

SUB ROSA

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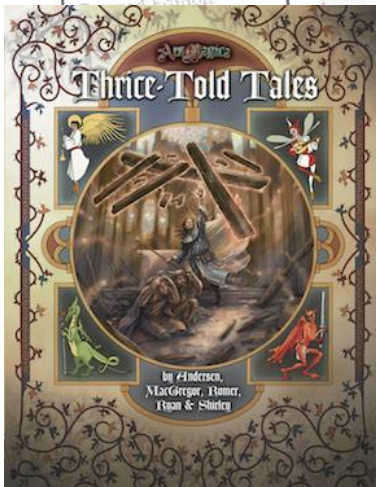
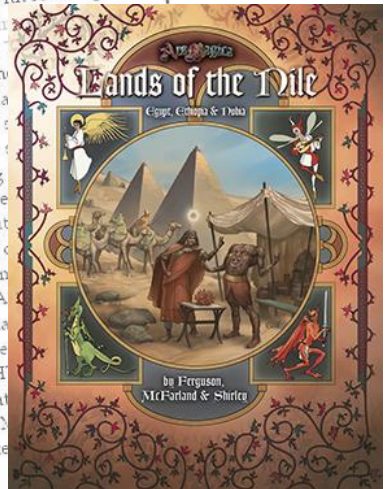
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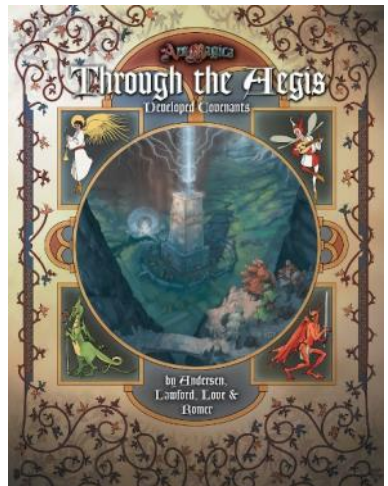
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THIS ISSUE

ISSUE 19

JANUARY 2017

CONTENTS

UNDER THE ROSE	PAGE 4
DIRECT FROM ATLAS-GAMES.....	PAGE 5
ROANOKE, FOUNDED	PAGE 6
BY JIM SEALS	
GEOMANTIC STORYTELLING	PAGE 22
BY MARK SHIRLEY	
THE FRIENDS OF THE APACEI OF VINILANDIA.....	PAGE 30
BY BERENGAR DREXEL	
MUTATIS MUTANDIS: STEPPING AWAY FROM DIO	PAGE 40
BY GERALD WYLIE	
THE CLOUDLANDS OF AIOLIA	PAGE 46
BY BEN MCFARLAND	
SET PIECE: THE MILL.....	PAGE 52
BY GERALD WYLIE	
HEDGE WIZARDS: A SAGA OF MINOR MAGICS	PAGE 60
BY ROBIN BLAND	
OLD-BRITANNIA	PAGE 78
BY BENOÎT LÉOUTRE	

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The new releases in support of **Ars Magica Fifth Edition** may be ending, but it's not the end. We'll carry on playing it, for sure, and **Sub Rosa** will carry on for a good while yet supporting Fifth Edition any way it can.

SCENARIO

BESTIARY

FICTION

SETTING

RULES

CHARACTER

EDITORIAL

UNDER THE ROSE

This issue has taken a bit of effort to complete, but number 19 is in your hands. With the official end of the line, we needed to consider how we would proceed.

I'm proud to say that we agree, **Sub Rosa** is going to continue, and we do so with Atlas-Games' blessing.

We intend to keep creating this for as long as we can and you keep asking for it; that's our pledge to the **Ars Magica** fans. I personally hope to push past Mythic Perspective's high-water mark of 23 issues, and I hope you'll be here with us.

However, I'm also proud to say I know we won't be the only torch keeping the flame lit. Jason Tondro, known as Doctor Comics on the forms, is putting together another fanzine, **Peripheral Code**. I've gotten to take a look at some preview material, and I think you'll be quite pleased at what it has to offer. I'd urge you to check it out and pick up an issue as soon as it's released. More content for this game means we all win. We welcome you to the community tribunal **Peripheral Code**, and can't wait to see some more.

But the last of the line books, *Dies Irae*, is both a book of endings and new beginnings, of whole new worlds fashioned from the foundations of previous ones. And in that spirit, I want to offer a short report on **Magic Shoe**, the Gumshoe variant being developed (about which you can read on the next page).

I got to play an initial draft of the rules in a very entertaining investigation of a faerie vineyard and its troublesome interactions with the locals while attending Gencon Indianapolis this summer.

The spirit of the session still felt right, the essence of Mythic Europe and still ring true, in part no doubt, because of the tables familiarity with the setting and our GM's knowledge of it. Jeff Tidball, the former line editor for **Ars Magica Fourth Edition**, ran a fun game, encouraging character interaction and keeping the story moving at a good pace. I got to play a Tytalus apprentice close to Gauntlet, who alternated between aiding and supporting his Mater, who was played by the only player unfamiliar with Mythic Europe.

