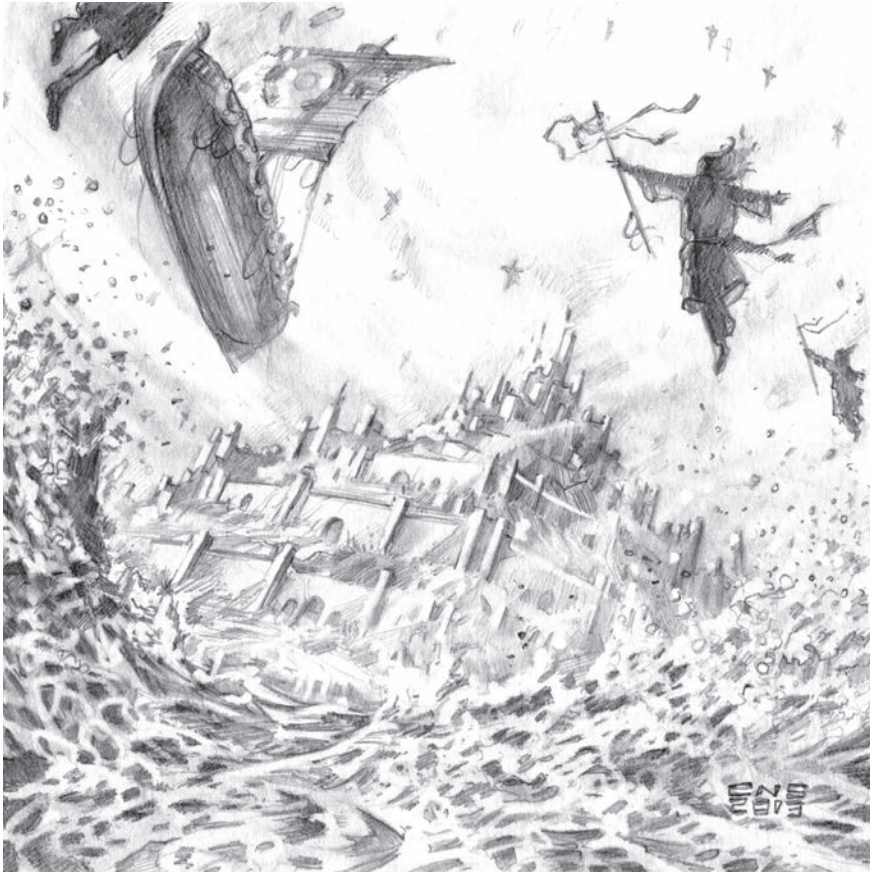
The spells and calculations given here are for a relatively simple island, but they also provide a good basis for more complex shapes and materials, if your troupe would prefer to customize their own land.

## Outer Wall Shapes

The first step in this model of construction is to create a thick stone wall, which protects from erosion the earth placed behind it. Walls made by magic are faultless, unless the sigil of the magus mars them. A conventional wall is made of blocks that have been quarried, so can be no larger than what can be handled by teams of men with cranes. A Hermetic wall is, therefore, far stronger, or far thinner, than a conventional wall.

In the spells given in a nearby insert, the walls are designed as monoliths two paces thick. A thinner wall might be cracked by wave action, a ship striking the wall in a gale, or the furious bite of an undersea monstrosity. The walls are supported by fill, described later.

The walls in the spells are designed as 30 paces high. This is satisfactory for the ocean's depth





in much of the southern area of the North Sea. If you want taller walls and don't want to use a calculator, then just increase the height of the wall in fractions, and reduce the diameter of the wall similarly. For example, if the wall is a third higher, then the diameter is a third smaller. The figures in the spells have a little leeway in them, and troupes shouldn't be too concerned about claiming every last square inch of area. If your characters are designing their island and it seems too small for their needs, an extra 5 spell levels increases the area incredibly. Remember, also, that a covenant could create an island chain, of a group of small filled circles within a larger circular wall, used only as a spell target and parapet.

### OPEN ENDED CYLINDER

The open ended cylinder is a simple design, and has many features attractive to player characters. It creates a circular boundary, which can be used for Circle and Ring spells. It creates a larger living space than fully enclosed shapes. It does not require excavation into the bedrock of the North Sea, like an inverted cone, or a design that uses pillars.

A better alternative is to create the wall as a hollow conical frustum: like a cone with the tip bitten off. For the sake of simplifying calculations, troupes are encouraged to just use the cylinder calculations, and remember, in play, that the sea wall slopes slightly. A frustum suffers less erosion than a vertical wall, as described in the ablative slope section, later.

- A level 30 spell creates a wall 30 paces high, 2 paces thick, and just over 3 miles in diameter.
- A level 35 spell creates a wall 30 paces high, 2 paces thick and just over 30 miles in diameter.
- A level 40 spell creates a wall 30 paces high, 2 paces thick, and just over 301 miles in diameter.

### TALL EMPTY CYLINDER

A tall cylinder is suitable for living in the deeper parts of the North Sea, and mocking the highest of waves.

- A level 30 spell creates a wall 240 paces high, two paces thick, and just over a third of a mile in diameter.

## Simple Spells to Create Permanent Walls

Spells to create simple geometric shapes are well understood by the Order, and have been used for fortification since the time of the Founders. The following spells create sufficient stone to create monoliths of the indicated shape and size.

### PERMANENT WALL OF PROTECTING STONE

**CrTe 20**

**R:** Touch, **D:** Mom, **T:** Ind, Ritual

Creates a wall 25 paces long, 4 paces high, and 1 pace thick, which is a total of 100 cubic paces of stone. Vis is used to prevent the wall disappearing after the spell ends. Walls made in this way are made of single pieces of unmortared stone, which gives them far greater durability than conventional walls, unless the caster has a sigil that degrades their composition.

(As *ArM5* page 153, modified for permanent creation of walls. The level rises from 10 to 20 because all Ritu-

als have a minimum level of 20 as per *ArM5*, page 114, so magi could increase the Range or Size without cost. (Base 3, +1 Touch, +2 size))

### EFFICIENT & PERMANENT WALL OF PROTECTING STONE

**CrTe 20**

**R:** Touch, **D:** Mom, **T:** Ind, Ritual

Creates a wall from a single piece of unmortared stone, which gives it far greater durability than conventional walls, unless the caster has a sigil which degrades its composition. Vis is used to prevent the wall disappearing after the spell ends.

Due to the quirk of Hermetic magic that makes all Rituals fourth magnitude spells or greater, there's no advantage to a magus who casts a spell to create a permanent, unornamented, wall of stone smaller than 10,000 cubic paces in volume. That creates a wall 167 paces long, 30 paces high and 2 paces thick.

(Base 3, +1 Touch, +4 size)

### AN EXPANSIVE & PERMANENT WALL OF PROTECTING STONE

**CrTe 30**

**R:** Touch, **D:** Mom, **T:** Ind, Ritual  
*As Permanent Wall of Protecting Stone,*

earlier, but with four additional magnitudes spent on size. This creates one million cubic paces of stone, which is sufficient for a wall 30 paces high, 2 paces thick, and just under 9.5 miles in length.

(Base 3, +1 Touch, +6 size)

### THE WEDDING RING OF GAEA

**CrTe 35**

**R:** Touch, **D:** Mom, **T:** Ind, Ritual  
*As Wall of Permanent Protecting Stone,*

earlier, but with five additional magnitudes spent on size. This creates ten million (10,000,000) cubic paces of stone, and a circular wall 30 paces high, 2 paces thick, and just over 94.5 miles long.

(Base 3, +1 Touch, +7 size)

- A level 35 spell creates a wall of the same height and thickness, but 3.8 miles in diameter.
- A level 40 spell creates a wall of the same height and thickness, but 37.6 miles in diameter.

### OPEN ENDED RECTANGULAR PRISM

A rectangular prism suffers greater ablation from the sea, and lacks the charming circular shape, so prized in Hermetic magic, of the cylinder. It is however, a shape that some characters may prefer. It is, for example, very easy to map, and to plan out the later use of land. Its walls form lengthy quays, which can be used directly for mercantile industry.

For the same reasons that a hol-

low conical frustum is a better choice of wall shape than a cylinder, so a pyramidal frustum is also a better choice than a rectangular prism. Players are encouraged to just use the formulae for right rectangular prisms, recalling in play that the sea wall slopes slightly.

- A level 30 spell creates sufficient stone to make walls 30 paces high, 2 paces wide, and a top square with 4,166 paces (2.4 miles) per side.
- A level 35 spell creates sufficient stone to make four walls, each 30 paces high, 2 paces wide and 41,666 paces (23.6 miles) long.
- A level 40 spell creates sufficient stone to make four walls, each 30 paces high, 2 paces wide and 416 666 paces (236.7 miles) long.

### SOLID STONE CYLINDER

A stone cylinder is a single monolithic block of stone. Characters can quarry into it, using *Perdo* magic or some conventional techniques, to create rooms.

- A level 30 spell creates a stone cylinder 30 paces high and 206 paces in diameter.
- A level 35 spell creates enough stone to create a cylinder 30 paces high and 651 paces across.
- A level 40 spell creates enough stone to create a cylinder 30 paces high and 1030 paces across.

### ABLATIVE SLOPE

Wave action batters small stones and pieces of sand against sea walls. This causes scouring of the walls, and undermines them at the base, where heavier objects strike the wall with each wave. This problem is worst on vertical sea walls, as they do not deflect any of the energy of

the striking objects. This can be prevented by coating the base of the wall with a slope of mud or sand, which acts as ablative armor against the waves.

The size of ablative slope needed varies depending on the wall it is protecting, but for empty cylinder walls, the spell to create an ablative slope is three magnitudes lower than the spell that creates the wall. This creates a slope of dirt equal in volume to the wall itself, which is excessive for most requirements. Ablative slopes can be larger if desired, so that they require less maintenance, or can be created by *Rego* magic that resurfaces the sea floor.

## Ornamentation

Characters creating a massive wall to jacket their island may prefer that it not be a simple geometric figure. They can alter the initial spell to create many of the following effects by increasing the spell level. Alternatively, they can create the wall as a simple shape, and then retrofit it with *Rego Terram* spells, or the work of mundane craftsmen.

### FORTIFIED WALL

The sea wall protecting the island could, if the player characters wished, be designed with fortress-like features. These include:

**Crenellation:** A wall that has been designed with crenels (gaps) and merlons (upward projections) allows soldiers to take cover between firing missiles at enemies. Adding crenellations adds a magnitude.

**A Fire Step:** A fire step is a Hermetic invention, probably pioneered during the Schism War. Unlike a crenelated wall, a wall with a fire step is complete, but has a raised step

### A Note on the Columbae

One group of magi, the Columbae, specialize in magi which affect circles and rings. They are described in *Houses of Hermes: Societates*, from page 113. A Columban magus is not required to create the magical island, but the assistance of one might prove valuable.

### Maximum Magnitudes Due to Complexity

Troupes should consider capping the number of magnitudes that complicated additional features add to the wall. They might, for example, agree that after adding three magnitudes for complexity, the magus can manipulate his creation into any shape he wishes, without adding extra magnitudes.



behind it. This allows the defenders to step up, see the foe, launch a spell, and then step down. This obscures the defender far better than standing behind a merlon, or even an arrow slit, protecting her from Sight ranged spells. Tremere magi, particularly, have spells which allow them to create one-way windows in walls, which help them to keep track of their enemies between castings. This doesn't raise the level: it just uses up additional fill.

**Greater Height:** Any wall is an obstacle, but one that's too high for climbing lines to be thrown to the top of it is the most secure. Adding height to the wall doesn't add to the spell's level: it just takes more stone and so reduces the diameter of the final circle.

**Machicolations:** These are holes between two wall supports (called corbels), which allow missiles to be dropped onto attackers at the

foot of the wall, by defenders still protected by the wall. This adds a magnitude. Another alternative is to leave beam holes in the walls so that wooden galleries, called hoardings, can be hung out over the walls, from which similar attacks can be made. These don't add to the spell level. These defenses are rarely seen on sea walls, as direct attacks on sea walls are rare.

### SEA GATES AND DOCKS

A sea gate allows ships to pass through the island's wall into a sheltered port. This area, filled with seawater, can be sealed at high tide by closing the gate. This allows vessels to remain at an optimal height compared to the dockside, which allows for direct unloading of cargo. This is far faster than the method used in most ports, where small ves-

sels, called lighters, transport cargo from vessels to the dockside.

The dock area is not exposed to the hammering action of waves, so it does not suffer erosion like the sea wall does. It does not require a thick stone jacket. If the player characters just add the sea gate, it adds 1 magnitude because it has some metal parts, but requires no added material. If they add the sea gate and the internal harbor wall, it still only adds one magnitude, but requires material, depending on the size of the harbor the magi create.

### STATUARY

If the player characters wish to create statues atop the wall, or have relief figures carved in its surface, this is free if they are an expression of the sigil of the caster. If they are an artistic motif, they add a magnitude.

## Story Seed: Attack of the Giant Magical Snails

Characters creating a stone jacketed island may attract predators that find magically-created stone tasty or useful. One predator of this type is the Sarmatian sea snail. Fortunately the snails eat so slowly that the player characters can remove them before the wall is breached.

### SARMATIAN SEA SNAILS: A CHARACTER GUIDE

Sarmatian sea snails are magical animals found around the coasts of the North Sea. In the same way that normal snails eat limestone and chalk to obtain the nutrients they require to grow their shells, these snails seek out magical stone. Sarmatian snails usually travel in large swarms, and if attacked, fight by crowding the foe. Each individual is willing

to die to soak up the attacks of the predator, so that its swarm-mates can surround and kill their foe.

The character guide below gives sufficient detail to use them as resources or foes in combat. They are not suitable as player characters.

**Magic Might:** 7 (Aquam)

**Characteristics:** Cun -2, Per +4, Pre -2, Com -2, Str +6, Sta +3, Dex -1, Qik -4

**Size:** +1

**Virtues and Flaws:** Magic Animal, 9 x Large.

**Personality Traits:** Hungry +3, Patient +2

**Combat:**

**Bite:** Init -4, Attack +5, Defense +5, Damage +10

This bite is made using a tongue covered in tiny, rasping teeth.

**Soak:** +6 (partially covered by a stone shell)

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

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-6), -3 (7-12), -5 (13-18), Incapacitated (19-24), Dead (25+)

**Abilities:** Awareness 9 (predators), Brawl 5 (bite), Swim 5 (ocean).

**Vis:** 2 pawns Aquam, shell.

**Appearance:** These giant snails are the size of a small pony each. They differ from garden snails in that they have hook-shaped feet, and a long, brightly colored, tail. Each also has a rack of tentacles atop its head, each terminating in a glowing, globular eye. These snails have a fringe of whiskers about their mouths, which give them the appearance of being mustachioed.

## Wall Materials Other Than Stone

The sea wall comes into contact with seawater, so stone — which does not corrode and resists impact — seems the best choice of material. Magi may, however, choose many other materials.

### BASE METALS

Base metals which are made from copper or its alloys (bronze or brass) form a layer of corrosion which protects the wall from further harm. This corrosion is generally green in color, is called verdigris, and is used in the production of colored ink. Copper is also poisonous to most lichens, so it does not become fouled with seaweed, as stone walls do, although this not widely known in Mythic Europe. Base metals which are alloys of iron (such as steel) lack the useful property of being protected by layer of their own corrosion.

Base metal walls are more difficult to create than stone ones. The base spell level is two magnitudes higher, while the base Individual of is 1/27th

the volume. This means that for a spell creating a circular wall, 30 paces high and two paces thick:

- A level 45 spell creates a wall 1.1 miles in diameter
- A level 50 spell creates a wall 11 miles in diameter
- and so on

Whether a wall of base metal needs to be two paces thick depends on the hardness of the metal. Troupes should discuss the correct thickness for the walls of their island.

### NOBLE METALS

Walls made of valuable metals are three magnitudes more difficult to create than walls of base metals of equivalent size. Silver and gold are not highly corrodible. Players may think silver corrodes easily, but this is because most silver is mixed with copper, to make it harder and more durable, and this copper corrodes, making the silver appear tarnished. Walls of silver and gold are, therefore, possible, with spells of high level. They are, unfortunately, a spectacular advertisement for any noble-

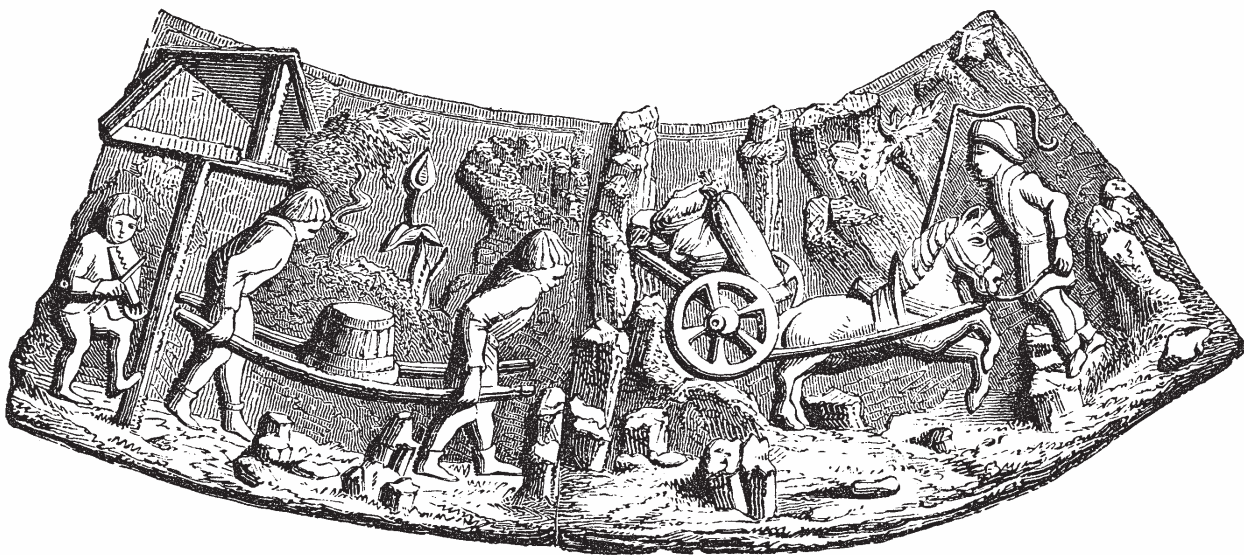
man seeking mercenaries to invade the magical island. Players may prefer to jacket a stone wall with a thin layer of precious metal, which can be simply achieved with Rego spells.

### UNNATURAL STONES

By adding a Muto requisite to the ritual used to create the wall, magi can create stone with unnatural properties. These strange effects often require further Requisites, which makes researching the spell which constructs the wall more difficult. For example, a wall which perpetually burns requires an Ignem requisite. A wall that heals itself requires a Requisite of one of the living Arts: Animal, Corpus or Herbam. Of these, Herbam is the least disgusting: plants do not bleed and scab while healing.

### BIOLOGICAL SUBSTANCES

The wall can, theoretically, be built of wood or bone. Each of these substances has specific predators in the North Sea. This makes them poor choices unless wards are later cast to prevent damage to the wall. When





calculating volumes, stone, animal bone, and wood are equally difficult to produce. Wood and animal bone walls may alter the roles of the faeries which come to the island. Human bone is about as difficult to make as base metal, and would attract dark faeries and demons. Muto requisites can toughen these building materials.

## Backfilling the Enclosed Space

The space within the enclosing wall can be filled in various ways.

### STEALING A ROCK

There are quite a few large, uninhabited, rocks in the North Sea. If the wall is placed around one of these, it makes filling the circle slightly easier, and also provides stone foundations for the construction of large, stone buildings.

It may also prove useful in providing an aura for the magi to develop laboratories within. See the later section on auras for more information. Claiming a rock may also make it easier to spread life across the island, which is also described in a later section.

### DIRT, WITH A LAYER OF TOPSOIL

In this model, the characters note that the roots of plants, even great trees, rarely go deeper than two paces into the earth. It therefore matters little what worthless rubbish is used to fill the enclosed space, save that it supports two paces of rich topsoil.

- For a cylindrical island 3 miles across, this requires just under 657 million cubic paces of dirt and soil.

## A Basic Quote

So, if your troupe decides they want a circular island thirty miles across, with a standard wall and filled with soil, then that requires just two spells, a level 35 and a level 40, and 15 pawns of vis. A maga can cast both spells in under four hours, if the long term fatigue levels lost in the first casting do not need to be recovered before the second ritual commences.

An island 300 miles across requires a level 40 spell to create the wall, and a level 50 spell to create the fill. It costs 18 pawns of vis and takes an extra 45 minutes. An "island" of this size can easily join Britain to the Continent and leave sufficient material to create a defensive range of hills along the old coastlines.

- For a cylindrical island 30 miles across, 65.7 billion cubic paces of soil are required.
- A tall cylindrical island 3.8 miles across requires 8.43 billion cubic paces of soil.
- A tall cylindrical island 38 miles across requires 843.1 billion cubic paces of soil.
- A square island, built as a rectangular prism, with a side of 2.4 miles, requires 535 million cubic paces of soil.
- A square island, built as a rectangular prism, with a side of 23.6 miles, requires 51.7 billion cubic paces of soil.

For a Creo Terram Ritual, with Touch range and Momentary Duration:

- A level 20 spell provides 10 million cubic paces of soil.
- A level 25 spell provides up to 100 million cubic paces of soil.
- A level 30 spell provides up to 1 billion cubic paces of soil.
- A level 35 spell provides up to 10 billion cubic paces of soil.
- A level 40 spell provides up to 100 billion cubic paces of soil.
- A level 45 spell provides up to 1 trillion cubic paces of soil.

Spare soil can be used to create an ablative slope around the sea wall, or to craft geological features like hills.

### CLAY

In this model, the characters backfill the enclosure with magically created clay. Clay created by Hermetic magic is perfect. That is it lacks the bubbles, gravel and biological matter which can cause pottery to catastrophically misfire. Clay is also waterproof, which means that even if small cracks do occur in the wall, the water table of the island will not fill with seawater.

Clay is as easy to create as soil. For fill which is topsoil on the upper two paces, and clay the rest of the way to bedrock, just calculate as soil.

### STONE

Stone is more difficult for Hermetic magic to make than dirt or clay, but its use as fill for limited areas of the enclosure is likely. If the magi wish to build large stone structures upon the island, like watchtowers, castles, or mountains, it is sensible that pillars of stone be placed within the enclosure, to act as foundations.

Characters creating stone may select what type of stone appears, except if they have a sigil which makes a particular variety the only suitable choice.

Stone is three magnitudes more difficult to create than soil of the same volume. If the characters choose a variety of stones – for example some

soapstone for implements, and some marble for civic buildings, and some tin ore because they want to attract faeries – then that adds one to the magnitude for complexity.

### CISTERNS

The magical island, having no natural spring, must get its drinking water via magic or rain. The vast subterranean spaces of the island are perfect for creating cisterns which store this water. This allows it to be drawn up through wells. Cisterns might also be created on the higher parts of the island, perhaps replenished using magically powered pumping systems, to allow plumbing in houses to gain pressure via gravity.

### ROOMS AND UTILITY SPACES

The space beneath sea level in the island can be filled with workspaces. This is a little counterintuitive, because when the island is first created the magi have enormous amounts of available space, and the resources to create vast storage spaces on the surface level. There are, however, some specialized rooms which are better underground. Magi may choose to fill the underground of their island with wine cellars, larders, magical furnaces, hypocaustic systems, catacombs, and laboratories. *Conjuring the Mystic Tower*, a spell which creates a single tower, adds 3 magnitudes for elaborate design, so a system which fills even larger areas of the island requires a spell of even greater complexity. Negotiate within the troupe.

## Surface Structures

Magi who are highly skilled in *Creo Terram* might, in theory, create the superficial buildings of the island

as part of the spell which creates the sea wall. This is more difficult than it initially appears, however. This method of creating the island first makes the stone wall, and then makes the earth fill. To make the buildings and waterways of the island at the same time as the wall requires either that the houses and canals have tall stone foundations, or that the earth fill that supports them be created at the same time as the wall. It is easier for most magi to create the island, and then alter its surface.

### ROAD WORKS

Roads have three basic forms in medieval Europe: packed earth, gravel, and paved. Hard packed roads effectively create themselves, as the users and their draft animals pack the earth. In Hermetic magic, gravel is treated as stone, so there's no particular advantage in creating gravel roads. This leaves only paved roads, but in Hermetic magic it is easier to create a road out of a single piece of stone than out of individual pieces.

### A Network Reminiscent of Rome CrTe20

R: Touch, D: Mom, T: Individual, Ritual

Medieval roads vary in design, so in this spell the road is based, roughly, on the dimensions of Roman roads, which are just under three paces wide. For simplicity's sake, the road is assumed to crown slightly, but average half a pace thick.

In Hermetic magic, all permanent creations spells are rituals, and all rituals are, at minimum, level 20. This means that for a simple shape, like a road, it's no easier to create a permanent road ten paces long than one of the maximum length for this spell, which is 3.78 miles.

If the road's design is complex

enough to require an extra magnitude, then either increase the level of the ritual, or shorten the road to 0.4 miles. Generally creating a bridge is not sufficiently complex to require an extra magnitude (there is none, for example in *Bridge of Wood*, *Ars Magica* page 135) but at the troupe's discretion, creating a system that has many bridges may require one.

(Base 3, +1 Touch +4 size)

### CREATING HOUSES AND OTHER BUILDINGS

There are many ways of creating housing on the island. The simplest way, in a mystical sense, is to leave sufficient stone over from the creation of the wall, to allow mundane crafters to raise houses with their own skills.

The wall of the island can be designed as a huge shell keep. That is, the wall, in addition to the width required to make it sea proof, can be extended into a wide room, that partially, or even fully, encircles the island. This reduces the size of the island's outer wall, the degree of diminution being dependent on the size and internal complexity of the shell keep's rooms. If they go all the way to the bedrock, they take up a great deal more material than thin walls which create a single story structure on the surface. When calculating the volume of material for a single story structure, add a little extra to account for the bracing required to suspend the rooms until the backfill can be added to support them.

If the player characters use a ritual to raise a series of identical houses, the level of the spell is dependent on their number and complexity. A useful trick is to leave thin pieces of stone connecting the houses, as this means they can be created as an Individual item, rather than as a Group of houses.



**Creation of the Walls of Simple Cottages**

CrTe 20

R: Touch, D: Momentary, T: Individual, Ritual.

This spell creates a series of identical stone enclosures each suitable, once roofed, shuttered, and portaled, for housing a family. Assuming each cottage is internally 30 feet long, 15 feet wide, and has walls that average 6 feet high and 1 foot thick, each requires 540 cubic feet of stone. That is 20 cubic paces of stone (although that makes no allowance for doorways or windows).

Hermetic magic requires that spells of permanent creation be rituals, and that all rituals be 4th magnitude. This spell requires a magnitude for doing complex things, because it creates multiple objects in a precise series. This means that it's as simple to create one cottage in this manner as to create the maximum possible, which given the amount of stone produced is 5. Every magnitude added to the spell multiplies the number of cottages produced by ten.

(Base 3, +1 Touch, +2 size, +1 complexity. For this spell to be created, thin connecting pieces of stone must run between the houses, to allow the Individual target. A Group Target would add 2 magnitudes.)

**Creation of a Legion of Appointed Cottages**

CrTe 30

R: Touch, D: Momentary, T: Individual, Ritual

This spell creates a series of identical houses, each fitted with a stone roof two inches thick, a stone floor a foot thick, and stone doors and shutters each an inch thick. The moving parts are on stone pivot points. Each house has stone plumbing for water and sewage. Each cottage requires 110 cubic paces of stone, allowing the construction of 9 cottages.

Every additional magnitude multiplies the number of cottages by 10.

An additional magnitude allows the characters to create a mass of non-identical cottages.

(Base 3, +1 Touch, +4 size, +2 complexity. These cottages must be linked by thin pieces of connecting stone, to allow the Individual Target.)

**Creation of a Well-Appointed Town**

CrTe 30

R: Touch, D: Momentary, T: Individual, Ritual

This spell creates the well-appointed cottages described in an earlier spell, the road between them, and the sewage and water pipes which are contained within the road. At this level, the spell creates 8 cottages. Every additional magnitude multiplies the number of cottages by 10.

An added magnitude allows the magus to create a series of cottages which are non-identical, creating a town less regimented in appearance.

(Base 3, +1 Touch, +4 size, +2 complexity)

**WATER WORKS**

Water can be stored in cisterns or lakes, can be channeled in aqueducts or rivers, or can be used to create canals. Canals and lakes can be used to raise freshwater fish, to irrigate crops, and to rapidly transport goods. They can also be used as sewers, or separate pipes or trenches can be created for waste disposal. Canals, unlike streets, can be washed clear daily, by the action of the tide. This removes evil airs. Cities built on canals, like Alexandria and Ravenna, have been praised for the purity of their air, and the health of their residents, since Imperial times.

Canals built by magi can be wider, deeper and less constrained by chang-

es in water level than those found elsewhere in Mythic Europe. This allows large cargoes to be transported. A limiting factor is that canal boats require power, and lacking magical assistance, this is usually provided by the canal's current, the wind, or by animals on towpaths. A single horse can draw 30 tons of cargo on a barge, but larger cargoes require teams of horses or oxen.

Magi may consider the current in the canals they create. The stronger the current, the faster goods travel downstream, but the more difficult it is for animals to drag cargoes against the current. On many Mythic European rivers, for example, goods are floated downstream on rafts, which are then broken up for lumber since it is uneconomical to reuse them. Magi may, for example, create parallel canals with opposing currents, either by magic, or by strategic design of their island's geography.

**A System of Narrow Canals**

CrTe 20

R: Touch, D: Momentary, T: Individual, Ritual

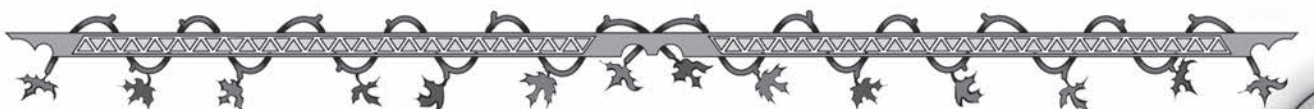
In this spell, it is assumed that the canal is stone-lined, 2 paces deep and 5 paces wide. It has straight sides, and has no locks. The wall of the canal is half a pace thick.

Due to the Hermetic restriction which makes all rituals level 20 spells, there's no advantage to a magus who chooses to create canal network of less than maximum length, which is 1.26 miles.

(Base 3, +1 Touch, + 4 size)

Slightly more powerful spells can create far larger canal systems. A level 25 spell creates 12.62 miles of canals, a level 20 spell creates 126.26 miles of canals, and so on.

Note that this spell can also be used to create irrigation ditches and roadside drains.



Players who have chosen clay fill for their island must make their own calculations, as a clay bottom is waterproof and does not need to be lined with stone. Player who have chosen stone fill for their island can reclaim some of their material by including canals.

### Canals that Accommodate Seagoing Vessels

CrTe 20

R: Touch, D: Momentary, T: Individual, Ritual

The average seagoing vessel in the northern waters of Mythic Europe carries 20 tons of cargo. It has a draft of about 2 paces, although larger and heavily laden vessels may have a draft of just over 3 paces. It is about 6 paces wide, although far larger ships are known. A canal which could accept such a vessel, (14 paces wide to allow vessels to pass each other, 4 paces deep and half a pace thick), created by this spell, can be up to 909 paces long.

An added magnitude creates a canal just over 5 miles long, two added magnitudes creates a channel 51 miles long, and so on.

This spell can also be used to create stone lined riverbeds.

(Base 3, +1 Touch, + 4 size)

### Surface Life

Having created an island the player characters need to develop it, so that it is something other than a desert of soil and stone and structures.

#### CREATING FIELDS AND FORESTS

Forests and fields can be created with a single spell, since both are within the purview of Herbam spells. If the characters wish to create them separately, they can use the spells below.

### The Creation of a Forest

CrHe 40

R: Touch D: Momentary, T: Group, Ritual

This spell creates a thousand mature trees (Size +2). Each added magnitude multiples this number of trees by 10.

An added magnitude allows the magus to precisely mix the varieties of plant he creates.

(Base 1, +1 Touch, +2 big initial individual, +2 Group, +3 size)

### The Creation of Acorns Aplenty

CrHe 20

R: Touch D: Momentary, T: Group, Ritual

This spell creates a vast pile of acorns, totaling 1 000 cubic paces in volume. An added magnitude (or reduction of the volume to one tenth) allows the maga to precisely mix the varieties of seeds she creates. The maga may use other Creo spells – not rituals this time – to mature each tree, or can use a vast ritual to mature every plant within the Boundary the wall creates.

(Base 1, +1 Touch, +2 Group, +3 size)

### The Creation of Verdant Grassland

CrHe 10

R: Touch D: Momentary, T: Group, Ritual

This spell covers just under 1.25 acres of land with thick grass about a pace high. Wheat is, of course, a grass. Characters making an island 3 miles across have just over 6000 acres of land. Player characters adding 4 magnitudes to this spell can cover just over 12,000 acres of land.

(Base 1, +1 Touch, +2 Group, +1 size)

## How Many Peasants Are Needed?

A typical manor, for a landed knight, is 600 acres. This includes a mixture of land types, and highly fertile land can reduce this by a third. This provides 20 Mythic Pounds of income, before expenses, each year. Such a manor requires between 5 and sixty peasant families, depending on which industries they pursue. This means:

- An island 3 miles across, with land of average fertility, can support about 10 manors, which is the equivalent to a small county.
- An island 30 miles across, with land of average fertility, can support about 755 manors.
- An island 300 miles across, with land of average fertility, can support 75,428 manors.

By way of comparison, about 1,500 manors in England are held by warrior knights, and another 1,500 are held by gentlemen who could become knights, but don't want to pay the related taxes. There are many other, unlanded, knights in the service of landed nobles.

#### ANIMAL LIFE

There are no native animals on the island, unless the sigil of the creating maga causes their spontaneous creation. They rapidly appear even without the assistance of the player characters. Most insects are self-generating in Mythic Europe. Birds and bats rapidly colonise the island, the precise varieties being influenced by the placement of the new land, and prevailing weather patterns. If there are no elevated and hidden places on the island, the birds and bats settle



around human habitations. Once ships begin to arrive, mice, rats and cats are introduced to the islands.

Larger animals may be introduced by magi, but may also be introduced by faeries.

### A Pile of Rotting Beef

CrAn 35

R: Touch, D: Sun, T: Group

Bees, which are vital for the production of most crops, are generated by the decay of the corpses of cows. Player characters who create too many bees before they have flowers must watch them starve, but players who have flowers, and no bees, must watch them wither. Fortunately, things generated by magically created animals persist even if the spell's duration ends. Clever magi

## Story Seeds: Stolen Things of Natural Beauty

Some areas of fantastic appeal are tethered to the Magic Realm, and skilful magi can simply steal these areas and move them to their island. Doing this may provoke various forms of resistance:

- Many magical sites have spirits which dwell in, and protect them.
- Characters moving chunks of countryside are creating and crossing boundaries, and providing unique opportunities for faeries.
- The owner of the land is likely to treasure it, and may seek out the thieves of his land.
- Some beautiful sites are hermit

retreats, so the player character, riding his stolen hill, may find he has company.

### A CAREFUL REMOVAL OF A PERFECT LANDSCAPE

ReTe 35\*, Ritual

R: Touch, D: Moon, T: Boundary\*

This spell slices off a piece of the countryside, and allows the magus to float it through the air, at the speed of a running horse. The magus can ride on the piece of land, if he wishes.

(Base 3, +1 Touch, +3 Moon, +4 Boundary, \* remember to add further magnitudes to increase Boundary size.)

## Story Seeds: Acquiring Ancient Structures

Many ancient structures might suit the player characters, but most are valued, and therefore guarded, by the magi of the surrounding Tribunals. A few exceptions exist, and player characters who make a Magic Lore or Area Lore roll against an Ease Factor of 9 can describe them to their sodales.

### THE STONE OF LONDON

In a street in the middle of London is a stone which is said to be linked to the prosperity of the city. It was an altar to Diana, used by Brutus, prince of the Trojans, when he landed on the island that now bears his name. This means that it is a portable object associated with the founding of nations and sovereignty magic, that is at least ten centuries old. Stealing it is one of the easiest ways of gaining a pow-

erful tether for the new island.

There are several powerful forces that resist the theft of the stone. These include:

- The Redcaps of London, who are likely to resist its removal, and blame any downturn in their trade on its loss.
- The faerie spirits of London, who see it as the true center of the town, on which all binding promises are made, so its loss shatters the local courts and ignites a general war among the faerie nobility.
- The Romans, who saw it as the stone from which every distance in Roman Britain was measured, now the ghosts of the Romans — and whatever vestiges of the spirits they served that remain — prize the stone and its significance.

### STONEHENGE

Stonehenge has already been moved once. The Giants' Dance, as it was originally called, since it is made of petrified giants, was originally in Ireland. The sorcerer Merlin moved it, to act as the grave marker of Uther Pendragon.

Player characters might take inspiration from this, and move it a second time.

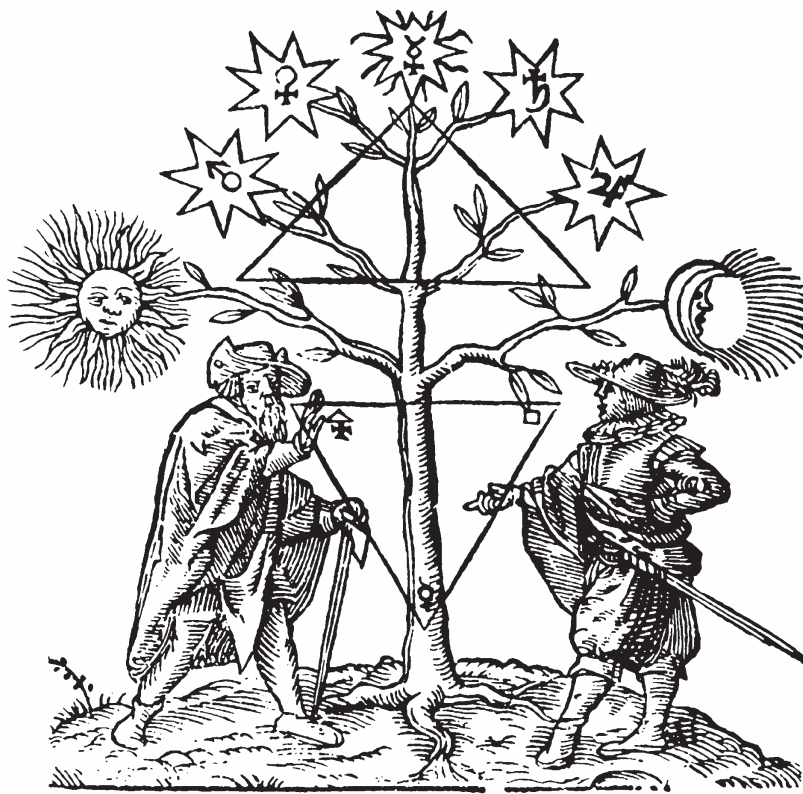
### THE SECOND REMOVE OF THE GIANT'S DANCE

ReTe 35, Ritual

R: Touch, D: Moon, T: Structure

This spell allows the magus to uproot a structure and float it through the air, at the speed of a running horse. The magus can ride the structure, if it is sufficiently strong to take his weight.

(Base 3, +1 stone, +1 Touch, +3 Moon, +3 Structure)



can simply strew their island with dead cows, using Sun duration spells like this one, and the bees which arise from these corpses are natural.

This spell creates ten cow carcasses.

Magi wanting to absolutely ensure they have bees can add a Perdo requisite, to make the corpses rot as they wish. Alternatively they can use spells like *Growth of Creeping Things*, bees being one of the insects created when destroying beef.

(Base 10, +1 Touch +2 Sun +2 Group)

## Mystical Features

After the player characters create their island, and deal with the immediate problems of housing themselves, their chattels, and their followers, they face a greater problem. The island is new and artificial, Magic auras, and the vis which arises in them, tend to be found near sites of ancient magic or natural beauty.

If the characters realize this problem in advance, they can make preparations. If they do not prepare, then they must ameliorate.

## Auras

Magic auras develop in four main ways. Areas of great natural beauty develop auras through their innate connection to the Magic Realm. Ancient structures slowly develop magical tethers. The residue of powerful rituals can create an aura. Magical creatures live in Magic auras, and whether they create the aura, or merely strengthen them by their continued habitation, is unclear.