Spell guidelines were loose, partially crabbled from **Fifth Edition**, but still a work in progress. They were complemented by the addition of a new form, *fabricum*, which covered manufactured goods of all kinds. There was no real mechanic for botches or exploding dice that we used, but my character did partake in a Certamen, which felt very like the stock dueling, as we described our attacks and defenses in detail, adding a layer of fun.

Overall, we had a great time and the experience seemed perfectly familiar. We had grogs, companions, and magi. While I love my **Fifth Edition**, I know this will be a great way to bring the magic of **Ars Magica** to more imaginations and I promise we'll be here to talk about both!

Ars Magica Gumshoe Character Sheet

Name: "Horse," Servant of Geretrudis
 Primary Drive: Gain Power
 Additional Drives: Undermine Geretrudis

☐ Companion
☒ Magus (House: Tytalus Apprentice)

	Starting	Experience
Investigative Build Points	6	
Hermetic Build Points	14	
General Build Points	45	

Hit Threshold: 3

Description (appearance, habits, temperament...)
 Very unusual among magi in that his Gift does not set mundanes ill at ease. Smiles easily; watches intently. Fastidiously groomed. In debate and conversation, allies himself with anyone who takes a position that contradicts Geretrudis of Tytalus.

Background (culture, family, training, social...)
 Orphaned to a monastery, now 13 years into his 15-year Hermetic apprenticeship to Geretrudis of Tytalus. Dubbed "Horse" by his filius and forbidden to speak his own name until the end of his training, he despises his master while appreciating that her harsh method of teaching has been effective.

Investigative Abilities

Ability	Rating	Pool
Social Abilities		
Craft		
Peasantry		
Yomany		
Academic Abilities		
Artes Liberales ¹	1	
Civil & Canon Law ¹		
Hermetic Law & Lore	1	
Languages ¹	2	
German, Latin		
Medicine	1	
Philosophiae	1	
Realm Lore (Dominion)		
Realm Lore (Faerie)		
Realm Lore (Infernal)		
Realm Lore (Magic)		
Theology ²	1	

Interpersonal Abilities

Ability	Rating	Pool
Animal Ken		
Assess Character		
Bargain		
Charm	1	
Etiquette		
Interrogation		
Intimidation	1	

General Abilities

Ability	Rating	Pool
Athletics ³		
Battle ³		
Carousing	4	
Certamen ⁴		
Chirurgy	6	
Concentration ⁵	6	
Finesse ⁶		
Grogs ⁷		
Health ⁸		
Legdermain	8	below
Magic Resistance ⁹		
Preparedness	3	
Scuffling ¹⁰		
Sense Trouble	8	
Stealth		
Will ¹¹	10	below

Health Pool Track

18	17	16	15	14	13
12	11	10	9	8	7
6	5	4	3	2	1
Health ▶ 0	-1	-2	-3	-4	-5
Incap ▶ -6	-7	-8	-9	-10	-11

Will Pool Track

18	17	16	15	14	13
12	11	10	9	8	7
6	5	4	3	2	1
Will ▶ 0	-1	-2	-3	-4	-5
Incap ▶ -6	-7	-8	-9	-10	-11

Character Creation and Advancement

¹For each point, choose a craft (e.g., blacksmith, mason, etc.). For each additional point, choose a new craft or advance an existing one from proficiency to mastery.

²For each point, choose a writing system (e.g., Latin, Greek, etc.).

³For each point, choose a body of religious law (e.g., Christianity, Judaism, etc.).

⁴For each point, choose a spoken language (e.g., Latin, Norse, etc.).

⁵For each point, choose a theology (e.g., Christianity, Islam, etc.).

⁶Only available to Gifted magi.

⁷Each time you suffer damage and rest at a negative number, test for unconsciousness.

⁸Health: No Investigative (including Hermetic) spends possible. All tests +1 difficulty (including Hit Thresholds).

⁹Incapacitated: As hurt, also, can't move faster than staggering walk, and lose one more Health or Will (as relevant) each 30 minutes, each requiring a further unconsciousness test, until stabilized with a 2-point Chirurgy spend.

Character Sheet Version 2016-05-04

DIRECT FROM ATLAS-GAMES

By JEFF TIDBALL

“**Magic Shoe**” is the working title of our project here at Atlas Games to unite the rich background of Mythic Europe and the Order of Hermes, on one hand, with the truly stellar investigative RPG framework found in Robin D. Laws’s **Gumshoe** system, on the other hand.

I fell madly in love with **Gumshoe** while writing *Eternal Lies for Trail of Cthulhu*, and I’m here to tell you have if you’ve never played a game that uses it, you’re missing out.

Progress on **Magic Shoe** has been intermittent over the last year. That, essentially, is because I’m so excited about it that I wrestled it onto my own personal development slate, and my time has been divided between many

creative and operational projects in recent months.

I managed to get enough work done to run preview playtests of the embryonic system at Origins and Gen Con this year. And in early November, at Metatopia in New Jersey, I had developed enough of the character creation and spell stat systems that I was able to run expanded playtests of both of those.