### Story Seeds for the Residue of Great Magic

The residues of great magic can come to the island in two ways. Player characters can seek out ruined sites of great mystical significance and transport them to the magic land. They might instead attract magi who perform great works.

a ritual, which is opposed by the Spirit of Place with all its power. Spirits of Place, listed under the Latin name of *Genius Loci*, are described on page 106 of *Realms of Power: Magic*.

#### MAGI WHO PERFORM GREAT WORKS

#### THEFT OF A PLACE OF GREAT WORKS

When moving the superficial features of a place which contains the residue of great magic, the aura is usually left behind. This is because the spirit of the place is tied not to a particular physical feature, but to the location itself. This can be overcome by a *Rego Vim* spell, or a *Vim* requisite as part of a larger *Rego Terram* spell which moved the landscape's features. This spell is usually complicated enough to require

Player characters can ask great magi from other Tribunals to travel to the island, and perform great works while guests. The player characters may lobby other covenants in their Tribunal to accept a *Dedication*, a legal recognition of the covenant as a place given a particular task. This draws specialists in the field, or at least their apprentices, from across the Order. This eventually allows the creation of new rituals, which as they are tested create magical residue, tethers and an aura.



## Dexitheia: a Telechine

The telechines were a small group of titans who fought on the Olympian side during the first Titanomachy. They were wizards and smiths. They created the sickle of Cronus and the trident of Poseidon who was, according to some, their foster-son. After the first Titanomachy the home of the telechines, Rhodes, was invaded by the followers of Athena. The telechines hid within Poseidon's realm, for he was always their ally and was a rival of Athena's, and created a new weapon. The telechines emerged from the ocean and used a terrible poison to blight the land. This weapon, which could kill even gods, terrified and repulsed the Olympians. They destroyed the fortress of the telechines with lightning.

What happened to the surviving telechines is unclear. Some say they were all killed. Other writers report that they were scattered and took refuge in the depths of the sea. Many others says a single telechine was allowed to live. The reasons they give vary: was she the wet-nurse of Poseidon? She went into exile, and made a home for herself deep in the sea, but she sometimes wanders the world, garbed with human contours.

**Magic Might:** 45 (Terram)

**Season:** Winter

**Characteristics:** Int +5, Per +2, Pre 0, Com +2, Str +2, Sta +2, Dex +5, Qik +1

**Size:** 0

**Virtues and Flaws:** Magic Human; Death Prophecy; 3 x Improved Characteristics, Strong Willed; Magical Monster; Plagued by Olympian Faeries; Proud (Minor).

**Qualities and Inferiorities:** 4 x Focus Power (Crafter of Terram, Bringer of Storms and Snows, Self Transformation at level 50), Grant Major Virtue (Create Magic Item\*), 2 x Greater Powers (Stygian Mixture,

Toxic Visage), Greater Immunity: fire; Master of Aquam Creatures, Master of Terram Creatures, Minor Virtues (Good Teacher, 4 x Great Characteristics, Keen Vision, Lesser Immunity: all weapons containing copper, Puissant Smith, Tough, Ways of the Deep Earth, Ways of the Waters), Personal Power (Human Shape), Voice of the Waters

\* This power represents Dexitheia's ability to craft magic items, but she has a stockpile, so she doesn't necessarily need it each time she gives a mortal an item. She recovers from the creation of permanent items only slowly, although she can speed her recovery by consuming vis.

**Combat:**

**Bite:** Init +1, Attack +15, Defense +8, Damage +5

Dexitheia is perfectly capable of biting, but prefers to simply kill with her looks.

**Soak:** +5, if unarmored. Dexitheia has some fantastic bronze armor made with Grant Virtue, which adds +12 to her Soak.

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

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-15), Incapacitated (16-20), Dead (21+)

**Abilities:** Ancient Greek 5 (fisherfolk), 5 x Area Lore 2 (some old place of hiding), Athletics 5 (running), Awareness 5 (faeries), Bargain 5 (faeries), Brawl 5 (bite), Carouse 2 (fisherfolk), Charm 2 (fisherfolk), Craft: Smith 10+2 (bronze), Dominion Lore 2 (attitude to titans), Faerie Lore 2 (Olympians), French 5 (fisherfolk), Imperial Latin 5 (fisherfolk), Infernal Lore 2 (smiths), Intrigue 2 (faeries), Leadership 2 (zealots), Magic Lore 5 (other telechines), Swim 5 (ocean), Teaching 5 (smiths).

**Powers:**

*Stygian Waters*, 5 points, Init -4, Aquam.

The telechines, betrayed by the Olympians, were the first race to create a weapon of mass destruction. They found that by mixing Stygian water (which is Perdo vis) with sulfur they could create a poison fatal to all men, beasts, and plants. This power requires vis to use, but produces sufficient poison to kill ten thousand men, or a vast number of plants and animals. The telechines can use their mastery of storms to spread this poison.

(Base: CrAq 25, +1 Touch, +4 additional doses)

*Toxic Visage*, 5 points, Init. -4, Corpus or Animal. People or animals who catch sight of the true face of the telechine die. The telechine is such a competent shapeshifter that it can alter just its face, and for just a moment, so that a single person in a group conversation dies.

(Base PeCo 30, +1 for Animal requisite, +1 Eye, +2 Sun)

**Vis:** 9 pawns Aquam, body

**Appearance:** In her natural form, Dexitheia looks like a human torso with flippers for hands and feet, the head of a dog, and flaming eyes. The sight of her, in this shape, is fatal for most people. She is an exceptionally skilled shapeshifter, and may take any human form she wishes. Dexitheia can perfectly replicate a particular human, if she has time to examine his or her features.

### BLOOD OF THE TELECHINES

A character who has the blood of the telechines adds +1 to her Dexterity and gains an additional Major Virtue, usually Ways of the Waters. All telechines, and their descendants, are hated by faeries that claim descent from Olympians, and have the Supernatural Nuisance Flaw.

## An Aspect of Phorcys

Phorcys was the Lord of the Barren Sea before Poseidon usurped the kingdom. He was offered sacrifices because he was the God of Death in the Sea, and the Father of Sea Monsters, but he wasn't a terribly responsive god, so his worship sharply declined after faeries began to meddle. The occasional ruined temple to Phorcys can still be found about the Mediterranean. If player characters can design a spell that summons an Aspect of Phorcys, he may be convinced to stay in the waterways of the island. Alternatively, if the player characters destroy the Dogger Bank, and so make much of the North Sea sterile, an avatar may be automatically generated. Such an avatar is inclined to be friendly toward the magi, much as a titan of bees would favor magi who create a flower thirty miles wide.

**Magic Might:** 40 (Aquam)

**Season:** Winter

**Characteristics:** Int +1, Per +1, Pre +2, Com +1, Str +17, Sta +1, Dex +3, Qik -3

**Size:** +6

**Virtues and Flaws:** Magic Spirit, Daimon; 2 x Great Characteristic, 5 x Improved Characteristics; Magical Monster, Supernatural Nuisance; No Fatigue, Proud (minor)

**Qualities and Inferiorities\*:** 2 x Focus Powers (Crafter of Form and Master of Form), 5 x Gigantic, Ritual Power (Enliven the Gross Water); Aquam Resistance, 3 x Improved Attack, 2 x Improved Damage, 2 x Improved Initiative

\* 6 spare Qualities

**Combat:**

*Torch:* Init+2, Attack +21, Dee +13, Damage +27\*\*

2 *claw feet* Init 0, Attack +21, Defense +13, Damage +24

\*\* includes +5 fire damage from torch.

**Soak:** Spiky chitinous shell +4

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-11), -3 (12-23), -5 (24-35), Incapacitated (36-47), Dead (48+)

**Abilities:** Ancient Greek 5 (fisherfolk), Aquam Resistance 5 (magic), Area Lore: The Sea 8 (barren areas), Awareness 4 (victims), Brawl 10 (claw), Faerie Lore 2 (Olympians), Folk Ken 3 (fisherfolk), French 5 (fisherfolk), Magic Lore 5 (his monstrous children), Single Weapon 10 (torch), Swim 5 (ocean),

**Powers:**

*Crafter of Water*, 1-3 points, Init. 4 - Might cost, Aquam: Duplicates any Creo Aquam or Rego Aquam spell of level 35 or below at the cost of 1 Might point per magnitude of the spell.

*Enliven the Gross Water*, 4 points, Init. -13, Aquam: Creates and controls an elemental of Might up to 39, or a pre-existing elemental, although this requires the power to Penetrate.

*Master of Water*, 1-3 points, Init. 4 - Might cost, Aquam: Duplicates any Muto or Perdo Aquam spell of level 35 or below at the cost of 1 Might point per magnitude of the spell.

**Vis:** 8 pawns Aquam, body

**Appearance:** Phorcys is an enormous merman covered in a spiny red shell. Long straight horns crown his brow. He carries a tremendously large and - strangely considering his environment - perpetually lit torch, which he uses as a weapon. He has two large claws, on extra arms, which join his torso where his hips would be, if he did not have a huge tail.

## NATURAL BEAUTY

Sites of great natural beauty can provide the tether for an aura. These can be incorporated into the magi's island by finding an uninhabited rock which has an aura, and then wrapping the island about it. Alternatively, the player characters can find a place where the actions of the wind or waves are archetypal. These tethers are outside of the island, but conveniently close for the purposes of the magi.

Finding places of archetypal elemental action is easiest in the Atlantic, which is the epitomic Ocean, and so has majestic waves of incomparable size. This may provide a weak tether, and an accompanying weak aura.

## ANCIENT STRUCTURES

Structures gain mystical associations slowly. As a general rule, each century adds 1 to the strength of the tether. Structures can, however, be moved, and still retain some of their magical potency. Player characters who seek to create an aura on their island using ancient structures need to acquire and transport these - sometimes tremendously large and ungainly - stone objects.

## THE RESIDUE OF GREAT MAGIC

Magical tethers are created by rituals of level 45 or higher. The rituals required to create the wall and the fill are not of sufficient power to create a preternatural tether, unless the characters have elected to create a vast island. More detail on mystical tethers is found in *Realms of Power: Magic*, page 10. Player characters can, however, still seek the residues of great magic as rewards in stories.



### THE LAIR OF GREAT MAGICAL CREATURES

Places where potent spirits dwell eventually develop auras. Potent spirits usually prefer to live in Magic auras, so this strategy is best used once one of the other methods has created a weak aura that the spirit can inhabit.

Two creatures who might be convinced to come to the covenant and make their lair among the magi are provided nearby: a telechine and an aspect of Phorcys.

### Lack Of Vis

Vis tends to form in areas which have Magic auras, and, as noted in the previous section, these are rare on newly created islands. Characters may get the vis they require through trade, by hunting it in nearby areas, or by calling faeries to the island.

### TRADE

Characters lacking spare vis may trade for it, but vis is valuable, and what can the magi of the magic land offer in exchange for it? One possibility is to design the covenant so that it provides services to magi from surrounding Tribunals.

### THE SURROUNDING SEAS

The lack of readily available vis sources on land may force the magi to seek it on the surrounding seas. Some vis is generated by natural events, like waves and storms, the epitomize their type.

Other sources have a more obscure origin, like ambergris and amber, washing ashore. Rumors of ghost ships and strange natural phenomena become story hooks.

### Story Seed: A Spare Farthing

The greatest treasure with a link to the North Sea is that of King John. His baggage train was lost in a tidal surge as his forces crossed the Wash, just over three years ago. No part of the treasure has been recovered, save one tiny piece. A little, flat crown, a hand span across and made of gold, was found by a laborer in the bog. It was perhaps the golden rim of a cup. This element of the hoard might act as an Arcane Connection to the rest. Sadly, the Redcap who heard the story of the find, from the reed cutter, says that man sold it to a passing merchant for a farthing. How do the characters find the merchant?

### Story Seeds: Faerie Kings

The player characters may wish to attract a powerful faerie to the island. This great being is able to maintain some control over the many minor spirits which follow settlers to the new land. If the player characters do not appoint a mortal king, it is possible that a faerie simply usurps that role.

In nearby inserts two faerie kings are detailed: the first must be courted, the second comes as an invader. Manannan Mac Lir is an Irish faerie sovereign known to anyone familiar with the faerie lore of Ireland or the Isle of Man. Tursus is a ferocious god of northern merfolk, likely to accompany waves of invading Norse.



## Manannan Mac Lir

Sometimes thought of as the god of the Isle of Man, Manannan was, before the coming of Saint Patrick, the god of Irish sailors. Faeries claiming the role have been found in many areas around the Irish Sea, responding to stories bought by Irish traders or settlers. When Manannan was cast out of the Isle of Man by Saint Patrick, a faerie set up a court on the Isle of Arran. The faerie wizard-king no longer dwells there, having withdrawn to Faerie centuries ago. The island is now claimed by a clutch of Criamon magi who study regiones. The covenant on the Isle of Arran can, however, show the player characters the path to Mannanan's realm, which is called Tir Tairngire (the Land of Promise), or Emain Ablach (the Isle of Apples, or the Isle of Women, or Avalon, depending on your translation).

Manannan is not designed as a player character.

**Faerie Might:** 55 (Corpus)

**Characteristics:** Int +5, Per +2, Pre +2, Com 0, Str +2, Sta +1, Dex +1, Qik +1

**Size:** Manannan is a shapeshifter of such skill that his Size is whatever his passing fancy makes it. To represent this he has been given the Huge Virtue and the Growth and Shrinking Focus powers. Assume he can take any form between size 6 and -6, and that he can use illusions to appear even bigger or smaller.

**Virtues and Flaws:** At least 4 Grant Major Virtue (each of his magic items), 6 x Focus Powers, 9 x Greater Faerie Power, Highly Cognizant, Extend Glamor, Huge; External Vis (all of his treasures), Faerie Sight, Faerie Speech, 10 x Increased Might (minor), Sight Beyond Sight, Traditional Ward (Dominion)\*

\* Although he cannot face down the Dominion, he often pretends to be a monk, to trick people into doing virtuous things.

**Personality Traits:** Mercurial +3, Proud +3

**Combat:**

*Giant Flaming Wheel\** Init -2, Attack +11, Defense +8, Damage +10 \*\*

*Size 0 Human form (Fatal Sword\*\*\*):* Init +2, Attack +14, Defense +12, Damage +7 \*\*\*\*

\* In terms of physical combat, this is perhaps Manannan's most dangerous form. It does, however, prevent him using his terrible sword and impenetrable armor. In this form he has +8 Strength, -2 Quickness due to his Size (+4)

\*\* In addition to the damage of being struck, Mannanan's flaming form does +15 damage. Since this is part of his body, rather than a Power, it is not resisted by the Parma Magica.

\*\*\* For every +1 Size, add +2 Str and -1 Qik (and also therefore +2 Dmg and -1 Init and Dfn)

\*\*\*\* In addition to this damage, the touch of the sword allows the use of the Stroke of Death power.

**Soak:** +21 in his magical breastplate, +11 in his flaming wheel form; in his environmental forms his Soak is basically limitless.

**Wound Penalties**

*Size 0 human form:* -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-15), Incapacitated (16-20), Dead (21+)

*Giant flaming wheel form:* -1 (1-10), -3 (11-20), -5 (21-30), Incapacitated (31-40), Dead (41+)

**Powers:**

The powers below assume Manannan is in size 0 human form. If he changes shape so that his Qik score declines the Init of his powers is similarly reduced.

*Lord of Imaginem:* Magnitude/5 points, Init -Magnitude+1, Imaginem: This Focus Power, which requires three Greater Virtues, allows Manannan to use any Imaginem effect that is not a ritual and lacks requisites, so long as it is level 40 or below.

(As Crafter of Imaginem and Master of Imaginem, with an added Virtue to raise spell level)

*Distant Eidolon:* 0 points, Init -1, Imaginem: Allows the creation of an illusory form to give messages. Manannan often uses this form to converse, which gives him an Arcane Connections to those he speaks with, under some circumstances.

(Costs 35 spell levels: Base 2, +2 move at direction, +4 Arcane, +2 Sun, +1 intricacy of effect, +2 intricacy points to reduce cost. Manannan could theoretically also produce this effect with his Focus Power, but that would more than double its Might cost.)

*Extended Glamor:* 0 points, constant, Mentem: Grants awareness of everything that happens within the bounds of a specific domain chosen by the faerie. In essence, the faerie is coterminous with its associated landscape feature, so it is present simultaneously everywhere within its boundaries. The faerie's Might score determines the size of area possible: Mannanan gets his island or any other large Boundary, should he choose to leave the island. The area controlled by the faerie can produce a yearly harvest of (Might/10) pawns of vis of an appropriate Form, which manifests as physical objects within the controlled region. Removing this vis does not harm the faerie if it is bargained for. This is the power that allows faeries to extend auras about themselves: in Mannanan's case he can create an aura of 6, and can open gates to Faerie (using his Spirit Away power).

(Special)

*Fleet of Woodchips or Rushes* 3 points, Init -4, Imaginem:

On many occasions, Mannanan has created fleets out of woodchips or by weaving little boats out of rush-



## Manannan Mac Lir cont.

es. With these, he has scared away invaders from his islands. This spell creates an illusory fleet of one hundred vessels, crewed with soldiers.

Costs 45 spell levels: Crlm Base 2 (sight, sound), +1 Touch, +2 Sun, +3 Structure, +2 size of group (100 ships), +2 move at command, 2 intricacy points spent on cost.)

*Grant Lost Love Flaw:* Init -9, Vim: Manannan can shake his cloak between two people and ensure they never meet again. Being a cunning faerie, he has allies with potions of forgetfulness, which he administers after using this Ritual Power temporarily. This allows him to lift the curse and recover his Might. His wife, for example, underwent this procedure. (Special)

*Growth and Shrinking:* Magnitude/5 points, Init -Magnitude+1, Corpus: The character can reconfigure the matter and magic in its body into a series of increasingly large, or increasingly tiny frames.

(Focus powers work like Spontaneous spells: these two powers, each bought as a separate Virtue, allows Manannan to use any spell of level 25 or below that alters his size. Each use of this power costs 1 Might per magnitude of the effect. Remember also, that Manannan's *Shift Human Shapes* power resets his size to +0, if he wishes it to. This is unusual.)

*Manifestation:* Magnitude/5 points, Init -Magnitude+1, Form as appropriate. This power manifests the faerie's consciousness among animal and plant life its glamor touches, temporarily controlling their actions. This power allows the character to simulate any Creo Animal, Rego Animal, Creo Herbam, or Rego Herbam effect with a value of 25 spell levels or less, targeted at the animals within its glamor and suiting its motif. Manannan's motif, that he's the wizard king of the isle and the seas

around it, gives him very broad latitude in the use of this power.

(Focus powers act like spontaneous spells, assume he can cast any appropriate spell to level 25, and that it costs him 1 Might per magnitude)

*Shift Human Shapes:* 0 points, Init 0, Corpus: Allows the character to change its appearance to any human configuration, although this cannot be used to replicate the features of a specific person. Manannan uses this to roam the countryside, performing tricks.

Costs 5 spell levels (Base 3 +2 Sun, 1 intricacy point to reduce cost)

*Spirit Away:* variable points, n/a, Vim: allows Manannan to act as a threshold guardian, as described in the Faerieland Chapter of *Realms of Power: Faerie*. Indeed, Irish faeries think he's the one who showed the rest of them how to enter Faerie in the first place. (Special)

*Stroke of Death:* 0 points, constant, as target: This is the power that makes Manannan's sword lethally sharp. The high level of effect would tend to make this spell ineffectual against the Parma Magica, but storyguides and players with Faerie Lore are reminded that Manannan can craft Arcane Connections to anyone who speaks to him while in combat (multiplier 2), who eats or drinks anything on his isle (2), who is wounded (3), or who has sex with one of his servants (varies).

Base 30 (minimum for immediately fatal effects), +1 Touch, +1 constant, +8 intricacy points to reduce cost to 0.

*Summon the Rider of the Waves:* 0 points, Init -1, Aquam: Similar to *Push of the Gentle Wave* (ArM5 page 124), but has a longer effect, allowing the faerie to appear to upturn small boats, pull objects across the sea, or swim assisted by a magical current. Despite the name, Manannan can also use this power to force ships away from

the island.

Costs 35 spell levels (Base 4, +4 Arcane, remembering that faeries can create Arcane Connections easily, +2 Sun, 2 intricacy points spent on cost)

*Transform into Impenetrable Fog:* 0 points Init -3, Auram: Transforms the faerie into a great cloud, which can be used to hide the island.

Costs 40 spell levels. (Base 30 +2 Sun, 4 intricacy points spent on cost)

*Transform into Tide:* 4 points Init -3, Aquam: Transforms the character into the upper layer of the sea, so that he can carry boats as he wishes.

*Transform into Thunderstorm:* 4 points Init -3, Auram: Transforms the character into a vast, black bank of thunderclouds. Allows him to blow tempestuous winds and drive hail at his foes. Costs 40 spell levels. (Base 30 +2 Sun)

*Transform into Wheel of Flame:* 4 points Init -3, Ignem: Transforms the character into a wheel of flame.

Costs 40 spell levels. (Base 30 +2 Sun)

**Pretenses:** Many, including Brawl 9 (giant flaming wheel), Charm 9 (getting people to talk to him), Penetration 9 (Stroke of Death power), and Single Weapon 9 (short sword)

**Vis:** 11 Rego vis in a shattered Celtic crown.

**Appearance:** Manannan's shapeshifting powers are such that he may appear however he wishes. He uses his shapeshifting to a degree that's extraordinary. When he chooses to look human, he is a tall, elderly man of noble visage and wealthy garb. He sometimes looks like a king, and for other audiences dresses as a wizard. Since the stories of wizards his viewers are most familiar with are those spread by Jerbiton magi, Manannan's magus form wears a pointed hat and a blue cloak, with astrological symbols upon each.

## Treasures of Manannan

Manannan is reputed to have either four or five magic items, which he may lend to those who serve him. Even if these items are lost, they are so closely tied to his legend that he instantly has them available again. Sometimes he seems not to know they were ever destroyed. The items are, probably, expressions of his faerie powers. His items are:

- A sword named Frangarach (Answerer) which always kills his opponent. Its effects are noted in Manannan's combat statistics. Manannan's sword appears in his hand whenever he needs it.
- A breastplate that no weapon can pierce. This armor has a Protection score of +20 and changes size to accommodate all of Manannan's human forms. If Manannan is not wearing his armor and combat begins, it appears instantly, if he so wishes.
- A ship, named Wave Sweeper,

which travels as swiftly as he wishes, regardless of the wind. This appears wherever Manannan wants it to appear.

- A horse named Enbarr (Splendid Mane), which runs faster than the wind, and trots across water. Splendid Mane is always nearby.
- A cloak that can have any color, make him invisible, shelter a place in fog, and prevent two people from ever meeting again.
- A bag of crane skin, which contains the External Vis Sources of dozens of dead Irish gods. Each grants a Virtue to a mortal user, and gives the god a chance to reform a body. If Manannan loses this item, he cannot reconstitute the External Vis sources of other gods in the way he can recall his other treasures.
- A cup which breaks if a lie is told by one who drinks from it (but which reforms as Manannan wishes).

- And, according to some, a helmet which grants him perfect invisibility. Treat this as a Perdo Imaginem effect, level 40, Penetration 15). If Manannan wants his helmet, he's wearing it.

### RELATION TO OTHER FAERIES

Celtic faeries who acknowledge Manannan's role believe that he:

- Is the most powerful magician in their courts.
- Gave them the power to become invisible, and so can see them when they are so hidden.
- Gave them the hidden lands in which to dwell, and so knows how to enter each.
- Made them immortal, and can take the feast of youth away if he wishes.
- Can make humans into faeries.
- Is a gatekeeper between the mortal and immortal lands.

## Tursus

Tursus is almost a faerie god: he is the lord of beaches festooned with seals and plundered for walrus ivory. If the player characters have created an island with an internal harbor, then he wishes to raise his throne in its center and have his minions, the Auvekoejaks, enslave nearby human settlements.

Tursus is not designed as a player character, although he could be made a substitute for a magus by balancing his Virtues with Flaws.

**Faerie Might:** 40 (Corpus)

**Characteristics:** Int 0, Per 0, Pre 0, Com 0, Str +14, Sta +3, Dex +1, Qik -7

**Size:** +7

**Virtues and Flaws:** Huge, 7 x Increased

Faerie Might, Faerie Sight, Faerie Speech, Monstrous Appearance, Incognizant, Traditional Ward (Norse sea chants to him).

**Personality Traits:** Belligerent +3, Brave +3, Greedy +1

**Combat:**

*Brawl (fist)* Init -7, Attack +8, Defense -2, Damage +20

*Brawl (tusks)* Init -7, Attack +12, Defense 0, Damage +25

*Pole Axe:* Init -6, Attack +13, Defense 0, Damage +25

*Thrown Rocks* Init -6, Attack +6, Defense -3, Damage +16

**Soak:** +7 (thick leather armor made of thousands of seal skins sewn together.)

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-12), -3 (13-

24), -5 (25-36), Incapacitated (37-48), Dead (49+)

**Abilities:** Awareness 3 (foes), Brawl 5 (bite), Carouse 2 (drinking), Faerie Speech 5, Leadership 3 (mortals), Single Weapon 6 (pole axe), Thrown Weapon 3 (rocks).

**Vis:** 8 pawns Rego vis, in a walrus tusk embedded in a fish.

**Appearance:** Imagine a vast walrus, but with a human torso, and arms instead of foreflippers. Then add a crown of corals and shattered ships across his pinnipedial brow. Tursus attempts to intimidate his foes by slapping his chest on the ground and roaring, which may require a Brave check, but is not a supernatural power.



## THE DEEPS

The bottom of the sea is a wilderness, little explored by Hermetic magi. Vis on the ocean floor is so difficult to collect that there may be great reserves awaiting harvest. Some magi have developed bathyspheres to allow the exploration of the bottom of the ocean, but many other techniques can be researched which allow characters to access the sea floor.

One possibility is to have rooms within the fill of the island that lie on the sea floor. These rooms have access to the ocean, but are Warded so they do not flood. Simple magic items allow player characters to walk along the seabed, encountering elemental spirits, faeries, and the ghosts of sailors.

## FIRST FAERIES

Faeries are troublesome neighbours, but their presence is valuable for magi. Faeries are made from vis. Some can distil vis. The most powerful faeries also create Faerie auras, which aid spellcasting and laboratory work. Player characters can draw faeries to the island deliberately, but even if they make no effort, faeries will follow the human settlers that the magi recruit.

## Ritual Wards and Other Boundary Spells

One advantage of a land which is completely encircled by a wall is that its jacket can act as the target for Warding spells. The circular shape of the land's wall makes it suitable for Ring and Circle wards, but these are difficult to cast. As per *ArM5* page 112, a magus must trace the Ring or Circle, cannot move faster than 10 paces per round, and must make an Intelligence + Concen-



tration roll of 6+ per round. The possibility of botching a roll, coupled with the possibility of someone crossing the circle during the casting and making the risk pointless, cautions against their use. Spells with the Boundary Target require vis, and are rituals, but are in a sense easier and safer to cast.

Player characters can place wards when the wall is first made, or can install them later in the development of the island. Some wards may be repeatedly renewed installations, like a ward against demons, while others may be created temporarily. For example, before agriculture starts on the island, the player characters may choose to ensure the weather is always good, while houses and other facilities are being constructed.

The *Aegis of the Hearth* (*ArM5* page 161) is an obvious choice of ward. Many magi may wish, initially, to cast about the whole island. The player characters may reconsider this, however, if they no-

tice that their island lacks faeries, their associated auras, and vis sources.

*Circle of Beat Warding* (*ArM5* page 120), *Ward Against Faeries* of the various elements, and *Ward Against The Beasts of Legend* (*ArM5* page 120), may be useful during individual stories. A Ward's level is selected by the caster, but the Touch Range, Sun Duration and Boundary Target add 35 levels.

## Weather Made Good

MuAq 40\*, Ritual

R: Touch, D: Moon, T: Boundary

This spell prevents rain falling on the island for a month. It may prove particularly useful when first settling the island, as it allows peasants and supplies to lie unprotected without suffering damage.

\* remember to add further magnitudes to increase Boundary size. (Base 4, +1 Touch, +3 Moon, +4 Bound)





## Auvekojaks

This tribe of northern merfolk is more vicious than their southern cousins. When the two types come into contact, they often make war on each other. The relationship is, deliberately, similar to the relationship between the Vikings and the southern nations. As an extension of this, a race of Norse faeries might invade the lands of the Saxon and Celtic faeries. This may send merfolk noblemen to the court of the magi as refugees, perhaps followed by whole tribes of their subjects.

Auvekojaks never run out of ammunition. They usually carry five javelins and their quivers refill each time they sink beneath the surface of the waves. They strongly prefer to murder their enemies with ambushes, by sniping, or by gathering in ranks and maintaining rolling fire.

Auvekojaks are suitable as replacements for player character companions, although their Virtues and Flaws need to be balanced, and a Social Interaction Virtue needs to be selected. A higher Might would be useful; the Feast of the Dead Virtue is particularly suitable for this type of faerie.

**Faerie Might:** 5 (Corpus or Animal depending on type of merfolk)

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

**Size:** 0

**Virtues and Flaws:** 2 x Greater Faerie Powers; Faerie Sight, Faerie Speech, Hybrid Form, Personal Faerie Power; Restricted Might (on land), Sovereign Ward (Priests); Aloof, Incognizant.

**Personality Traits:** Rapacious +3, although if they conquer an area, this changes to Greedy +1

**Combat:**

*Axe and small shield:* Init +2, Attack +11, Defense +7, Damage +7\*

*Brawl:* Init: +3, Attack +5, Defense +3, Damage +5

*Ivory-tipped javelin (thrown):* Init +1, Attack +5, Defense +3, Damage +5\*

\* Does not include Damaging Effect

**Soak:** +5\*\*

\*\* Sealskin armor

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-15), Incapacitated (16-20), Dead (21+)

**Abilities:** Awareness 2 (riches), Brawl 3 (underwater), Faerie Speech 5, Carouse 2 (singing), Single Weapon 5 (axe), Swim 3 (endurance). Thrown Weapon 3 (javelin).

**Powers:**

*Damaging Effect:* 2 points, Init -2.; Ter-ram: Increases the damage of one of the faerie's weapons by +5 for two minutes. (Base 5, +1 Part, +1 Diameter: note that the Base is lower for faeries than humans.)

*Push of the Gentle Wave:* 2 points Init -1, Aquam: Similar to the spell of the same name (*ArM5* page 124), but has a longer effect, allowing the faerie to appear to upturn small boats, pull them out to sea, or swim, assisted by a magical current. Costs 15 spell levels (Base 4, +1 Touch, +2 Sun)

*Conversing with the Sea:* 3 points, Init -2, Aquam. Allows the faerie to ask questions of their local part of the ocean. Similar to *Voice of the Lake*, *ArM5* page 122, except that faeries can converse with portions of genuine lakes and seas. Costs 25 spell levels (Base 15 +1 Touch +1 Concentration)

*Transform into Human:* 3 points, Init: -2, Corpus. This is treated as a level 25 effect, easier than a complete transformation into a fish (level 30).

**Equipment:** Weapons, armor, buckler shield, stolen treasures.

**Vis:** 1 pawn Animal, seal skull.

**Appearance:** These merfolk are seals, or perhaps walruses, from the waist down. They also wear thick, leather clothing, apparently made of sealskins.



## Strategies For Players Feeling Swamped By Choice

Player characters may seek the advice of older or wiser magi when assessing the many issues which emerge from their plot. If they seek out that sort of aid, the following scenarios could be described to them, to give them options to discuss.

### FITTING INTO THE CURRENT SYSTEM

In this strategy, player characters try to make their land seem like a mortal kingdom. This allows it to take a place among the mortal kingdoms, by allowing surrounding mortals to react the way they would to any other monarch.

To complete this strategy, the player characters must (in any order):

- Create the island.
- Give it mystical features by calling faeries or attracting magical spirits.
- Settle it and develop industries.
- Nominate a king, and have him accepted by surrounding kings. Negotiate alliances.
- Arrange a place in the hierarchy of the Church.
- Settle the concerns of the Quaesitores and surrounding Tribunals.
- Rule through a puppet dynasty.

### THE COMMUNE MODEL

In this strategy, the player characters defy the conventions of feudalism, but make destroying them too difficult to be contemplated. The

strategy takes its name from the independent cities of Northern Italy.

To complete this strategy, the player characters must (in any order):

- Create the island.
- Give it mystical features by calling faeries or attracting magical spirits.
- Settle it and develop industries.
- Create a political system which emphasizes military service by the citizenry, and train them in the massed use of weapons like the pike, crossbow, longbow, or warships. Determine how the magi control the commune.
- Arrange a place in the hierarchy of the Church. This is harder than if the players have a king who has negotiated his crown with the pope, but support in any of his many wars may aid the player characters here.
- Settle the concerns of the Quaesitores and surrounding Tribunals.

### THE SECRET KINGDOM

This strategy is based on making a kingdom, but keeping it secret from surrounding realms.

To complete this strategy, the player characters must (in any order):

- Arrange methods of hiding the island.
- Give it mystical features by calling faeries or attracting magical spirits.

- Create the island.
- Settle it, however they wish. Perhaps they create a cadre of servants who scour Europe, finding the right people for their new kingdom.
- Make the land either self-sufficient, or able to meet its needs with limited trade.
- Develop methods for the limited trade required.
- Arrange cultural traditions which minimize the harm from predictable breaches of secrecy, caused by the True Love flaw, for example.

### THE WARM OASIS

In this strategy, the characters place their realm in the far north, and use weather control spells to make it pleasant, or even habitable. If the realm is close to Scotland or Denmark, then the players may use the Fitting In strategy.

To complete this strategy, the player characters must (in any order):

- Create the island.
- Give it mystical features by calling faeries or attracting magical spirits.
- Settle it, develop a social system, and develop industries if desired.
- Arrange methods of trade, if wanted, which make the location of the land deniable.
- Arrange a local priesthood, if desired.
- Rule directly if Gently Gifted, or through intermediaries if not.

### OTHER BOUNDARY SPELLS

There are three considerations for magi wanting to use the island's wall as a Boundary for spell casting.

- Boundary spells are Rituals, and Rituals cannot be cast spontane-

ously. This means that the player characters need to have these spells prepared — at minimum written on a casting tablet — before they are required.

- Some wards need a marked boundary between the thing they are protecting and the outside.

An example of this is *The Shrouded Glen*, which only works if the victim crosses the ward before they see the island. Similarly spells which make the sea rough, or control the winds, need a second marked Boundary, outside the walls, to act as their target.

- The basic Boundary is only 100 paces wide, so islands created using the methods described in this chapter require spells with additional magnitudes for the size of their targets. As examples, a circular island with a diameter of 3 miles requires 2 added magnitudes, a 30 mile diameter island requires 3 added magnitudes, and a 300 mile wide island requires 4 added magnitudes.

### The Command of Every Beast

ReAn 20\*, Ritual

R: Touch, D: Conc., T: Boundary

This spell allows the magus to give a command to every beast on the island. Commands for large groups of animals can be no longer than a sentence, because there are simply too many minds to control.

A level 25 version has D: Sun.

- \* Remember to add further magnitudes to increase Boundary size. (Base 2, +1 Touch, +1 Conc, +4 Bound)

### The Eyes of Every Beast

InAn 40\*, Ritual

R: Touch, D: Conc., T: Boundary

This spell allows the magus to sense what the animals of the island

are seeing. A magus who is not looking for a particular thing can simply ramble through the impressions of nearby animals. A magus seeking a particular thing in these perceptions must make a Perception + Awareness roll vs. an Ease Factor of 12 to find what he seeks.

A level 45 version lasts a day.

- \* Remember to add further magnitudes to increase Boundary size. (Base 10, +1 Touch, +1 Conc, +4 Bound.)

### Fumigant of Minor Demons

PeVi General\*, Ritual

R: Touch, D: Mom, T: Boundary.

A variant of *Demon's Eternal Oblivion* (ArM5, page 160) designed to destroy all of the minor infernal spirits on the island. The demons affected have a Might equal to the spell's level -25, lower if the Boundary is larger.

- \* Remember to add further magnitudes to increase Boundary size. (Base effect (Gen), +1 Touch, +4 Bound)

### The Lost City

PelM 45, Ritual

R: Touch, D: Sun, T: Boundary\*,

Req: Rego

Makes the wall, and everything within it, invisible, no matter what the residents of the island do. The residents can see the contents of the island, so long as they do not step outside the Boundary. Enemies who still reach the walls are able to see the contents of the island normally once the Boundary has been crossed.

- \* Remember to add further magnitudes to increase Boundary size. (Base 4, +1 Touch, +2 Sun, +4 Bound, +1 requisite, +1 changing image)

### Murderous Woodland

ReHe 55\*, Ritual

R: Touch, D: Sun, T: Boundary

Wakens and mobilizes every tree on the island, forcing them to follow simple commands. The trees can walk at human pace, and fight using their branches.

- \* Remember to add further magnitudes to increase Boundary size. (Base 10, +1 Touch, +2 Sun, +4 Bound, +2 size of plants)

### Remembered Messages

MuMe 20\*, Ritual

R: Touch, D: Sun, T: Boundary

To use this spell successfully requires a little preparation, because





## Story Seed: Faerie Tribes

Merfolk and selkies, both described in *Realms of Power: Faerie*, are both found in the North Sea, and so are obvious candidates for stories set about the fishing grounds. Rather than repeating creatures well known to players, storyguides may prefer something a little more unusual, such as the beings below.

### ICHTHYOCENTAUR WARRIORS

This is a tribe of faeries who, in a distorted way, copy the chivalric ruling class of the surrounding kingdoms. They do not need to breathe, but have all the appearance of amphibiousness, including gills, webbed fingers and plates of scales over their bodies. Their scales are similar to armor plates, and the strange crests on their heads are almost like the helm crests of knights. Individual ichthyocentaurs have various colorations, much like the colored caparisons of cavaliers.

Ichthyocentaur warriors may take the place of companions, if the characters can negotiate a peace, or the service of a particular errand. The ichthyocentaur below has two Virtues too many to substitute for a companion. The Improved Damage, Faerie Speech, or Faerie Sight Virtues could be removed. An adolescent centaur, Size +2, could retain these powers but trade away one pick of the Huge Virtue. The ichthyocentaur needs additional Flaws, including the Social Status Flaw of Monstrous Appearance. These creatures take advantage of their size and the innate powers of a faerie form, rather than additional powers that cost Might to use. The Pretenses of this ichthyocentaur are correct for a beginning companion, but players could modify them to emphasize, or reduce, the character's skill in combat.

**Faerie Might:** 5 (Animal)

**Characteristics:** Int 0, Per 0, Pre 0, Com 0, Str +6, Sta +3, Dex +1, Qik -1

**Size:** +3

**Virtues and Flaws:** 2 x Huge; Faerie Sight, Faerie Speech, Hybrid Form, 2 x Improved Characteristics; Lesser Power, Incognizant, Sovereign Ward (Code of Honor) is common: a faerie with this Flaw that breaks its code is destroyed as its glamour unweaves.

**Personality Traits:** Brave +2, Chivalry +1  
**Combat:**

Each ichthyocentaur has a Single Weapon Pretense with a score of 5 and a specialization bonus of 1. Each centaur also has Brawl, with a score of 2 and a bonus of 1 for specialization. The statistics below assume the centaur is specialized in each weapon. For a specialized brawler, add 3 to Attack and Defense for Brawl (fist) and Brawl (kick), and subtract 3 from any one other weapon.

*Brawl (fist):* Init -1, Attack +4, Defense +2, Damage +11\*

*Brawl (hooves):* Init +1, Attack +6, Defense +4, Damage +12\*

*Single Weapon (club and round shield):* Init 0, Attack +9, Defense +8, Damage +20\*

*Single Weapon (lance and heater shield):* Init +1, Attack +11, Defense +8, Damage +20\*

*Single Weapon (short spear and round shield):* Init +1, Attack +9, Defense +8, Damage +20\*

*Thrown (javelin):* Init -1, Attack +9, Defense +5, Damage +16\*

\* Includes +5 for Damaging Effect.

**Powers:**

*Damaging Effect:* 1 points: Init -7, Terram (supernaturally sharp) or Animal (fish spines), 2 intricacy points spent on cost. This is designed as a Lesser Power. More powerful centaurs may have this as a Greater Power (Cost 2, Initiative -3, possibly with the cost adjusted down using intricacy), or may have Improved Damage on preferred weapon, or may stack Improved

Damage and Damaging Effect.