There will be much in **Magic Shoe** that’s familiar, and some that’ll be completely new. Some elements may be surprising; hopefully none will be shocking.

Ars Magica fans can hopefully rest assured that someone who truly loves both of these games is standing at the helm of the project, working hard to make something new

that lives up to both the **Ars Magica** and **Gumshoe** names.

We expect that **Magic Shoe** — which is to say, whatever we wind up actually calling it — will be a Kickstarter project launched in either 2017 or 2018. To make sure you hear about it as the launch date nears, double-check that you’re subscribed to **Ars Magica** updates from our email newsletter, which you can do from literally any page on atlas-games.com.

SCENARIO

BESTIARY

FICTION

SETTING

RULES

CHARACTER

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ROANOKE, FOUNDED

By JIM SEALS

In *Grogs*, Timothy Ferguson introduced the concept of the Time-Lost Witness as a means for players to add “anachronistic touches to their version of Mythic Europe” by means of faerie meddling.

In **Roanoke, Founded**, we build on this conceit, taking a lost page of history and asking, what if the *Lost Colony* was merely unstuck in time, reappearing several centuries earlier off the coast of Mythic Europe?

Within this article you will discover a general background detailing the historical account of England’s nascent attempts at colonization under the reign of Queen Elizabeth I, grog templates outlining the Gentleman-Adventurer, the Wandering Poor, and the Conjuror, a magical bestiary entry delineating the Wendigo, a creature of Algonquian legend, and lastly a collection of story seeds for incorporating Roanoke into your ongoing **Ars Magica** campaign.

GENERAL BACKGROUND

Having won the esteem of his queen, Elizabeth I, and proven his mettle in Ireland during the Second Desmond Rebellion, Sir Walter Raleigh was awarded the English patent for colonization of the New World in 1584. This patent bestowed unto Sir Raleigh the sole right to settle somewhere in



North America not otherwise claimed by a Christian power. Throughout the patent's lifespan (1584-1603), Raleigh dispatched a total of three expeditions to America in as many years. It should be noted, however, that Sir Raleigh's was not the first such patent issued by

Gilbert's death at sea in 1583 during his second attempt to establish a permanent English presence in Newfoundland.

During this period, England was still seen as "a weak, somewhat backward nation clinging to the fringe of the

and France. Both Raleigh and Gilbert agreed that England's impending greatness resided in world trade through colonization. After all, permanent English governed plantations in America would allow for the cultivation of renewable resources, freeing England from their reliance on imported foreign trade goods (much as the Spanish had done with their holdings in the West Indies). However, whereas Sir Gilbert sought to claim a monopoly on Europe's seasonal fishing industry off the banks of Newfoundland for his settlement, Raleigh's sights were set farther south, toward the Outer Banks of North Carolina.

While his long term goal remained the establishment of plantations, Raleigh's short term goal hinged on the prospect of privateering. Specifically, he sought to create in America a port-of-call from which England could heighten their assault on the Spanish treasure fleet. Privateering was a practice in which both mariners and merchants might achieve recompense for the value of their lost cargo at sea. The government, in this case England, would issue a "letter of marque" which allowed the aggrieved parties six months to seize goods from the country responsible, up to the amount lost. Once, privateering was a highly regulated industry in England; however, as time wore on and relations between England and Spain continued to deteriorate, these regulations were stripped and privateering became commonplace on the high seas.

The central conceit between England and Spain's shared enmity was rooted in religious dogma. Since the Protestant Reformation, Europe had become a house divided on matters of faith, and in 1585 Queen Elizabeth committed herself to a holy war that would last until the end of her reign when she sent troops to defend the Protestant Netherlands against a repressive Catholic Spain. As France descended into an ongoing civil struggle between these two extremes, Spain ascended as defender of Catholicism in



the queen; that particular charge had been entrusted to Raleigh's half-brother, Sir Humphrey Gilbert, in 1578; alas, that patent came to an end with

European continent" whose foreign policy consisted solely of maneuvering around the whims of the continent's more established superpowers, Spain

Europe, leaving weak, backward England to assume a similar role for Protestantism. The English believed that the imperialistic Spanish sought nothing less than the utter eradication of their Protestant faith and their complete conversion back to Catholic dogma. In such a harsh light, privateering against Spain was not only seen as a deeply patriotic act, but as a defense of God Himself.

By establishing his settlement farther south down the eastern seaboard, Raleigh hoped to create a base of operations in the Western Hemisphere from whence to launch raiding missions, pillaging the ill-gotten Spanish loot taken from indigenous peoples of Central and South Americans. Profits secured in these high stake ventures would then go to rewarding the joint-stock companies and private investors in Raleigh's colony. Raleigh's short term profits would help ensure the success of his long term goal.

Sadly for Sir Walter Raleigh, this never came to pass.

The first expedition left England on April 27th, 1584 under the command of Philip Amadas and Arthur Barlowe. Amadas and Barlowe made landfall by July 13th. Theirs was a reconnaissance mission hoping to discover a location suitable to sustain a settlement. It was during this initial outing that Barlowe discovered the island of Roanoke, a place he would often describe as a newly discovered Garden of Eden. The verisimilitude of these reports was further bolstered by the presence of two Native American visitors to court, Manteo and Wanchese, all of which provided Sir Raleigh with the breadth of propaganda needed to sign up enough backers to finance his second expedition: England's first outpost in the New World.

On April 9th, 1585, seven ships set sail from England; their destination was Roanoke Island. Lending her support, Queen Elizabeth granted Sir Raleigh powers once denied to him by

PROTESTANTISM

The Protestant Reformation began on October 31, 1517 when Martin Luther posted The Ninety-Five Theses on the Power and Efficacy of Indulgences upon the door of All Saints' Church in Wittenberg, Germany. The thesis was a scathing indictment of the Church's practice of accepting monies in exchange for divine forgiveness.

In the sixty-seven years between Luther's thesis and the issuing of Sir Walter Raleigh's Patent to Settle Virginia in 1584, a schism had formed in Western Christianity. Spain had sided with the Church, while other countries, like the Netherlands, took the side of the Protestant Reformers. Still, there were countries, like France, where the issue of Catholicism versus Protestantism had not been settled, igniting a civil conflict.

For the English colonists of Roanoke, their lot was cast when the Pope denied

Henry VIII's request for an annulment of his first marriage to Catherine of Aragon in the late 1520s, leading the king to sever all ties with the Roman Catholic Church; this set the stage for the English Reformation. Under the stewardship of Queen Elizabeth I, Protestantism became the national religion. Catholicism was still practiced in some circles of the aristocracy, however, in secret.

If introducing Roanoke colonists as Time-Lost Witnesses into Mythic Europe, the colonists will believe that the Pope is not only fallible, but corrupt; what's more, his corruption is tainting the faith. In this light, England's war with Spain has taken on the connotations of a holy war, with the English as protectors of the one true faith against a scourge that would eradicate it. If the Roanoke colonists are introduced to the Iberian Tribunal, consider them hostile insurgents.

Parliament, the seizure of men and prize ships, and also gifted unto him her own vessel, the Tiger, to serve as flagship. This second expedition was under the command of Sir Raleigh's cousin, Sir Richard Grenville, a man with no prior naval experience to speak of. Once established, the settlement's governor was to be Ralph Lane, fresh from his role in the subjugation of Ireland. The mission was to establish a garrison within this fabled Garden of Eden. As the outpost was intended to service the endeavor's short term goal, the colonists selected were, with rare exception, hardened veterans of the continental and Irish campaigns. Two of those rare exceptions were Thomas Harriot and John White. Harriot was a scientist and writer, and White an illustrator by trade. Upon their arrival in the New World, the two men collaborated closely with one another, creating scientifically accurate maps as well as detailed examinations of the various indigenous tribes local to the

area. Their crowning achievement — and perhaps the single greatest outcome of this second expedition, though it was not thought such at the time — was the creation of one of the most enduring documents of the age, A Brief and True Report of the New Found Land of Virginia, which gave Englishman back home a concise picture of what life could be like within a North American settlement.

In spite of this academic accomplishment, the second expedition was an abject failure. From the outset, the efforts of the gentleman-adventurers and their rank-and-file subordinates were beset by woe and ruin in equal measure. Some of these woes the colonists could rightly attribute to acts of God beyond their control, such as the great storm that beleaguered their sojourn across the Atlantic, scattering the fleet and claiming one of their light boats as its own, or the shallowness of the sounds