**Soak:** +15 (Strange scale armor)

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-8), -3 (8-16), -5 (17-24), Incapacitated (25-32), Dead (33+)

**Pretenses (as Abilities):** Athletics 4 (long-distance running), Awareness 3 (noises), Thrown 5 (javelin), Brawl 2 (kick), Carouse 2 (drinking), Chirurgy 2 (centaurs)\*, Craft: any 1, Faerie Speech 4 (oratory), Hunt 2 (humans), Single Weapon 5 (club or lance), Survival (grassland) 2

\* Like most faeries, centaurs heal supernaturally quickly. They don't, however, notice.

**Equipment:** Weapons

**Vis:** 1 pawn Animal, coral encrusted armor.

**Appearance:** Like all centaurs these are a composite of horse and human, joined so that the human torso emerges where the neck of the horse would usually connect. They differ in that they are more heavily armored than the rest of their kind, and have amphibious traits.

### INVERTED FISHERS WITH NETS & BOATS

The Inverted are merfolk who have been placed on land. They are continuing, in a twisted way, to do what humans think merfolk probably do, in their kingdoms deep below the sea. The Inverted Men may serve as the peasant class for ichthyocentaur nobles — in which case the ichthyocentaurs should perhaps be given Flight — or may form communities on their own.

The inverted fishers form small villages near high places, mountains if they are available, structures they build with their glamour if they are not. About the high place they keep their boats, which, as props for faeries, float in the air as part of the Flight power used by these creatures. The inverted fishers regularly

## Story Seeds: Faerie Tribes cont'd

take to their sky boats, and sail out of sight, returning with their nets filled with flocks of brightly colored birds. These they kill, salt, eat, and sell, much as fishers do with sea life.

Sometimes the inverted catch strange creatures of the air in their nets. Medieval people believe that every land animal has a reflection in the sea, even down to fishes that look like monks. These faeries take their cue from these myths, capturing cloud-like sheep, winged pigs, and floating deer.

Inverted men are suitable as alternatives to Companions.

**Faerie Might:** 5 (Corpus)

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

**Size:** 0

**Virtues and Flaws:** Humanoid Form, Faerie Sight, Faerie Speech Lesser Power; Incognizant, Sovereign Ward (Water).

**Personality Traits:** Vary. As a group they mimic the population of a small village. Each has one exaggerated trait, so one is the town mayor, one the town priest, one the scribe, and so on. The inverted often refer to each other by role, rather than name.

**Combat:**

Each inverttee has a Single Weapon Pretense with a score of 5 and a specialization bonus of 1 in net or javelin. Each also has Brawl, with a score of 2 and a bonus of 1 for specialization. The statistics below assume the creature is specialized in each weapon. For a specialized brawler, add 3 to Attack and Defense for Brawl (fist) and Brawl (kick), and subtract 3 from any one other weapon.

*Brawl (knife):* Init +1, Attack +6, Defense +4, Damage +4

*Net:* Init -2, Attack +9, Defense +4, Damage +7\*

*Javelin:* Init+1, Attack +10, Defense +7, Damage +7

\* Resolve as a grapple attack (ArM5, page 174)

**Powers:**

*Flight:* 0 points: constant

These creatures have the ability to fly while in their boats, and some can swim through the air. Many cannot swim, and float off into the upper airs if they fall from their boats while on a voyage. This power also allows the javelins and nets of these faeries to float weightlessly in the air, allowing casts over supernatural distances (as per *Realms of Power: Faerie* page 62. 2 intricacy to reduce cost.)

**Soak:** +3 (Leather jerkin)

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-15), Incapacitated (16-20), Dead (21+)

**Pretenses (as Abilities):** Area Lore 2 (village and surrounds), Awareness 3 (dangers), Thrown 5 (net or javelin), Brawl 2 (knife), Carouse 2 (drinking), Craft: Fishing (sky) 5, Craft: Any Other 4 (related to sky fishing), Faerie Speech 4 (trade), Survival (air ocean) 2, Swim 2 (through the sky).\*

\* If designing as a player character, add an extra Ability with a score of 1.

**Equipment:** Fishing gear that floats supernaturally.

**Vis:** 1 pawn Auram, discarded fishing gear

**Appearance:** Each of these creatures looks superficially human, but they have strange, colorless eyes and skin mottled with smoky marks.

### DEATH SHARKS

A death shark is a psychopompic faerie, which comes into the shallows near a village where a person strongly connected to the sea is sick. It stays until the ebbing of the tide, and then departs as the human dies. Some people think that the shark carries the life of the dying person away, while others think it

more a herald of death, like a banshee. Regardless, it seems that slaying the shark, or driving it off, can do the ill person no harm.

Death sharks are not suitable for player characters.

**Faerie Might:** 5 (Animal)

**Characteristics:** Cun +1, Per 0, Pre -2, Com -5, Str +2, Sta +3, Dex +1, Qik +1

**Size:** +3

**Virtues and Flaws:** 2 x Lesser Powers, Monstrous Form, Incognizant,

**Personality Traits:** Patient +3, Ferocious +2

**Combat:**

*Teeth:* Init +3\*, Attack +12, Defense +11, Damage +16\*\*

\* prefers to attack with surprise, for a +3 Initiative in the first round.

\*\* Includes +5 for Damaging Effect.

**Powers:**

*Damaging Effect:* 0 points, Init -2, Animal

This creature's bite is incredibly powerful (as per *Realms of Power: Faerie* page 58. 2 intricacy to reduce cost.)

*Hound:* 0 points, Init -2, Corpus

Allows the shark to know the distance and direction of a particular human, usually the one who is dying, so that it can follow and loom in the harbor regardless of where the character flees to (as per *Realms of Power: Faerie* page 59. 2 intricacy to reduce cost.)

**Soak:** +2

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-8), -3 (9-16), -5 (17-4), Incapacitated (25-33), Dead (34+)

**Pretenses (as Abilities):** Awareness 3 (dying people), Brawl 6 (in water), Hunt 4 (the dying), Swim 5 (ocean)

**Vis:** 1 pawn Aquam, pieces of shark tooth jewelry

**Appearance:** A shark, but with white skin and red eyes



each target needs to be prepared with a memory that can be altered with little trouble. For example, at sporting or cultural events, everyone may be asked to repeat the recipe for sea urchin soup, or memorize a string of flags.

When this spell is required, the memory of the recipe is replaced with a single useful piece of information, or the flags are replaced with a single useful image. For example, an evacuation plan can be distributed in this way, or a series of mustering points for militias.

- \* Remember to add further magnitudes to increase Boundary size. (Base 1, +1 Touch, +2 Sun, +4 Bound)

### Speech of the Warding Ring

InTe 35

R: Touch, D: Sun, T: Ind.

*Stone Tell of the Mind that Sits* (ArM5, page 153), the most popular Hermetic spell for interrogating rocks, does not work on the stone jacket of the island solely because the spell's target is limited to a square pace cubic in size. Characters using this spell can speak with far larger stones.

(Base 20, +1 Touch, +2 Sun. This spell uses the wall, but a mind is an Individual target.)

### Strange Tricks Using Canal Contents

MuAq 25

R: Touch, D: Sun, T: Boundary\*, Ritual.

This spell transforms the water in the canals of the island into another natural liquid. Oil, tar, turpentine, treacle, honey, wine, vinegar or whatever else suits the magus' fancy is possible, save blood which requires a Corpus requisite.

- \* Remember to add further magnitudes to increase Boundary size. (Base 2, +1 Touch, +2 Sun, +4 Bound)

## Elemental Spirit of the Waves

Deep within the waters are potent elemental spirits. If the characters construct their island by first casting up a great wall of stone, it is possible that one of these creatures will be penned inside. It must be dealt with because it has the power to shatter the wall in its quest for the open sea. The characters may only discover the creature exists if they cast spells to fill the space inside the wall, and find a great well, caused by the Magic Resistance of the creature, diverting the infill from landing upon it. A powerful water elemental enclosed in a tube of earth like this is both dying and furious.

**Magic Might:** 35 (Aquam)

**Season:** Summer

**Characteristics:** Cun +2, Per +2, Pre -7, Com -9, Str +9, Sta +7, Dex +1, Qik 0

**Virtues and Flaws:** Magic Thing; Ways of the Waters; Poor Memory, Short Attention Span, Simple Minded

**Qualities and Inferiorities:** Greater Power (Crafter of Aquam), Greater Power (Drown), Split Attacks\*\*, 14 x Improved Attack, 14 x Improved Damage, No Fatigue, Temporary Magical Might.\*

- \* Wounds decrease the Might pool of the elemental by separating part of its material form. Each wound reduces the Might pool by the Wound penalty. If the creature manages to reconnect its parts, it regains that Might. Sections chipped off like this contain vis, in proportion, which may be used before the creature is defeated.

\*\* See note after Combat

**Combat:**

*Bludgeon*\*: Init+5, Attack +32, Defense +5, Damage +52\*\*

\* Includes Ways of the Waters (+3)

\*\* Water elementals can only cause Scuffle damage (see ArM5, p 175)

Each round the elemental can split this attack into as many attacks as it chooses, retaining the same Init and Defense for each smaller pseudopod, but dividing the Attack and Damage pools as it wishes. Decide the division before the Attack roll is made.

**Soak:** +12

**Wound Penalties:** -1 & 1 Might point (1-5), -3 and 3 Might points (6-10), -5 and 5 Might points (11-15), Incapacitated & 5 Might points (16-20), Dead & all Might points (21+)

Immune to blades and piercing weapons; sources of fire that do less than +35 damage are harmlessly extinguished.

**Abilities:** Awareness 5 (surface), Brawl 7 (pseudopods), Swim 7 (ocean)

**Powers:**

*Crafter of Water*, 1-3 points, Init 4 - Might cost, Aquam: Duplicates any Creo Aquam or Rego Aquam spell of level 35 or below at the cost of 1 Might point per magnitude of the spell.

*Drown*, 0 points, Init -2, Aquam After a successful melee attack the elemental can engulf a target of smaller than Size 12, necessitating a deprivation roll (ArM5, pages 180-181). Each victim may attempt to escape each round by Grappling (ArM5, page 171)

**Vis:** 7 pawns Aquam, body

**Appearance:** A stormy stretch of belligerent sea

### A Spell for the Defense of the Realm Against Expected Invasion MuCo 50\*

R: Touch, D: Sun, T: Boundary, Ritual.

Adds +3 to the Soak score of all humans on the island, for the rest of the day or night. The spell makes the flesh of the targets tough and insensitive, so they suffer a -1 penalty on all dice rolls requiring sensitive touch.

\* Remember to add further magnitudes to increase Boundary size.

(Base 15, +1 Touch, +2 Sun, +4 Bound)

## Location: The North Sea

The North Sea has been chosen as the site for this example for several reasons.

### Comparatively Shallow

Constructing the magical country in a shallow sea allows magi to have a greater area of land above the surface for any volume of created earth.

- The Dogger Bank is the shallowest part of the North Sea, between 17 and 33 paces deep.
- The rest of the North Sea south of the Shetland Islands is between 22 and 33 paces deep.
- The Dover Straight averages 33 paces deep.
- Excepting the great sea trenches, the northern part of the North Sea is between 110 and 219 paces deep.

And added complication is that these average depths do not take into account wave heights. The North Sea is troubled by seasonal storms which regularly create waves 4 paces higher than this, and some freak waves, according to

the folklore of fishermen, can be up to 20 paces higher in the deeper parts of the North Sea. Low areas around the North Sea are sometimes inundated by flood tides. It's wise to allow for regular wave action, but seasonal storms can be warded against magically, or just allowed to wash over the wall, provided the land behind is high enough.

### STORY IDEAS FOR THE SHALLOW SEA

A covenant which covers much of the Dogger Bank destroys the fishing industries of most of the countries surrounding the North Sea, leading to famine and war. Conversely, a covenant which raises the sea bed in the deeper parts of the North Sea may increase the size of these fertile fishing grounds. Either of these situations can cause waves of migrants to wash into the covenant's kingdom. Can the magi accept these settlers, and how do they deal with the problems of housing, maintaining and policing their communities?

There are legends of various faerie tribes which dwell in the depths of the sea, particularly in the area of the Dogger Bank, because it is visited by so many fishermen. When the area of sea that the magi rework becomes land, these faeries are forced into new roles. Some aquatic faeries are able to come onto land, like selkies and some merfolk. Others take on entirely new roles, to meet the expectations of the humans coming to colonize this new land.

### Surrounded by Turbulent Kingdoms

From the perspective of the player characters, the kingdoms surrounding the North Sea make good neighbors, because they lack naval forces of their Mediterranean counterparts. They

also lack the infrastructure to rapidly create large, modern fleets. In the North Sea, naval battles do occur, but are comparatively rare, because kingdoms have land boundaries with their adversaries, and these are the theaters of conflict.

On a deeper level, the kingdoms surrounding the North Sea lack Mediterranean-style war fleets because sea trade is less well developed, and because they are not internally unified. The cost of keeping nobles in line prevents kings from spending money on ships. This suits troupes, because it allows player characters to meddle in the surrounding kingdoms.

### Picking a Nobleman as King

The player characters, if they wish to select a king, face the least resistance if they select one from a family already noble in the surrounding lands. Most noble families have a genealogy, however spurious, which links them to some ancient hero or other, giving them an apparent authority. Selecting a peasant as a new king is possible: there's some precedent in history for the sons of farmers and tanners becoming emperors, but it's not as easy as promoting a nobleman. Ultimately, any king needs to prove his mettle, but moreso if his blood is considered base.

Some interesting historical figures that the player characters might select as their ruler follow.

#### FREDERICK II, THE HOLY ROMAN EMPEROR

Frederick's center of power is in Sicily, so characters who become his vassals must either be granted self-government by him, as many cities



are, or accept an appointed governor. Frederick is fascinating because he is a patron of the arts, has a court in which friendly contacts with Arabic scholars may be made, and is all but an atheist, which leads him into perpetual trouble with the Church.

### ISABELLA II, QUEEN OF JERUSALEM

Isabella is a seven year old in distant Outremer, so her demands are few. Her lands are, however, considered to be part of the great Crusading project, and, so long as magi continually send her funds, it would be difficult for surrounding kings to invade their lands without censure from the Church.

### PHILIP AUGUSTUS OF FRANCE

The great master of politics in Western Europe, the player characters need to deal with Phillip in some way, so vassalage might suit. Phillip has already doubled the size of his personal lands, shattered the rivals on his southern border, and wrecked the economy of England by fueling civil war and invasion. His interests are held most strongly by these powerful

## Story Seeds For Turbulent Kingdoms

A saga set on an island in the North Sea can harvest mundane story seeds from Tribunal books for Stonehenge, Loch Leglean, the Rhine, and Normandy.

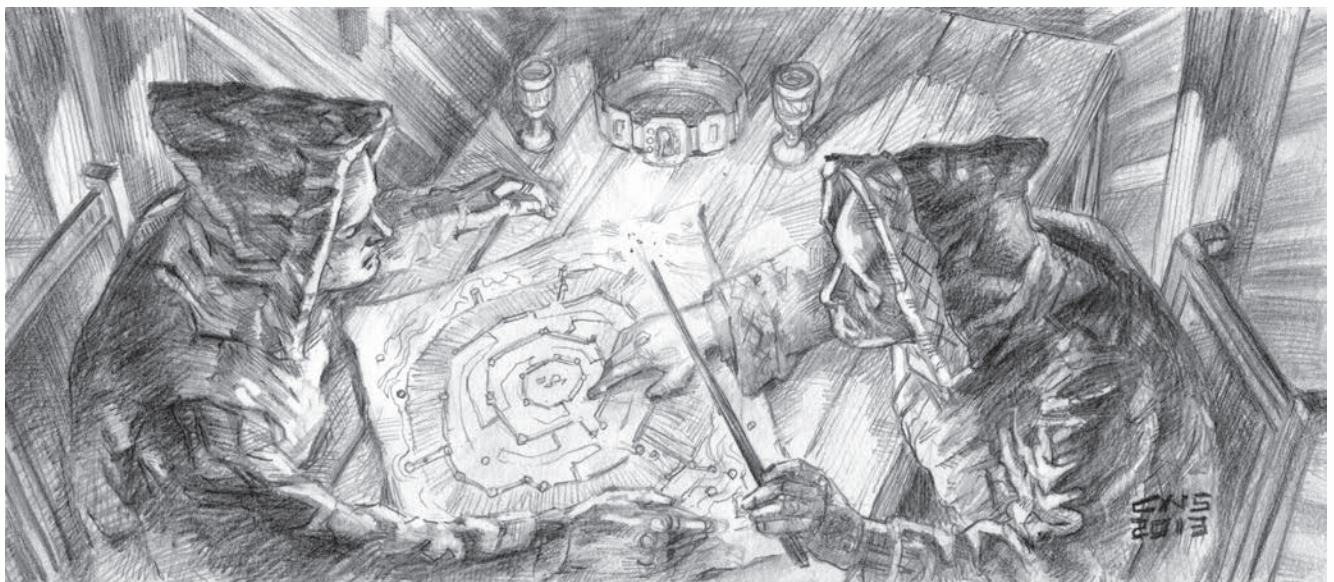
The North Sea is often used by rebellious noblemen or deposed princes to flee to the court of another ruler, and from there plot a return. French and English nobles, for example, are often in the court of their traditional foe, but flight to Denmark or the courts of the German princes also regularly occurs. When the magi create a powerful and officially neutral kingdom, at a far safer and more comfortable sailing distance, it is the obvious place of flight for dispossessed noblemen lacking family in other courts.

If such a nobleman arrives, what do the player characters do? If assassins or ambassadors arrive from the court of his or her nominal ruler, what then? What if the refugee is arguably the rightful queen of a coastal state? Will the magi allow her to create a court in exile?

Some noblemen, knowing the importance of having a place to flee to if politics goes sour, establish their younger sons, or cadet branches of

their families, in distant courts. If a group of young noblemen arrive in the country of the magi, what do the player characters do? The young noblemen may expect to swear fealty and be allowed to create manors, but do the magi want their island to be feudal? If all of the young men are from a particular faction, for example the pro-Scottish faction in the English court, does accepting them place the magical country in danger of taking sides in foreign wars?

Medieval kingdoms occasionally expel the Jews, when religious mania turns against them, or the debts the noble classes owe them get too high. Consorting with magi is a sin, according to some interpretations of Jewish law, but fleeing to the magical country might give Western Jews surcease from persecution. If the characters discover a pogrom is coming, can they negotiate with the leaders of the Jewish community, overcome their suspicions, and carry the Jews away to safety? They need to time this perfectly: in many kingdoms farming the Jews is a privilege of the king's, so whisking them away before they are formally expelled is theft.



## Story Seed: The Coronation

If the player characters do create a king, and have him recognized, then they need to arrange coronation for their puppet. A coronation must occur, and must involve a vast panoply of people, and require great expense. Coronations cannot be simple. The only king in the region who has had a simple coronation in the last few centuries was Henry III, and the pope forced him to do it again, properly this time.

At minimum, a coronation requires:

- At least one bishop to lead the ceremony, and preferably an archbishop or papal legate. If a new kingdom arises, there is bound to be some church politics over who has the right to crown the king, crown the queen, and host the coronation of the new realm. The outcome of these arguments is likely to be a compromise, so that different bishops are given each role. A fourth prize is the right to inter the bones of the royal family, but the king himself

theoretically can modify that. The Church will convene an ad hoc convention to decide these matters, and the king's advisors are welcome to attend.

- A huge church. A king can be crowned somewhere else, but eventually some sort of ceremony must occur in a large church. This does not need to be a cathedral, although it may be. If the player characters lack a beautiful church of tremendous size, then they need to build one, or find an alternative which others will accept. For example, whisking the court magically to Jerusalem or perhaps Santiago would be suitable.
- A lengthy ceremony, where the king is anointed with holy oil, and where strange rituals demonstrating the historical power of the throne are performed. Since the new realm does not have similar traditions, the player characters must design them.
- The attendance of a large number of churchmen and vassals. The

coronation gives vassals the opportunity to renew their oaths of fealty, and prevents them later saying that the coronation was irregular. The presence of many, wealthy, vassals is also required to impress the ambassadors from foreign kingdoms.

- Royalty or ambassadors of other realms. These people are present to negotiate alliances, marriages, and trade links on behalf of their kingdoms, and to take stock of the strength and unity of the new court. Before the ambassadors, it's important for the new king to seem wealthy, wise, and commanding. Magic can be useful for each of these.

Alternatively, if the player characters can arrange for the pope to personally crown their candidate in Rome, then they don't need bishops, a vast chapel, nobles or ambassadors. A lesser, later, ceremony, when the king returns to his realm, is, however, required, to impress vassals and ambassadors.

states, but his land is primogenitural, which means he's perpetually looking for land for his sons to inherit. If the island seems poor, the ruler he appoints is a cousin, or loyal follower from his wars. If the land seems rich, he appoints one of his younger sons as the ruler. Philip Hurepel, who is nineteen, landless and arguably a bastard, might be appointed.

### RICHARD, DUKE OF CORNWALL

Although still a teenager, Richard is already showing the flair and intelligence which, if your saga's history follows real life, will make him the richest and most cunning politician in Western Europe. In real

history he eventually purchases the title of Holy Roman Emperor.

His brother, King Henry of England, is ostentatious and fickle. Richard, in contrast, is a fine administrator, and is enormously patient for a Plantagenet, a family not known for its ability to delay gratification.

### VALDEMAR II OF DENMARK

The King of Denmark is an expansionist, and an experienced crusader, with a broad swath of territory in the Baltic lands, much conquered by himself. He usually strikes when he senses weakness in surrounding lands, grabbing territory

during civil wars and succession crises. If he becomes king of the new realm he might be persuaded that he now needs to administer what he has taken, a decision he takes, in real-world history, after a kidnapping in 1223. If he has the greater security of magical defenders, however, kingship of the new land might merely give him the resources to fish in troubled waters on a grander scale.

If the player characters do go to war with a surrounding kingdom, Valdemar will be tempted to claim lands from whichever side is weaker, and has sufficient naval power to interfere with his enemy's trading and fishing fleets.



### WILLIAM LONGESPÉE (LONGSWORD), EARL OF SALISBURY

Henry II once claimed his bastard son was a finer prince than any of his legitimate sons. Given that one of his legitimate sons was Richard the Lionheart, that's quite a commendation. William, unlike all of his legitimate brothers, remains alive in 1220. He is known for his loyalty, for his skill as a general, for leading a naval raid against a French invasion fleet, for the tremendous wealth seized in that raid, and his obvious nobility of blood.

As a useful addition, his mother is the wife of the Earl of Norfolk, one of the most powerful of nobles of England, whose lands are heavily populated and face the North Sea. If your game's history follows that of the real world, the Earl of Norfolk dies in 1221, and his young son is placed in his half-brother's care.

Selecting William may lead to trouble with England, however, because he hates and is loathed by Peter de Roches, the churchman who has the care of the young king and all but rules the country. William went missing once, shipwrecked while crossing the English Channel, and de Roches tried to force William's supposed widow to marry one of Peter's relatives. When William arrived back, having been stranded on an island for less than a month, it almost shattered the fragile peace between the Normans (the families who had come over with the Conqueror) and the Poitevins (who came to the realm with King John's wife, and are currently in the ascendant.)

### PATRICK, COUNT OF DUNBAR

The wearer of the crown of Scotland has often been determined by civil war. The current line descends from Malcom Big-Head, who defeated MacBeth the Good and his adopted son, Lulach the Unready.

The Earls of Dunbar believe they are the descendants of Duncan Bad Blooded, MacBeth's predecessor, and so have a right to the throne. Since primogeniture is now practiced in Scotland, this is not considered important: Patrick instead is a powerful noble with land on either side of the border between England and Scotland. He is experienced as a lawgiver, and judge in the Debatable Land between the two kingdoms.

### JON HARALDSSON, MORAMOR OF CAITHNESS AND EARL OF ORKNEY

Jon holds land from the kings of Scotland and Norway, and would make a suitable king if the characters place their land in the icier parts of the North Sea. John has a great deal of support from his people, but if your game history follows actual history, in 1222 he is implicated in the incineration of a bishop.

This bishop may have been a faerie. Bishop Adam was found as a baby in a basket on the church's step. The final straw for the people who killed him was his insistence that they all pay a traditional tax of butter on their herds, even though this meant he had far more butter and far less coin or meat than any sensible person could want.

## Does it Need to be a King?

Independent counts and princes are found in many areas of Mythic Europe. They do not require a papal coronation and gain less Magic Resistance from the process than king. They also have less diplomatic prestige than kings.

## Hermetic Borderland

The North Sea is treated as a natural border by Hermetic Tribunals, so

a magical island placed in the center of it becomes a contestable space. A Grand Tribunal ruling on the status of the Isle of Man, which indicated that the island belonged to whichever Tribunal could settle it, gives the characters precedent to join whichever surrounding Tribunal they wish, provided that Tribunal accepts them.

## Theological Matters

The Roman Church claims universal power in Mythic Europe, and although it is contested in the East and Africa, player characters who create a new country must come to terms with the Church in some way.

### A NEW AND STRANGE SAINT?

The player characters have created, for all intents, a kingdom, and so it will be granted a patron by God. Which patron he chooses is up to the troupe, but here are some options:

**Saint Brendan** is a patron for Irish sailors, and is arguably intercessor for islands in the Ocean.

**The Blessed Cyprian** may perform a miracle sufficient to have him recognized as a Saint. In life he was a penitent magician, and House Jerbiton has been waiting for this miracle for centuries.

**Saint Neri** was a Criamon magus. He is the saint of pious magi. He has not been recognized by the Church.

**Saint Nicholas** is the patron of sailors. He's an interesting choice, because players are so used to Santa Claus, and the medieval saint varies from him so remarkably. Saint Nicholas is, in many local traditions, followed by a little demon that torments naughty children.

**Someone the magi choose.** If the player characters quest for the relics of a particular saint, they may draw her

## Story Seeds for the Hermetic Borderland

Each of the surrounding Tribunals has factions which would support, and others which would oppose, the addition of a huge territory to the Tribunal.

- Stonehenge has not been defined in this edition of *Ars Magica*, which leaves an interesting space for troupes to design factions who react to the creation of the island.
- Normandy is a Tribunal deliberately kept turbulent by the large number of Tytalus magi there. Covenants form feudal relationships, and the magical country could find admittance easier if it selected the right overlord. House Tytalus is divided between two claimants for leadership, and the player characters may be forced to support one over the other. The covenants in this Tribunal regularly engage in contests to determine who has the right to use certain resources from a common prize pool. It might be resented that a covenant which has nothing to lose, since no local resources are in the prize pool, participates in these contests.
- The Rhineland is riven by multifaceted factionalism, but one obvious fault line is between the older, more conservative covenants and the Lotharingian group in the north who wish to break away and form a new Tribunal. The magical kingdom is welcomed by the conservatives if it seems loyal to them and brackets the Lotharingians, since the Order has not accepted geographically discontinuous Tribunals. It is welcomed by the Lotharingians, since its method of formation shows

little of the reserve of the older Rhineland covenants, provided it seems sympathetic to their desire to secede.

- Even if it is in the southern part of the North Sea, the covenant that creates the magical kingdom might choose to join the Loch Leglean Tribunal. Other Tribunals include large expanses of sea between their components. Loch Leglean's magi tend to keep to themselves, so magi wanting to join that Tribunal will need to assist their sodales with a series of local issues.
- A group of twelve magi could, theoretically, create their own Tribunal by dividing into four covenants, invoking an ancient Grand Tribunal ruling from when the Order was less populous. It would need to be accepted at Grand Tribunal, which would require the cultivation of votes from the delegates of lesser tribunals, and from the *primi*. This Tribunal could be promoted as a neutral area, in which magi from surrounding tribunals could negotiate and sign treaties.
- To take the above a step further, the player characters might divide into four covenants, as above, but prefer to have one covenant join each of the neighboring Tribunals. A Grand Tribunal ruling could be sought so that part of the island had a special role in Hermetic culture, and was answerable to representatives of each of the Tribunals.

When the player characters begin to settle their island, a group of Tytalus magi from Normandy decide to stir them up. Their strategies include:

- Settling a covenant on the new country. The Tytalus magi claim there's no precedent for a covenant claiming exclusive use of such an enormous piece of land, and so they are free to settle part of it. They can be forced to leave with Certamen, or convinced to leave by challenging them to another, suitably amusing, contest, with their departure as a stake. Alternatively, the player characters may pursue them through the Tribunal system, perhaps claiming that since the land was created using *vis*, to steal it is, effectively, stealing *vis*, which is a crime.
- Creating sufficient land to make the island connected to a surrounding kingdom. If the local noble then claims the land, since it is obviously now part of his domain, what do the player characters do?
- Creating bridges from the magical country to two nearby kingdoms, which are rivals. All roads and bridges in England can theoretically be claimed by the king as his personal property, so can the magi destroy the bridge without angering him? If the bridges become a pilgrimage route, creating the usual pattern of Divine and Infernal along the road between them, how do the player characters manage?
- Creating a smaller version of the magical country, on the Dogger Bank. Do they player characters claim it, accepting the blame for the damage to fishing? Do they leave it so that the Tytalus can stir up surrounding kingdoms to fight over it? Do they allow it to be seized by whoever is strong enough to take it? If it becomes infested with pirates, what do the player characters do?



## Story Seeds for Theological Matters

The pope claims sovereignty over the entire earth, theoretically, but in practice lets kings rule. As a display of this, newly baptized kings from previously pagan lands often gifted with a crown by the pope, demonstrating his acceptance of the king's right to rule.

The pope is not a fool: a powerful monarch who suddenly appears, and asks for a crown, gets one after some haggling. The player characters need to haggle for the crown. Will the pope get a penny per head per year and all the usual tithes? Will he get an extra contribution to the crusade, or the foundation of churches and abbeys?

If the player characters take no steps to have a king accepted by the pope, he may be convinced to give the crown of their land to some other nobleman, or may conclude that the new land is part of an already established kingdom. The player characters may first hear of this when their king arrives.

The spiritual welfare of the people of Western Europe is in the hands of the bishops of the church. New sees are created as the pope thinks necessary, and have seniority as he, and his predecessors, have decided. This means that some politically autonomous areas have churches that are governed by bishops from neighboring, hostile, kingdoms. Examples of this are the bishops of Scotland, who are almost all directly dependent on Rome with no intervening archbishop. This has not stopped agitation by the Bishop of Saint Andrews, the Bishop of Glasgow, the Archbishop of York, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and the Archbishop of Nidaros (now Trondheim in Norway) for them to be recognized as suffragans.

One argument in favor of a particular area being under the authority

of an archbishop is that it was evangelized by people from his see, and that the early churches and congregations looked to his predecessors for leadership. When the player characters suddenly create land without an archbishop, it's an obvious ploy to send a team of priests to found a church and lead the congregations of the people. The problem is that this ploy is obvious to the archbishops of York, Canterbury, Nidaros, Rouen, and Bremen, and the bishop of Saint Andrews. They all send missions: disputes break out.

God Himself seems to take a hand in lands lacking churchmen, and often dispatches saints to evangelize and found churches. Player characters can oppose these saints if they like, but when the druids tried that with Saint Patrick, it didn't go well for them.

Outranking the bishops and archbishops, the pope sends special envoys, called legates, to represent his authority in distant realms. A legate is the perfect person to negotiate with, since they have most of the powers and authority of the Pope, but are nearer and not surrounded by the bureaucracy of the Vatican. Britain is so far away that in late 1220 there are two active there.

Before July, Pandulf Marca, an Italian by birth but now bishop of Norwich, is the legate to Britain, Ireland and the Isles. He is the chairman of the Council of Regency which runs England on behalf of Henry III. Pandulf would prefer that, like England, the king of the magical land gave it to the Church, and received it back as a fief. Pandulf has many talents, but one of them (Intelligence + Church Lore against an Ease Factor of 15) is finding useful and well paid jobs for his family members. He does not betray the Church with his nepotism, but he can be swayed, on fringe

issues, by bribes not to him, but to his family's welfare. Of course, any appointee from his family is a spy, both for Pandulf and the Pope.

There is a conspiracy against Pandulf, by the Archbishop of Canterbury and some of the senior nobles of England. They plan to petition the pope that, when Henry reaches his majority in 1221 (an arbitrary time of their selection), the legate's embassy should end, and no new legate be appointed. Pandulf has fallen sufficiently in the Pope's estimation that, unless the player characters alter events, the legate will lose his role. Pandulf may not be aware of this, but once it becomes known, he's far more willing to make agreements.

In July 1220, a second legate is appointed, taking all of Pandulf's legatorial responsibilities outside of England. The new legate, James, takes five months to travel to Britain. After Christmas, James arrives to act as legate to Scotland and the Isles. He is the Pope's chaplain, but linked to the church of Saint Victor in Paris.

One of James' duties is to arrange a method of managing the Scottish bishops. They are independent of any archbishop, and ten independent bishoprics together is unknown in the Church, outside northern Italy. James is authorized to create special dispensations, allowing bishops so distant from Rome to appoint their own leaders, pending the approval of the Pope.

If he sees the magical land as an "isle of the sea," which places it within his remit, he can stretch the dispensation to include the magic land's bishops. In exchange he wants to appoint all of the bishops, and to make sure the church has substantial tithe lands, preferably tied to the Augustinian Order, of which he is a member.

attention and special favor.

**Someone new.** If a person of great piety dies during the foundation of the magical land, God may grant that person powers of intercession. The player characters may wish to campaign for the formal recognition of their local saint.

## The Eye of Hell

There is a demon appointed for the subversion of every kingdom in the world. Some say that these are all Watchers, who fell when they married into the Race of Men. These are described on page 64 of *Realms of Power: The Infernal*. For the sake of this story, two other varieties are used. A demon claiming suzerainty over this new realm rises in the Infernal hierarchy.

A horde of demons, majors and minor, rush to the kingdom, each vying for superiority. The two most powerful claimants are already the patrons of kingdoms, but are the least of their kind, because their kingdoms have fallen into the sea. They use the other demons, human servants, and even the magi, as pawns in their battle to become the patron demon of the new land. Each has minor demons as personal servants.

## Three Demons and their Retinues

These three demons are particularly appropriate to oppose player characters who create islands. Their retinues are also described below.

### RUMAEAL, THE FALSE NEPTUNE

This demon claims to be the god Neptune, the creator and destroyer of Atlantis. Magi with even the most ba-

## A Note on The Powers of Demons

Many demons have powers which are variants of those gathered here.

*Coagulation*, 1 point, Init -1, Corpus: Allows the demon to manufacture a solid body from the ambient, unformed matter of the universe. It may only take the form described in its Appearance. Manifesting takes (Might) rounds, but dissolving again requires only one round of concentration. A demon in spiritual form may not use its physical Characteristics. Demons are forced to abandon this form on Holy Saturday.

*Envisioning*, 1 point, Init +0, Mentem: The demon uses this power to appear in, and distort, the dreams of mortals.

*Obsession*, 1 to 3 points, Init -5, Vim: When a person is committing a sinful thought or deed, the demon may impose its Obsession Trait if this Power Penetrates Magic Resistance. This gives the

person a temporary Personality trait equal to the number of points spent, and at the next opportunity the victim must make a roll, opposed by any suitable Personality trait, to avoid doing something self-degrading. If the Obsession fails, the temporary trait is lost. If it succeeds, the trait is acquired permanently.

### DEMON WEAKNESSES

Each demon in this chapter has a Weakness. Characters know this weakness if they are aware the demon exists, consult a relevant source, and make an Intelligence + Infernal Lore roll against an Ease factor of 9 + (Might / 5).

If the weakness is a material, then in the presence of their weakness these demons must flee. They cannot regain Might while their weakness is present. If the weakness is a protected group, the demon cannot harm members of that group.

sic education in the Artes Liberales will notice that Atlantis was reported by the Greeks, and was ruled by Poseidon. Rumaël is either unaware he's using the wrong version of the god, or includes this flaw in his story to mock the stupidity of humans, being blinded by his pride to the possibility that he's not so clever, and they not so stupid, as he imagines.

He is served by the Wicked Boys of the Third Square, a race of tiny demons that take the form of men with the heads of horses (see nearby insert). Each has a pitchfork (or perhaps trident) design on its back.

Rumaël has many powers that aid his pretense, controlling water, storms and horses. It is unusual for False Gods, but these powers have small touches to them which make clear that they are Infernally tainted. This may be a further manifestation of Rumaël's hubris.

**Order:** Lord of the False Gods

**Infernal Might:** 40 (Aquam)

**Characteristics:** Int +2, Per +1, Pre +2, Com 0, Str +4, Sta +4, Dex +4, Qik +4

**Size:** +3

**Confidence Score:** 5 (5)

**Personality Traits:** Proud +6, Taunts foes with clues that are obvious +2

**Hierarchy:** 5

**Reputations:** Patron of a Kingdom That No Longer Exists 2 (Infernal)

**Combat:**

*Trident:* Init +6, Attack +15, Defense +13, Damage +9

**Soak:** +8 (metal scale armor)

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

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-8), -3 (9-16), -5 (17-24), Incapacitated (25-32), Dead (33+)



**Abilities:** Various, including Single Weapon 8 (trident)

**Powers:**

*Coagulation*, 1 point, Init -1, Corpus.

*Envisioning*, 1 point, Init +0, Mentem.

*His Master's Voice*: Points equal Might, Init +1, Vim. This power summons lesser demons, although it does not control them. Rumael is intimidating enough that he can rule his minions without mystical compulsion.

*Master of Storm and Sea*: 1 point per Magnitude of simulated spell, Init +1, Aquam or Auram: This power allows Rumael to create effects similar to Hermetic Creo, Muto or Rego spells that affect storms. Rumael may not create spells of level 41 or higher, nor ritual spells.

*Obsession*, 1 point, Init -5, Vim. Sycophancy.

*Shroud the Stench of the Pit*, 1 point per level of affected power, Init +3, Vim: This power can make an Infernal power appear magical, faerie, or mundane.

*The Wealth of Nations*: 3 points, Init 0, Terram: This spell summons wealth from wherever its absence will cause the most trouble. Rumael can call forth up to 40 pounds of gold, or the equivalent in value, with each use of this power. The wealth created is never directly useful: for example it cannot create materials suitable for craftwork. It calls forth only those sumptuous goods which tempt to avarice.

**Weakness:** Vulnerable to fire (the touch of any flame causes a Light Wound.)

**Vis:** 8 pawns Aquam vis sordida in teeth.

**Appearance:** As suits his role, Rumael uses his Infernal powers to appear as a bearded man in a white robe, armed with a trident. His teeth are thin needles, like those of a fish. Rumael could correct this, but does not. The same strange urge which forces him to use the wrong name when pretending to be an ancient Greek sea god prevents him.

When False Gods appear, they are accompanied by an animal which is really an extension of the body of the demon.



When Rumael appears he is accompanied by a horse, sometimes with the tail of a fish, He is occasionally accompanied instead by a dolphin.

**NEQAEL, THE LADY OF THE PURPLE BOWER, CORRUPTER OF LYONESSE**

This demoness takes the form of — and spreads through her mortal servants a reputation as — a faerie-blooded but mortal noblewoman of great wealth and wisdom. She is a corrupter of etiquette in the courts of the nobility. Her particular vice is the corruption of the emerging principles of courtly love. Her pleasure is to suck the meaning out of fine amor, making it a sham, and a mask for adultery and fornication.

Neqael corrupted, but did not destroy, the half-imaginary land of Lyonesse. Most people who are aware of

**A Note on Tainted Vis**

Detailed information on tainted vis can be found in *Realms of Power: Infernal*, on pages 18 and 19. Those troupes not using that set of rules might instead assume that all tainted vis:

- Adds 5 instead of 2 to casting totals.
- Adds three botch dice per pawn, for non-Infernally aligned users.
- Causes a temporary Personality trait of 1, in a sin appropriate to the original demon, in any person who carries the tainted vis for a year. This trait becomes permanent if the carrier successfully acts on the Trait.

## The Wicked Boys of the Third Square

This tribe of small, evil spirits serves Rumaël. They delight in racing across the decks of ships, or through the streets of towns, wrecking things. While racing they carry off prizes. They value beer highly, and also, for reasons which are unclear, hats. Occasionally a captain among these creatures is slightly more powerful (Add title of Master to Order, 5 Infernal Might, Reputation 3, Hierarchy 3, Qik +2, Imitative +2, Defense +8). He also has a fancier hat.

**Order:** Evil spirit

**Infernal Might:** 5 (Aquam)

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

**Size:** -2

**Personality Traits:** Selfish +6

**Hierarchy:** 1

**Combat:**

*Trident:* Init +2, Attack +10, Defense +6, Damage +6

**Soak:** +2 (metal scale loincloth)

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

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-3), -3 (4-6), -5 (7-9), Incapacitated (10-12), Dead (13+)

**Abilities:** Various, including Athletics 8 (acrobatics) Single Weapon 5 (trident)

**Powers:**

*Coagulation*, 1 point, Init -1, Corpus.