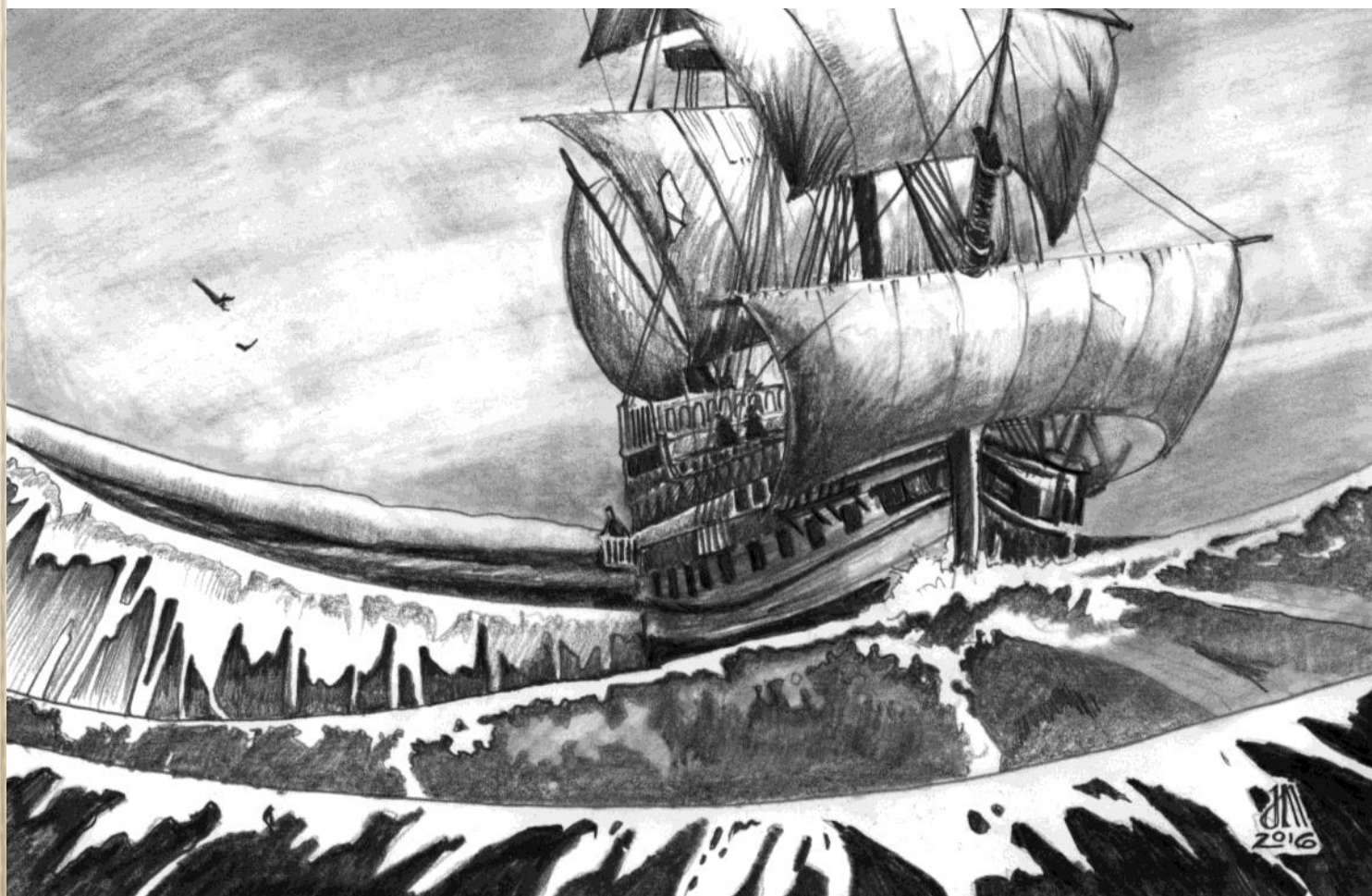
surrounding Roanoke, which were discovered shortly after their arrival on June 26th when the *Tiger* ran aground, depleting much of the expedition's stores. Other obstacles, however, were of the colonists own doing, such as the burning of an Aquascogoc village over one lost silver cup. This led to hostile relations with the indigenous people the colonists, with their diminished supplies, were entirely dependent upon for survival. Hostile relations gave way to open hostilities; several skirmishes were had between the colonists and the natives during this time period. Soon, the colonists had to confront the very real possibility of either dying in another raiding attempt to secure more resources or starving to death cloistered in their settlement; neither prospect sat well with them.

By June 1586, with the aid of a newly arrived Sir Francis Drake, the

outpost had been abandoned. In the colonists' haste to return home to England, three men previously dispatched on a mission into the interior were stranded; of these lost souls no further historical record remains. The following month, in July, Sir Grenville returned from England with the supplies Governor Lane had requested. Discovering the outpost deserted, Grenville dispatched a holding party of fifteen men to occupy the settlement, giving them a single year's worth of provisions though his holds contained much more, and promptly returned to the West Indies to continue preying upon the Spanish treasure fleet.

Sir Raleigh's third and final expedition to America, the oft-popularized "Lost Colony of Roanoke", is paradoxically his most well-known venture and the one we know the least of.

What is known is that shortly upon his return to England, White took up the mantle of colonization and went to work pulling together another expedition in earnest. Taking to heart the hard learned and bitterly fought lessons of Lane's failed colony, with its overt emphasis on privateering and governing through military might, White leaned in the opposite direction — perhaps too heavily so. His idealized settlement aligned with Raleigh's own long term goal for American colonization: the establishment of permanent plantations whose American-made products would go on to subsidize both English markets and English wealth, stealing a page directly from King Phillip II's playbook on empire building. However, in order to create a self-sufficient agrarian society in this strange land, his choice of colonists were almost exclusively families. Whereas Lane's colonists relied on



martial prowess, with the expectation of returning home to England when their tour was done, White's were forced to commit their all to the endeavor.

In the end, White enlisted 116 settlers — including his own daughter, Eleanor Dare, laden with child — and set sail for the New World aboard three ships, including their flagship the *Lion*, on May 8th, 1587. White's intention was to establish himself somewhere in the Chesapeake Bay area, not in Roanoke. White carried on his person a missive from Raleigh that stated as such. However, on July 22nd, once the *Tiger* had made landfall outside the Outer Banks to take the measure of Grenville's holding party, White discovered that Simon Fernandez, the ship's seasoned navigator and a veteran of the previous two expeditions, had convinced his men to strand the colonists on Roanoke in order to pursue their own privateering interests before summer had ended.

Seeing no other recourse, White relented. He and his 40 charges onboard the *Lion* disembarked on Roanoke Island. The remainder of their number would arrive three days late. Of the holding party, there was no sign, save the remnants of a lone skeleton. Much of Lane's settlement, however, remained and that was where White established his settlement.