*Envisioning*, 1 point, Init +0, Mentem.

*A Little Hop*, *A Little Jump*, *A Little Skip*: 1 point, Init +5, Corpus

and Animal. This power allows the demon to step through a solid object, like a wall, or an opponent in combat. The evil spirit remains intangible for

one round, but may trigger the power each round to prevent flickering into solidity.

**Obsession**, 1 point, Init -5, Vim. Destructive japery.

**Weakness:** Vulnerable to fire (the touch of flame causes a Light Wound.)

**Vis:** 1 pawn Aquam vis sordida in eyes.

**Appearance:** These little sprits look like small men, very muscular, with the heads of horses. Each wears a pair of bronze plates, joined by a shell encrusted belt, as a loincloth. Each also has a thick collar of shells about its neck. Although the creatures have the heads of horses, they lack the passive expressions of most of those animals: they bare their teeth, flick out long, discolored tongues, and flick their manes.

Lyonesse think it was swallowed by the sea as a divine judgment on the wickedness of its inhabitants. In truth, it was destroyed by the demon now known as the Red Knight of Ys. He and Neqaël hate each other, and each would ally with the magi for the opportunity to humiliate, injure, or banish their foe. Each is aware that many magi refuse to deal with demons, and each can pass for human with care, so they simply may not inform the player characters of their nature.

The Lady of the Purple Bower is served by a strange tribe of succubi who cannot attack people who have attempted to seduce them. They are unable to have sex with mortals, and so instead must manipulate their victims. Humans are usually seduced in pairs, each using the body of another victim as their instrument of sin. Some of these creatures instead select a particular human to act as their champion, and train him or her in all the techniques of courtly seduction.

**Order:** Lady of the Spirits of Deceit

**Infernal Might:** 40 (Imaginem)

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

**Size:** 0

**Virtues and Flaws:** Great Characteristic, Improved Characteristics

**Confidence Score:** 5 (5)

**Personality Traits:** Deceitful +6, Trustworthy -3

**Hierarchy:** 5

**Reputations:** Mistress of a fallen realm 5 (Infernal), Mistress of etiquette 2 (nobles).

**Combat:**

*Dagger:* Init +2, Attack +12, Defense +11, Damage +4\*

\* Venomed: as per asp bite in **Arm5**, page 180.

**Soak:** +1

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

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-5), -3 (5-10), -5 (11-15), Incapacitated (16-20),

Dead (21+)

**Abilities:** Various, including Brawl 8 (dagger), Charm 8 (nobles), Etiquette 8 (nobles)

**Powers:**

*Coagulation*, 1 point, Init -1, Corpus.

*Envisioning*, 1 point, Init +0, Mentem.

*Forked Tongue of the Serpent*: 3 points, Init -1, Mentem: The target believes any lie until he or she relates it to someone else. An hour after the lie is told, the hearer may make an Intelligence roll against an Ease factor of 9 to disbelieve it. The hearer may reroll every hour.

**Obsession**, 1 point, Init -5, Vim. Unrequited passion.

**Change Form**, 0 point, Init 0, Corpus or Animal: May take any animal or human form. The demon's form is not resisted by the Parma Magica if the demon makes a physical attack.

*Summon Mavens of the Purple Bower*: Points equal Might, Init +1, Vim.



This power summons lesser demons, although it does not control, them. Neqael usually calls a particular type of demon, and rules her minions without mystical compulsion, using a mixture of pleasure and threats.

*Trust of the Innocent*, 1 point, Init +1, Mentem: The victim believes a single, plausible lie until evidence to the contrary is presented. An Intelligence roll against an Ease Factor of 6 allows a character to resist this effect.

*The Serpent's Oracle*: 2 points, Init -3, Vim: The demon can duplicate the effect of any Intellego spell, or can gain an understanding of the immediate consequences of any specific act.

**Weakness:** Protected group: nuns

**Vis:** 8 pawns *Imaginem vis sordida* in clothes

**Appearance:** The Lady of the Purple Bower is fairest by candlelight, or in the dappled light of her bower, with milky skin, fair hair and grey eyes. In direct sunlight her skin looks yellowed, and her eyes hollow.

### THE RED KNIGHT OF YS: BRINGER OF REQUESTED INUNDATIONS

The Red Knight is a demon who delights in drowning his victims. His proudest achievements are the destruction of whole kingdoms, like Ys and Gwenolod, but he similarly is responsible for some of the towns now covered by lakes in the Alps, for Italian merchant ships lost at sea, and for many thousands of people whose heads he has held in a rainwater butt. The Red Knight is, however, under a strange compulsion: he can only harm people once he has been given permission to, by a mortal. He destroyed the kingdom of Ys after its princess, in exchange for a kiss and the unspoken promise of his love, gave him the key to the kingdom's sea defences. He claims his victims deserve their punishment, and that he acts as God's chastiser, but this is false and he knows it.

The mortal who grants the Red Knight permission to destroy his victims must have a social connection to them, such that by giving the permission, the mortal is acting

treacherously. Even a rival covenant, though it betrays the Code to call on him, is not sufficiently intimate a betrayer to allow the Red Knight to crack the wall and send towering waves against the player characters' island. The family member of a magus, an apprentice, a familiar, a lover or a trusted servant could all give the Red Knight leave to destroy the land. The Red Knight prefers to kill the mortal who gives him permission to cause great inundations. If this cannot be accomplished he sometimes selects, as his next temptee, someone who hates the survivor.

Some tribes of merfolk, around the coasts of France, and even further afield if interacting with Breton sailors, claim to be descendants of the people of Ys. They say they were changed into merrow as an act of mercy by God, when the sinners of Ys were killed. These merfolk have a traditional, intergenerational hatred of the Red Knight (or, at least, they believe they do). They will gladly die to see him destroyed. Characters who make an Intelligence + Faerie Lore roll against an Ease Factor of

## The Mavens of Etiquette in the Court of the Purple Bower

These courtiers are sexual demons who are, strangely, entirely chaste. They teach courtiers a distorted moral code, and the techniques of seduction.

**Order:** Tempters

**Infernal Might:** 5 (Corpus)

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

**Size:** 0

**Virtues and Flaws:** Improved Characteristics, Weak-willed

**Personality Traits:** Selfish +6, Emotionally voyeuristic +5, Deceitful +4

**Hierarchy:** 1

**Combat:**

*Short Sword:* Init +1, Attack +10, Defense +6, Damage +8

*Knife:* Init 0, Attack +8, Defense +6, Damage +3

**Soak:** +4, clothes. On rare occasions, armored (+8)

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-50), Incapacitated (16-20), Dead (21+)

**Abilities:** Brawl 5 (knife), Charm 8 (teaching), Etiquette 8 (teaching shallow manners), Folk Ken 3 (nobles), Single Weapon 5 (short sword)

**Powers:**

*Coagulation*, 1 point, Init -1, Corpus.

*Envisioning*, 1 point, Init +0, Mentem.

*Mutable gender*, 0 point, Init +0, Corpus:

A demon can switch gender at will. *Obsession*, 1 to 3 points, Init -5, Vim. Secret desire.

*Trust of the Innocent*, 1 point, Init +1, Mentem: The victim believes a single, plausible lie until evidence to the contrary is presented. An Intelligence roll against an Ease Factor of 6 allows a character to resist this effect.

**Weakness:** Protected group: those who have offered to have sex with the demon.

**Vis:** 1 pawn Corpus *vis sordida* in the private organs.

**Appearance:** Elegant women in lace and fur. Languid men with rippling muscles in leather trousers.

12 know that some merfolk claim Ysian descent. This number may be lowered by circumstances such as a Breton upbringing.

**Order:** Lord of the Avengers of Evil

**Infernal Might:** 30 (Aquam)

**Characteristics:** Int +1, Per 0, Pre +2, Com +2, Str +3, Sta +4, Dex +5, Qik +3

**Size:** 0

**Confidence Score:** 5 (5)

**Virtues and Flaws:** Venus' Blessing.

**Personality Traits:** Relentless +5, Manipulative +4, Mentions his mustache far more than necessary +3, Flirtatious +2, Merciful -5

**Hierarchy:** 5

**Reputations:** A demon of shipwreck and mass drowning 5 (Infernal)

**Combat:**

*Bite:* Init +4, Attack +16, Defense +11\*, Damage +11

\* +2 if using his shield

**Soak:** +10 in armor, +4 without

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

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-5), -3 (5-10), -5 (11-15), Incapacitated (16-20), Dead (21+)

**Abilities:** Various, including Carouse 6 (with women), Charm 6 (potential sexual partners), Single Weapon 7 (sword)

**Powers:**

*Coagulation*, 1 point, Init -1, Corpus.

*Change Form*, 0 point, Init 0, Corpus or Animal: Allows the Red Knight to manipulate his shape so that his armor immediately congeals about him.

*Envisioning*, 1 point, Init +0, Mentem. This demon uses this power to prepare his temptees for meeting with him while awake.

*Obsession*, 1 point, Init -5, Vim. Infatuation with the Knight.

*Inundation*, 1 point per Magnitude of simulated spell, Init +1, Aquam or Terram: This power allows the Red Knight to generate effects similar to Hermetic Creo, Muto or Rego spells that allow him to break sea defenses or call up

waves. The Knight cannot create spells of level 31 or higher, nor ritual spells. To this there is a single exception: the Knight may create a single great wave, of level 60 or below, for each temptee.

**Weakness:** Protected Group (those whom he has not been invited to harm by a traitor)

**Vis:** 6 pawns Perdo vis sordida in mustache

**Appearance:** The Red Knight dresses impeccably, in enameled armor or costly scarlet clothes. He has red hair, a jaunty mustache, and arching eyebrows. He's roughish and charismatic. Unlike the other two major demons given here, he does not have Infernal servants. He often travels with a human squire or valet, who appears unaware of his nature.

## Other Faiths

Player characters might choose settlers of a different religion, or of a Christian sect considered heretical by the papacy. The current pope, Honorius III, is strongly in favor of the crusading movement in the Baltic, the Reconquista in Iberia, the crushing of the Cathars in southern France, the Latin Empire in Constantinople, and the invasion of Muslim lands in Africa. One more theatre of war won't bother him.

- The pope's first move is to send evangelists to have the land come to the faith by conversion. If he considers it necessary, he will send members of the Order of Preachers (later called the Dominican Order) who are trained to preach in vernacular language, endure great hardship, and be martyred if necessary.
- If that fails he has no compunction about preaching a crusade. The player characters, if there are any priests on the island, hear of this. If a Christian presence on

the island has been thoroughly driven underground, then red-caps traveling through distant cities send urgent reports to their superiors, who use magic to transport messengers to as close to the covenant as is possible. The player characters, if they capitulate speedily, can prevent the crusade, which is expensive and time consuming to prepare, from being launched. Alternatively, the player characters may use this time to bolster their defenses.

- A crusade against one covenant could easily expand to include all. Crusades against distant pagans, for example, are always accompanied by the widespread abuse of Jews (who are still unbelievers but are militarily weaker and conveniently close.) If it is clear that the crusade will go ahead, powerful figures in Houses Guernicus, Tremere and Jerbiton contact each other and discuss how to clean up the mess, canvassing options up to killing the player characters and submerging the island again. The player characters are tipped off by their allies, and have time to convince an emergency Tribunal not to cast them out.
- The player characters may decide to sidestep this whole issue by creating a race of inhabitants alternative to humans. This idea is more fully developed in *The Broken Covenant of Calebais*. A kingdom of intelligent, magical animals has strange effects on the political and theological development of Mythic Europe.

As a counterpoint, the pope's resources are thinly stretched. Offers of assistance, with any of his many campaigns, may sway him to allow the player characters nominate a king for him to appoint, may add luster to the reputation of a particular candidate



for the role of bishop, or convince him of the need for immediate reporting to Rome rather than suffragancy to an archbishop.

Honorius is implacably opposed to Jews or Muslims working in the administration of any Christian king, particularly in roles which involve handling money. If the player characters promise to not employ Jews or Muslims directly, and to aid the Order of Preachers in their peaceful conversion, Honorius can be convinced not to demand their expulsion.

## A Boom in People and Trade

Many of the kingdoms surrounding the North Sea are experiencing explosive population growth, and rapid urbanization. In Great Britain, the population is predominantly along the North Sea coast. In France, Paris, which connects to the North Sea by the heavily-trafficked Seine, is the largest city in the west of Mythic Europe. In the Baltic, alliances of merchants, and between towns, are forming, allowing them to prepare for greater adventures of commerce and speculation than ever before.

- Many story seeds regarding trade can be found in *City & Guild*, the *Ars Magica* supplement dealing with merchants.
- Once the characters have established a settlement, many towns send merchant adventurers to assess what the inhabitants want, what they produce, and what prices are available in their port. This is completely dependent on how the player characters design their country, but even if they choose relatively normal commodities, like wool or lumber, they are closer than other sources of supply.

- The player characters may design their kingdom as a great emporium of the north, although in time this may lead to conflict with Venice. Venice lacks the power to send a war fleet into the North Sea in 1220, but it has sufficient money to bribe the nobles of surrounding nations into declaring war. As a corollary, if the player characters can prove this has occurred, then there are many covenants with interests in Venice, one of which may be pleased to aid the player characters in reprisal, in exchange for some other favor.

## Alternative Locations

There are many good reasons to place the magic land in the North Sea, but player characters may prefer one of these other locations.

### The Atlantic Ocean

The depth of the Atlantic acts as a complicating factor to creating a truly massive island, as it is somewhat over 4000 paces deep, on average. The *Wedding Ring of Gaea*, given in an earlier insert, creates a wall of stone 4000 paces deep, two paces thick, and just under 1250 paces long, which is a circle 398 paces in diameter. *The Wedding Ring of Gaea* is, however, a level 35 spell, and some Hermetic magi are able to cast spells of far higher level than this.

- A level 40 spell creates a ring just over two miles in diameter.
- A level 45 spell creates a ring 22 miles in diameter.
- A level 50 spell creates a ring just

under 226 miles in diameter

- A level 55 spell creates a ring 2259 miles across. By way of comparison, it is slightly over 1500 miles from London to Constantinople. Filling such a ring would be a mammoth task.

Characters wanting a rock to wrap their island around have a few options in the Atlantic.

- The almost-mythical Purple Islands, which are discussed in *Ancient Magic* are one possibility. Player characters investigating them may discover Magic and Faerie auras aplenty, a reliable supply of vis, and valuable trade goods. These islands are also ruled by a caste of magicians, so taking control of them by force arguably doesn't breach the Code.
- The Scilly Isles, off the tip of Cornwall, are owned by the Abbey of Tavistock in Devon, following a royal grant by Henry I. The abbey founded a small monastic community at Tresco, on the islands. The characters can buy the islands off Tavistock Abbey, although the king must approve, and be paid a portion of the final price. To remove the Scilly Isles from the kingdom would require a far larger bribe.
- The St Kilda Archipelago, the largest island of which is called Hirtir, lies to the far west of Scotland. It has perhaps a hundred inhabitants, of Viking stock, and is not claimed by any outside power, with the possible exception of the petty rulers of the Outer Hebrides. The people there are Christians in name, but incorporate many pagan practices into their religion. Megalithic sites can also be found on many of the islands.
- There are many islands off the

## Story Seeds: Has Someone Else Has Done This Before?

When House Diedne disappeared, leaving an unambiguous message of eternal hatred and a threat of revenge, many magi believed they sailed into the West, and Arcadia, where they died.

It's entirely possible that if they had just a handful of vis, they could have created an island the size of Europe in the depths of the Atlantic. There is nothing inherently impossible in the idea that the Diedne have built themselves an entire civilization, somewhere in the west.

As another alternative, maps from slightly after the game period record an island, called Antillia, or the Isle of Seven Cities, which lies in the Atlantic opposite Iberia. The island's history, as reported by a group of sailors washed there in a storm, is that when the

Moors invaded Iberia, seven bishops and their followers fled to sea.

They were washed up on a great island, which had, through sheer coincidence, seven ports, and each bishop founded a city. The odd thing about the island is that, when mapped, it is clearly a vast rectangular prism 350 miles long and 135 miles wide. Its capital lies at one short end, like a father at the head of a family table, with its six other ports equidistant along each of the long sides. The capital's harbor is a vast and perfectly symmetrical bay with a perfectly straight breakwater. Each of the other cities rests on an identical trefoil bay of precisely the same size. Somewhere in the depths of Antillia, is there a record of which magus built it, and why?

west coast of Hibernia which may be suitable, but some of these may have been claimed by Hermetic covenants already.

## The Baltic Sea

The Baltic Sea averages 60 paces in depth, which means:

- If magi use *The Wedding Ring of Gaea*, a level 35 spell, it creates a ring just under 15 miles across.
- If magi use a level 40 spell, it creates a ring 150 miles across, which is rather too large for the Baltic Sea.

The islands of the Baltic are, for the most part, owned and claimed by various kingdoms. That being noted, with the obvious exception of Gotland, most can be purchased from their current ruler, for a large enough fee. Bornholm is currently contested by the King of Denmark and the Bishop of Lund. The Ertholmene Archipelago is uninhabited, but perhaps lacks sufficient sea room about it to make it a viable choice.

## Saga Seed: Tartessos Emerges

Tartessos, as described by the ancients, was a rich port at the furthest inhabited edge of the world. Phoenician traders who landed there could gain such cargoes, and realize such profits, that they could plate their anchors in silver before their return. Tartessos no longer exists — it may perhaps have been in Iberia — but the memory of it, the dream of it, persists.

- When the player characters create a rich port at the edge of the world, the old Gods of Tartessos rouse from their slumbers.
- In the depths of the night, misty buildings can be seen and strange songs heard.
- A person who turns down an unknown street may find a bazaar filled with strange, but friendly traders speaking an unknown

language, who barter away rich goods for apparent trifles.

- As time progresses, the tired story of Tartessos becomes revitalized, and the intrusions of the Faerie port become more overt.
- Whole suburbs change on ancient, sacred days.
- Strange ships, with faerie crews dressed in Cathaginian robes arrive, to trade fish sauce, gold and dye for local wares.
- The people sleepwalk to build temples, filled with fire, bulls and bronze.

Do the player characters oppose the return of Tartessos, or find a way to communicate with the Faerie gods, and parley with them? For inspiration, an alternative version of Tartessos is found in *Rival Magic*.

## The Black Sea

The Black Sea is an interesting choice as site, located on the edge of the Hermetic world and lying between the Theban, Transylvanian and Novgorod Tribunals. This sea averages 1420 paces deep, which means that:

- A spell of level 35 gives a ring 1120 paces (0.63 miles) wide.
- A spell of level 40 gives a ring 11200 paces (6.36 miles) wide.
- A spell of level 45 gives a ring 112000 paces (63.63 miles) wide.

There are hundreds of faerie islands in the Black Sea, only one of which is geographically stable. Snake Island is described in greater detail in *Against the Dark: The Transylvanian Tribunal*.



## The Mediterranean

The Mediterranean requires more powerful spells to create an island of a particular size than the North Sea, lacking that body of water's strange shallowness. On average, the Mediterranean is 1630 paces deep, with lower wave height than the Atlantic. The *Wedding Ring of Gaia*, given in an earlier insert, creates a ring of stone 1,640 paces deep, two paces thick, and just under 970 paces (0.55 miles) in diameter.

If claiming an island as a core for the magical land, there are a few candidates:

- Three small islands to the southwest of Sicily, Lampedusa, Linosa, and Lampione, are close enough to be contained in a single magical land. Lampedusa was settled by the Romans for a time, as a manufactory for fish sauce, so perhaps an ancient temple or other structure can be excavated, providing a weak Magic aura. Lampione was, in local myth, a stone dropped by a cyclops, so it may have a Faerie aura. A new land here would, however, be a direct neighbor to the Holy Roman Emperor, whose court is in Palermo in Sicily, and to the strange Arabic sorcerers of Tunis.
- Malta is currently ruled by a count who owes fealty to the King of Sicily, who happens to be the Holy Roman Emperor. Claiming his land is an act of war, and after such a mistake only adroit diplomacy can save the player characters.
- The Balearic Islands are an independent taifa in 1220, and although their Christian neighbors look on them covetously as an eventual prize of the Reconquista, none have plans to make an actual attempt. The Balearics have been settled since before the arrival of the Romans, and megalithic structures from that time survive. The islands were a Roman province for a time, complete with a temple to

Mercury on the site currently occupied by the largest mosque in the island chain. Magi who seize these islands might be able to make peace with other Arabic states, since none effectively controls the islands regardless of their claims to suzerainty, and a successful crusade might gain them cachet with the pope.

- All of the islands off Greece are claimed by the Theban Tribunal's many member covenants, and their innate conservatism is unlikely to welcome an innovative land construction project.
- Vis harvesting rights to all of the islands off the coast of Dalmatia are claimed by House Mercere, under the stringently enforced rules of the Transylvanian Tribunal.

## A Floating Island

Player characters may prefer to create an island which is mobile. They can do this by changing the shape of the wall into a circular cap, and making it from pumice, a strange type of stone which floats in water.

- A level 30 spell creates a circular cap that, if 35 paces at its deepest point, is just under 800 paces wide.
- A level 35 spell creates a circular cap around 2500 paces (1.4 miles) across.
- A level 40 spell creates a circular cap around 14 miles across

Characters who create a floating island must find a way to steer it. If they have the aid of one of the vast magical monsters described earlier in this chapter, then smaller floating islands can simply be towed, if the creature will deign to perform such labor. Magic items may be used to push, drag or teleport the island. Alternatively, spells to control the island are simple to create.

### Story Seed: Earlier Floating Islands

The island of Delos, in the Aegean Sea, was once a floating island. Zeus, lord of Olympus, tethered it to the sea floor with, depending on which source you prefer, great chains or thick pillars. Player characters intent on creating a floating island may wish to go to Delos, to see how it comes to float. Is it natural, is it the handiwork of ancient spellcasters, or is it the creation of creatures with supernatural powers? Delos is the meeting place of the Theban Tribunal, so characters may find collaborators in their research, or locals who do not want the mysteries of their region exposed to outsider eyes.

### Steering A Vast Stone Dish ReTe 40

R: Touch, D: Ring, T: Circle

This spell allows the player characters to direct the voyage of a small floating island whose wall has been created with a level 30 spell. The island travels at the speed of a running horse, which is about 50 land miles per hour. An island with a wall created using a level 35 spell requires a level 45 spell to steer, and one created by a level 40 spell requires one of level 50. Larger islands, if steered by a single spell, can only be maneuvered with rituals.

This spell does demonstrate the difficulty of steering with simple spells, however: a Ring 800 paces across requires over 250 concentration rolls to draw. Wise player characters would, instead, invest this spell in an invested device that maintained Concentration for them.

(Base 2, +1 Touch, +2 Ring, +1 Circle, +6 Size)

# Magic as Technology

Mythic Europe is a world of Aristotelean physics, where magic manipulates the natural forces of the universe. Technological development is unlikely to develop down the same paths as historical Europe, since the differing laws of physics make some scientific developments impossible, and others yield contrary results. Magic is bound to be an integral part of the future development of Mythic Europe, and the most powerful wielder of magic in the thirteenth century is the Order of Hermes.

Magi of the Order of Hermes form a subclass of society: they are well-educated in the main, and versed in subjects of mundane study such as philosophy and the liberal arts, and yet they also wield the terrifying power of magic. A third and oft-forgotten function of the Hermetic magus is as a craftsman, a producer of items of great interest to peasant, merchant, and prince. This chapter is about developing this third role for magi beyond a simply artisan position and into the realms of the magus as an inventor and producer of marvels in great demand by those who can afford them.

Troupes often try hard to avoid anachronism in *Ars Magica Fifth Edition*, both in terms of maintaining an accurate historical setting and in avoiding the introduction of modern concepts and equipment in the form of "magitech," largely because technology has a major transformative effect on the society that uses it. This chapter explores what happens

if the troupe tries to introduce such anachronisms to society at large. A key aspect of a technological society — which Mythic Europe is not, at least by modern standards — is that the technology not only exists, but the benefits of its existence are felt by many. This chapter is not about equipping a magus with a magical version of a mobile phone, but equipping nobles, merchants, and even priests with them.

This chapter focuses principally on four inventions as examples of enchantments that could change the face of Mythic Europe. These are intended to serve as paradigms of the kind of impact that magical technology could have on society. These examples are discussed first, and then the rest of the chapter is a more general discussion of the effects that magical technology can have on Mythic Europe.

## Scrying as a Means of Correspondence

Considering the ubiquity of mobile phones in the modern era, it should be no surprise if players of *Ars Magica Fifth Edition* want their magi to invent magical analogs of these devices. This technological breakthrough is about communication over

distances, a practice to which the term "scrying" is rightly applied, although the Code of Hermes also uses this term to designate a proscribed use of magic (more on this later).

The utility of such enchantments need not be explained to most players, but the impacts that they might have on a medieval society should be carefully considered. The populace of Mythic Europe has very little exposure to people or places further than a week's travel from their home. Language is a barrier to all but the educated classes who speak Latin; communities on different sides of mountains — or in some places, on different sides of a river — speak different dialects or even languages, and these varied tongues are kept distinct by the lack of cultural exchange. Among the changes that first occur with increased communication between distant places is a gradual globalization of language and culture.

It may be that some covenants already have devices permitting communication between distant allies. Scrying devices become agents of transformation when they become commonly available to mundanes rather than just between members of the Order.

## Remote Writing

The subtlest form of magical correspondence is an enchantment employing remote writing, where a message written at one location



also appears at another. There are a number of ways in which this can be achieved, two of which are described below. Remote writing is less useful for conversations and more useful for imparting information, asking for help, and sending news. A key advantage of this type of magical technology is that it cannot be misconstrued as scrying by a Tribunal, or accidentally used to commit a Hermetic crime. It also presupposes that the intended recipient can read — a safe assumption if the message is for a Hermetic magus, but this can be more restrictive if intended for mundanes.

### Example Device: Quills of Arcane Correspondence

This item is usually designed as two identical magical devices: a pair of perfectly matched goose quills. Inside the hollow shaft of each quill is an Arcane Connection to its partner; these Arcane Connections have been fixed in the laboratory to extend their durations indefinitely (ArM5, page 94). The enchantment within ensures that whatever is done with one quill is copied by the other, including dipping the pen into ink and writing on a page. Each item is typically left in a carefully prescribed position, lying on top of a sheet of parchment with an inkwell exactly placed and always filled with fresh ink. Failure to follow these procedures may mean that the message is not reproduced at the other location, either because the parchment was not registered correctly or no ink was picked up by the pen. Only one quill needs to be enchanted if one-way communication is all that is desired.

These devices would be more common in the Order were it not for the *Aegis of the Hearth*. If two covenants desire to be in contact using such de-

vices, one must be made within the *Aegis* of one covenant and given to the other covenant, and *vice versa*. The items could still be made by the same individual at both locations, as long she was included in both *Aegis* rituals or granted token(s) for the duration of her work.

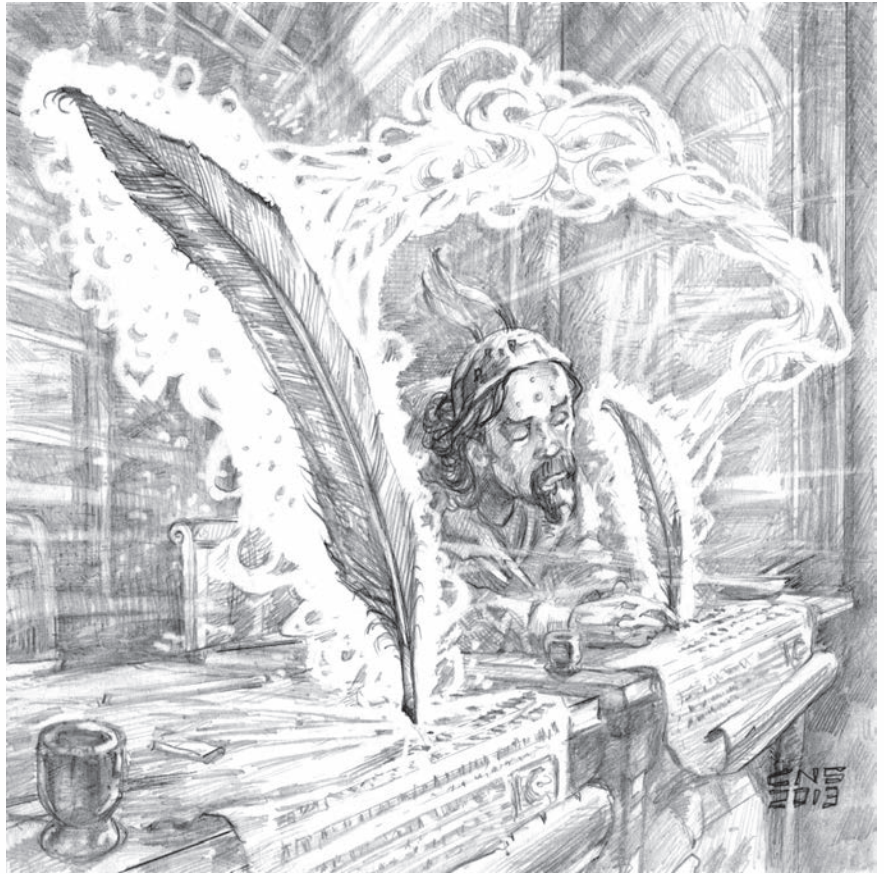
A variant of this device is a pair of enchanted bone styluses, which are used to inscribe on wax tablets. This version has the advantage of not relying on an inkwell in precisely the right location, but has less flair, thus less appeal, than the version using a quill. Quills are also superior because they offer a +7 Shape and Material Bonus to scribing.

This device could be expanded in scope by linking several quills together, each with an Arcane Connection to either a master quill or to each other. The invested effect would need to have Target: Group, but the resultant device would permit

secure communication to several targets simultaneously.

### DESCRIPTION

Two perfectly matched goose quills from the left wing; each is a snowy white feather. The quills are equipped with silver nibs for greater endurance, as a quill otherwise has a limited lifespan. Each quill is a Lesser Enchantment, each using two pawns of vis. The Arcane Connection to the other quill was fixed with a further pawn of vis. If this enchantment is modified it can potentially be used to write multiple books at once, although not being able to see the remote text makes for poor quality reproductions. Substitute the character's Finesse score for Profession: Scribe, but with a -3 penalty, and reduce the Quality of any remotely-written text by 3 points.



TWINNING THE QUILL

ReAn 19

Pen 0, 12/day

R: Arc, D: Conc, T: Ind

When the effect is triggered, any movements of the enchanted quill are exactly mirrored by the other, which is usually left atop a sheet of parchment with an open inkwell in a precisely defined position. Errors must be crossed out rather than scraped from the parchment in the usual fashion. A concentration roll is required every few sentences. Arrangements are usually made to change the parchment and refill the inkwell.

(Base 1, +4 Arc, +1 Conc, +1 precise control; +4 12/day)

Example Device:  
The Unsubtle Knife

Invented by Atrax of Tytalus, this device allows him to issue orders to any of his agents, who are scattered across the region. He keeps an Arcane Connection to each agent's home as a matter of course.

DESCRIPTION

A simple silver knife, as commonly carried for eating or for trimming quills. This item was made as a Lesser Enchantment with three pawns of vis.

THE WRITING ON THE WALL

CrIm 22

Pen 0, 3/day

R: Arc, D: Sun, T: Ind

The effect is triggered by writing a message with the tip of the knife on a suitable flat surface; in the past Atrax has employed ink on a parchment, carved his message on a tavern table, and cut an order into the flesh

of a defeated enemy. The knife must be in contact with an Arcane Connection to a location during the writing. The message appears at that location, and persists until the sun next rises or sets. Because of Atrax's sigil, the message appears to be written in blood.

(Base 1, +4 Arc, +2 Sun, +1 clear letters; +2 3/day)

Clairvoyance  
and Clairaudience

Scrying is technically the use of Intellego spells at Arcane Connection Range, although for legal purposes the Code of Hermes has extended the use of the term to cover the use of any magic to spy or aid spying into a magus's affairs (*Houses of Hermes: True Lineages*, page 52). When magi talk of scrying however, they are normally thinking of clairvoyance (viewing things from a distance) or clairaudience (hearing things at a distance).

Items involving scrying magic often employ similar Shape and Material bonuses. Rock crystal is perhaps the most potent, granting +5 clairvoyance (*ArM5* page 110). Electrum is an alloy of gold and silver that grants +3 scrying (*Houses of Hermes: Mystery Cults*, page 137), and silver offers a +2 bonus to Intellego effects (*The Mysteries Revised Edition*, page 33). Mirrors are a popular shape for scrying: not only do they include silver, they also grant a +6 bonus to effects that display images within the mirror (*Houses of Hermes: True Lineages*, page 139).

Example Device: Earring  
of Whispering Voices

Perhaps the simplest of all scrying devices, this enchantment takes the form of a piece of jewelry — usually an earring to make the best of the Shape

and Material bonus of +5 to hearing effects. Occasionally these items are made as a matched pair with an integrated Arcane Connection to the other user, and these allow two people to communicate with one another no matter what the distance between them. The owner of a paired device who does not want a conversation overheard would do well to remove her earring and place it in a box or bag.

Since the key effect of this device must Penetrate Magic Resistance to work, it has been designed with the ability to create a brief noise to indicate the activation of the device, so that a magus can suppress his Parma Magica so that he can be heard. Otherwise, the device must be entrusted to servants who can be relied upon to relay any messages.

DESCRIPTION

This decorative piece of jewelry consists of a short cylinder of silver with a slit that admits the ear lobe. It is closed by applying gentle pressure. It was invented as an Invested Item prepared for enchantment with six pawns of vis. Three pawns of enchantment space have been used.

The two effects could be made as two separate Lesser Enchantments — perhaps as a conjoined two-part earring — taking only two seasons of laboratory work (rather than at least 3) and only three pawns of vis in total (rather than nine).

A SIGNAL OF INTENT

CrIm 8

Pen 0, 6/day

R: Arc, D: Mom, T: Ind

This effect creates a brief sound at the location designated by the Arcane Connection. The exact form of the sound is between the inventor of the device and his sigil, but a bell's note



is usual. This effect does not need to Penetrate the Magic Resistance of the target; the sound may be heard by anyone in his vicinity.

This effect is used to signify to the recipient that the device's owner has used (or is about to use) *The Ear for a Distant Voice*. If made as a paired device to allow two-way conversation, it is usual for the recipient to trigger the same effect in his own device to indicate his own ability to hear the words of the listener; otherwise the first user cannot be sure his words are being received.

(Base 1, +4 Arc, +3 6/day)

### THE EAR FOR A DISTANT VOICE

**InIm 12**

**Pen 0, 3/day**

**R: Arc, D: Conc, T: Ind**

The user of the device can hear the voice of the person to whom she has an Arcane Connection. She cannot hear anything else from the vicinity of the target other than his voice. The effect is triggered by touching the earring with the forefinger while holding an Arcane Connection to a person or place in the same hand.

(Base 1, +4 Arc, +1 Conc; +2 3/day)

### Example Device: The Hermetic Speculum

The traditional design for this device is a polished sphere of rock crystal, taking advantage of the Shape and Material bonus for clairvoyance. Another common form for this device is a silver-backed mirror. A speculum ("mirror" in Latin) is a well-known magical device among sorcerers who indulge in speculomancy for their masters, often credulous lords and princes. Such sorcerers may be charlatans, hedge wizards, or both.

If used to scry upon someone who

has a Hermetic Speculum themselves, *The Scrier Spied* effect is activated by the contactee's device, signaling that someone either wishes to talk, or else is eavesdropping in on the conversation.

### DESCRIPTION

A sphere of rock crystal filled with flaws, creating many mirror-like surfaces within the body of the crystal. A small crystal is traditionally mounted on a chain worn at the belt; for an enchanted device this chain is often made of silver. Larger crystal spheres are too unwieldy to carry like this, and are instead provided with a stand on which they sit; these stands can be made of orangewood, which provides a +5 bonus to sight-related effects (*Houses of Hermes: Mystery Cults*, page 137). Because flawed rock crystal is enchanted as hard stone, a chain-born crystal would be a small object prepared with eight pawns of vis, and a free standing Speculum is a medium object needing twelve pawns of vis. Five of these pawns have been used up.

### SUMMONING THE IMAGE OF THE DISTANT

**InIm 17**

**Pen 0, 3/day**

**R: Arc, D: Conc, T: Ind**

The wielder of the device can see and hear the individual to whom she has an Arcane Connection, provided he has no Magic Resistance. The images are divorced from any surroundings or other beings in the vicinity.

The effect is normally triggered by rubbing the item with the thumb or palm while holding an Arcane Connection to the person to be viewed. The images appear in the mirror-like flaws in the crystal.

(Base 2, +4 Arc, +1 Conc; +2 3/day)

### THE SCRIER SPIED

**InVi 29**

**Pen 0, constant effect**

**R: Per, D: Sun, T: Smell**

This spell operates like *The Invisible Eye Revealed* (ArM5, page 157): the Speculum responds whenever a spell of 30th level or lower is used to spy on whoever is carrying it. Note that this spell can detect the presence of scrying spells that have failed to Penetrate its bearer's Magic Resistance because it can "smell" such spells within a three pace radius of its location. A detected scrying spell is signaled by a soft golden light filling the crystal; this is a cosmetic effect indicating that the power has been triggered.

(Base effect, +1 to increase Duration from Conc to Sun, +1 to increase Target to Smell; +1 2/day; +3 environmental trigger)

### Example Device: The Effigy of the Errant Image

This is perhaps the most effective type of device for distant communication, because it allows two-way communication through a single device rather than having paired items with reciprocal Arcane Connections. The user of the device creates an image of himself at a distant location, and can see and talk to anyone there present. The chief disadvantage is that the enchantment is of eighth magnitude, and so is more difficult and more costly to create.

A similar device can be achieved with a *Creo Imaginem* enchantment like *Haunt of the Living Ghost* (ArM5, page 144) rather than the *Rego Imaginem* effect detailed here; there is no difference in the overall level of enchantment. Tribunals have usually ruled that neither effect is an illegal use of scrying magic, since they make no attempt to hide the magus employing them.

### DESCRIPTION

A small wooden statue of a human, small enough to easily fit into the palm of one hand. Its features are ill-defined and androgynous, and it has its hands held out palm up, as if asking for a gift. The Effigy has been prepared for enchantment with four pawns of vis (a small wooden object) and has no space remaining for further enchantments.

### THE WANDERING EIDOLON

Re(In)Im 40

Pen 0, 1/day

R: Touch, D: Conc, T: Ind

This effect causes the user's image to disappear from its current location and appear in a location designated by an Arcane Connection placed in the hands of the statue when triggering the effect.

The wielder can speak at the designated location and hear any responses, and he can also see everything he could if he were actually there. He cannot move his image from the immediate vicinity of the Arcane Connection, although he has some limited movement — he can pace up

and down, for example. While his image is dislocated, he is invisible and inaudible at his true location. The displaced image is his image; if he sits then the image sits, if he is wounded then the image appears to bleed.

Note that the image cannot enter an area protected by an *Aegis of the Hearth* unless the device was made within that covenant or made by a caster who was included in the ritual's effects. If designed with sufficient Penetration, this effect could potentially overcome this limit.

(Base 15, +1 Touch, +1 Conc, +1 additional sense, +1 requisite; +5 item maintains concentration)

### “I Will Not Use Magic to Scry...”

The scrying devices described above use Target Individual to directly spy on a person, but could equally use Target Room to relay the images of multiple individuals at once (provided they were in a room). If a magus happens to be in that area, then the user of the device has scried upon the other, and if a magus, has committed a High Crime. Designing the device with a Penetration of zero prevents this, but also prevents distant communication between magi. The two devices described above each have methods of signaling the recipient so he can suppress Magic Resistance, but this extends the resources needed to make the item in the first place.

Few tribunals would convict a magus if the possessor of a twinned device carried it while knowing both its function and the owner of its twin; such a case would probably be construed as malicious entrapment. However, there are other ways in which the device could raise accusations of scrying. If another magus is in the vicinity of the device when it is used, then his auditory or visual spe-

cies could be transmitted to the user against his will, and that is scrying without a doubt. If a magus should come into possession of a device — innocently or not — and if the linked device is used by the other recipient, then the scried magus has a legitimate claim to bring before the Tribunal if he was ignorant of its enchantment, even if he came by the device in an illicit manner.