August was a tempestuous month for the Lost Colony. It began with the death of one of their own, George Howe, on August 1st. The colonists discovered his corpse mutilated "wading in shallow water 'almost naked, without any weapon'" (Kupperman 112). Unaware of whom to blame, White tried to parlay with the nearby Croatan Tribe to determine those responsible for Howe's death and to learn the fate of the holding party. Time passed and no answer came. On August 9th, White led a contingent of colonists to the Dasemunkepeuc village in a sneak

attack, killing one in the skirmish. Sadly, these were not the Native Americans White sought; they were later proved to be a group of once-friendly Indians.

Understandably, relations with the indigenous people swiftly soured, and the colony soon found itself, much as Lane's had earlier, at the mercy of a now hostile native populace as supplies dwindled.

On August 18, Eleanor Dare gave birth to a daughter, Virginia Dare, the first English colonist born in the New World. Her christening was held on August 24th.

For their part, Fernandez and his flotilla of three ships would soon depart for England. Uncertainty settled upon the colonists; the last vestiges of their homeland would soon be well out of sight. It was determined that an agent would return home to petition on behalf of the colonists. Through a



SUB ROSA

convoluted means of elections and refusals, White was selected to make the petition and finally accepted, albeit with great reluctance. It was determined that as governor his word would undoubtedly hold more sway with the English court.

At the stroke of midnight on August 27th, John White, now a grandfather and governor of what was to have been christened the City of Raleigh, departed the settlement. He promised to return with supplies in three months' time — a promise he was destined not to keep. Thanks to the impending Spanish Armada's attack on England in 1588, which placed an embargo on all vessels leaving port, White did not return to Roanoke Island for three years. When he did, in 1590, he discovered nary a sign of the colony's presence save the word "CROATOAN" etched in the King's English on the bark of a lone tree. There was no other trace of the colony's existence; even the buildings that had stood since Lane's initial settlement were gone.

For the Roanoke Colony was truly lost.

GROG TEMPLATES

This section of the article is written to be compatible with Chapter Seven of *Grogs*, "Grog Templates." Provided herein are three suggested backgrounds for Elizabethan-era grogs found in the various Roanoke expeditions. Each includes suggested Virtues and Flaws as well as Abilities at three different ages.

This article assumes that the Storyguide has brought these characters into *Ars Magica's* default setting of Mythic Europe, rendering them "time-lost characters". As a consequence, each character has taken the Worthless Abilities Flaw (Minor, General): "A time-lost character must have about 30 experience points that have been rendered valueless by her shift in

time" (Anderson 86). This allotment of 30 experience points should be spent on abilities that were contemporaneous to Elizabethan England.

The most fundamental cultural departure from the Mythic Europe campaign setting is the existence and widespread acceptance of Protestantism. The English Reformation, which saw King Henry VIII renounce the Roman Catholic Church in his single-minded pursuit for a male heir, occurred during the 1530s. Since then Protestantism has become the adopted religion of the English, and it is what saw Queen Elizabeth commit herself to a protracted military engagement with the world's greatest naval presence, Spain. Points spent on "Theology: Protestantism" would prove an excellent choice, as it means that these time-lost men and women have dedicated a portion of their lives to a religion that is two centuries from formalizing.

However, if the Storyguide is running a campaign set in Elizabethan England, then the Worthless Abilities Flaw need not be taken.

THE GENTLEMAN- ADVENTURER

Fain would I climb, yet fear I to fall.

Sir Walter Raleigh

BACKGROUND

The Gentleman-Adventurer is a privateer hailing from English gentry. Under the aegis of Queen Elizabeth's Letter of Marque, the Gentleman-Adventurer has set out to make a name for himself on the high seas. For a few, success meant a lifetime of fame and fortune; for most, however, it was a tedious, unforgiving existence that came to no pleasant end.

As with Mythic Europe of the early 1200s, England of the 1500s was a plutocracy; ergo, the accumulation of

wealth was of paramount concern. While a flourishing merchant class was starting to come to power during Queen Elizabeth's reign, thanks in no small measure to technological advances in seafaring and trade with neighboring countries, inheritance remained the central player in determining one's social standing. Tradition adhered strongly to primogeniture in matters of inheritance; the firstborn son remained the sole inheritor of a deceased father's lands, titles and wealth. This left second and third sons of the gentry to fend for themselves. (In addition, those overseeing a less than prosperous estate or feeling the extravagant excesses of a life lived at court may also have become Gentleman-Adventurers in their own right as a means of shoring up their wealth.) While privateering by the gentry did exist prior to the advent of war, a Gentleman-Adventurer was the exception and not the standard. It was not until Elizabeth I declared war against Phillip II that the Gentleman-Adventurer came into his own. Now, preying upon the Spanish treasure fleet was not only seen as a means to a worldly end, but as a patriotic act for Queen-&-Country; overnight, such deeds took on a divine connotation. Soon, the Gentleman-Adventurer became the romantic figure of the times, a stalwart defender of the one true faith against an implacable foe. If he was able to turn a personal profit from his godly efforts, all the better.