Remote writing technology has none of these perils. Even if a magus sees a message that was not intended for him he has not been scried upon, for the user of the device has gained no information about the other magus. It could be argued that a magus who reads a message intended for another has scried upon the author of that message, since since he has gained information about another magus through the use of magic. This is a very tenuous argument to make, and would probably be rejected by most Tribunals since the aggrieved magus was the initiator of the magic that caused the crime to occur.

### Why it May Not Work: Lack of Penetration

The Order of Hermes is liable to be very cautious around magic that permits an individual to scry on another. The Hermetic Oath is quite specific in prohibiting its members from scrying another maga or using magic to peer into her affairs. The Peripheral Code of a Tribunal might forbid magi from supplying scrying magic to their servants for this purpose as well.

For safety's sake, any magus embarking on plans to distribute scrying devices to mundanes should design them with zero Penetration, including more Penetration than this in their design is perhaps an admission that their intended use is

### Story Seed: Inappropriate Use

Once scrying devices make it into the hands of mundanes, it is only a matter of time before a magus becomes the target of a mundane's curiosity. The victim raises a prosecution case against the manufacturer of the device for scrying. This might seem like a difficult case to argue, but the prosecuting counsel has a sympathetic Tribunal behind him, and this could go badly for the character who made the offending device.



not wholly innocent. However, this simple implementation of avoiding Penetration means that the devices are useless for communicating with magi, making the prospect of their spread much less likely.

Remote writing devices present less of a problem; they can be made by a covenant and then given to an ally, allowing that ally to instantly communicate with them regardless of distance. Covenants may be unhappy about handing out permanent Arcane Connections to items within their covenant, however, even to trusted friends. Once such items are out in the world, it might be too easy for enemies to get their hands on them.

## Societal Impacts

It is a common aphorism that "knowledge is power," and this is particularly true in a world where news can be transmitted much faster than a courier can travel. Getting news of a battle just minutes after its conclusion confers a huge tactical advantage on a major noble conducting a war — on the assumption that these devices are scarce. Indeed, a cunning individual might pay a premium ensuring exclusivity over all copies of the device, which he gives to his trusted vassals and spies. It might be years before anyone discovers the source of his political and military success. The attempted patent on the device will not persist beyond this revelation; the spells needed to copy the device are relatively simple, and variants can be easily conceived by another magus.

### SAGA SEED: A SCRYING SOCIETY

If integration of scrying devices into Mythic Europe is achieved, the impacts will be seen in all aspects of society. In the scenario considered here, the situation began with a single

scrying device developed by a magus and (legally) sold to a mundane lord. When his use of the device was uncovered, there was public condemnation of this flagrant use of dangerous-sounding magic, and a secret clamor for similar devices directed toward the Order of Hermes. As a result, Mythic Europe has a fair number of different designs, each one made by a different inventor and working somewhat differently from the others, bearing different features and quirks. Rather than attempting to produce an "industry standard", the Hermetic manufacturers of these devices have prospered from the diversity of different devices, and have even staged public debates over which one is better. The devices are nearly always designed with a seven year expiry; in a particularly cynical move by the manufacturers the designs are changed every few years, so there is a strong business in repeat customers who want to replace an expired model or else upgrade to a more fashionable design.

The most basic devices are remote writers like the Quills of Arcane Correspondence. These have proved a boon to merchants, who can place orders with their suppliers without having to rely on couriers. Likewise, producers can inform their vendors instantly when new artisan goods are ready, and create a demand for their produce in advance of its arrival. Bankers use the devices to secure remote authentication, allowing transfer of funds to be arranged instantly. Lieges use the devices to communicate with their vassals, and they have changed the face of warfare, allowing orders to be clearly and unambiguously issued to distant troops. The commoners also have access to Quills, at least in towns. It is usual for a town ward to club together to raise the funds for devices connecting to several locations, and they are available to any member of that ward. The Quills are normally kept in a locked room, and

## I'm Sorry, Your Call Could Not Be Arcanely Connected

Magical communication is reliant on Arcane Connections, and these would probably need to be fixed in the laboratory (ArM5, page 94), else they are in danger of becoming Arcane Connections to something else, such as the box they are stored in (ArM5, page 84). If scrying technology is to become widespread, then it is likely that the locations it would be possible to view or contact would be limited, due to the time and vis needed to perform this task. It is a laboratory activity that can be easily assigned to Hermetic apprentices and junior magi, however; even some hedge wizards are capable of fixing Arcane Connections. Public collections of Arcane Connections might be made available, each carefully labeled, and an individual could borrow one if he leaves a deposit and an Arcane Connection to himself. Both will be returned upon return of the borrowed material, but allow the collection's curators to track down unreturned reference material, and trace or punish those who are suspected of using such material in malfeasance.

any messages received are posted in a public place for their intended recipients to claim them. Townsfolk whose relatives have moved away now keep much closer contact with them. One noticeable effect is that Reputations are more easily gained, harder to lose, and apply over a large area now that gossip is widely spread by the Quills.

The first Hermetic Speculum was commissioned by a prince of the Holy Roman Empire so he could observe battles and better organize his forces, but these have since spread into general use as well. Some cities

## A Desire for Privacy

In a world where scrying devices are common, magi might have interest in spells or technology that hinders scrying. Remaining within an *Aegis of the Hearth* is a good way of foiling spies, but this is not always practical. The following spell can form a basis for an industry based around confounding the new magical technology.

### SAFEGUARD THE CLANDESTINE CONVERSATION

Mu(Re)Im 10

R: Touch, D: Ring, T: Circle

The visual and auditory species produced by anyone within the circle

drawn by the caster as he casts the spell are muddled to any observers who were not present in the circle at the time of casting; this includes those scrying on the target from a remote location. Those inside the circle can still see and hear each other normally, due to the Rego requisite that causes the spell to only affect the species streaming in certain directions. The nature of the muddled images varies according to the design of the spell, but usually includes the inventor's sigil, and leaves those within unidentifiable by their appearance or sound.

(Base 2, +1 Touch, +2 Ring, +1 requisite)

### Story Seed: Peeping Tom

A clandestine interest in invading another's privacy with scrying devices has attracted the interest of a demon. It supplies Arcane Connections to particularly licentious people, hoping that the peeping toms will imitate what they see. It can also manipulate the images, allowing nosy individuals to "witness" sinful behavior from public figures, leading to the public vilification of (amongst others) a friend to the covenant. The characters might be a target of the demon's false scrying when they begin to investigate.

have bought them for their populace, asking for particularly big mirrors so that many people can observe the images at the same time. To begin with, these Specula were just used to look at distant scenery and monuments that many townsfolk would never normally see. Later

they started to be used by the cities' leaders to communicate with their citizens *en masse* through proclamations, and the Town Crier's Guild has recently formed to service the announcement of news using these devices. Just recently an enterprising group of jongleurs has taken to selling Arcane Connections to the hall in which they will be performing, informing buyers on what day and at what time they should use their Specula (of course, only those with Specula designed with Target Room can watch). The jongleurs have audiences hundreds of times bigger than they have achieved in the past, and the idea is sure to catch on with other entertainers. Artistic Reputations (*Art & Academe*, page 126) are bound to spread much faster and wider than ever before.

There have been several public scandals revealed by the Specula and other scrying devices, and a lot of public debate has revolved around an individual's right to privacy. Of course, these are the same individuals who are more than happy to gossip about what they've discovered about

their neighbors. The recent fad is for devices that detect scrying, and some inventors have produced devices that prevent it entirely. There have been covert requests to the Order by certain high placed individuals for ways by which communication can be intercepted by a third party, but each object works through an Arcane Connection, which can only ever be joined to a unique object. Interception of communiqués requires obtaining an Arcane Connection to one of the two original devices and creating a third, and only half of the conversation would be heard unless an Arcane Connection to both devices was obtained. Whether or not this has been achieved is a secret of the artificers and their employers.

## The Copying of a Book

This section discusses some of the ways in which books can be magically copied. This is not intended to be an exhaustive catalog of the methods of producing books with magic; other techniques certainly exist, limited only by the imagination of the players.

A key advantage of copying a book magically is that a spell or device does not have the same limitations as a mundane scribe. The facsimile created with magic is as close as it can be to the original, duplicating every nuance, diagram, and letter precisely.

This means that texts on magical matters can be copied with as much ease as ones on mundane matters with a spell, whereas a scribe copying a book on a Hermetic Art needs to have a score in Magic Theory to avoid corrupting it.



## Limitations of Hermetic Theory

There are a few principles that pose problems for any magus attempting to change the manner in which the Order acquires and exchanges knowledge. These do not necessarily relate to the Limits of Magic, but may instead be part of the incomplete nature of Magic Theory. It may be that there are hedge wizards who know magic that does not have the same restrictions.

### THERE IS NO ART THAT COVERS KNOWLEDGE

A magus cannot create knowledge using magic, and can only manipulate it indirectly. In Mythic Europe, a person's knowledge is integrated into his mind through the memory and the imagination. The memory stores ideas and experiences, whereas the imagination stores images and other sensory input. In particular, inscribed memories are the powerhouse of one's Arts and non-physical Abilities, fixed into the memory through study and experience. Magi have only begun to delve into the secrets of the mind, and there is no known way (yet) of transferring inscribed memories between minds or creating new inscribed memories, even though other types of memories can be influenced with the Art of Mentem. For more information on the medieval concept of the mind, see *Art & Academe*, pages 31–32. For more about memories in particular, see *Houses of Hermes: Societates*, pages 68–70.

### MAGIC CAN NEITHER READ NOR UNDERSTAND

The Technique of Intellego is sometimes mistakenly seen as the Art



## Rego Craft Magic

This insert summarizes the rules for Rego craft magic. For more details, see *Covenants*, page 49.

Rego magic can duplicate the activities of any mundane craftsman, bypassing the need for tools, time, and skill. Rego magic cannot create substances, and therefore the magus must provide all the raw materials necessary for the craft, while the Rego craft magic rearranges these materials into the desired form. It is not necessary to provide substances that are not integrated into the finished object but that are essential to the process; for example, a mundane percamenarius needs lye to bleach animal skins to make parchment, but Rego craft magic does not. The Duration of Rego craft magic is almost always Momentary; a longer Duration would merely repeat the manufacture

process again and again on the same raw materials.

Rego craft magic requires a Finesse roll, the Ease Factor for which is at least three higher than the Craft roll needed by a mundane craftsman making an equivalent object. The Ease Factor for the Finesse roll is further increased if the Rego craft magic is drastically shortening the time needed to produce the finished item: doing a month's work in an instant requires an additional +3; doing a season's work in an instant incurs a +6; and a year's work imposes a +9 to the Ease Factor. If the mundane craft requires many intermediate steps, then an additional +3 (or more) to the Ease Factor is justified. Failure on the Finesse roll results in a mess rather than in a useful item, and a botch indicates a fatal flaw that is overlooked.

of Knowledge. However, this Art in truth covers only the acquisition of information, not the information itself. Likewise, Mentem spells operate on sentient minds, not on the contents of those minds, so learning is not encoded with the Form of Mentem either. Words on a page are under the purview of the Form relating to the components of the ink used (mostly Herbam and Terram), or the page itself (Animal for parchment, other Forms for different media). Manipulating the words however gets no sense of the meaning therein. There is, for example, a profound lack of a spell that can translate the written word from one language to another, even though there is a spell that translates the spoken word in exactly this manner. This is because the mind that uttered a word can be interrogated for its meaning with Mentem magic, but written words are just artifices of ink and parchment that have no intrinsic thoughts behind them.

### Copying a Single Page

Perhaps the simplest way to magically reproduce a text is to use Rego craft magic (see Insert) to duplicate the efforts of a copyist. Having a copy of the work to be copied present is essential, as is a stack of clean parchment (or other writing medium) and ink appropriate to the medium. Rego craft magic does not require quills, blotting powder, or other accoutrements of the copyist's craft; these items are not integrated into the finished manuscript and therefore not needed by the magic. As discussed earlier, magic cannot read, so the process of copying a page of text is a two stage process. A spell is first employed to lay an image of the text to be copied over a blank page, and then the Rego craft magic spell causes ink to follow the image's impression.

### THE FIRST FURROW GUIDES THE SECOND

**Cr(In)Im 25**

**R:** Voice, **D:** Sun, **T:** Group

This spell lays the image of a book's page over the top of a blank sheet, so that a scribe can trace the page's content. This creates identical copies of books. Used repeatedly over the course of a season, it can assist in the creation of copies of Hermetic books, allowing an unskilled magus to copy books even without having the Profession: Scribe Ability. (Note: this spell's description has been modified from when it first appeared in *Covenants*, page 97, where it erroneously implies that a magus without Profession: Scribe has a -3 penalty to any totals requiring that Ability)

(Base 1, +2 Voice, +2 Sun, +2 Group, +1 changes as pages turn, +1 requisite)

### THE COPYIST'S PUISSANT QUILL

**ReAq 5**

**R:** Voice, **D:** Mom, **T:** Group

This craft magic spell causes prepared ink to form words and images on a page. The ink is overlaid on guidelines already present on the page, such as chalk or charcoal sketches left by a copyist, or the result of a spell such as *The First Furrow Guides the Second*. The

Group Target permits multiple colors of ink to be employed. The spell does not distinguish between writing and illustrations, copying both with equal skill. The caster must make an Intelligence + Finesse roll to determine the accuracy of the spell's copying. The Ease Factor is 9 for an easy piece of copying, for example, one color and no illustrations, typical of a book with a Quality of 6 or less. The Ease Factor is higher for more complex or detailed works typical of higher Quality; for a Quality of 7 to 9 the copying Ease Factor is 12, and for a Quality of 10 or more the Ease Factor is 15. If this roll fails, then the ink fails to form letters and simply makes a mess. A botch indicates that the text looks fine but is actually nonsensical, a flaw only discovered when the text is read for the first time; however, characters will not often be rolling stress die for this Finesse roll.

Variants of this spell with higher Duration allow a magus to use this spell to make patterns on the page that correspond to the caster's words.

(Base 1, +2 Voice, +2 Group)

### Copying an Entire Book

The spells in the previous section allow the copying of a single page at a time. However, a book usually contains more than a single page

### Quality Remaining After Copying

This table assumes an Ease Factor of 12 (i.e. Quality 7 to 9), a simple die roll, and no proofreading. For books requiring Finesse rolls of Ease Factor 9, add 3 to the Finesse Total, and subtract 3 for books requiring Finesse rolls of Ease Factor 15.

FINESSE TOTAL	EFFECT	QUALITY OF COPY
3	Spoil 8 pages in 10	No readable book results
5	Spoil 6 pages in 10	6 points lower than original
7	Spoil 4 pages in 10	4 points lower than original
9	Spoil 2 pages in 10	2 points lower than original
11 or more	Spoil no pages	Equal to original



of text. A typical book consists of a series of gatherings bound together between two boards of wood. A typical gathering, called a *quaternion*, consists of four sheets of parchment folded in half, and is therefore eight pages of text.

It takes a moderately skilled scribe one day to copy four pages of text, and another day to tidy up and provide basic illumination for those same pages. A typical tractatus consists of about twenty quaternions (160 pages) and takes about a season of continuous work to copy (80 days: scribes do not work on Sundays or holidays). A typical *summa* has twenty five pages per point of its Level. Since scribes typically spend only half their time actually scribing and illuminating, the estimation of a year to copy a Bible is about right (it is a *Summa* on Theology of Level 10 and a *Summa* on Church Lore of Level 3; approximately 325 pages and therefore 163 days of continuous work).

Since copying an entire book is at least a season's work for a

mundane scribe, a version of *The Copyist's Puissant Quill* that duplicates an entire book in one spell — rather than page by page — would require an Intelligence + Finesse roll against an Ease Factor of 15, minimum, which is well beyond the capacity of most magi. Copying a book page by page using Rego craft magic as detailed in the previous section would therefore seem the best option, but it requires hundreds of castings, each with its accompanying Finesse roll. For simplicity's sake, compare the Finesse Total (Intelligence + Finesse) of the caster on the nearby table to determine how much Quality is retained from the original book.

### RESONANCES

*Covenants* (pages 87–88) details rules for improving the quality of a text by incorporating resonant materials into the creation of a book, or by clarifying the book by exposing it to a Magic aura. If such techniques

have been used in the production of a book that is then copied with magic, the benefits of such resonances are lost. A copied book can be rebound using new resonant materials, and so the benefits may be replaced by similar ones if the copyist takes the effort to do so.

### BINDING

Once a text has been copied onto loose sheets it should be gathered together and bound into a codex. Unbound books are easily damaged, since it is easy for individual sheets to go astray. Furthermore, parchment is prone to warping out of shape unless it is firmly pressed between wooden boards and clasped together. This damage can negatively affect the quality of the text. Finally, unbound books cannot have resonances (see earlier).

## Example Device: The Superb Scrinium

A magus is unlikely to want to cast the same spell a hundred times to copy a text page by page. A more efficient way to do this would be to create an Enchanted Item which performs the task automatically. While the Superb Scrinium described here can copy and bind an entire book in a few hours, it does have its disadvantages. It takes twelve pawns of vis to prepare this item for enchantment, and another twelve pawns to instill the effects. It takes at least six seasons to create the item. It can only copy single sheets or codices, not other forms of books such as rolls or tablets, and only copies one side of each page (although it is rare to have writing on both sides of parchment). The biggest impediment is that the books produced by the Scrinium are rarely as good as the originals: they do not have any

### Discovering Mistakes

A magus might want to compare a magically or mundanely scribed copy of a text with the original to find mistakes. *Intellego Imaginem* can detect differences between copies, but cannot distinguish minor variations in pen-work from meaningful errors. A spell such as *The Copyist's Critical Eye* (below) could be enchanted into a device that can turn the pages of both texts simultaneously, and even mark the pages that differ using a linked trigger. The marked pages would still have to be checked by someone who understands the importance of the text, but it would greatly reduce the time this takes. Once mistakes have been identified they can be scraped out and corrected. As a rough guide,

a text that would normally take a season to write can be proofread and corrected in a week with unlimited uses of this spell.

#### THE COPYIST'S CRITICAL EYE

**Inlm 10**

**R:** Per, **D:** Conc, **T:** Vision

The caster casts his eye over two texts, and he can immediately see the places in the second that differ from the first by perfecting his memory of the first text. The manner in which the differences are displayed depend on the caster's sigil. To Atrox of Tytulus, any incorrect words appear to be drawn in fresh blood.

(Base 1, +1 Conc, +4 Vision)

resonant materials, and they require a character with a high Finesse score to operate the device if mistakes in the text are to be avoided. The latter limitation cannot be circumvented; it is a fundamental constraint of Rego craft magic. Integrating resonant materials is possible, by using *Binding the Hermetic Codex* instead of *Binding the Mundane Codex* (*Covenants*, page 97), although these materials need to be sourced first.

### DESCRIPTION

The Superb Scrinium consists of a large writing desk (a scrinium) designed to be put on top of a table. The desk is ornately carved from walnut wood. The lid of the desk can be propped up to make a slanted desk or lectern, but when in operation the lid is kept closed. Inset into the flat surface of the desk are three rectangular slabs of alabaster. In front of the middle slab are four horn inkwells, each one designed to take a different color of ink.

The enchanted item is set in motion by placing a book on the left-hand alabaster slab and opening its back cover. This triggers *The First Furrow Guides the Second*. The device can copy a text onto any animal- or plant-derived material, but usually copies onto parchment. Ink appropriate to the writing material should be placed into the inkwells. Wooden boards, twine, glue, and other materials necessary for binding books should be put before the rightmost slab. A stack of blank sheets of sufficient number for the copy should be placed on the middle slab. The copying process is initiated by taking the top sheet from the middle slab and placing it on the right-hand slab, which triggers *The Lector's Deft Hand*. The book is duplicated one sheet at a time from back to front. It takes about

one and a half hours to copy a text of 300 pages: three combat rounds (eighteen seconds) per page, one for each of the three effects.

The device relies on the Finesse Total of its activator, so its operation is usually restricted to magi, and even so it will tend to produce texts of lower Quality than the original unless the operator is highly skilled. It has no intrinsic proof-reading, although *The Copyist's Deft Eye* could be included into the design. *The First Furrow Guides the Second* determines how many books can be copied per day, since it needs a separate activation for each text; *Binding the Mundane Codex* should have the same number of uses.

The Scrinium has been prepared for enchantment with 12 pawns of vis (the highest cost of all the components is for the alabaster slabs, which are large objects of soft stone). It has no more space for any further enchantments.

### THE FIRST FURROW GUIDES THE SECOND

**Cr(In)Im 22**

**Pen 0**, 3 uses per day

**R:** Touch, **D:** Conc, **T:** Group

This enchantment has the same operation as the spell of the same name, described earlier, except with respect to Range and Duration. Each casting is sufficient for an entire text, since the created illusion affects a moving image. It is triggered when an open book is placed on the left-hand marble slab; an additional command word could be included if desired. To use the item correctly, the back cover of the book should be opened (else the book will be copied and bound in reverse).

(Base 1, +1 Touch, +1 Conc, +2 Group, +1 changes as pages turn, +1 requisite; +5 item maintains concentration; +2 3/day)

### THE LECTOR'S DEFT HAND

**ReHe(An) 15**

**Pen 0**, unlimited uses per day

**R:** Touch, **D:** Mom, **T:** Ind

This enchantment turns a page of any book placed on the left-hand marble slab. It can turn pages of paper, papyrus, and other plant-based materials as well as parchment and vellum. It is triggered when a sheet of parchment is placed on the right-hand slab (that is, after the *Stack the Decorated Page* effect has acted).

(Base 3, +1 Touch, +1 requisite; +10 unlimited uses per day)

### THE COPYIST'S PUISSANT QUILL

**ReAq 15**

**Pen 0**, unlimited uses per day

**R:** Voice, **D:** Mom, **T:** Group

This enchantment has the same operation as the spell of the same name, described earlier, and acts on the topmost sheet of the middle stack of blank pages. It is triggered when a page of the book on the left-hand marble slab is turned (that is, after the *Lector's Deft Hand* effect has acted).

(Base 1, +2 Voice, +2 Group; +10 unlimited uses per day)

### STACK THE DECORATED PAGE

**ReHe(An) 20**

**Pen 0**, unlimited uses per day

**R:** Voice, **D:** Mom, **T:** Ind

This enchantment moves a sheet of parchment, paper, or other animal or plant-derived writing medium from the stack on the middle marble slab and places it on the right-hand slab. Note that the pages produced by the Scrinium are totally dry; there is no wet ink. It is triggered when the topmost sheet on the middle stack has been written on (that is, after the *Copyist's Puissant Quill* effect has acted).

(Base 3, +2 Voice, +1 requisite; +10 unlimited uses per day)



BINDING THE MUNDANE CODEX

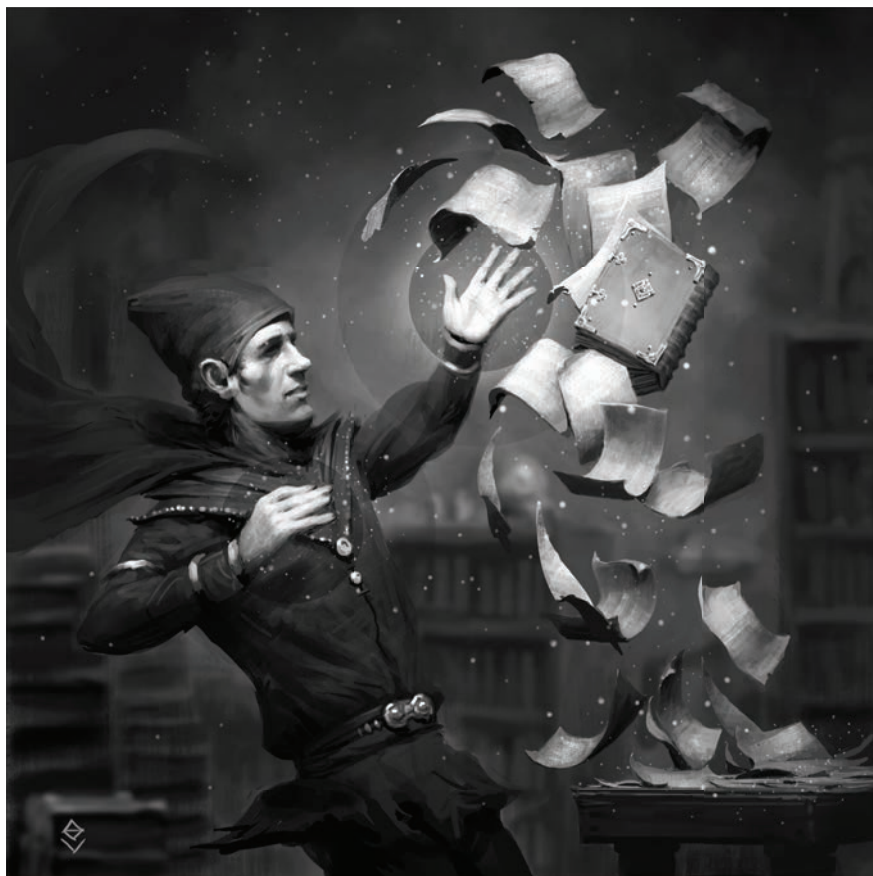
ReHe(An) 22

Pen 0, 3 uses per day

R: Touch, D: Mom, T: Group

This enchantment binds up to 800 individual sheets into a book (a base Individual of Animal is equivalent to a quarternion). The enchantment fails if any of the materials necessary pieces of a codex are missing. It is triggered by tapping three times the stack of finished sheets to be bound. The operator of the device must have an Intelligence + Finesse of at least 6 to successfully bind the book. If you are using the extended rules for book creation (*Covenants*, page 88), then readers of a book bound with this enchantment can claim the +1 quality bonus for sound binding.

(Base 3, +1 Touch, +2 Group, +1 requisite, +1 size; +2 3/day)



Copying Laboratory Texts

In theory, Laboratory Texts can be copied with magic in exactly the same way as books on Abilities and Arts. Naturally, an exact duplicate of the text is made, so if a Laboratory Text is still written in its author's personal code, this will be replicated in the copy. A Laboratory Text is usually much shorter than other books (approximately one page per level of the effect), although it may not be written as a typical codex but take a more unusual form. It may be that a magus does not have the capacity to magically copy a book due to the form that it takes. For example, many magi scribe their laboratory texts into wax tablets, some use metal sheets and an enchanted stylus, still others cover the walls of the laboratory themselves with chalk notation.

Laboratory Texts are a lot less forgiving than a book on an Ability or an Art. The Laboratory Text must be copied exactly without the slightest deviation, else it is corrupted and useless. Pages where the Finesse roll fails

must be repeated, and a single botched page corrupts the entire Laboratory Text; something which will only be discovered when the Laboratory Text is used (wasting the season). If using Rego craft magic to duplicate Laboratory Texts, then consider that a professional scribe could copy five levels of

effects a day; 120 levels in a month, and 360 levels in a season. Using the earlier table, you would need a Finesse Total of 11 or more to copy a month's worth of Laboratory Texts flawlessly page by page, or a Finesse Total of 14 or more to copy a season's worth in the same manner.

Optional Rule: Hazardous Laboratory Texts

Rather than requiring flawless copying of every page of a Laboratory Text, the troupe could decide that errors introduced into Laboratory Texts do not make the Text useless, but can introduce unwanted effects into the product of the season of work. If the magically-copied Laboratory Text was created with insufficient Finesse, then whenever it is used, the magus must make an extra roll on the Experimentation Table (ArM5,

page 109) with a risk modifier equal to half the number of pages spoiled per ten pages total. Thus if four pages in ten were spoiled, the risk modifier is +2. If a copy is made of the copy with magic, then the users of the second generation copy must make two extra Experimentation rolls, each potentially with its own risk modifier. This option makes magical copying of Laboratory Texts possible, but often undesirable.

### Optional Rule: No Magical Copying of Laboratory Texts

Alternatively, you could rule as a troupe that Laboratory Texts are too sensitive to scribal errors to be copied with Rego craft magic. In a Mythic Europe that has magical copying of books, the production of Laboratory Texts becomes an artisan craft, with each one handwritten each time. This makes them a more valuable commodity.

(that is, power) is worth nothing if not earned.

Quaesitores worry about the implications. While books on Magic Theory, Organization Lore: Order of Hermes, and especially Parma Magica are rare, it is easy to contain them. Once they can be mass produced, then it will be difficult to prevent such books falling into the hands of the mundanes, and (worse still) enemies of the Order. They are likely to attempt to ban the production of books on the Parma Magica at the very least.

Those Bonisagi who do not vehemently oppose the technology embrace it, as a superb method for disseminating knowledge of Hermetic breakthroughs and innovations. Some members of House Tytalus support them in this, recognizing that conflict can arise from — and be manipulated by — the control of which texts are made available.

Those more politically-savvy members of House Ex Miscellanea are eager to obtain books on the Arts. They believe that the Order has too long kept knowledge from them, allowing them to wallow in Hermetic backwaters as second class citizens. Writing, publishing, and disseminating books that discuss their own unique tradition not only simultaneously preserve those traditions but perhaps attract more recruits.

## The Order's Response

The Order of Hermes commonly sells books, either by public offer, by tender, by exchange, or by subscription (*Covenants*, page 94), and arrangements for a magus to visit a covenant and copy one of their books are relatively common. Technology to instantly reproduce these efforts could rapidly change the established order depending on the availability of the magic, although Hermetic magi are split as to whether this would be a change for the better or the worse.

### NEUTRAL PARTIES

The Mystery Houses are little affected by this innovation; the knowledge they hold dear cannot be trapped on parchment with ink, but must be wrestled from the fabric of the world with ritual and ordeal. They are not likely to have any great opinion on magical duplication of books; at best they might mildly support the ideas if it means more books to study. However, fear mongers might point out that should their secrets ever be discovered and recorded by an outsider, if book-duplication technology exists then the mysteries of a cult could be quickly disseminated — a sure fire way to ensure that the ancient ceremonies lose all power.

## Why it May Not Work: The Cow and Calf Oath

The Cow and Calf Oath (*Covenants*, page 95) simply states that the purchaser of a book, or the recipient of a book as a gift, will not sell or give copies of that book without the permission of the original owner. The oath refers to a ruling in the Hibernian Tribunal, and is not part of the Code of Hermes in any other Tribunal, and yet it is exceptionally common as a “gentleman’s agreement” throughout the Order. Sometimes, for books of the highest quality, the oath is specifically recalled and sworn to give it legal weight. Copying a high quality book normally entails seasons of diligent work which few magi are willing to undertake if they might incur the displeasure of the book’s originator. However, a device like the Superb Scrinium permits the copying of a book in no time at all, making it far more tempting to contravene the

### DETRACTORS

Some magi of House Bonisagus are likely to deplore the multiplication of such knowledge. If power is not hard won, then it comes with no responsibility. More mundanely, House Acclaim is devalued as authors become anonymized by mass production.

Jerbiton are, broadly speaking, disgusted with the idea of this invention, seeing it as a cheapening of knowledge for the sake of power. Those who live under the principle of sufficiency particularly deplore the technology. Similarly, many (if not most) Tytali believe that knowledge

House Mercere are likely to be unaffected by the technology. Exemplar texts still need to be transported to those covenants who have a Scrinium, and copies still need to be distributed.

### PROPONENTS

Both House Flambeau and House Tremere are in favor of the mass production of books, since it permits a more rapid growth in power which in turn leads to a more efficient and powerful Order.



## Rules for a Large Library

Each Art and Ability is represented as a single Level and Quality that represents the sum total of the knowledge that the library has on that subject. Each subject has a summa; this is the best tome that the library has, with the highest Level + Quality. A library that lacks at least one summa on a subject has no score for that Art or Ability. The base scores for the library are equal to this book.

Acquiring more books on the subject increases the Level and Quality of the library's resources in this Art or Ability. Adding tractatus act as experience points in the Quality, and acquiring new summae acts as experience points in the Level; both scores increase as if they were Arts. Most books add at least some knowledge, but as the library grows, it becomes steadily more comprehensive. A book does not contribute an experience point to Quality unless its Quality is within three points of the library Quality, and does not count as an experience point in Level unless its (Level + Quality) is within three points of the library's (Level + Quality). Once added to the library there is no need to track individual Level or Quality. Needless to say, a covenant cannot just duplicate books they already have to increase either characteristic.

### STUDYING FROM THE LIBRARY

A maga whose score in an Art is less than the library's Level in that Art gains the library's (Quality + 3) in experience points in the relevant Art. A maga whose Art score is equal or greater to the library's Level gains experience points in the Art equal to the library's Quality each season, and can only study here for a number of additional seasons equal to the Quality before she has exhausted the library's information on the subject. Abilities are treated in an identical fashion. If a library's Level should subsequently improve beyond the maga's Art score, she may recommence her studies with the +3 bonus to Quality until she reaches the new Level. If the Quality is unchanged then she must cease her studies for that Art in this library; if Quality has increased as well then she can study for additional seasons equal to the change in Quality.

More than one magus can study the same subject in the same season; usually one studies the best summae according to the normal rules, and the others split the remaining books between them. Only those not studying from the best summa get the +3 bonus to Quality if their Art or Ability score is lower than the Library's total Level in that subject.

### EXAMPLE

A library's best book on Ignem is Level 6, Quality 7. There are also ten other summae and nineteen tractatus on Ignem, so the library's total score for Ignem is Level 7, Quality 9. Rather than providing details for all thirty books, this can be represented as follows:

Ignem: Level 7 Quality 9 (Level 6 Quality 7, + 10 summae + 19 tractatus)

Any magus with an Ignem score of 6 or less studies gains 12 experience points in Ignem from this library and can continue to study until his Ignem is 7. If he has Ignem 7 or more he gains 9 experience points and can study for 9 more seasons. If two magi wish to study Ignem in the same season, one studies from the best summa and gets 7 experience points as long as he has an Ignem of 6 or less, but can't learn anything if his Ignem is greater than 6. The second studies from 10 summae (enough to provide an Ignem of 4) and nineteen tractatus (a Quality of 5). If his Ignem is less than 4, he receives 8 experience points, otherwise he receives 5 — but can study Ignem from the library regardless of his Ignem score. If three magi want to study Ignem this season, then one gets the best summa as described, and the other two must split the remaining books between them; if done evenly then they each get a Level 2 Quality 4 library.

Cow and Calf Oath for financial gain.

As it stands, the Cow and Calf Oath is not part of the Code anywhere other than in Hibernia, so cannot be assumed to be in force without specific mention of prohibitions on copying. Magi have tried in the past to bring the decision to the Grand Tribunal, but so far that august body has declined to make a ruling. This might change if copying books becomes a trivial task. The intellectual wealth that powerful covenants

have invested in their libraries will be quickly devalued if the Cow and Calf Oath is ignored, and the only way to enforce it is for it to become part of the Code.

The Cow and Calf Oath does not protect texts belonging to non-magi, so the edicts of the Grand Tribunal have little effect on the ability of the invention to transform Mythic Europe. However, it would take an altruistic magus to pursue the considerable time and vis needed for this

invention if there was no possibility of him being able to profit from the books in his own library — many of which are likely to have been gifts or bought from other magi under a Cow and Calf arrangement.

## An Erudite Society

The cost and time involved in creating a book is one of the principle reasons why they are the property

of the monasteries (who make them) and nobility (who can afford them). The vast majority of Mythic Europe would normally never own a book. However, it would not take that many copies of a device such as the Superb Scrinium for books to be a much more widespread phenomenon. Limited only by the supply of raw materials (and this is a very real limit, but not an unassailable one) and the provision of skilled operators (specifically, those trained in the Finesse Ability), copies of key texts could be available to any individual.

The impacts on medieval society could be tremendous. Free access to cheap reading material leads to the democratization of knowledge. Rather than being the province of the elite, the ability to read can be passed from parents to their children since it becomes a useful skill to acquire. Fortunately, we have a model to

see how world-changing this can be, since in 1455, the Gutenberg printing press began to produce books using moveable type. By 1480, nearly every city in Europe had at least one press. Within a handful of decades of its first print run it was being used to generate political treatises exhorting the masses on the inequality of the world and the oppressive nature of the nobility. It would be hyperbole to suggest that the printing press saw an end to feudalism or the Catholic Church, but it was instrumental in the rise of civil disobedience against the aristocracy and the spread of Protestantism. The Gutenberg device was exceptionally slow in producing books compared to the speed that the Superb Scrinium can achieve, but then a magical device is less easy to make than a press, so the speed of the impact of such a device may be considered equivalent.

The dissemination of ideas and

the questioning of the intellectual authorities is a natural consequence of a more literate society. The Church resisted translations of the Bible into vulgar tongues for centuries, largely because it feared what man might do if he were able to interpret the Good Book for himself.

### A GUILD OF SCRIBES

A device such as the Superb Scrinium could easily put all the scribes in a city out of work. Capable of working tirelessly all day and all night, producing a complete tome every few hours, the Superb Scrinium could copy an entire monastery's library in a month, given sufficient supplies. That volume could represent several years of work for a team of several scribes, and unsurprisingly, the profession will be up in arms. The scribes are likely to lodge complaints with the burghers of the city or the local lord; trying to bring legal proceedings halting the operation of the technology. The reasons they give for this vary, but many will be outright fabrications — such as the books reproduced by magic are somehow profaned.

It is also likely that the non-religious scribes will incorporate and found a guild. Scribes do not have any strong reason to join a guild until their livelihoods are threatened, and they may join forces with other professions who make a living by writing, such as notaries and legal advocates. Monks are not allowed to join guilds, but they may well sympathize, and the guild could be supported by a monastery (or monastic order). The Learned Magicians (*Hedge Magic Revised Edition*, Chapter Five) may join forces with them; these hedge wizards are known for their parchment amulets and calligraphic chartae, and may be personally invested in maintaining a thriving industry. It may be that the parchment makers and ink-

### Optional Rule: Limits on Instant Transportation

Some troupes consider instant transportation to be a bit too much like science fiction for their tastes. As an alternative to banning such spells entirely, it could be reconfigured as traveling in the blink of an eye. Rather than disappearing from one place and reappearing in another — a feat best left to saints and holy magicians — the magus travels through every point between his point of departure and his destination in a mere moment. The spell *Gift of Frog's Legs* (ArM5 page 134) epitomizes this approach: while the guideline specifies instant transportation up to 5 paces, the spell actually allows the target to jump that distance. Because essentially the character is flying exceptionally fast, anything he is wearing or carrying travels with him (even other creatures such as familiars, as long as they are small), but as noted in another insert

(nearby), storyguides might veto characters from carrying with them an excessive load.

Under this optional rule, a character must have an unobstructed path between the two locations to use such spells, although it need not be a straight path. The caster cannot be in a building which does not have open doors or windows of sufficient size for him to get through, and he cannot be shackled or tied. His destination is subject to the same requirement for lack of barriers; if he forgot to leave his sanctum door open, then *Leap of Homecoming* does not deposit him there. If a barrier does exist, the target is transported as far as the nearest barrier. So if he is shackled, the spell has no effect, but if the only barrier is his closed sanctum door then he simply appears outside it.



smiths also join up, but these professions are not under threat; indeed, the capacity for the Superb Scrinium to consume parchment and ink may well cause these professions to support it. Paper might become more widespread as a cheap alternative to parchment, and one which can be made at a much faster rate.

The political power of the Scribes' Guild depends on the role planned for them in the saga. If they can control provision of writing materials, then they can exert control over the magi-

cal creation of books — at least until a magus invents a ritual spell that generates vast amounts of parchment for relatively small amounts of vis. If left high and dry by their former allies, the scribes may well take on the role of saboteur, destroying books created by the new technology and attempting to wreck the device itself. They may become an underground profession devoted to what is perceived as old, archaic ways; writing their malicious spells to the doom of the Order in catacombs hidden under the city.

### INCREASED KNOWLEDGE

Assuming that Hermetic books are manufactured at the same rate — if not faster — than mundane books, the consequences for the Order are profound. Books are no longer priceless commodities that are copied only with great effort by skilled magi. There will always be a place in the Order for the artisan bookmaker who picks unique resonances and magical enhancements to set his work above all others. However, covenants might

## New Guidelines for Instant Transportation

In all cases, add 1 magnitude to increase the distance to 50 paces, 2 magnitudes for 500 paces, 3 magnitudes for 1 league, 4 magnitudes for seven leagues, and 5 magnitudes to a place for which you have an Arcane Connection.

### REGO ANIMAL

**Level 10:** Transport an animal instantly up to 5 paces. Non-living animal products are transported with Rego Terram.

### REGO AQUAM

**Level 4:** Transport a liquid instantly up to 5 paces.

### REGO HERBAM

**Level 10:** Transport a plant instantly up to 5 paces. Non-living plant products are transported with Rego Terram.

### REGO IGNEM

**Level 3:** Transport a fire instantly up to 5 paces.

### REGO TERRAM

**Level 4:** Transport a non-living object instantly up to 5 paces. For objects larger than something that can be comfortably held in two hands, size modifiers are necessary. Casting requisites may be needed if the item is primarily not under the Form of Terram.

### INSTANT TRANSPORTATION AND REQUISITES

*Ars Magica Fifth Edition* does not specify whether casting requisites are needed for instant transportation, and this may be left to the interpretation of the troupe. A storyguide wishing to make spells of instant transportation difficult might insist on casting requisites unless the character is to arrive naked (or has clothes made from human skin and hair...); however this has the effect of making these spells exceptionally difficult to cast. Spells to levitate or fly do not require casting requisites, neither, apparently, does *Gift of the Frog's Legs* which uses a guideline for instant transportation.

The view taken in this chapter is

that since Rego Corpus spells move the body, anything that the body is wearing or carrying is moved as well. Living creatures cannot be transported without requisites, except for familiars (if they can be carried), which share a special bond with the magus.

If the target is burdened by an unusually large load then casting requisites are certainly justified. As a guideline, any Burden which causes an Encumbrance of 3 or more should require a requisite appropriate to the material comprising the majority of the weight: Terram for metal, Herbam for wood, etc. Furthermore, a requisite is also justified if half the total weight is made up of a Form different to the primary Form: for example, a glass bottle containing wine, or a wooden crate with eggs inside. As always, the primary Form for a spell with requisites is derived from the spell with the highest base level, so a spell to transport a crate containing eggs is a Rego Animal (Terram) spell, not a Rego Terram (Animal) spell.

If you disagree with the basic premise that requisites are not required, then all you need to do is add casting requisites where applicable to the spells in this chapter.

have hundreds of books, and if they own their own Superb Scrinium, have the capacity to generate hundreds more. This could easily change the learning model of the Order. Study becomes a much more common method of advancement for apprentices since more books are available to them. At the other end of the scale, old magi have much more ready access to tractatus, and need not rely on the more dangerous study of vis for advancement in the Arts. Magi won't necessarily gain more experience points from studying books, but they are now less limited by the contents of their library; for, unless they are very unlucky, it will contain dozens of books on each Art.

In game terms, this greater provision of books might change the way that libraries are recorded in terms of game statistics. The system described in a nearby insert is suitable for covenants that contain at least fifty or so books.

## Travel in the Blink of an Eye

Travel is a tedious facet of life in Mythic Europe. The fastest that most people can ever travel is on a horse at full gallop, and such speeds cannot be maintained. The fastest a messenger has ever traveled is 90 miles in a single day, and this relies on multiple changes of horses. Yet journeying away from home is a necessary evil for many; most freemen attend markets in their nearest town every week to sell their wares, and even if they live in that town, they may need to travel to obtain raw materials or clients. Some priests need to travel between their parish churches to hold Mass and hear confession. Nobles (or their representatives) travel between the

manors of their fiefs to dispense justice and collect taxes. Perhaps most of all, merchants must shift goods from their place of production to the point of sale, and for those trading in expensive or rare materials, this might entail great distances indeed. It is within the scope of magi to lighten this burden of travel.

## New Spells for Instant Travel

Some example spells for instant transportation are given here. These use the new guidelines from the nearby insert. These spells can easily be adapted into enchantments in devices. To make best use of Shape and Material bonuses they are often invested into enchantments in the shape of doorways (+5 magical transportation) or halls (+3 magical transportation), or incorporate opal (+4 travel).

### BRING THE HERD TO MARKET

ReAn 45

R: Touch, D: Mom, T: Group

Instantly transports a Group of standard Individuals up to seven leagues, usually to a location known to the caster. This is often sufficient to transfer a flock from its pasture to market. This spell can affect up to two hundred chickens (Size -3), fifty sheep (Size -1), ten ponies (Size +1), or five horses (Size +2).

(Base 10, +1 Touch, +2 Group, +4 transport seven leagues)

### A BRIDGE WITHOUT WOOD

ReCo 20

R: Touch, D: Mom, T: Ind

Instantly transports the target to a point up to 50 paces away. The caster

must be able to clearly see the destination. This effect can be used to cross rivers and even scale cliffs if a suitable arrival point can be seen.

If enchanted into a device, this effect could be used in place of a bridge, and has the additional benefit that it can be easily removed to prevent enemies from using it.

(Base 15, +1 Touch)

### THE MESSENGER'S SHORTCUT

ReCo(An) 45

R: Touch, D: Mom, T: Group

Transports a rider and his horse one league (three miles). This effect is usually designed to affect a particular pairing of horse and rider to avoid warping, and so is designed to affect only two individuals. A spell of the same level could transport two or three riders and their mounts, but this spell is not designed to do so.

(Base 25, +1 Touch, +2 Group, +1 requisite)

### THE MOBILE INFANTRY

ReCo 50

R: Touch, D: Mom, T: Group

Instantly transports up to 100 men and their personal equipment up to 7 leagues. This powerful spell has been used to ferry soldiers to a battlefield; the magus who cast it was later executed in a Wizard's March by a Tribunal.

(Base 30, +1 Touch, +2 Group, +1 Size)

### THE INSTANT HARVEST

ReHe 45

R: Touch, D: Mom, T: Group

This spell divests a field of its crop, depositing the produce in a spot next to the field designated by the caster. It is best used for field crops such as leeks or turnips since it transports the



whole plant; if used to gather wheat, peas, or fruit, they must be processed further. An Intelligence + Finesse roll determines how neatly the vegetables are gathered; Ease Factor 9 avoids them being in an untidy pile at the designated spot.

(Base 10, +1 Touch, +2 Group, +3 Size, +1 transport 50 paces)

### RAPACIOUS HAND OF THE HIGHWAYMAN

ReTe 35

R: Voice, D: Mom, T: Ind

Transports a wagon and its contents from within range to a location three miles away. An Intelligence + Finesse stress roll against an Ease Factor of 9 ensures that the wagon is deposited on all four wheels, otherwise it tips over upon landing and may spill its contents. Note that since this uses the Terram guidelines to transport non-living objects, anyone riding in the wagon is left behind. Without requisites, substantial amounts of liquid or animals are also left behind.

This spell has become commonly used in the Normandy Tribunal, where stealing the supplies of another covenant is not forbidden by the Peripheral Code and there is a culture of raiding the supply lines of one's rivals.

(Base 4, +2 Voice, +2 Size, +3 transport 1 league)

### PORTAGE OF THE EAGLES

ReTe 45

R: Touch, D: Mom, T: Group

Transports up to one small hundred crates or equivalent volume of goods (100 cubic paces) to a place to which the caster has an Arcane Connection. Requisites are needed if the crates contain live animals or liquids.

(Base 4, +1 Touch, +2 Group, +1 Size, +5 transport to an Arcane Connection)

### IMPEDE THE IMPERTINENT INTERLOPER

PeVi General

R: Touch, D: Ring, T: Circle

This spell cancels the casting of any spell of instant transportation within a circle drawn at the time of casting, or to a person within the circle. It also prevents the area within the circle from being the destination of such a spell. The spell fails and the intended target does not move. The spell can only cancel spells of a level less than the (level of this spell + 5 + stress die (no botch)). Thus a 25th level version of this spell is always sufficient to block a *Seven-League Stride*, and might block *The Leap of Homecoming* if the stress die result is 5 or more. If the transport spell is of non-Hermetic origin then you should estimate its level based on Hermetic guidelines. If the caster of the affected spell is within the circle, then this spell must

Penetrate Magic Resistance to have the desired effect.

(Base effect, +1 Touch, +2 Ring)

### Example Device: The Gate of Countless Vistas

This rather grand-sounding device is typical of an enchantment with powers of instant transportation designed for a sanctum, covenant, castle, or so forth. It is unusual in that it is enchanted with multiple copies of the same enchantment, each designed specifically for a different user of the device. In this manner, magi can avoid warping from the powerful mystical effect while remaining able to benefit from the enchantment's effects. Naturally, as covenants grow, more potential users of the device arise, and an old covenant might have a chamber



dedicated to its numerous Gates of Countless Vistas. While a magus cannot benefit from the Laboratory Text of another, since each enchantment is designed for a different person, they do get a small bonus to their Lab Total for every version of the enchantment already in the device (ArM5, page 99).

If there are multiple covenants with similar devices, common practice would be to only provide allies with Arcane Connections to a particular room — and this would not be the room containing the covenant's own Gate of Countless Vistas. Rather, it would be a room with a sturdy lock, or else one with no door at all, but a magic device to open up a portal. This room is often placed outside of the destination covenant's *Aegis of the Hearth*. One never knows how long allies will remain allies, or how securely they maintain the Arcane Connections to other covenants.

**DESCRIPTION**

The Gate of Countless Vistas is an arched doorway made of stone. It is usually set into a wall rather than standing free, but if the latter is preferred, the doorway is equipped with a stout oak door fastened with an impressive iron lock. This door is not part of the enchantment — it just stops covenfolk accidentally straying through the gateway. The arch has a particularly prominent keystone at its apex; this keystone has a rectangular niche cut into it.

Nearby the Gate, and also not part of the enchantment itself, is a shelf containing several Arcane Connections collected by the user(s) of the device. Each one is designed to fit into the keystone at the top of the arch, and is clearly labeled — although some magi use a code only they know. The shelf may also hold several Arcane Connections to the

magus's own Gate, made from the same stone used to construct the arch. All of these Arcane Connections have usually been fixed in the laboratory to prevent their expiry.

The Gate of Countless Vistas is a large item of hard stone, and was prepared for enchantment with sixteen pawns of vis. The amount of space left in the enchantment depends upon how many times the enchantment has been instilled; a maximum of four users are possible per device assuming that only one use per day is acceptable.

**THE LONGEST STEP MADE SHORT**

ReCo 40

Pen 0, 1/day

R: Touch, D: Mom, T: Ind

Transports one person, his clothes, and his equipment to a location designated by the Arcane Connection placed in the Gate's niche. Each time this effect is added to the enchantment, it is keyed to a different trigger word. Each user is given his own password, to be uttered as he steps over the threshold of the arch.

(Base 35, +1 Touch)

**Example Device:  
Phylactery of the  
Cautious Maga**

This invested item is principally designed for a maga who prefers to avoid danger, but tends to find herself in harm's way. When she utters a command word, the Phylactery gathers an Arcane Connection from the maga's current location, and then transports her to a safe place represented by an Arcane Connection already within the Phylactery. She can use the gathered Arcane Connection to scry the location she has just left to determine whether danger has passed, and use it to return to her original location once

she deems it is safe. The effects described below allow the maga to complete one cycle of these effects each day; if she expects more trouble than this, she may wish to design the effects with more uses per day.

A particularly paranoid (or accident-prone) magus might enchant an Intellego Corpus effect into the Phylactery that continually monitors his health, and uses a linked trigger to gather the Arcane Connection and then transport him to safety should he be seriously wounded. In this case, the usual Arcane Connection within the device might be to a physician or healer whom the magus has cultivated as a friend. The disadvantage of this option is that it puts the wearer under a constant mystical effect, which might cause warping if employed for too long (ArM5, page 168). Additionally, the effect that transports the magus to safety needs sufficient Penetration to breach the magus's Magic Resistance, for he cannot always rely on being conscious in order to suppress his *Parma Magica*. Placing the effect in a Talisman allows the Range to be reduced to Personal, avoiding this latter problem.

A saga where Laboratory Texts of this and similar Invested Devices become readily available could cause a major change in the current dynamics of the Order of Hermes. Magi are no longer exposed to many of the perils of the world, since they can return to their sancta whenever danger threatens, and then return when it has passed. Indeed, they could return every night to the comfort of their own chambers rather than spending the night by the side of the road or in a louse-infested tavern. A very lazy magus could use these effects in reverse; acquiring an Arcane Connection to a grog or companion, then sending him out to travel to the intended location. Once there — which he can check through scrying effects — the magus can transport himself to his doughty servants, entirely bypass-



ing both the dangers and the tedium of traveling far from home.

### DESCRIPTION

A hollow wooden box approximately three inches long, two inches wide, and an inch deep. The box has a lid of highly polished silver that slides aside to reveal two compartments within; one is usually empty, whereas the other contains an Arcane Connection to a safe place such as the magus's sanctum. The Phylactery is usually suspended around the neck on a thong, but may be affixed to the forearm or thigh with a leather strap. This item has been prepared for enchantment with twelve pawns of vis (the highest vis requirement is for the small silver plate used as a lid), and has used ten of those in its effects.

### ACQUIRE THE CONNECTION

**ReTe 15**

**Pen 0, 1/day**

**R: Voice, D: Mom, T: Part**

Upon uttering a command word, this effect transports a pinch of dirt, a cobblestone, or a chip of flagstone (as specified by the creator of the device) from the floor around the magus into the empty bottom compartment of the Phylactery.

(Base 4, +2 Voice, +1 Part)

### FLEE TO SAFE REFUGE

**ReCo 44**

**Pen 0, 2/day**

**R: Touch, D: Mom, T: Ind**

This effect transports the wearer to the place designated by the Arcane Connection in the top compartment of the Phylactery. Note that unless this effect is designed with a Penetration bonus, the wearer must suppress her *Parma Magica* (ArM5, page

85) for it to affect her; this requires a Stamina + Concentration roll, vs. an Ease Factor determined by the maga's current situation (ArM5, page 82).

The effect is triggered by activating the Acquire the Connection effect; it can also be triggered separately by a command word. The reason for the linked trigger is to minimize the actions required by the fleeing maga: it takes just one command to activate both effects, and if a maga is sorely injured or in imminent danger, one action may be all she gets.

(Base 35, +1 Touch; +3 linked trigger, +1 2 uses per day)

### SUMMONING THE DISTANT IMAGE

**InIm 25**

**Pen 0, 1/day**

**R: Arc, D: Conc, T: Room**

As the spell of the same name (ArM5, page 145); using the Arcane Connection residing in the bottom compartment of the Phylactery. The images appear in the mirrored lid of the box. Note that the effect will not work if the Arcane Connection is not to a well-defined room.

(Base 2, +4 Arc, +1 Conc, +2 Room)

## New Spells for Very Fast Travel

Not all magical transportation has to be in the blink of an eye. There are other means of travel that, while not instant, are still faster than anything currently available in Mythic Europe. This section includes a few spells which could act as inspiration for devices permitting other modes of transport.

### MERCURY'S WINGED SANDALS

**ReCo 20**

**R: Per, D: Conc, T: Ind**

The caster can fly. He must make an Intelligence + Finesse roll to change direction or speed, with an Ease Factor related to his current speed — Ease Factor 3 for walking pace, Ease Factor 9 at moderate speed, Ease Factor 12 at maximum speed.

He can move at a maximum speed as fast as a running horse — about forty miles an hour — but this is reduced by one mile an hour for every point of Load he carries. He cannot physically carry a load which inflicts a Burden more than five points greater than his Strength (i.e. 15 points of Load for a character with Strength 0, 10 points of Load for a character with Strength -1, etc.). A second, unencumbered individual is a Load of 21 on average (see *Grogs*, Chapter 4).

Concentration Duration is better than Sun Duration for this spell since in the former case the caster can end it at will, but the effect is often enchanted into an item that maintains concentration for the caster, for added safety.

(Base 15, +1 Conc)

### WOOLEN STEED OF ARABY

**ReAn 15**

**R: Touch, D: Sun, T: Ind**

Imbues a woolen rug or animal pelt with the power of flight. A person sitting on the rug is lifted along with it, and the caster may make Intelligence + Finesse rolls to change direction or speed. The Ease Factor is related to current speed — Ease Factor 6 for walking pace, Ease Factor 12 at moderate speed, Ease Factor 15 at maximum speed of forty miles an hour. (Note that these Ease Factors are higher than for *Mercury's Winged Sandals* due to the increased difficulty of moving an object rather than oneself directly). The rug can only support the caster and his clothes; he can have no more than one point of Encumbrance or else the spell cannot

lift him. The passenger is not protected from falling off the flying rug, so impressive aerial maneuvers are not recommended, nor is flying through strong winds.

The extra magnitudes have been added to this spell by analogy with the Rego Corpus guidelines.

(Base 1, +1 Touch, +2 Sun, +1 unsupported surface, +1 for any direction, +1 for increased speed)

### VESSEL OF THE CLOUDS

ReHe 30

R: Touch, D: Sun, T: Ind

Imbues a small boat such as a coracle with the power of flight. The

boat and all its contents are lifted into the air, and the caster may make Intelligence + Finesse rolls to change direction or speed. For typical Ease Factors, see *The Woolen Steed of Araby*, earlier. The maximum speed is forty miles an hour.

The rigid nature of wood allows the boat to carry a substantial burden, in addition to being lifted itself, the boat can contain a Load of 50. Note that an average person has a Load of 21, so the boat can carry perhaps two people and their equipment. Adding a Size modifier to this spell lifts a larger boat: each additional Size modifier multiplies the maximum additional Load by a factor of 10.

A boat made of metal (or other

metal object) could be made to fly using the Rego Terram base guideline of 2, +2 to affect metal. Metal is even more rigid than wood, and can bear an extra 75 points of Load in addition to itself. As before, Size modifiers lift ten times as much metal and thus ten times as much Load.

The extra magnitudes have been added to this spell by analogy with the Rego Corpus guidelines.

(Base 3, + 1 Touch, +2 Sun, +1 Size, +1 unsupported surface, +1 for any direction, +1 for increased speed)

### THE CHARIOT OF ZEUS

MuCo(Au) 30

R: Per, D: Mom, T: Ind

Transforms the caster into a thunderbolt (equivalent to an insubstantial object). In this form he can move literally at the speed of lightning to any location he can see. There must be an unobstructed path between the caster and his destination. Upon arrival the caster transforms back into his normal shape with a mighty crack of thunder. Anyone within 2 paces of his destination must make a Size stress roll against an Ease Factor of 6 to remain standing. The caster can choose the location of another person as his destination, in which case he inflicts +30 damage to that individual and arrives standing next to her. If he strikes a building he arrives on the roof, and the building must make a stress check (*City & Guild*, page 77) or take six damage levels; wooden buildings catch fire even if they survive.

The Duration of this spell cannot be extended beyond Momentary, since bolts of lightning exist only for a moment; furthermore it can only be used outside. Note also that, no matter what your ruling on casting requisites for Rego spells, Muto spells definitely require them.

(Base 30)

## What About The Hermes' Portal?

The Order is in possession of a powerful Mercurian Ritual that allows unlimited instantaneous travel between two points over the course of its year-long duration — the *Hermes' Portal* (ArM5, page 156). House Mercere guard a secret lab procedure to make Mercere's Portals, which act just like a Hermes' Portal but are permanent (*Houses of Hermes: True Lineages*, pages 80, 100–101). However, these methods have several disadvantages compared to devices like the Gate of Countless Vistas. Both *Hermes' Portals* and Mercere's Portals link two places through mutual Arcane Connections, and once cast or created, this location cannot be altered. A *Hermes' Portal* requires two casters (or groups using *Wizard's Communion*) who can cast a 75th level Ritual spell, and it lasts just a year. The Mercere's Portals are slightly easier to create and are permanent creations, but still constitute a 65th level enchantment and, again, must be made as a pair. The total cost in vis is less than for a *Hermes' Portal*, but the requisite Lab Total is harder to achieve than

the Casting Total for the Ritual spell, even if Laboratory Texts are available.

There are some advantages to these two approaches over devices like the Gate of Countless Vistas. The first is Warping: neither the *Hermes' Portal* or a Mercere's Portal grant Warping points to those transported, since the target of the spell is the other end of the portal, not the transported individual. This is not true for Rego Corpus spells such as *The Leap of Homecoming*, which directly target the individual being transported and inflict a warping point for being a powerful mystical effect. Devices like the Gate of Countless Vistas can be designed to partially overcome this limit, but every user needs their own enchantment to be safe from Warping. The second advantage is that both the *Hermes' Portal* and a Mercere's Portal will transport any object — person, living creature or plant, or inanimate object. This gives them an enhanced utility over spells of instant transportation that must be invented for each type of object transported.



## Plaustrum Pertinax

**Magic Might:** 0 (Herbam)  
**Season:** Spring  
**Characteristics:** Cun 0, Per +2, Pre +1, Com -6, Str +5, Sta +6, Dex +2, Qik -5

**Size:** +3  
**Warping Score:** 5 (2)

**Virtues and Flaws:** Magic Thing; Transformed Thing; Essential Virtue\*, Tough, Well-Traveled; Magical Monster; Lesser Malediction (moving parts sometimes temporarily fuse)\*, Oversensitive (orders from magi)\*

\* from Warping

**Magical Qualities and Inferiorities:** Personal Power, Terram Resistance; Reduced Attack, Reduced Initiative

**Personality Traits:** Stubborn +6, Disobedient to Magi +3, Wagon\* +2, Hard to Topple (Dexterity)\* +3

\* Essential Trait

**Combat:**

**Bludgeon:** Init -7, Attack +6, Defense -1, Damage +7

**Soak:** +15

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

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-8), -3 (8-16), -5 (17-24), Incapacitated (25-32), Dead (33+)

**Abilities:** Animal Handling 3 (dray animals), Area Lore 4 (routes), Athletics 2 (avoiding potholes), Awareness 1 (roads traveled before), Brawl 3 (bludgeon), Con-

centration 2 (*Immovable Object* power), Living Language 2 (drover's slang), Terram Resistance 2 (wear and tear)

**Powers:**

*Immovable Object*, 0 points, Init -3, Herbam: The wagon can fix itself in place, and prove completely immobile. Any attempt to move the wagon while this power is in operation risks damaging it. None of its contents may be removed either. ReHe 10 (Base 3, +1 Conc, +1 size, +1 extra force) Personal Power (10 levels, -2 Might cost, +1 Init)

**Vis:** none

**Appearance:** A flat-bedded four-wheeled wagon, big enough to carry six people, plus two on the driver's bench, or an equivalent load. An optional canvas canopy can be raised to keep the contents protected from the weather. The wagon requires two beasts of burden to pull it, or four when fully laden.

This wagon has been the property of a covenant for decades, maybe over a century. It became heavily warped after the covenant developed spells for instant transportation. At least once per week it was ported all around Mythic Europe, and eventually a botched casting of the transportation spell granted it the Transformed Thing Virtue (*Realms of Power: Magic*, page 47).

Known now as the Stubborn Wagon (Plaustrum Pertinax), this Magic Thing is viewed with a certain affection by some of the covenfolk, who enjoy its petty disobedience towards the covenant's magi. Its axles seize at inopportune moments, and it often throws a wheel rim close to an inn favored by the grogs. Despite this, it will always be an outsider, a freak generated by magic. It is capable of slow movement even without dray animals, but hasn't shown anyone this ability yet. When in a helpful mood, it can use its own Animal Handling in place of that of its driver.

You might wish to use the rules for Damaging Objects on page 77 of *City & Guild* rather than using Soak and Wound Penalties. In this case, the Plaustrum Pertinax has 10 damage levels, and when an event could damage it, make a stress roll + 5 (Wondrous item) + Profession: Drover or Animal Handling of the operator. If the result is equal to or greater than the Ease Factor of 15, the wagon avoids losing a damage level. Damage levels do not impose penalties, they simply indicate how much punishment an object can take until it is broken beyond use. Damage levels can be restored by a competent carpenter or wheelwright, although if the wagon is completely broken it may not still be a Magic Thing once repaired.

### FORM OF THE ZEPHYR

MuCo(Au) 40

R: Per, D: Sun, T: Ind

Transforms the caster into a strong gale wind. She flies at 50 miles an hour, but can increase this speed to that of a violent storm wind — 75 miles per hour — by expending a Long Term Fatigue level. She can travel at this increased speed for no more than an hour without expending

another Fatigue level. This ability to gust is intrinsic to the type of wind into which the caster turns, much as the *Cloak of Mist* (ArM5, page 131) allows the caster to seep through cracks like natural mist. Note that because this spell turns the caster into a gale wind, she cannot travel any more slowly than 50 miles an hour. A different spell (of the same level) is needed to turn into a more gentle wind. The caster inhales a gust of wind to cast

this spell, and can end the spell and transform back into human form by letting this captured wind free.

While in the form of a wind, she can attempt to bowl over any object her size or smaller; this requires making roll of Strength + Concentration + stress die against the target's Stamina + stress die. The defender may add Athletics to their roll if they are braced for the attack. If the caster's roll exceeds her opponent's, then the

target is knocked off his feet and flung backwards one foot for every point of the difference. As a violent storm wind, the target is instead flung three feet per point of the difference. Falling damage (ArM5 page 181) is inflicted on those knocked over; hitting an obstruction before the full distance flung back is reached counts as falling onto a hard surface (such as a wall) or a soft surface (such as a haystack). Knocking over inanimate objects has an Ease Factor of  $9 + (3 \times \text{its Size})$ .

(Base 30, +2 Sun)

### Warping Gained from Instant Transportation

Spells and effects for instant transportation are often over 30th level, particularly if they transport a target an appreciable distance. This means that the targets of these spells accu-

mulate a Warping point with every casting, and if a person, animal, or object is affected 5 times or more, it will suffer a Minor Flaw (ArM5, page 168), and another after 15 castings. Should one target experience 75 or more transits, it also accumulates a Minor Virtue. Flaws that result from repeated transportation magic might include Motion Sickness, No Sense of Direction or Lesser Malediction (feelings of loneliness and depression when away from home). Virtues might include Wilderness Sense (which includes a sense of where north is) or Homing Instinct (see *Realms of Power: Magic*, page 44).

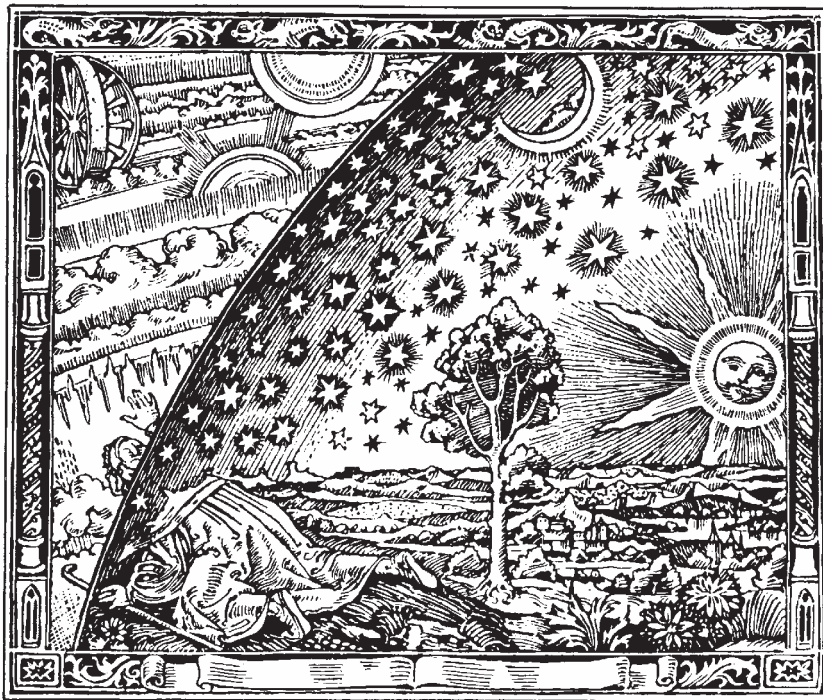
Even inanimate objects suffer warping (ArM5, page 167), and while warped packing crates are no great trial (as long as they are not reused), transporting an entire wagon and its contents is not such a good idea, since the wagon represents a substantial outlay of funds and is not dispos-

able in the same manner. There are no clear rules regarding what happens when items become warped. Eating food warped by transport across Mythic Europe should not be any problem (it would only have one Warping point in any case), unless it suits the story for this to be an issue. Items that get heavily warped may develop a personality of their own, although it probably needs a more dramatic event, such as a botch, for an item to become truly sentient.

### Why it May Not Work: A Prohibitive Cost

Instant transportation is a high level effect. Even the basic version — *The Longest Step Made Short* described above — is eighth magnitude, and this permits just a single use per day. This represents a significant investment in time and vis even for a specialist in magical transportation. An option is to include effect expiry (ArM5, page 99); a magus could instill *The Longest Step Made Short* in a single season with a Lab Total of 48, if he was prepared to accept the limitation that the item would lose its magic after seven years.

If these problems are faced by the creation of just a single device, imagine the problems involved with setting up an entire network of Gates. Once Laboratory Texts are available for these effects then the pool of magi capable of creating the device widens, but the vis cost and time incurred does not change. The initiating magi would need to involve a fair few colleagues for the invention to have a significant impact on Mythic Europe. Involving an entire House in the benefits might be the way to go. House Verditius is perhaps the best skilled, but they are ill-suited to duplicating the same invention multiple times. House Mercere would perhaps be pleased to assist in a substitute for their Mercere





Portal network, but there are precious few Gifted Merceres. House Tremere might see the benefits of rapid transit, particularly if it permitted the mass movement of troops. Other Houses might be more or less interested depending on the saga.

## Societal Impacts of Magical Transportation

While conceptually simple, inventions incorporating instant transportation are only likely to be achieved by specialists in Rego — or magi with a Minor Magical Focus in Magical Transportation — due to the high levels of the effects involved.

### TRANSPORT OF GOODS

The facility to bypass hundreds or thousands of miles of hostile countryside filled with untold dangers is highly attractive to a merchant adventurer. Caravan consignments go missing all the time, prey to robbers, dishonest carriers, and sheer bad luck. Sea travel is particularly hazardous; an estimated 10 percent of all ships on the Mediterranean Sea never reach their destination.

It takes nearly 50 days for a consignment to travel from Genoa to Paris overland, and 70 days by sea (*City & Guild*, pages 88–90). If the same commodities could make the journey in a matter of minutes, through several uses of a magical item with an enchantment like *Portage of the Eagles*, this could save the merchant vast sums of money in carrier costs and lost consignments.

Merchants with the capacity to instantly return valuable goods back home are likely to fund expeditions to distant places in search of fabled material. For example, nearly all the turquoise and malachite in Mythic

Europe is sourced near the city of Nishapur in Persia, about as far as Mythic Europeans have ever gone. In the same part of the world in Badakhshan is the single source for lapis lazuli (for more on Nishapur and Badakhshan, see *The Cradle & the Crescent: the Mythic Middle East*). Other luxury goods from distant, almost mythical locations include silk from Serica, diamonds and spices from Hind, and gold and ivory from Africa. Such expeditions are far more attractive prospects if the goods (and possibly the explorers, although this is of lesser importance) do not have to risk the perils of the journey home, but can be sent direct to the warehouses in Genoa or Paris. The short term consequence will be that those merchants who possess such fabulous devices get rich, very quickly. In the medium to long term, particularly if instant transportation of goods becomes readily available, the principle consequence is inflation. Luxury items become a lot more common, and towns and cities in particular experience a boom in material wealth. Whereas before the typical medieval society consisted of subsistence living, spending what wealth was earned rather than allowing it to accrue, a society enriched in this manner has more disposable income than it is capable of spending, so saving becomes more common. Of course, hoarding wealth constitutes the sin of avarice, and demons flock to the cities to corrupt the inhabitants.

In the meantime, the people of the countryside are little affected by the economic boom. It takes much longer for the economic growth of the cities to filter through into the rural food-producing communities since there is no direct acquisition of wealth occurring in the provinces. As a result, most farmers are unable to afford the higher prices of the cities, and the divide between rural and urban populations grows ever more stark.

Ultimately, the cities and their burghers become highly influential. They can begin to dictate terms to the nobility, for their wealth is founded in hard coin rather than in sinew and acres. The baronial class loses its influence, although some barons will doubtless adapt to the new traditions, and perhaps attempt to found a trading house of their own, complete with an item permitting instant transportation of goods.

### TRANSPORT OF PEOPLE

Travel for the sake of the journey is rare in Mythic Europe. Those who make a living traveling the roads and byways are viewed with suspicion by most people, and this is a clear mark of a low status profession. A trip between the home manor and the nearby market town is the weekly business of farmers and craftsmen, and the business of the merchant has been described above. Other reasons to travel include pilgrimage, carrying messages, and visiting tenants or dependents — such as the yearly visitation of a bishop or his archdeacon to the parishes of the see, or a baron visiting the manors of his vassal knights to gather taxes. Of these travelers, it is the couriers who are likely to benefit the most from technology permitting instant transportation. There are occasions when the missives they carry are time dependent — particularly during times of war — and the messenger that has access to instant transportation grants his client or employer a massive advantage.

Spells and effects to shuffle soldiers across the face of Mythic Europe (such as *The Mobile Infantry*, earlier) can change the face of warfare. Distant allies can be of more use to those engaging in war, since their troops are at the other end of a spell or magical device.

SAGA SEED: PUBLIC PORTALS AND MEDIEVAL TOURISTS

Consider a Mythic Europe where magi have spent many decades disseminating devices of instant transportation such as the Gates of Countless Vistas across Mythic Europe. This begins as a means of convenience for the redcaps, replacing the former network of Mercere's Portals that was torn down during the Schism War (*Houses of Hermes: True Lineages*, page 80) with a less expensive and more flexible alternative, albeit one that causes warping. Most see little harm in allowing their companions and allies use of the Gates, but this makes it more difficult to keep the secret from mundane lords and burghers, who immediately see the benefits of instant transportation, and clamor for the building of private Gates for their own use. Many of these are personally built and installed by a single enthusiastic magus of House Mercere.

A generation later sees Gates of Countless Vistas crossing Mythic Europe in an extensive network. Most major cities have two or more Gates for public use, and nearly all major nobles have their own. Chartered towns often collected the funds for a Gate through taxes, and have either now procured one or are on the waiting list of the local Gatemaker, usually a member of House Verditius. The minimum manufacturing cost for a Gate with unlimited uses per day is 10 pawns of vis (five to prepare for enchantment, five to instill a 50th level effect), which translates to a price of 150 Mythic Pounds or 30 pawns of vis (taking into account House Verditius's normal pricing structure, see *Houses of Hermes: Mystery Cults*, pages 114–115). Demand could inflate this cost further (maybe to 20 Mythic Pounds per pawn of vis, or four times the enchantment cost). Similar devices have been produced for transporting goods; rich merchant houses

have both types, and employ a staff of specialist porters called *concierges* who work both sides of the Gates, transporting themselves, transferring the goods, and then transporting back to unload the pallets.

Most civic Gates have Arcane Connections to neighboring cities on sale, with the price dependent on the distance to that city. There is a brisk trade in Arcane Connections to more exotic locales, and a "tourist" industry has arisen amongst the rich, who visit cities or natural wonders at the opposite end of Mythic Europe, a true trip of a lifetime. Some locations have built hostels specifically to cater for these tourists. Of course, an unscrupulous vendor may sell an Arcane Connection to a place with no Gate for the return journey, then help himself to his client's property, knowing that he will not return! The pope has had to issue a bull indicating that the use of a Gate invalidates the spiritual benefits a pilgrimage brings.

When the devices first came into service, users were warned to not make more than four trips through the Gates in a lifetime, but this is routinely ignored since many of the signs of warping caused by the Gates are not immediately noticeable. The recommendation has since been relaxed to only 12 trips in a lifetime, and many stick to this since it is reinforced through the superstitious dread of the unlucky 13th journey. It is not widely known that if you are going to make five or more trips, you won't suffer from a second Flaw from warping until your 30th trip. The heavy level of warping that the *concierges* suffer is a poorly kept secret in cities, and the city slums are slowly filling with individuals with mental and physical deformities or supernatural aberrations. *Beguines* — women from wealthy backgrounds who have taken lay religious vows and tend to the poor and sick — have begun to agitate against the use of the

Gates, claiming they are a dangerous and corrupting influence on society. They use the former *concierges* as evidence of the threat. It has been several years, but people are starting to listen to the *beguines*, and some are looking to the creators of the devices as responsible for the situation.

## Creating Wealth with Magic

A temptation for many player magi is to use their magic to create untold wealth. It can be exceptionally simple to create wealth, either directly in terms of silver and gold, indirectly in the form of valuable goods, or as enrichment through the reduction of costs. The realization that magi do not have to live in abject poverty is a revelation to many apprentices, and a source of confusion too, because few magi adopt the extravagant lifestyles that their Arts could permit.

The principle reason cited for not creating wealth is the negative impacts it can have on the local — or global — economy, which is assuredly meddling with mundanes. Additionally, being conspicuously wealthy draws too much attention to the Order of Hermes, which has always done best by thriving on the fringes of society, a separation mandated by the suspicion engendered by The Gift.

These concerns do not always stop magi young and old from pursuing magics to enrich themselves. The love of money and a yearning for luxury seems ingrained behavior in some people, despite religious prohibitions about coveting riches and the immorality perceived in those who hoard that which God has given them. Devices and spells to generate wealth are as much a part of technology in Mythic Europe as is wealth a motivator to invent in the first place.



## A Cashless Economy

Much commerce in Mythic Europe — at least that on a local level — does not rely on the exchange of coins. When the autocrat of a covenant wishes to settle a bill with the local flour merchant, he may not hand over a pouch of coins; instead, he might arrange for the delivery of four dozen eggs. These he got in exchange for some iron remnants that the covenant's smith had left over... and so on. In towns, tally sticks issued by the merchant's guild are far more likely units of currency than the actual coins they represent. Peasants in particular avoid spending coins locally if they can, preferring to use barter to

exchange the excess produce of their own efforts with a neighbor's excess, gaining some variety in their diet. The coins they receive are saved for paying the tithe and the various rents and fines levied by their lord (*Lords of Men*, pages 79–82).

It is usually visitors to a region who pay for things in coin. A sure way to spot a foreigner in a town is to observe someone handing over more than a few pennies for something; since they are strangers to the area they do not have a local line of credit or goods with which to bargain, and so must rely on hard cash. The nobility also use coinage, using the revenue collected from their peasants to pay their own dues to their lieges and the

Crown, as well as dowries for their daughters and ransoms for their sons.

In addition to the difficulty in redeeming goods for coins outside market towns and cities, the magical creation of silver bears a real danger. The license to mint coins is perhaps the most jealously guarded right and is reserved for monarchs and — depending upon where one is in Mythic Europe — a few high ranking noblemen and archbishops. Even though the local economy does not rely on wealth invested into precious metals, the economy of a kingdom does; as a consequence, those found adulterating coinage or minting false money are dealt with in the most serious manner — nearly everywhere this is con-

## Direct Creation of Wealth

There are many ways to directly create wealth; this insert covers just two of them. Perhaps the simplest way of increasing one's personal wealth is through the direct creation of coins. These can then be spent as one would any other coins, although note the comments in the main text about Mythic Europe being a largely cashless society.

Probably the most lucrative substance to create directly with magic is pearls, one of the most sought-after precious gems in Mythic Europe. River pearls are of average quality, and are sourced mostly from Russia, but the most valuable pearls come from even further afield — from Persia, the Red Sea, and the islands around Arabia. Since antiquity it has been known that pearls are the offspring of a shellfish. Pliny the Elder revealed that they are conceived in the air from the dew, as evidenced from their color — if conceived on a cloudy day the pearl is similarly cloudy, whereas brilliant pearls result from sunny mornings. One

of the key qualities of pearls is that no two are identical, although lapidaries try very hard to match them as closely as possible when constructing jewelry from pearls. Since magically created pearls are all identical to one another (see *Boundless Wealth of the Oceans*, below) suspicion might be raised that they are fake.

### BOUNDLESS WEALTH OF THE OCEANS

CrAn 20

R: Touch, D: Mom, T: Group, Ritual  
Creates 3,000 pounds of pearls, equivalent to over one million pearls about half an inch in diameter. These are remarkably large pearls, each one about a quarter of an ounce in weight. Good quality sea pearls usually sell for about three Mythic Pounds per ounce (*Covenants*, page 141). Each pearl is identical to its fellows, and is somehow marked by the sigil of the caster.

(Base 5, +1 Touch, +2 Group)

### THE WEALTH OF CROESUS

CrTe 30

R: Touch, D: Mom, T: Group, Ritual  
Creates 13,000 silver pennies, amounting to 650 Mythic Pounds. The magus's sigil is incorporated into the design on the obverse and reverse of each coin. An Intelligence + Finesse roll allows the caster to match the design otherwise to that of a specific realm's coinage; an Ease Factor of 9 means that only an expert would notice the difference.

Note that the coins are made of unusually pure silver; even English silver — considered the purest in Mythic Europe — cannot match it in quality. Furthermore, coinage created with this spell is free from nicks, scratches, dents, and tarnish, and unlike a large proportion of coins in Mythic Europe, have not been clipped or divided to make change.