As befitted a member of Elizabethan gentry, the Gentleman-Adventurer was a creature prone to profound arrogance, caring little for the well being of the "rank-and-file." Often, those of lesser station were regarded as mere cannon-fodder "to serve in any way their commanders saw fit" (Kupperman 33). This is no more evident than during Sir Grenville's initial voyage to America when he stranded twenty of his crew on Jamaica after the supplies of his ship, the *Lion*, ran low. Moreover, command of these expeditions was class-based, taking little consideration of the commander's merits. Gentleman-Adventurers often found themselves in

leadership positions by the sole virtue of their birth with little to no experience and questionable skills. This lack of seasoning, coupled with a blatant disregard for those serving beneath them, led to an exuberant loss of human life throughout this time period (with nary a word murmured in the romanticized tales of their exploits).

CHARACTER CREATION

A Gentleman-Adventurer character must take the Social Status Virtue Gentleman-Adventurer (+1) and the Privileged Upbringing Virtue (+1) to denote their elevated status in Elizabethan England. Additional virtues and flaws can be taken as normal. In addition, a Gentleman-Adventurer allowed access to superior quality equipment, including a longsword, plate cuirass, and musket. (See the “Technological Advances” sidebar.)

SUGGESTED VIRTUES & FLAWS

Prior to taking to the open sea, several Gentleman-Adventurers came into their own at either the Inns of Court, learning law, or in one of the continental wars; this led to a bifurcation of pursuits. Virtues that emphasize additional experience points in either Academic or Martial Abilities, such as Educated or Warrior, are both appropriate.

If one wishes to create a more scholarly Gentleman-Adventurer—the like of which may one day become a Renaissance Man in his later years, such as Sir Walter Raleigh—then take Affinity with (Academic Ability), Apt Student, Book Learner, Clear Thinker, Common Sense or Intuition. If one wishes to create a more militant Gentleman-Adventurer—the like of which may one day be sung in song throughout England, such as Sir Richard Grenville, captain of the Revenge—then take Enduring Constitution, Long-Winded, Puissant (Martial Ability) or Tough.

OF THE COLONISTS AND THE RANK & FILE

This article intentionally forgoes giving lengthy grog template for the common rank-&-file soldiers of Governor Lane’s expedition or the civilian colonists of Governor White, in favor of highlighting those colorful characters more indicative of the English Renaissance. Elizabethan England is often defined by extremes in opposition to one another.

“[T]here are different perspectives on the life of these times. One would portray ‘merry England’, an increasing national confidence, the glamour of Court and high fashion, the splendor of great mansions, the power and beauty of the drama, literature and music, the eloquence of religious prose and concern for religious principle, the charm of traditional customs and a relatively lightly populated, bird-rich countryside, and remarkable energetic

and colorful individuals. Another would present a typical third-world developing country, with gross disparities of wealth, with the powerful few plundering the commonwealth, the numerous poor with low life-expectancy, traditional cultural patterns crumbling under the pressure of new and more efficient agricultural and economic practices, inflation outpacing wages, child labour, infectious diseases, religious intolerance and widespread superstition.”

(Pritchard 1)

In the case of this article, we are highlighting the disparity between the Gentleman-Adventurer and the Wandering Poor. In such a juxtaposition there is precious little room for a middle ground.

For those Storyguides or players wishing to populate their version of Roanoke with that middle ground, see Grog Templates on *Ars Magica 5th Edition*, page 21 and *Grogs*, page 87. In case of soldiers, some abilities need to be rearranged to give them access to Firearms: Musket. In case of colonists, any professional grog would work to fill the needed roles.

Lastly, if one choses to forego the harsh realities of the Gentleman-Adventurer and strives instead to play a far more romanticized version then the Inspirational virtue will serve that purpose quite nicely.

In terms of Flaws, there are several Personality Flaws that can be taken as Minors to simulate a Gentleman-Adventurers’ privileged worldview, such as Ambitious, Avarice, Driven, Higher Purpose, Overconfident, Proud, Reckless, Sheltered Upbringing, or Wrathful.

RECOMMENDED CHILDHOOD PACKAGES

All the childhood packages listed in *Grogs*, page 66 are applicable, except for the Covenant-Bred and Feral Childhood

Packages. However, the Social Childhood Package is recommended, as it will give the character social skills that will prove invaluable in navigating courtly intrigue.