(Base 15, +1 Touch, +2 Group)

sidered traitorous, and punishable by death. Even carrying false coin in any great amount is dangerous, and trying to use it in a commercial exchange is tantamount to an admission of guilt. Whereas the man on the street might not know the provenance of the many different types of coins, a royal official does. Few magi are willing to risk the perils involved, particularly when the populace is already suspicious of them thanks to The Gift.

Magi wishing to improve their financial situation should therefore look outside the direct creation of wealth, and look at ways of producing goods for exchange for things they wish to purchase. It is important to know one's market; an enchantment which entices fish into the nets ironically has little value in a coastal community where fish are in ready supply.

### FLOODING THE MARKET

There are any number of ways in which Hermetic magi can create precious materials. Commodities created with magic only have potential value — they have no actual value unless they can be sold, preferably for their going price. The biggest problem is that Hermetic magic creates far too much of these valuable materials, tempting magi to sell it quickly and live a life of luxury. However, if the magi flood the market with their produce, then the price of that product — which is based solely on its scarcity — plummets. The characters then have the option to sell the rest of their stock at a fraction of its former value, or hold onto it until the market recovers, which might take decades, or even longer.

### Example Device: Potent Salts

The right to produce salt is possibly the most lucrative of the rights given to lords and monasteries by monarchs. Salt is less expensive than pearls and silver, but it is craved by all levels of society. One's social standing is often measured by the quality of salt one can offer one's guests at the table, but it is also heavily used by cooks and peasants alike to preserve meat and fish. The ubiquitous need for salt makes the rights to produce it very valuable, and in western Mythic Europe where salt mines are scarce, most salt derives from salt pans. Salt production and marketing is highly regulated as a town monopoly and, by setting prices, the salt makers maintain their profits. Salt rights representing the amount of brine that could be extracted each year are shared amongst certain of the townspeople. Town officials collect salt dues (or "sallage") in order to pay the fee owed to the king, which can be a hundred Mythic Pounds or more. Salt rights can only be passed on by inheritance; they cannot be purchased.

This example technology makes use of the Charged Items rules. The effect is of such a low level that even apprentices and junior magi can often create multiple charges, especially if a Laboratory Text is available.

### DESCRIPTION

A common form for this Charged Item is a bag of crystalline material, akin to salt but with a slight metallic smell. A charge is used by scattering a pinch of the Potent Salts onto an amount of water up to the size of a base Individual of Aquam. As the crystals touch the water they initiate a rapidly expanding circle of pure white

### Story Seeds: Precious Goods

If the characters attempt to enrich themselves by usurping a traditional right like the production of salt, they may find themselves in all sorts of trouble. What might seem like a simple scheme to make the covenant a little more comfortable for its inhabitants could quickly escalate into a "salt war" with the local holders of the rights. In the past, such confrontations have included adulterating the opposition's salt pans with poisonous metal salts which cause hair loss, cramping muscles, and intestinal distress in any who consume even small amounts. Finding the alchemist who poisoned the salt before he strikes closer to home could develop into a paranoid witch-hunt amongst the covenant's employees.

A *Harvest of Figs* afflicts a Warping point on the target plant

thanks to a powerful mystical effect, and *Nourish the Displaced Vines* inflicts another Warping point as a continuing mystical effect each year it is used. After several years of being affected by these spells, the covenant's spice trees develop the (Form) Monstrosity Flaw (*Realms of Power: Magic*, page 48–49).

Cinnamon trees are well-known for their propensity to spontaneously burst into flames, and many other spice and incense trees are famous for attracting deadly serpents who live amongst their branches.

Some incense trees are guarded by powerful spirits, who may resent the theft and farming of the sacred incense, and send a team of sorcerers to reclaim their child (see *Rival Magic*, Chapter Five for details of the perfume-sorcerers of Soqotra).



that expels the water as vapor and leaves the salt behind. A season in the laboratory creates the same number of pinches of crystal as charges; there is no effect from using less than a pinch.

#### ALCHEMICAL SEPARATION OF BRINE

ReAq 4

Pen 0, charged item

R: Touch, D: Mom, T: Ind

A pinch of these crystals converts salt water into pure salt through Rego Craft magic. Saltmaking is a skilled profession, and normally takes a month to turn brine into perfectly dry salt; this spell therefore requires a Dexterity + Finesse roll with an Ease Factor of 12 to successfully produce pure salt. Any sea creatures, seaweed and other flotsam are removed as part of the process and piled up next to the salt.

Saltwater is usually about seven parts salt to two hundred parts water; this spell can affect up to 4,350 gallons of seawater (a base Individual of Aquam, assuming a circular body five paces diameter and two paces at the center), yielding 147 gallons of salt weighing 1228 pounds, or just over half a ton. Salt sells for 120 Mythic Pounds per ton (*City & Guild*, page 142) in a scarce market.

(Base 3, +1 Touch)

### Example Device: The Garland of Prosperous Harvests

Amongst the most expensive commodities brought to the west are spices such as cinnamon, cloves, cardamom, and pepper. Various fantastic tales are told about their origins, but educated people are aware of Pliny the Elder's explanations of their origins among exotic trees and bushes of Persia and the semi-mythical

Hind. Spices are expensive because they travel from so far, and a magus might be tempted to cultivate the trees in Mythic Europe. And it is not just spices — incenses such as olibanum (frankincense) and myrrh are similarly expensive and derive from the gums of exotic trees. The principle difficulty is that a magus cannot create what he cannot conceive, and few people in Mythic Europe have seen a pepper bush or cinnamon tree.

This device uses an effect called *A Harvest of Figs* (see below) to rapidly bring a plant to maturity from the dried seed without the need for vis. This is typically done in the autumn, so that a harvest can be gathered immediately. When "planting" a new orchard, the magus or his representative parades around the prepared site carrying the Garland of Prosperous Harvests before him, touching the base of the pole to each seed as he comes across it. Just two dozen plants can be grown in each day, so the Garland of Prosperous Harvests is usually employed over two or three days to generate a decent-sized orchard. To allow the trees thus grown to survive past one crop, the Garland of Prosperous Harvests is then planted in the center of the orchard, touching one central plant, and *Nourish the Displaced Vines* is triggered to keep the plants safe.

#### DESCRIPTION

The Garland of Prosperous Harvests usually takes the form of a tall pole bearing a circular wreath of greenery one pace in diameter at its top. Sometimes, the wreath is replaced by a life-sized jointed mannequin, of the sort used to scare birds as it rattles in the wind. The Garland of Prosperous Harvests has been prepared with 8 pawns of vis (it is a large item made of wood), and has



## Technological Cost Saving

As detailed in *Covenants* (page 66–69), a covenant can employ various cost-saving measures, and by far the most effective of these is replacing people with magic. Each laborer working for the covenant can reduce the expenditure on Provisions by one pound, but all the laborers can be replaced by an enchantment that produces an effect such as *The Instant Harvest* (earlier). Using the rule of thumb given in *Covenants*, this 35th level spell does the work of seven laborers, and thus saves seven pounds of expenditure every year. An item enchanted with *The Elfin Baker* can replace the need for employing a baker at the covenant and create a cost saving of at least four pounds a year.

2 pawns unused. Other enchantments typically invested may include effects to keep out disease and vermin.

### A HARVEST OF FIGS

CrHe 40

Pen 0, 24/day

R: Touch, D: Sun, T: Ind

This spell brings a plant from seed to maturity over the course of a day. The plant that results is a perfect specimen of its kind appropriate to the season; if cast in spring the plant has flowers, if cast in autumn it is in full fruit. It can affect a tree up to Size +6, about 25 feet tall (a base Individual of Herbam is Size +3). The plant only thrives beyond the spell's duration if it can normally grow under the climate and soil conditions that it finds itself in.

(Base 15, +1 Touch, +2 Sun, +1 Size; +5 24/day)

### NOURISH THE DISPLACED VINES

CrHe 19

Pen 0, constant effect

R: Touch, D: Sun, T: Group

Permits up to a hundred plants of Size +3 (or an equivalent volume, such as a thousand plants of Size +0 or ten trees of Size +6) to grow well regardless of the climate and soil conditions, although they may still be affected by disease. The plants must be growing close enough to each other for their roots or branches to touch, else they are not considered to be part of the same group.

Plants affected by this spell for a year always produce their maximum yield of fruits, nuts, or seeds. A single bush of Size +3 produces anywhere between half to one bushel of produce, depending on the type of plant. A tree of Size +6 can bear five to ten bushels.

(Base 1, +1 Touch, +2 Sun, +2 Group, +1 Size; +1 2/day, +3 environmental trigger)

### Reducing Covenant Costs

The food bill is the largest category of expenditure in the day-to-day running of a covenant and so has the greatest potential for cost-saving. According to the economic system presented in *Covenants* (Chapter Five), it costs one Mythic Pound to support one point of inhabitants (in a spring covenant, a grog is one inhabitant point, a companion is three, a magus is five). Half this cost — i.e. 10 shillings — is taken up by provisions. Wages and consumables each account for another four shillings in every Mythic Pound, and the wear and tear on the fabric of the covenant accounts for the remaining two shillings per Mythic Pound.

Depending on how well the covenant eat, half to three quarters

of the provisions consumed at a covenant is in the form of bread. Most of this will have started life as grain, either bought in or grown in the covenant's own fields. If a covenant relies on magically-created grain (see *Fill the Capacious Silo*, below) to meet its flour requirements, then it can save five to seven and a half shillings on every Mythic Pound it spends.

Magi could replace the wage cost with magically-created silver (see earlier), but they are simply passing onto their covenantfolk the problems of false coinage. The consumables bill covers the various tools, equipment, and fuel needed for the smooth running of the covenant, and while these costs could be cut with magic, it would require lots of different spells to have a noticeable effect on cash flow.

### FILL THE CAPACIOUS SILO

CrHe 20

R: Touch, D: Mom, T: Group, Ritual

Creates a silo of grain. A base Individual of Herbam is about twenty bushels of grain, so this spell creates about twenty thousand bushels, or 30 tons of grain (640 bushels to a ton). This would fill a cylindrical silo 8 paces in diameter and 20 paces high, or a barn 20 paces by 10 paces to a depth of 15 feet. This spell is under-optimized, in that it could create a hundred times more grain for the same spell level (since all Ritual spells have a minimum level of 20); however, that amount of grain would be virtually impossible to store. In a time of famine, that may not be a difficulty.

(Base 1, +1 Touch, +2 Group, +2 Size)

### WORK OF A HUNDRED QUIERNS

ReHe 15

R: Touch, D: Mom, T: Group



This spell uses Rego craft magic to transform up to 10 bushels of grain into flour. The caster must make an Intelligence + Finesse roll against an Ease Factor of 6 to obtain usable flour, but this is of the poorest quality with pieces of husk still within the bran-heavy flour. An Ease Factor of 12 generates fine white flour instead. An advantage of this spell is that no grit from the millstones end up in the flour regardless of its quality. In Mythic Europe, the right to mill flour is usually protected by law (*Lords of Men*, page 77), and using this spell could get the magus into a lot of trouble; however, it will save them the cost of employing a miller.

The guideline used was published in *Covenants* (page 51), and permits items made of plant products to be treated.

(Base 4, +1 Touch, +2 Group)

### THE ELFIN BAKER

ReHe 20

R: Touch, D: Mom, T: Group

This spell uses Rego craft magic to create a batch of 12 dozen loaves of bread in an instant from sufficient raw ingredients of flour, water, and yeast. The spell can even use raw grain rather than flour; if used at its maximum capacity it requires 10 bushels of either. Making basic bread is a Simple (Ease Factor 3) task for a baker, so the magus must make an Intelligence + Finesse roll against an Ease Factor of 6 to succeed; otherwise the result is an inedible mess of spoiled dough. If this roll achieves an Ease Factor of 9 the bread is particularly good; an Ease Factor of 12 produces pandemayne, the finest white table bread.

The guideline used was published in *Covenants* (page 51), and permits items made of plant products to be treated and processed. A similar spell — *The Elfin Brewer* — can create 12 dozen pints of ale from grain, water, yeast, and gruit (herbs used for flavor).

(Base 5, +1 Touch, +2 Group)

### STORAGE AND LIFE OF MAGICALLY-CREATED GRAIN

A peasant in Mythic Europe requires about 24 bushels of grain each year to support his nutritional needs. They don't eat all of this; some is bartered away for an equivalent value of vegetables, meat, eggs, and cheese. Using the system presented in *Covenants*, these 24 bushels support one inhabitant point; magi and companions eat finer quality food, and so consume more bushel-equivalents than grogs.

The grain created by *Fill the Capacious Silo* has all the properties of normal grain, and so unless precautions are taken, there will be a steady loss every year due to rot and vermin. Even under the best conditions — a silo magically protected from damp and mice — the loss rate can be 5 to 10 per cent. If minimal precautions are taken (i.e. keeping the grain covered from the weather but little else), the remaining grain could reduce by a fifth every year, and after just one year all the grain has a musty taste.

*Example:* A small covenant with 50 inhabitant points uses *Fill the Capacious Silo*. Unfortunately, they do not have sufficient storage space, so lose a fifth of their stored grain each year. In the first year they create 20,000 bushels: 1200 bushels are consumed (24 bushels per inhabitant point); and 4000 bushels are lost to rot. This leaves them 14,800 bushels. In the second year they eat another 1200 bushels, and lose 2960 to rot. They now have 10,640 bushels, just over half what they started with. It takes them six whole years before the contents of the barn is insufficient for another year's worth of bread, and the covenant has saved 7½ shillings per inhabitant point per year (this is a poor covenant that eats a lot of bread and porridge). The covenant considers the total saving of 112½ Mythic Pounds to be a good return on an investment of four pawns of vis to cast the Ritual spell.

### CONSEQUENCES OF RELYING ON MAGIC TO MEET ONE'S COSTS

Magi often do not think about the industry that has grown up purely to support their often large households. For example, the covenant mentioned earlier is consuming 1200 bushels of wheat each year. Since one acre of land yields one bushel of wheat, or thereabouts, this could represent the land farmed by 10 to 40 peasants (a freeman typically has 120 acres or more, a villein usually rents about 30 acres). One casting of *Fill the Capacious Silo* represents the grain grown on 20,000 acres of land — or, more realistically, 3300 acres of land each year for the six years it lasts.

If the characters have hitherto relied on the local community for provisioning their covenant, and suddenly halt their demand for a particular commodity — such as grain — then they may inadvertently create a surplus in the local community. In the short term, the farmers sell or store the excess, but in subsequent years simply grow less to match the reduced demand. This can have significant repercussions on the lower levels of society, the villeins and half-free peasants who rely on agricultural day labor to make ends meet. It might also affect freemen who had acquired debts in order to buy land to grow crops on their behalf, believing that they could be guaranteed a steady income.

If the covenant owned the land that the crops were grown on, then they can make an entire community redundant. Without the covenant to purchase their wheat, these farmers and their families could be driven into poverty if they cannot find a buyer. The repercussions go further than just affecting the farmers; farming communities need a host of other support industries such as carpenters, smiths, millers, bakers, cook shops, thatchers,

carters and dray men, chandlers, and so on. The wives and children of the farmers and tradesmen provide servants to the covenant; if the families are forced from a region, there will be a dearth of such individuals. Alternatively, with so many out of work farmers, covenants might see an increase in applications to join their turb. The social upheaval of replacing costs with magic should not be underestimated as a source of stories highlighting the dependence of the covenant on the local community.

## Societal Impacts of the Creation of Wealth

Issues regarding the local impact of the magical creation of wealth have already been discussed above. There is an implicit assumption that when magi realize the impact their activities are having on a local level, then they cease in those activities at the very least, and at best make an attempt to set matters right.

But what if they don't? the Order of Hermes does not have a collective social conscience — indeed, individual members can be entirely selfish

or completely amoral and yet remain within the Code of Hermes. What if the Order simply doesn't care about destabilizing economies as long as it cannot be linked back to the Order itself? It is quite possible for the Order of Hermes to become fabulously rich through the magical creation of wealth, as the following story illustrates — a possible direction for Mythic Europe if the Order chooses not to regulate wealth creation.

### SAGA SEED: HERMES MERCATORIUS & HERMES FURIS

Two common depictions of the god Hermes or his Roman counterpart Mercury were as a merchant (Latin *mercator*) and as a thief (Latin *fur*). Both of these aspects are intimately connected with the acquisition of money, both licit and illicit.

This scenario commences after a few covenants in Normandy began various schemes for acquiring wealth. The impact of their actions was great enough to crash the economy of Flanders, and the Order of Hermes was eventually forced to step in. The key offenders were Marched, and the wealth they accumulated was con-

fiscated. The Quaesitores were surprised as to how much silver they had managed to accumulate, and while some advocated destroying the illicit riches, other voices prevailed. So the money simply sat in a storeroom in a Normandy covenant under guard, while magi debated how best to use it. Eventually it was entrusted to House Mercere who had experience with banking (*Houses of Hermes: True Lineages*, pages 84–89), and the Primus at Harco used it as capital to support various investments and loans on the Order's behalf.

Due to the shrewd behavior of the Primus, the money steadily grew over time. It became a matter of further concern to the Order and was raised at Grand Tribunal. Some magi considered the accumulation of wealth unseemly, and once again advocated its destruction. Others pointed out the folly of such action — the financial balances of the realms of Mythic Europe depended in part on the existence of this money; to destroy it would risk wide scale economic collapse. The problem, they argued, was that the money was not in circulation. A resolution was passed at the Grand Tribunal that House Mercere would be permitted





to offer loans outside the members of the Order, for the purpose of recirculating the wealth they had accumulated. Naturally, these loans would be offered without interest.

Fast-forward several decades and the Order of Hermes is now the richest institution in Mythic Europe. It has financed crusades, the building of cathedrals, and numerous trade expeditions to distant lands; there are few money-making schemes that they are not involved in. Knowledge of the Order's existence has not changed — that is, most nobles and churchmen have heard of the Order of Hermes and know them to be a society of wizards — but most cities and large towns have an official office where freemen, nobles, and clergymen may meet with a representative of the Order (invariably an unGifted member of House Mercere, at least in the first instance) and either deposit money for safekeeping or else arrange a loan for a costly purchase. The Order keeps the ability of magi to create wealth *de novo* a closely-guarded secret, but in actual fact has relied on this many times when capital was insufficient to meet demands due to failed investments.

This increased presence has had unfortunate consequences. The Church in particular dislikes the Order's role, despite being one of its biggest clients. Believing strongly that the love of money is the root of all evil, some bishops have begun to preach on the perils of getting financially involved with the Order's financial business. They remind their flock that magi are first and foremost practitioners of wizardry, and those members of the Order whose business it is to watch mundane attitudes closely are uncomfortably reminded of the manner in which Jews, and in particular Jewish moneylenders, have been treated in the past.

## Why it May Not Work: The Silver Consensus

If magi are in danger of destabilizing local economies through the magical creation of wealth or through technological advances that simulate the creation of wealth in an indirect manner, the Order of Hermes may intervene. However, it is not in anyone's interest for the Order to simply forbid the creation of wealth; instead it is much better for the lawmakers of the Order to try to regulate wealth creation so that it is still possible for magi to live a comfortable life, and yet in a sustainable manner. This section describes a Tribunal ruling called the Silver Consensus, which attempts to tackle the issues involved.

Following some disturbing mistakes made during the Schism War, the Order is aware of the effect that creating large quantities of wealth has upon the surrounding mundane populations. However, it was decades before magi started to repeat the same mistakes, resulting in a special Tribunal being held to discuss the issue of magically created wealth. The Silver Consensus is an expression of their agreement concerning how magi would balance the ease with which they can create treasure and the antagonizing effect this has on other powerful groups.

The Tribunal ruling from which the Silver Consensus derives its name and legal force simply states that no covenant may create more than two Mythic Pounds of silver per member per year. More recent rulings, and public statements from magi interested in maintaining Europe's financial system, make the law more complex, and subtler.

The Silver Consensus should be considered an option for your saga rather than part of the canon setting. It might result from a ruling of the

Grand Tribunal and therefore apply to the whole Order; or else it may be specific to a single Tribunal, probably the one in which the characters reside. Finally, the Silver Consensus may not exist — yet. Rather, it could be introduced during the course of a saga where the creation of wealth plays a major part.

### THE PRINCIPLES OF THE SILVER CONSENSUS

*The intention of the Tribunal ruling, to prevent a repetition of the problems caused by the creation of wealth, may not be subverted through childish literalism, or sleights of speech.*

That is, covenants dickering semantically, for example by claiming that they created gold, not silver, will not simply be punished, their magi will be considered incompetent and mocked. Magi wanting to test the boundaries of the Consensus, and the patience of those magi willing to violently enforce it, are expected to try harder than this. To fail to do so demonstrates a lack of respect for the opinions, and power, of the enforcers of the Consensus.

*No more than two silver pounds worth of goods, procured by magical means, may be trafficked to the mundanes by any magus in a single year.*

This principle has several effects. Magi may not average out their two pounds of goods across several years. Goods that occur naturally but are gathered or processed by magic are not exempt from the consensus. The economy of Europe is divided between the mundane and magical: it is perfectly legal for a magus to create a diamond to enchant as his talisman, or as a gift for a faerie prince, provided no magus ever gives or sells it to a mundane. It is permissible, in-

deed expected, that covenants will create commodities and trade them with each other.

Some younger covenants bridle under the Silver Consensus, but no stable group opposes it. As powerful Summer covenants become wealthy, they want to preserve their position, and move from opposing to supporting the Consensus. The division of wealth into that which can be used inside the Order and that which can be used outside allows older covenants to act as bankers for younger ones, by granting them mundane silver in exchange for magically-produced goods.

*Wealth created by magic taints such wealth as it generates.*

This rule prevents magi from blurring the division between their magically-acquired and mundane wealth. A magus who clears farmland with magic cannot ever use the proceeds of that farmland to buy goods from mundanes. A magus who gathers fish to shore with a magical flute may not use the profit from their sale to purchase mundane goods. This rule does not prohibit the magi from using these goods, so some covenants meet many of their expenses magically, and run businesses that provide them with sufficient money to afford mundane produce.

*The members of a magus's household are the magus's property: they are not mundane.*

A magus may use magically-created wealth to support and maintain his household, including its servants. These servants, however, are not independent of the magus. They are not permitted to pass magically-created wealth to mundanes.

*The sale of magic items — provided they do not assist in the creation of wealth — does not breach the Consensus.*

Magi are permitted to sell many items to mundanes, but are prohibited from selling those items that provide significant wealth, or allow the mundane to magically defray large expenses. A candle that burns forever is permitted; a magical millstone that grinds forever is not. Less clear-cut examples are discussed at length during Tribunal meetings.

### ENFORCING THE SILVER CONSENSUS

The Silver Consensus is supported by those Autumn covenants who feel they would likely be targets of harassment if the current detente between Europe's landed class and the Order broke down. Toward the end of the Schism War the creation of wealth by each side destabilized the currencies in some areas. When there is too much silver in the mundane economy, it loses its worth. When a region reverts to barter, many people in cities starve, and many nobles wage war on whomever they think has money. The Autumn covenants that support the Consensus all have methods of generating mundane income, and don't want their own position undermined.

Several Houses support the Consensus. Houses Guernicus and Jerbiton prefer that the mundane nobility not be molested, and urban society not collapse. House Mercere has decisive advantages in the current trade system, and does not wish to lose them. Several other Houses — Criamon, Bonisagus and Verditius — support the Consensus because, were it to break down, magi would need to waste time governing mundane people. Even some members of militant Houses, like the Tytalus and Flambeau, feel that the collapse of society would lead many starving people toward the Infernal,

strengthening the Enemy.

The Consensus is not enforced strictly. For it to become a concern, the magus's illegal activities have to reach a value sufficient for it to draw attention. This is usually only after an inflationary bubble makes obvious to observers that there is something unbalanced within a region's economy. It is very easy for magi creating goods to collapse a local economy, because a little added wealth in an economy tends to magnify its effectiveness as it is spent. Similarly, pulling wealth out of an economy tends to do greater harm than immediately apparent.

## Other Examples of Magical Technology

It is not possible to cover all possible impacts of magical technology that could be wrought by player magi. Invention often follows need, so player characters are most likely to seek technological solutions for problems specific to the saga. This section has a few further ideas for inspiration, which involve relatively simple inventions that can have significant ramifications.

### Mechanical Power

The majority of mechanical power in Mythic Europe is supplied by the labor of people and animals. The innovation of the padded collar a few hundred years ago permitted horses to outstrip oxen as the superior draft animal. Waterwheels — horizontal wheels at first, but gradually re-



placed by the more efficient vertical wheel — came into use at about the same time, and are now commonplace for pounding, grinding, lifting, and pressing. Wind power has been used to power ships since antiquity, but the latest innovation is the windmill, apparently invented in eastern England in the 1180s, and now spreading through northern Europe.

The Order of Hermes has a new source of power available for general use, typified by the Hermetic Generans (see below). Costing just two pawns of vis as a Lesser Enchantment, this device can be manufactured by even junior magi if a Laboratory Text is made available to them.

### The Hermetic Generans

ReTe 15

Pen 0, 1/day

R: Touch, D: Conc, T: Ind

This enchantment takes the shape of a thick disc of iron connected to a rod. This rod can be connected to a gear wheel or cuff which can be slipped over any axis. Once triggered, the device imparts strong motion; this would normally be in a straight line, but because it is tethered to the wheel or axis, it generates rotation instead. Assuming it is sufficiently attached, the Hermetic Generans can do as much work as a person or animal with a Strength of +5 (approximately one horse-power). It continues to turn until commanded to stop by the person who activated it, or until the sun sets. Naturally, the device could be designed to provide truly constant motion, but this would prevent it from ever being shut off. If nothing else, storage of such devices could be amusing.

A stronger Hermetic Generans can be made; each magnitude added to the effect increases the power output ten-fold. One magnitude more would be enough to turn the front

axle of a heavily-laden cart. Two additional magnitudes would turn an average waterwheel.

(Base 2, +1 Touch, +1 Conc, +2 affect metal; +5 item maintains concentration)

### THE IMPACT OF MAGICAL POWER GENERATION

In the hands of a mundane who has a general familiarity with gears and mechanics — and given the ubiquitous nature of the waterwheel, these are by no means uncommon — multifarious uses for the Hermetic Generans will present themselves. Any device that normally relies on a beast of burden to pull it can be replaced with a Hermetic Generans attached to an axle between two wheels. Such a device could pull a plow at greater speed than a team of horses or oxen, and require just one man to guide it. Stronger devices could power a cart. As a mode of transport it would need some control over the speed, and be dependent on road quality, but would be superior to a horse since it does not tire and does not need to be fed.

Where the Hermetic Generans would be particularly useful is in industrial processes, replacing wind power. The wind is currently the strongest source of power available, but it is highly variable and dangerous in excess. The Hermetic Generans produces a constant, strong force capable of operating ceaselessly without wear. This would not only increase output of current processes employing this technology, but would permit applications not currently possible, such as lathes, trip-hammers, mechanical saws, paddle boats, fans for blast furnaces, and mechanical clocks. Think of a world of clockwork and steam, rather than

reaching its heyday in the 1700s, this could occur easily 400 years prior if there is sufficient supply.

## Warfare and Weapons

Because of the restrictions on interfering with mundanes, Hermetic magi do not often turn their thoughts to mass combat; however, magic can be devastatingly effective in wartime. It is not possible to detail all the ways in which a magus can apply magic to the battlefield, but inventive players can surely come up with any number of effects. This section offers a few ideas as to where magical technology can be of use. The use of magical technology in warfare is predicated on the fact that using or supplying such devices is not considered to contravene the Hermetic Oath, although clearly this is against the Code under the default setting. A circumstance where this might be permissible, for example, is if a warlord was supported by non-Hermetic wizards (or renegade magi), and the Order felt honor-bound to respond in kind.

Direct attacks — such as inflicting wounds on your enemies, or causing them to burst into flames — are certainly effective, but have a few practical difficulties. Such effects are usually of high level (especially if they are going to affect many opponents at once), and so are expensive to manufacture in time and vis. They also generally need a specialist magus to achieve the requisite Lab Totals. Furthermore, unless designed at Sight Range, the device must usually be carried into combat. Even ignoring the possibility that it could be captured by the enemy, there is a danger inherent in pausing in the midst of a pitched battle for a round in order to activate an enchanted item. Another consideration is the use of Target:



Group on the battlefield — there is a large gulf between the maximum number of people affected and the actual number of people affected because a group must be clearly separated from others of its kind (*ArM5*, page 113). During melee, combatants do not form large groups suitable for this Target, even with size modifiers added. A spell might be designed to affect 100 humans, but you will rarely find 100 humans forming a clear group in the middle of a war, and if you do that skirmish may include as many (or more) of your own side as the enemy. More likely, combatants will be split into smaller groups of six or fewer, reducing the maximum effect greatly.

Magi are even more useful in a support role, and if they manufacture enchantments that they can hand to mundanes then they need not even endanger themselves. The section on Magical Communication has several methods for distant viewing, which can be very useful for safely scouting out the deployment of enemy troops. Spells such as *Breaking the Captain's Baton* (*Magi of Hermes*, page 50) or *Dissolving the Wall of Shields* (*Houses of Hermes: Societates*, page 70) can turn a trained group of soldiers into an

untrained group in an instant; in the middle of combat this can be lethal. A scout armed within enchantment that creates spectral noises, horrific images, or even something as simple as rain can ensure that an opposing force is not rested before a battle, and so have fatigue to fight as well as their enemy.

Where magic can be exceptionally useful is during sieges. The bane of any war is the ability for those within the defensive walls of a city or castle to resist their opponents, for at least as long as their food and water lasts. Walls are rarely a serious barrier to devices constructed by magi; Charged Items such as *The Instant Breach* (see below) can have a devastating effect on walls, and with the use of a Laboratory Text can be invented by almost any magus. Specialists can create many copies every season.

It is important to magi that their own technology cannot be turned against them, and this might affect the devices that they make available. Whereas battlefield magic potentially affects anyone without Magic Resistance regardless of which side they are on, devices like the *Instant Breach* are useless against covenants protected by an *Aegis of the Hearth*.

### The Instant Breach

PeTe 15

Pen 0, Charged Item

R: Touch, D: Mom, T: Part

Triggered when touching a stone wall, this Charged Item destroys a section of that wall. It destroys 270 cubic feet of stone; enough to make a 6 foot diameter breach in a castle wall that is 10 feet thick, or 10 feet in diameter in wall that is 3 feet thick.

The charges are usually placed into separate boulders which are flung in groups by a trebuchet along with ordinary rocks.

(Base 3, +1 Touch, +1 Part, +1 affect stone, +1 Size)

### THE IMPACT OF MAGICAL WEAPONS

Magical technology has the potential to affect warfare in Mythic Europe as much as gunpowder affected warfare in historical Europe. If the manufacturers of magical arms are common, then Hermetic magic could easily come up against Hermetic magic, and an arms race would ensue. With the right impetus — such as a barbarian horde supported by powerful wizards poised to invade



Mythic Europe — the Order might see the need to develop a more martial stance and become purveyors of magical weapons technology.

## Medicine

Disease is perhaps the biggest cause of mortality and misery in Mythic Europe. All diseases are caused by an imbalance of the humors (see *Art & Academe*, Chapter 4), and the things that can cause such an imbalance are legion. A dearth or an excess of those things necessary for life can cause sickness, as can the presence of contranaturals such as a malign celestial influence, and super-naturals such as demons and faeries. Hermetic magic can tackle these external influences, but it is much more effective at directly affecting the humors themselves and creating conditions that are conducive to swift recovery. Ritual magic can be used to heal the disease completely, but this cannot be adapted to a form of technology because ritual spells cannot be made into enchantments.

A less efficient but still effective device would be one such as the Lancet of Good Health. This takes three pawns of vis to make as a Lesser Enchantment, but can be used to treat an entire community against infection, one at a time. An average individual with a Severe disease (such as bloody flux or pneumonia) normally has an even chance of getting worse every month (or whatever the disease interval is); but with a +6 bonus to Disease Recovery rolls he has an even chance of improving, and has only a one in a hundred chance of getting worse. Furthermore, the Lancet of Good Health can be used on a new set of patients every day.

## The Lancet of Good Health

CrCo 25

Pen 0, 24/day

R: Touch, D: Moon, T: Ind

Anyone whose blood is let by this sharp scalpel receives a +6 to any Disease Recovery rolls for a Moon's Duration.

(Base 3, +2 Touch, +3 Moon; +5 24/day)

## THE IMPACT OF MAGICAL MEDICINE

While well-meaning, healing devices could actually have an adverse effect on Mythic Europe. Cities are smelly, filthy, and crowded places. If more people survive the diseases that thrive here, then they will only become smellier, filthier, and even more crowded. As harsh as it might seem, poverty's effects are exacerbated if fewer people succumb to the diseases of the poor. Land clearances would follow to provide enough food to feed all the extra mouths; and vis sites might be compromised. Those that survive disease could easily succumb to famine unless further innovations improved food production.

It is not just the poor who would be affected. Feudal lords rely on producing children to inherit their lands (if male) and to make good alliances (if female). A lord typically wants two sons ("an heir and a spare"), and as many daughters as his wealth can support. If more children survive to adulthood this could disrupt noble society — more sons desiring a share of the estate, particularly under the French and German system of partible inheritance (where the estate is divided between all male heirs) rather than Anglo-Norman primogeniture (where only the eldest son inherits). The sons may not have anything to inherit anyway, since

their father could be impoverished by trying to find a dowry for his many daughters.

Since contraception is sinful, husbands might be reluctant to fulfill their marital duties resulting in the wife acquiring legal grounds for divorce. There may be a backlash amongst the nobles against the new medical technology — at least, until the lords get ill themselves. It could take several generations for a new social equilibrium to establish after such an upset.

## Further Ideas for Magical Technology

Here are some additional ideas and applications of enchantments to replicate technological advancements in your saga. You will need to come up with the appropriate statistics and guidelines for these enchantments, but these notes should get you started.

### THE MAGICAL MANUFACTURE OF GLASS

Creating smooth sheets of clear glass is very difficult using mundane technology, but would be easily achievable with magic.

### MASONRY LIFT

The 13th Century is a time of great architectural advances, but the capacity to design vastly outstrips the capacity to build. A device which makes the moving of stone blocks a trivial task would be a massive boon to the construction industry, not only in terms of speed, but also in terms of safety.

AUTOMATIC PLOW

Preparing the land for harvest is the most intensive of all agricultural labors. It heavily depends on access to a draft team of oxen, or more rarely horses, a commodity that several villages often share. Those who get to use them last risk doing a poor job thanks to sodden or frozen ground, and may suffer from a shortened growing season. Good plowing ensures good crops, and a magical device that plows a field in an instant would be a major boon to rural areas.

TRUTH-TALKER

The legal system could be revolutionized by a device which revealed the truth or falsehood of a statement; merchants and kings could find uses for such devices as well.

## Technology's Transformative Nature

The rest of this chapter considers some more general issues around introducing magical technology into a saga, and how it might transform Mythic Europe. The examples examined up to now represent a good range of the sort of impacts that the characters' actions could have, but every eventuality cannot be catered for. This section deals with the motivations, the processes, and the impacts of magical innovation.

## Medieval Concepts of Technology

The technical arts have been the subject of many words written by the great thinkers and philosophers of both antiquity and the current day. For example, Plato divided technological pursuits into productive arts, which bring about something that did not previously exist, and acquisitive arts, which conquer by word or deed, or prevent others from acquiring things already produced. In the former category fall agriculture, medicine, construction, and painting and sculpture; among the acquisitive arts are learning, cognition, trade, fishing, hunting, and warfare. He and other classical scholars saw these arts as inferior to the liberal arts and philosophy, for they do not nourish the mind — indeed, many of them distract one from this noble pursuit.

However, in the 13th century these mundane practices are slowly undergoing a renaissance, shaking off the labels of "vulgar" and "sordid," and becoming instead the *artes mechanicae*, or mechanical arts. The classical heritage of crafts and craftsmanship has been reworked to explore technology's positive place in the relationship of humans to God and nature, and a distinction has opened up between purely physical labor and the intellectual work of the inventor, engineer, and mechanic. By elevating these technologies to the status of intellectual arts, they have become perceived as worthy fields for study and innovation, which in turn has led to a technological boom. The last hundred years has seen (to name just a few inventions) the introduction of horizontal looms for weaving; the trebuchet, mangonel, and crossbow; the round-hulled cog; the mariner's compass; and wa-

ter powered machines for milling grain, fulling cloth, retting linen, twisting cables, and forging iron.

Keen to contrast the *artes mechanicae* with the *artes liberales*, most 12th and 13th century discourses list seven technologies to parallel the seven liberal arts, although which seven are included varies from author to author. A typical list, from Hugh of Saint Victor, consists of:

- Lanificaria:** wool working, weaving, leather-working, and costuming;
- Armatura:** manufacture of armaments and also architecture, metallurgy, carpentry;
- Navigatio:** navigation, which through its nature permits business such as buying, selling, and exchange;
- Agricultura:** growing crops and raising domestic animals;
- Venatoria:** hunting, also cooking, gathering, selling and serving food;
- Medicina:** medicine;
- Theatrica:** theatrics, games, and amusements.

Other lists exchange some of the above to consider painting, toolmaking, or alchemy; or elevate individual arts such as architecture, commerce, pottery, or navigation to independent status. Some classifications even designate magical practices such as divination, necromancy and illusions as mechanical arts.

## The Magus as Inventor

For many of its practitioners, Hermetic magic is a tool to overcome difficulties and make life easier — that is, it is a form of technology rather than an academic pursuit.



Whereas some magi seek Hermetic breakthroughs for the sake of intellectual satisfaction, most magic nourishes the body rather than the mind. However, there is a world of difference between a maga who creates enchantments to improve her sanctum or covenant, and one who is a true inventor who creates enchantments for the good of all men.

For magic to become a technological advance — and to transform Mythic Europe — it must become available for use to a significant proportion of the population who can benefit from it. This goes beyond the sale of a few Lesser Enchantments to noblemen, although mass production is not necessarily required. For example, a single device that duplicates books can have an impact on society all on its own.

## Why Should a Magus Pursue Invention?

Even the most obsessed Verditius craft-magus does not usually seek to transform Mythic Europe with his inventions, although this would indeed be an exercise in hubris. Most magi who specialize in enchantment are artisans, making unique items of high quality for themselves or for customers who can pay the astronomical price demanded. To truly transform Mythic Europe with an invention takes hard work and the sacrifice of resources that could have been spent on increasing personal power. So why might a magus do this? This section explores some motivations. Note that none of the motivations given below are mutually exclusive with the others; the impetus that drives a magus to invent is often a complex one.

## Enchantments are Arcane Connections

Before a covenant sets up in business selling magical technology, it might want to have a care for its own security. A lesser enchantment is an Arcane Connection to its creator that persists for weeks after creation, and invested items last years. As an option, a saga might decide that charged items remain Arcane Connections for days. Lesser enchantments can be kept at the covenant until the duration of the Arcane Connection has expired but makers of invested items could benefit from the following spell.

### SEVER THE CONNECTION

PeVi 20

R: Touch, D: Mom, T: Ind

The targeted Arcane Connection has its duration reduced by three magnitudes. This is sufficient to reduce an Arcane Connection of a duration of years to a duration of days. The affected item can then be stored for a couple of weeks before being passed on.

(Base 15, +1 Touch)

### WEALTH

A base motivation for the invention is the desire for material wealth. Even saving one's riches is a modern concept; seeking to hoard that which God has given is considered an affront to the Almighty. While some might frown upon this ambition as sinful, it is true that life in Mythic Europe is a lot more bearable if you are rich. Magical technology can generate wealth in two ways. Enchantments can be sold for profit, in effect converting the manufacturer's time (and possibly vis) into silver. Alternatively, the magic can be used in the generation of wealth, as discussed earlier.

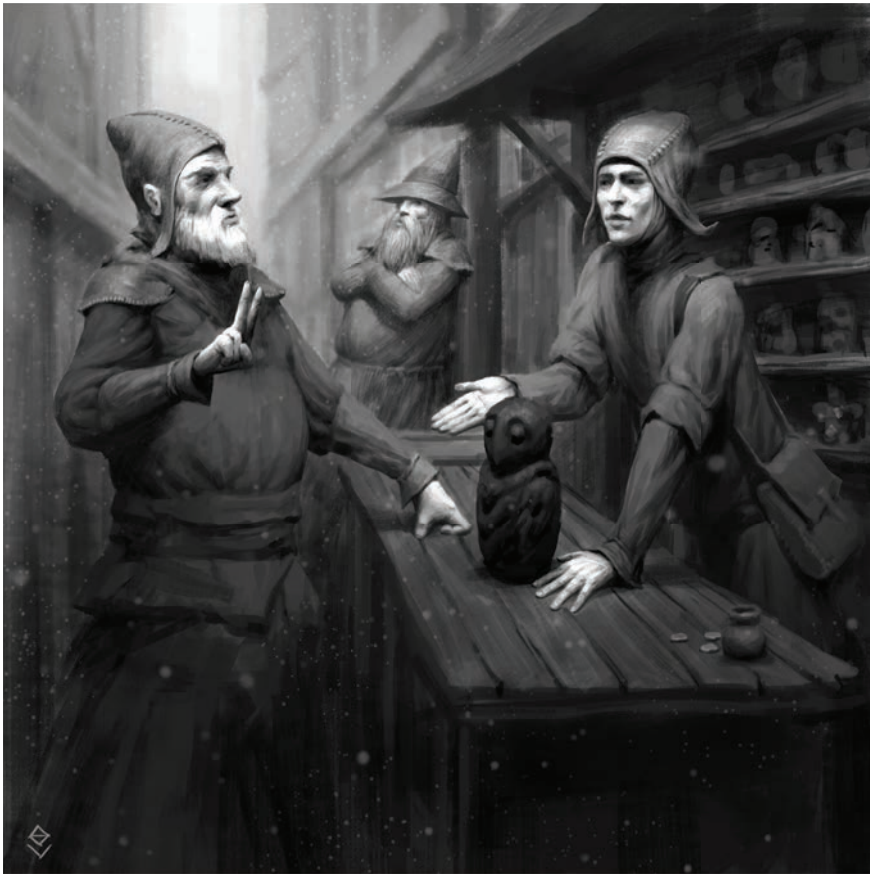
### FAME

Sometimes, the accolade of one's colleagues is insufficient; the desire to be recognized outside the peer-group for one's efforts is the driving goal of an inventor. If this recognition is to come, then the invention must be truly great, and make a real impact on the lives of many — or the lives of a few influential individuals. This goal is more nebulous to some

players, since fame has few concrete benefits, and any satisfaction experienced by the character is one step removed from the player. Nevertheless, fame is an important motivator, particularly to those Houses that keep track of acclaim in the form of Reputations.

### INFLUENCE

In the cutthroat politics of the courts and guilds of Mythic Europe, he who can provide an advantage to a player of the "Great Game" — even a small one — can be a valuable asset. Possession of a magical device that one's opponents do not have can be sufficient to ensure one's ascendance or the downfall of one's enemies. If an inventor controls who has access to his innovation, then he can assert influence over those who benefit — or those who wish to benefit. How this influence is used might come close to breaking the Code of Hermes, but a clever magus can manage such problems by working through intermediaries.



## SOCIAL CHANGE

The three reasons already given are fundamentally selfish reasons for pursuing invention; each aggrandizes the magus through acquisition of transferable resources — silver, prestige, or favors. However, some inventors are driven by selfless goals, providing access to technology to those who really need it. Such socially-minded magi pursue simple inventions that improve the lot of the agricultural laborer, the journeyman craftsman, and the common trader.

Because of the greater numbers of such individuals in society compared to those who could advance the magus's financial or social status, the rewards are often poor for the effort required. Nevertheless, some consider it their duty to share the product of The Gift which God has given them.

Not all desire for social change is selfless, however. A magus can be motivated by a number of emotions or philosophies that have nothing to do with wealth, fame, or influence. For example, hatred for the ruling classes might lead to benefit for the poor, but not as its main goal.

## Manufacturing

One of the downsides of Hermetic laboratory projects is the time and vis that they normally need to complete, neither of which is unlimited in supply. If we look at the development of technology in historical Europe, we find that the greatest advances occurred through the capacity to mass-produce key devices so that their benefits permeate throughout society. At no time did a single unique object create a technological

revolution.

However, if the advantage of an advancement is very great, and has the capacity to affect many people's lives on its own, then copies can afford to be produced very slowly. A classic example of this is the Gutenberg printing press, whose impact was felt locally almost immediately. An invested item intended as a technological advance would have to make a similar impact, since few would be willing to spend time and resources to create multiple copies. The production and publication of Laboratory Texts would speed things immeasurably, allowing less skilled or less specialized magi to complete complex projects in a reasonable amount of time.

Creating Invested items or lesser enchantments with a limited lifespan (ArM5, page 99) is a means by which the manufacture of magical technology can be sped up, and if the enchantments are intended for dissemination amongst mundanes, this is a good idea anyway (see The Sale of Enchantments, below).

## CHARGED ITEMS

One solution to the constraint of vis is to formulate the magical technology as a Charged Item. Once a Laboratory Text for the Charged Item exists, manufacture rates are increased for those capable of completing the project, and no vis is required for completion. The biggest difficulty with this approach is meeting the demand, especially once the technology has spread beyond the local area. Such problems can be solved through a good distribution network, or local magi who can manufacture charges in return for a share of the profits. However, a big advantage is the likelihood of repeat custom; once the charge has been used, the buyer needs another one.



## A HERMETIC WORKFORCE

A magus might be unwilling to make multiple copies of the same enchantment, but this is an ideal job to give apprentices approaching their Gauntlet. Assuming that their Lab Totals are sufficiently high and a Laboratory Text is available, an apprentice can be set the task of creating copies of the item under the guise of gaining exposure in Magic Theory or in the applicable Arts. This tactic is especially productive when Charged Items are the technology being manufactured. Of course, not all apprentices are appropriately skilled: a manipulative master might ensure that they are, and as soon as possible to get maximum utility during their training, but most magi are not this unprincipled.

Some covenants place requirements on their members for seasons of work for the good of the covenant as a whole. These obligations in the charter can be exploited to obtain a magus' services with a minimum of grumbling, as long as the covenant as a whole is to benefit from the spread of the technology.

## The Sale of Enchantments

Most Tribunals have established some rules regarding the sale of magical enchantments to mundanes. These are usually based around the clause of the Hermetic Oath that forbids interfering in the affairs of mundanes. A series of Tribunal rulings in 1061 made it illegal to accept money or other mundane goods as payment for arcane services from anyone other than a member of the Order of Hermes or a Hermetic covenant, and any magic sold in this manner to a non-magus must eventually lose its power. These rulings were confirmed by

the 12th meeting of the Grand Tribunal in 1063, making them binding in all Tribunals.

As indicated in *Ars Magica Fifth Edition* (page 16), this ruling has two (apparently deliberate) loopholes. The first is that magi are permitted to accept magical goods as payment from mundanes, such as vis or minor enchantments. The second is that magi can deal through intermediaries, permitting mundane agents who are members of their covenant to sell magical devices on behalf of the magi who make them.

The sale of enchanted items therefore continues across Mythic Europe through intermediaries, who usually obscure the connection to the Order of Hermes. Indeed, the primus of House Verditius has even set a standard price to which members of his House must adhere, which currently runs at 15 Mythic Pounds per pawn of vis used to enchant the item (*Houses of Hermes: Mystery Cults*, pages 114–115). These prices apply only to members of House Verditius and according to policy, are one and a half times the cash-equivalent of a pawn of

vis — the house deliberately overprices its items as a mark of the added quality provided by a Verditius artisan.

The Quaesitores only need to step in to regulate the market when a magus has been too blatant, or is showing excessive favor to a single recipient, thereby acting much like a court wizard despite the pretext of using a subordinate for the actual sale. Another suspect activity is giving away enchantments for free, even if the intent is an innocent one. Providing magic to mundanes for no remuneration is a sure sign of acting as a court wizard, at least in the eyes of some magi.

## Why Hasn't This Happened Already?

Before we go on to discuss how characters might achieve the production of magical technology, it is worth considering why this has not been done before. After all, the motivations for magical technology are many and varied, and the techniques

### Story Seed: Foreshadowing

If a troupe is planning to gift or sell magical devices to a favored mundane, the storyguide can foreshadow the social unrest that might result from this. A faerie (or enemy magician) seeking to cause mischief to the covenant ensures that one of the covenfolk discovers a minor magical device — a stout metal rod that has the power to momentarily soften any material with which it comes into contact. The covenant's smith might use it first, binding a handle onto it and using it as a forge hammer, as he no longer needs to heat the metal. Then the carpenter borrows the hammer and finds he can shape wood in ways he never could before. The mason discovers

he can build walls without mortar. The gardener uses it to soften the packed earth. Even the cook has a use, using the rod to extract marrow from bones and roll out stiff pastry with ease. The problem is that there is just one such rod, and everyone wants it. The covenfolk become fractious as they compete to gain control over the miraculous device. The matter finally comes to the notice of the magi when the rod goes missing, and everyone accuses each other of hiding it for their own use. By this stage, desire for the object has become so strong that certain individuals are willing to lie, cheat, and falsely accuse others if it means they will possess it.

do not, in the main, rely on any recent innovations in Hermetic theory. So why has no-one else done it first? The Order of Hermes has had the ability and a sufficient supply of intelligent individuals with the same needs and motivations that might drive player characters down this route.

### NO-ONE THOUGHT OF IT BEFORE

The Early Medieval period in Europe that immediately preceded the current era was not a time of great innovation or invention. Socially, the feudal system discourages change, and this mindset is deep-rooted in the medieval psyche. Intellectually, scholars are overshadowed by the great minds of the past, and there is a prevailing attitude that all that can be known, is known. It might

seem odd to the modern reader, but immediately prior to the game period there was no inertia for new ideas in the Middle Ages. The great thinkers stood in the shadow of giants rather than on their shoulders.

In the 12th and 13th centuries, this intellectual stagnation is being challenged thanks to an influx of scientific and mechanical texts newly translated from Arabic by Spanish and Italian scholars. The new thinking is spreading at such a rate that the 13th century will be known as the Golden Century, for the sheer wealth of its innovations and inventions. This is now the perfect time for innovation to be accepted and rapidly disseminated.

In the Order of Hermes, magic is most often used to do things more quickly and easily, not differently. Only rarely do true innovators come along and enact a

transformation that can influence all of society. Under this scenario, that would be the player characters.

### IT DIDN'T CATCH ON

Alternatively, one might posit that innovations have been made, but for one reason or another did not become widespread. Maybe the innovator died or accepted the embrace of Final Twilight before passing on his ideas. Maybe one covenant pursued a magical book-making scheme, but they kept the secret to themselves to preserve their monopoly, and it was never intended to be widespread.

### INSUFFICIENT SUPPLY

An innovation could have a major impact on Mythic Europe, but it needs magi who are willing to abandon their usual activities to make duplicate copies of inventions. Such work holds little interest for most magi; even the inventor of the device himself might balk at having to make copy after copy to the specifications in his Laboratory Text. In 1220, there are approximately 1200 magi spread widely across the face of Mythic Europe, all involved in their own studies, breakthroughs, schemes, and cults. Persuading even one other to assist in manufacturing could be an insurmountable task.

### THE ORDER LACKS A SINGLE VOICE

The Order of Hermes is not in the main an agent for change. Many Tribunals work hard to maintain the current equilibrium between themselves and mundane society, and if player characters wish to enact a transformation, they may find themselves struggling against their own sodales.





Furthermore, even the best plans can be quashed by apathy or narrow vision on behalf of one's peers. The Order of Hermes is perhaps unique amongst medieval institutions in that it is essentially without rank or hierarchy. As a social model this is daring and innovative, but as a form of government with no clearly defined central leadership, the decisions it makes by committee are highly subject to persuasion by a motivated demagogue. If a magus who invents a game-changing device has a political enemy, with sufficient skill that enemy could turn the temper of the Tribunal against the inventor. Alternatively the enemy could arise precisely because of the device, through a sense of envy or genuine concern for the implications. The Quaesitores could be convinced that the item embodies some infraction of the Code. The more religious magi could be persuaded that the device is immoral and will lead to sin. The Bonisagi and Verditii could be stirred to jealousy. If all else fails, the rival could resort to certamen or even Wizard War to prevent the dissemination of the device. Once the Order's mind is made up, overturning the decision is difficult, and the magus may need to abandon his plans or continue them in secret.

The Order of Hermes might actively discourages certain technological devices if they get wind of them early enough, because of past disasters relating to the innovation. For an example of how the Order might react, see the Magical Creation of Wealth, earlier. The player characters might discover one or more of these failed attempts while researching their own project. Magical technology requires the vision of its inventor for it to persist past his lifespan. Since it is not revolutionizing Magic Theory or making a breakthrough, other magi may have little interest in taking up the baton.

## Luddites and Saboteurs

Disenfranchised skilled workers were a major cause of social unrest during the Industrial Revolution, and a troupe might wish to turn to that period for inspiration as to how society might react to magical technology. In early 18th century England, the Luddite movement organized the destruction of textile factories in a desperate attempt to preserve their jobs. The name "Ned Ludd" was attached to the workmen's manifestos left at the scenes of their crimes, giving the movement its name. Fearing a revolutionary conspiracy, the gov-

ernment ruthlessly repressed Luddite rioting. In France, disenfranchised workers threw their wooden shoes (sabots) into machinery to jam them, thus the name *saboteurs*.

The proto-Luddites and early saboteurs of Mythic Europe will not attack the "factories," since assaulting a covenant filled with creepy wizards with eldritch powers is too much for the courage of most craftsmen. However, they can assault the supply lines, ostracize vendors, attack grogs gathering vis, and cause multiple other annoyances to the magi.

## Magic as an Agent of Social Change

This book is about how magi are capable of changing the face of Mythic Europe. For magical technology to achieve this, it must go beyond the creation of a single device for use by the covenant. A significant proportion of Mythic Europe must be affected by the invention for a true transformation to be achieved through the technology. This does not mean that there have to be hundreds of devices — a single device can have as much impact as a hundred if it does the work of a hundred men, even if the impact is strictly local. Furthermore, a single device can have a large impact if it is in the hands of one who controls the fate of thousands (or more). Due to the feudal structure of much of Mythic Europe, a device in the hands of a baron has the potential to change the lives of all his vassals and tenants.

## Social Consequences

There are knock-on consequences of any technology that do not necessarily relate directly to the benefits offered. These social consequences may be difficult to predict, since they emerge from human behavior.

### I WANT ONE

When a magical device first enters public hands it is likely to be unique, or one of a very small number. As discussed earlier, Hermetic invention is hampered by the process of enchantment being an artisan craft rather than amenable to mass manufacture. Regardless of the size of the impact that these small number of devices have, there will be some who do not benefit, and this breeds jealousy. A magus might be only seeking to improve the lives of the peasants who supply food for the covenant, or his local friend the baron, but soon enough the neighboring peasants or lords will notice the advantage of their fellows, and may approach the characters the gain the same advantage for themselves. Of

course, if persuaded to duplicate their efforts — perhaps encouraged by the compensation offered — then the problem just spreads further. This is exactly how magical technology may become widespread in the first place if the characters are not already inclined towards mass production but wish to avoid problems with the locals.

Envy is a powerful emotion — it is not for no reason that it is counted amongst the deadly sins — and an even more powerful motivator to action. If the inventor refuses to duplicate their efforts, then the easiest way for those who lack it to get what they want is to take it from those who have it. This could take the form of a pitched battle or a covert raid. Of course, if the theft is successful, then the original possessors may well attempt to steal it back.

It is a short step from envy to malice. If denied the capacity to take the device from their neighbors, then they may seek to destroy it instead — if it can't be stolen and it can't be shared, then it is better for no-one to have it than for someone else to prosper. Alternatively, some do-gooder might seek to destroy the cause of contention to restore former harmony between the warring groups.

### THE DEVIL MAKES WORK FOR IDLE HANDS

On the face of it, anything that increases the wealth of the lower classes seems like a force for good. Players with a modern outlook might wish to improve the lot of the poor and downtrodden through labor-saving devices that take the place of back-breaking toil. They may be expecting those peasants to be grateful, and become more manageable as a result.

However, this is not often the case, at least in the short term. Peasants who have time on their hands

use it to organize politically (see *Lords of Men*, page 92). If freed from the chains of drudgery, peasants have the opportunity to look around and discover that while their lives are better than they were, they could be better still. After all, their lords have even better living conditions, and perform absolutely no work at all, relying instead on their staff to fulfill their needs. Even the inhabitants of the local town have a better time of it than a rich peasant, since the town charter grants them definite rights and personal freedom. In short, labor saving devices promote idle peasants, and idle peasants foment rebellion.

### ECONOMIC EFFECTS

A magical device might be directly involved in the creation of wealth, but it could also incidentally enrich the local economy as well. If a covenant becomes rich through an invention, then its local expenditure is likely to increase as it uses its new-found wealth to improve the living conditions of its inhabitants. This might require attracting builders and masons to improve buildings and build new ones; these trades need laborers to support their trade. New people brought to the area also need places to live, and will spend locally on food and drink. All this stimulates the local economy, and a small change to a covenant's wealth could easily spur the growth of a nearby hamlet into a village, and a village into a small town.

### DISENFRANCHISEMENT

Magic need not improve the local economy; it can destroy livelihoods as easy as creating them. A magical device that simplifies a manufacturing procedure or speeds production eliminates the need for humans to

perform the same task. If these devices become locally common, then mass unemployment can easily result as the work done by scores of people is now done by a single enchantment. Depending on how widespread the device becomes, there might be nowhere for the disenfranchised skilled craftsmen to go to ply their trade. As they leave the area seeking work further afield, the local economy suffers from the loss of a workforce that would normally be spending their wages on food and consumables. This could impoverish villages that hitherto relied on a specific trade, and towns could shrink in size and importance.

A second impact to the detriment of the economy is a device that removes the dependence of the covenant on a local produce or service. A single covenant can have a major economic impact in a region; a typical spring covenant spends one Mythic Pound every year on each of its servants and grogs, three Mythic Pounds on each companion, and five Mythic Pounds on each magus (*Covenants*, page 65). A lord's household might incur the same costs (with the lord and his family replacing the magi), but the peasants in a lord's demesne exist to meet his demands; so the "cost" is incurred only in book-keeping terms — it is exactly matched by income, and no actual money changes hands. Most covenants do not have feudal rights over peasants, and so any transactions they make for buildings, consumables, and provisions actually puts cash or trade goods into the economy. If a covenant devises a way to avoid one of these costs and therefore reduce its outgoings, the community outside its walls that has grown up to service its needs is denied the income the covenant once provided, and this decreases the amount of available wealth in the region. Few magi stop to think that



supplying their laborers with an enchantment that instantly plows their fields could actually destroy the livelihoods of all the peasant laborers who they have previously employed to do that task for them.

## Non-Hermetic Inventors

While it is the preeminent magical tradition in Mythic Europe, the Order of Hermes does not have a monopoly on the production of enchanted items, and other wizards could effect a transformation in Mythic Europe.

In general, non-Hermetic wizards are more restricted in the types of magic they can perform, and so are more limited in the sorts of change they can cause. However, it is true that there may be some traditions specialized in enchantment that might be better than a Hermetic magus in his chosen field, as well as being sufficiently motivated.

This option is a good choice for troupes who might want to advance the progress of a magical society but who have misgivings about the Order being its instigator.

### CRAFTERS OF WONDROUS ITEMS

Characters with the Touched by (Realm) Major Supernatural Virtue (*City & Guild*, page 71) are perhaps in the best position after Hermetic magi to become inventors.

Their biggest advantage is that they do not require *vis* to create their enchantments. They can also benefit from assistants in their workshop, as well as using workshop innovations and superior raw materials to improve their Craft Total.

Their chief disadvantages are that their powers are limited to just two Hermetic Forms, the items they

make will only work for the specific individual for whom they are made, and the effect is limited to Range: Personal or Touch, the Duration must be Sun or less, and the Target must be Individual.

These devices cannot Penetrate any Magic Resistance.

### THE RUSTICANI

Although there are Rusticani (also known as Mechanicals) within House Ex Miscellanea (see *Houses of Hermes: Societates*, pages 130–133), no part of their unique magic requires the practice of Hermetic magic. Rather, the Craft Magic Major Supernatural Virtue permits its possessor to enchant any other magic he knows or Virtue he possesses into a charged item or lesser enchantment. Making enchanted items in this way requires *vis*, and that *vis* must be already present in the object crafted into the lesser enchantment, which limits them a great deal. Nevertheless, the Mechanicals are perfectly placed to be inventors due to the speed by which they can produce items — it takes as long as it does to make the mundane object bearing the enchantment — and their outlook on life. These hedge wizards live amongst the common people in villages and other rural communities, and share the effects of their magic freely with the people with whom they live. Combining the Craft Magic of the Rusticani with the powers of a hedge tradition could be particularly effective.

### LEARNED MAGICIANS

The Mathematici of Bologna (*Hedge Magic Revised Edition*, Chapter Five) and their allied traditions are examples of the scholarly approach to magical invention typified by Her-

metic magi. While their laboratory activities can only produce the equivalent of charged items, their production of chartae in particular is very swift, taking a matter of hours or days rather than a season. They are limited in what they can achieve in terms of technological effects, but innovations which promote the practice of a particular craft in an affected building, or the health of crops or farm animals, are possible, although no dramatic changes will be enacted on Mythic Europe by learned magicians.

### ALCHEMISTS

Practitioners of experimental philosophy (*Art & Academe*, Chapter Five), these scholars use natural magic rather than supernatural magic in their science. Alchemy is a difficult subject to master, but once formulae have been developed for specific reagents these can be duplicated by those with only a basic understanding of the underpinning philosophy. Another key advantage is that alchemy can be taught to anyone; it does not require The Gift or any underpinning Virtues. All of the reagents listed in *Art & Academe* (pages 75–77) are technological advancements in their own right, and if mass-produced, could effect a real change in Mythic Europe.

One example of how Mythic Europe has already been transformed through alchemy is the use of Greek Fire by the Byzantine Empire (*The Sundered Eagle*, page 47). They cracked the problem of mass production through innovation and the almost limitless coffers of an empire. As a consequence, factories producing Greek Fire were scattered in secret locations across the Empire, although most have closed down since the fall of Constantinople in 1204. If other reagents could be mass-produced in the same manner, alchemists could easily become highly sought after as a route to political and military power.



## Inanis

When vis is imbued into a physical object in preparation for enchantment or in the instilling of powers, its previous physical vessel crumbles, but leaves behind a residue. This used to be removed as part of the ordinary laboratory trash and never given a second thought. However, with the increased production of enchantments, large amounts of this residue was accumulating, and magi began to notice a strange phenomenon. The residue imbues the detritus from a laboratory with magic-sapping properties. The residue from one hundred pawns of vis is needed to make a single pawn of this *inanis* (meaning "void" or "emptiness"), which usually takes the form of a concretion of dust, dirt, pottery fragments, and other rubbish into a spongy gray mass. One pawn of *inanis* takes one round to stop a first magnitude magical effect from working within one pace. The *inanis* is unaffected by this sapping effect. Pawns are cumulative in terms of time taken, strength and range when in contact with one another, so five pawns would take five rounds to de-

plete a fifth magnitude effect at five paces. Effects are not partially canceled by *inanis*: if they have a level equal or lower to the maximum magnitude the effect is canceled, if it is greater then it is not affected. Effects originating from beyond the range of the *inanis* can pass through the radius of its effect, but if they linger within the area of effect they are diminished by it. The *inanis* absorbs the fluid vis that makes such effects possible. Supernatural creatures with a Might less than or equal to (5 x pawns) of *inanis* lose one Might for every season they spend within its area of effect. Concerns have been raised that *inanis* might also deplete auras or even destroy The Gift. The problem of what to do with the *inanis* that is gradually accumulating across Mythic Europe has become a major topic for debate for the Order; most magi refuse to have it anywhere near them.

Note: the existence of *inanis* is not a standard part of the *Ars Magica Fifth Edition* game, but an option for a saga that wants to explore the problems of magical pollution.

fragments of Heron's teaching could be gathered and put back together.

If the secrets of the *Mechanica* of Heron were rediscovered, the ability to build technological devices producing semi-magical effects without the need for vis would be a major boon to any aspiring inventor. The devices described by Heron are almost by definition the types of invention that could transform Mythic Europe: any conceivable device that produces, controls, destroys, or changes earth, fire, air, or water are within the purview of his *mechanicae*, and they were also able to affect the human mind.

## The Process of Transforming Mythic Europe

The impact of any magical technology depends on both its dissemination and integration into the community that benefits from it. The first effects are likely to be seen local to the introduction of the device. There may be economic impacts initially, but once these stabilize, there is likely to be a period of growth and acceptance of the device. Other magi may get involved by duplicating the device from the inventor's Laboratory Texts, promoting its spread. Things may eventually advance to the point where the device is so widespread that its use is commonplace.

### Prerequisites for Change

For the Order of Hermes to make a major change to the course of Mythic Europe through magical technology, there are a few prerequisites for per-

### THE AUGUSTAN BROTHERHOOD

The recently discovered Virgilian Magic (*Rival Magic*, Chapter Three) has a strong element of invention through the practice of Animo, the creation of objects with awakened spirits that have caused them to take on the semblance of life. Animo is as costly and time consuming as creating a Hermetic enchantment, but produces devices which can move of their own volition and be aware of their own surroundings and adapt to them, something impossible with Hermetic magic. The discoveries of the Augustan Brotherhood are less than a century old, and it remains to be seen how much influence they will have on the

future of Mythic Europe.

### MECHANICIANS

The *Mechanicians*, or "wonderworkers of Heron," are a now-extinct magical tradition of mechanic-magicians who studied under Heron of Alexander and his pupils (*Ancient Magic*, Chapter Six).

The *Mechanicians* infused mechanical devices with wondrous abilities through the combination of mundane craft with geometry, arithmetic, astronomy, and physics. They died out sometime in the fifth century, although some magi believe that their magic could still be resurrected if the



mit that change to take place. These are saga considerations, in that if the troupe wishes to run a saga in this environment, these needs must be met by the world and/or society.

### Vis

Magical technology requires a plentiful supply of vis. The more spectacular enchantments cannot be achieved with Charged Items, requiring sufficient resources to meet the needs of the inventors. This does not require a vis-rich saga if the vis is not available to the player characters. One option is that in the past, when these innovations were first made, there was a plenty of vis to meet the needs of the Hermetic inventors. However, those sources have been plundered and are now dry; the world has much vis spun into enchantments, but there is a paucity of it in its raw form. In a saga of this type, discoveries such as Mutable Devices (from Heron of Alexandria's *Mechanica*, *Ancient Magic* page 79) or Reforging Enchanted Items (an Inner Mystery of House Verditius, *Houses of Hermes: Mystery Cults* page 125) become important to characters who want to innovate themselves since they allow them to scavenge spun vis and use its capacity in new enchantments.

Alternatively, vis might still be present in its raw form in Mythic Europe, but the Order keeps sources under close guard and distributes or sells it to its members. House Mercere might be rumored to have a huge vis cache hidden somewhere close to Harco, and House Guernicus punishes anyone found stockpiling vis from their own sources.

### MAGICAL ENGINEERS

As discussed earlier, a sufficiently large workforce is needed to produce enchantments who must be Gifted,

know Magic Theory to a sufficient degree to utilize the required amount of vis, and have sufficiently high Arts to achieve the enchantment even with a Laboratory Text. It takes a long time to train a Hermetic magus and, in traditional sagas, this slows the growth rate of the Order of Hermes. If the Order is to become a mass-producer of enchantments on behalf of Mythic Europe, it needs to have a suitable workforce able to prepare items for enchantment and then instill effects.

One solution would be to indenture magi after their apprenticeship, requiring a certain number of seasons of labor to remunerate the Order for the training they have received. This indenture period is not dissimilar to the journeyman phase of a craft guildsman, and while it is a tedious requirement, it helps the Order maintain its position as the

prime inventors and producers of technology in Mythic Europe. Magi can further indenture themselves for future benefits such as membership of a covenant or access to prime texts on the Arts.

Alternatively, the Order may have discovered a way to speed the process. If all apprentices are taught Magic Theory at the beginning of their apprenticeship period — or even before apprenticeship truly starts — then they can begin preparing items for enchantment as soon as they are Opened to the Hermetic Arts. With the help of Laboratory Texts, an advanced apprentice could even instill some simple effects. Other apprentices could be set to copying out Laboratory Texts for dissemination across the Order. This could greatly speed the manufacture of items.



**BREAKTHROUGHS  
IN MAGIC THEORY**

While not necessary for magical technology, there are some Breakthroughs in Magic Theory that either speed or ease the creation of enchantments. Such Breakthroughs include Single-Use Charged Items (*Hedge Magic Revised Edition*, page 102), Vis-less Enchantments (*Ancient Magic*, page 120) and Rune Magic (*Ancient Magic*, page 139). These innovations, once sufficiently integrated into Hermetic Magic Theory, could revolutionize the way in which enchantments are made, and remove some of the restrictions of time, resources, and workforce.

**Early Adoption**

Early on, inventor magi may need to work hard to get others to adopt their invention, a stage crucial to the creation of wealth, fame, influence, or desire for social change that has driven them to this in the first place. Thanks to the social penalty of The Gift, if the invention is intended for lords, craftsmen, or peasants, magi are better off employing mundane factors to handle the transactions. Even then, there is a general distrust of magical things — and things perceived as magical — in Mythic Europe, and it could be endlessly frustrating to magi that the device that could make life so much better for peasants lies abandoned in a barn because of a superstitious fear of it.

Once this hurdle can be overcome, the benefits resulting from the device's usage should become apparent to the community employing it, and this generates interest in the device. Once interest leads to demand, the spread of the magical technology begins to gather momentum.

**Acceptance and Spread**

Perhaps the hardest phase for any technological advance is keeping the interest in the device going. In this phase, the inventor magus will have to overcome problems of supplying the demand for his creation: Hermetic enchantments take at least a season's work in the laboratory, and many of them have a vis cost attached to them. The benefits to the inventor must outweigh the demands on his time to duplicate the device, unless he is able to farm out production to others (see earlier for a discussion of the problems of manufacture).

If he is both hard-working and lucky, a magus might see benefits deriving from his invention within one to five years of its adoption. It is during this phase that one can expect to see increasingly larger perturbations to the social order caused by the invention (see Social Consequences, earlier).

**Widespread Integration**

If the player characters are the inventors of technological magic, then they may never see this stage of the device's dissemination in Mythic Europe. However, if the player characters are particularly aggressive in the manner in which they spread use of the device, and the saga is sufficiently long lived, then they may live to see this transformation. Alternatively, this might be the time to introduce some of the playing styles discussed in Chapter 1: Introduction, and allow the characters to see a version Mythic Europe post integration of their technology in a flash-forward to the future.

Inspiration for the sort of long-term changes that might result should be sought in the modern world. Players of roleplaying games are intimately familiar with technology, but it is often hard to see to see the impact

that their character's invention might make when it first comes out. With hindsight we can see what a major leap forward the introduction of a certain invention has had, but this is difficult to predict at the time, particularly with the knock-on effects that one industry can have on another. For example, technological advances in the production of linen during the thirteenth century led to linen underwear becoming more common. This led to a bonanza of raw material for the making of cheap paper, which in turn made writing materials more accessible to townfolk and encouraged the rise of literacy in urban areas. The main cost of book production became the wages of the scribe, and with more people able to read, there was a need to find a means to drive book production costs downwards. Inventors started to experiment with printing, and the book press was born.

**Saga Seed:  
A Transformed  
Mythic Europe**

Imagine a world which has been completely transformed through magical technology. The player characters are just one group of inventors amongst a host of others, Hermetic or otherwise. This section briefly discusses one possible outcome of widespread magical technology in Mythic Europe. It is described as if these changes have already occurred by the time the saga starts, which may not in fact be the case. The troupe may well decide to play through these transformations and be involved — or perhaps prevent — their described outcome.

The principle transformation of Mythic Europe into a society using magical technology occurred seventy years ago. Since then, progress



has raced on, with more and more devices becoming available to the common man. The skies over most big cities throng with ships held aloft by magic. In the homes of the rich are to be found delicate automata which perform to the delight of the children, while the cook slaves in the kitchen over a magical stone that provides heat without fuel. Fields are tilled with mechanical plows, which also sow the seed and ward off crows; livestock reach maturity in record time and are free from disease that reduces the yield of milk, eggs, or meat. Some covenants resemble factories rather than the homes of scholars, home to artisans and craftsmen who provide the raw materials to supply the burgeoning need of the artificer-magi.

**ARMATURA & LANIFICARIA:  
MANUFACTURE**

Magic has permitted the rapid production of textiles, tools, and weapons, but also created advances in architecture and carpentry resulting in better housing and grander structures. Largely operated by individuals with little or no score in the Finesse Ability, these creations of Rego Craft Magic turn out at best items of average quality, and much of it is shoddy. However, manufacture is no longer time-limited, merely resource-limited, and advances in mining and processing have improved resource provision as well.

The outcome is the increased availability of materials and objects formerly restricted to the wealthy classes, such as parchment and books, fine cloth, forged iron, and hardwood tools. Increasingly, the cities of Mythic Europe are developing a disposable society in which shoddy tools are bought cheaply but not expected to last very long.

### The Other Houses

**Bjornaer:** The dominant Harmonist faction of the house (*Houses of Hermes: Mystery Cults*, page 11) have largely eschewed Hermetic society, and taken to an adventuring life in flying ships and other devices of magical transportation. They search for new wonders in the natural and supernatural world, having tired of human-created wonders. The few Wilderists have dispersed: claiming back the wilds from humanity can no longer be supported by the Order.

**Criamon:** Largely unchanged. House Criamon still contemplates the Enigma and ignores the changes in the world of dross.

**Flambeau:** Mostly unchanged by technological magic, although a new school of magical combat has been developed that specifically concentrates on the destruction or interruption of magical devices.

**Guernicus:** Unchanged, although somewhat emasculated. The House fought long and hard to enforce the Oath and stifle change, now defeated it fears it

has lost the respect of the Order.

**Jerbiton:** Has concerned itself with the aesthetics of technology, developing new art forms based on magical devices that transform the populace through their appreciation.

**Merinita:** House Merinita has suffered under the relentless stripping of vis from supernatural sites for the manufacture of technology; Faerie has proved a particularly vulnerable target.

**Tremere:** Particularly interested in armamentation: siege engines and devices that protect from them; ranged and melee magical weapons; and shields that prolong the life of soldiers.

**Tyталus:** Polarized as ever, the followers of Tyталus have found a new way to challenge the Order. Some have wholeheartedly adopted the new technology and strive to remain at its cutting edge. Others stubbornly refuse to adopt innovation, only practicing magic through spells, and even promulgating "wizard" stereotypes such as pointed hats and staves.

Despite the efforts from the peacemongers of the Order of Hermes — mainly from House Guernicus — technological advances have changed the face of warfare. This is true not just of personal weapons useable in both missile combat and melee combat, but also of and siege weapons that are deployed against massed troupes and against defensive structures.

The rise in availability of magical technologies that can enact massive destruction on buildings have driven a demand in protective devices. The

Learned Magicians, who can influence luck, health, and magic with their protective devices, have a roaring trade in protecting buildings and city walls against magical siege engines.

**NAVIGATIO & THEATRICA:  
TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATION**

The distant communication innovations discussed above have been fully integrated; indeed, this was one of the first magical technologies made available by the Order of



Hermes. The version of Mythic Europe described above is a reality in this scenario, where distant viewers are used by rulers to address their subjects on mass and — some claim — to spy upon them. In the meantime, most rich households have such a device themselves, and most poor households can rely on having a public device nearby. House Jerbiton, despite initial reservations, have embraced this technology as a means of providing beauty to multitudes in one go, and sponsor events in which artists display their work through public scrying mirrors.

Instant transportation was not considered as a viable option for magical travel due to concerns over warping. Instead, Hermetic architects built alternatives to beasts of burden that need neither food nor rest, and, more recently, flying ships for the transport of passengers as well as cargo. These devices are still expensive to use, and most individuals still rely on slower traditional forms of transport.

#### AGRICULTURA, VENATORIA & MEDICINA: ENVIRONMENTAL TECHNOLOGY

Crop yields and animal husbandry are areas that have benefited from magical technology, with the result that, in cities at least, people are better fed. Comestibles have a longer life and can be preserved from rot, with the result that the Living Conditions penalty for living in a city or town is halved to +1.

Medical magic is to be found in hospitals in most towns and cities. Enchantments drive out the foul airs and corruption that can cause infectious diseases, humoral balances can be quickly identified and corrected, and wounds heal better and faster.

#### A NEW WORLD ORDER OF HERMES

As a whole, the Order of Hermes has itself changed as much as the rest of Mythic Europe. As the authors of the transformation — or at least a major contributor — the Order

has flourished. With the spread of magical technology, the Order of Hermes has come out of the shadows (see Chapter 2) and incorporated as a highly selective craft guild.

One of the contributing factors to the revolution in magical technology was the betrayal of House Verditius's Outer Mystery to the Order as a whole by an anonymous writer who distributed many copies of his text (depending on your saga, it might have required a Breakthrough as described in *Houses of Hermes: True Lineages*, page 29 to allow a Mystery Virtue to be acquired through teaching rather than Initiation). Verditius Magic was consequently learned by many magi, and without the need for casting tools. This scandal bit deep at the heart of House Verditius, which has ceased to operate as a Mystery Cult and has become a Societas, although it still retains the secrets of its Inner Mysteries. Many followers of Verditius have entered a partnership with magi Bonisagi, as always, House Bonisagus toils to find new uses for magical applications, but



now rarely indulges in the practical or experimental side to their science. Instead they pass their Laboratory Texts onto Verditius colleagues for the actual manufacture. At the last Grand Tribunal the primus of Verditius announced the co-location of his domus magna with that of House Bonisagus at Durenmar, and many believe that it will not be long before House Verditius ceases to exist as an independent entity and becomes absorbed into House Bonisagus.

The second factor promoting the rise of technological magics was the take-over of House Ex Miscellanea by a cabal of Rusticani. While this House is still home to a collection of Hermetic hedge traditions, a sizable minority of its membership are Rusticani, including the primus. The domus magna has become a hive of industrial activity, attracting magical craftsmen from across Mythic Europe and producing the magical technology on a wide scale. Some magi of other houses have entered joint apprenticeship arrangements with a Mechanical so

that Craft Magic has entered the milieu of Houses Tytalus, Tremere, and Mercere. Some have linked the downfall of House Verditius to the rise of the Rusticani, noting that the Mechanicals were ever opposed by the Verditius mystery cult.

Since the wider use of scrying devices for communication and instant transportation for travel has become commonplace, House Mercere has been forced to reappraise its usefulness to the Order. Rather than a messenger service, the redcaps have turned their talents towards the business side of their house, and have become mundane agents for the sale of magical technology.

### THE ENEMY

Greater capacity for exploration has also led to greater contact with civilizations beyond Mythic Europe. In particular, contact with Arab and Persian cultures has revealed a similar — if not more advanced — level of magical technology, but one which is alien to the

approach adopted by European wizards. Eastern magic is channeled through spirits, and their technology therefore has the capacity to be intelligent rather than mechanical in its response to a situation, albeit limited by the constraints imposed by the sorcerer. Breakthroughs in Solomonic magic have led to an enhanced capacity to coerce spirits into the service of a wielder of a device rather than under the direct control of a sorcerer. Such magical practices are viewed with great suspicion on the west, particularly since some eastern wizards employ demons to power their devices. The secular and almost scientific nature of western magic is equally incomprehensible to the easterners.

Years of warfare in the Holy Land between Arabs and Westerners have caused an innate unwillingness to share ideas, resulting in a great deal of hostility between the branches of magical technology. As a consequence, there is a great interest in studying the devices of the opposing side, to gain vital information about how to counter it. Espionage and counter-espionage are fertile grounds for stories.



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1	3	5	6
2			

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# Arsmagica

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The magi of Hibernia respect the land and its supernatural inhabitants, granting much of the Tribunal's area to hedge traditions and allowing supernatural creatures a vote at Tribunal. Now, magi from elsewhere in the Order have come to "reform" the Peripheral Code, laying siege to and taking one of the Irish covenants. If the native magi could just stop fighting each other, they would resist.

As English lords push further into the island, and the Church struggles with attempts to make it fit continental ideals, the Order of Hermes faces its own conflict. The traces of past conflicts are everywhere: the faerie Tuatha De Danaan, the magic Fir Bolg and Formorach, and saints as prone to curse as bless. Demons, however, are nowhere to be seen, as constant fighting convulses the Emerald Isle. It is, as ever in Ireland, a time for heroes.

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Magi of the Order of Hermes often come to the attention of other inhabitants of Mythic Europe. Some see them as a threat, others as a target, still others as an opportunity. Some even want to help the magi to better integrate themselves into society. These might be mundane humans, supernatural creatures, or other magi, but they all have one thing in common. They're nothing but trouble.

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