Age 20:

Artes Liberalis 1, Bargain 2, Brawl 2, Charm 3, Common Law 2, Craft: Punning Word Games 2, Etiquette 3, Folk Ken 3, Guile 3, Intrigue 3, Firearm: Musket 2, Leadership 2, Native Language: English 5, Organization Lore: Elizabethan Court 2, Ride 2, Single Weapon: Longsword 3, Theology: Protestantism 2

Age 35:

Area Lore: The Newfoundland of Virginia 1, Artes Liberalis 1, Bargain 3,

John Howes, 1582

Brawl 3, Carouse 2, Charm 3, Common Law 2, Craft: Punning Word Games 2, Etiquette 3, Folk Ken 4, Guile 3, Intrigue 3, Firearm: Musket 4, Leadership 4, Living Language: Algonquian 2, Native Language: English 5, Organization Lore: Elizabethan Court 2, Organization Lore: Military Outpost of Roanoke 1, Profession: Privateer 3, Ride 2, Single Weapon: Longsword 5, Theology: Protestantism 2

Age 50:

Area Lore: The Newfoundland of Virginia 1, Artes Liberalis 2, Bargain 3, Brawl 3, Carouse 2, Charm 4, Common Law 3, Craft: Punning Word Games 2, Dead Languages: Latin 4, Etiquette 5, Folk Ken 4, Guile 3, Intrigue 4, Firearm: Musket 4, Leadership 4, Living Language: Algonquian 2, Medicine 1, Native Language: English 5, Organization Lore: Elizabethan Court 4, Organization Lore: Military Outpost of Roanoke 1, Philosophiae 1, Profession: Privateer 3, Ride 3, Single Weapon: Longsword 5, Theology: Protestantism 3

CONCLUDING NOTES

The Gentleman-Adventurer is expected to hold his own on both the battlefield and court. As a consequence, he needs a myriad of skills to represent this dichotomy. In addition, several assumptions were made with this write up.

Chiefly, it is assumed that he is a part of Governor Lane's expedition, as Gentleman-Adventurers took no part in John White's experiment. If the Storyguide wishes to highlight Governor White's colony over Lane's and still wants to use a Gentleman-Adventurer, then the character might have been one of those lost souls left behind in Lane's departure.

This character has taken both the Social Childhood Package and the Privileged Upbringing Virtue. This affords the character several social skills

as well as access to both Academic and Martial Abilities.

Upon reaching 18, the character is assumed to have attended the Inns of Court, such as the Middle Temple, where he was introduced to Common Law. It was common practice for gentlemen to spend a year or two there, especially those who expected to run an estate of their own someday; an understanding of law was seen as crucial.

At age 20, the character is inexperienced. All his training, both academic and martial, has come by way of either paid tutors or goodhearted mentors. He has yet to have his mettle tested.

By age 35, that mettle has been tested. Here is a privateer of some renown. His martial skills have increased, as has his leadership. Social skills that would benefit him at court have not advanced. Instead, he picks up Carouse and strengthens both his Folk Ken and Bargain. Lastly, he picks up a smattering of Algonquian, the language of the Native Americans indigenous to Roanoke, and acquires area lore for his new home as well as organization lore for how that home is run under Governor Ralph Lane.

By age 50, the Gentleman Adventurer has returned home to England. His courtly skills increase, and he begins to entertain a myriad of intellectual pursuits. It is possible to use an older Gentleman-Adventurer in the Roanoke setting by establishing the character as a more experienced privateer predating the Anglo-Spanish War.

THE WANDERING POOR

"Was there ever, in any age, the like number of poor people as there are at the present, begging in the streets of the City and wandering in the fields so idly, being ready to attempt any mischief upon any light occasion?"

BACKGROUND

Today, we have a highly romanticized image of the vagabond: wandering the countryside with nary a care in the world, surviving on charm and wit in equal measure. However, this colorful fantasy is discordant with the harsh realities of Elizabethan England.

As with our modern-day concerns, the disparity in wealth in this time period between a cloistered ruling elite and the governed impoverished was quite vast. By the late sixteenth century, England was nearing the end of a protracted period of population growth—all the while, it was burdened with severe economic inflation. The cost of goods continued to soar as wages plummeted. There was simply too much need and not enough to be had at affordable prices.

These socioeconomic factors conspired to give rise to the wandering poor: men, women, and children with no settled home of their own who wandered the countryside living off the succor of others.

Adding insult to injury, the institutions once equipped to handle this need, the Catholic monasteries, had all their wealth sized by Henry VIII during the English Reformation. To answer this growing crisis, Parliament introduced a parochial poor rate, requiring each parish to request parishioners of suitable means to give alms to the poor. As time went on and the crisis showed little abatement, this request became an obligation with disobedience punishable by imprisonment. Now the districts themselves were given compulsory ownership over the poor living within their parish, and none wanted to be laden with the idleness of another's parish.

These draconian measures made life as a wandering poor even more strenuous. Some of these impoverished

beggars were afforded a license by the state; the so-called "begging license" gave a person the right to travel from parish to parish unmolested; most, however, had no such right. Overseeing this process was the local Justice of the Peace. If a beggar was discovered without a license outside his parish of origin, it would not be unheard of for him to know the Justice's lash before being dispatched to return home. These whippings might even occur in every parish the wanderer passed through, again and again, until he had reached his destination.

One of the reasons the establishment of permanent plantations in America was attractive to the Elizabethan Court was that it would siphon off some of this excess population, placing these idle wanderers to work for the good of England.

To that end, Queen Elizabeth gave Sir Walter Raleigh the ability to press men into his service. This saw several of the wandering poor enlist, signing into one year agreements to colonize the New World. Talk of paying the colonists in cultivated land did not enter into the discussion until the third expedition, when Governor White insisted that the colonists needed to be shareholders in the colony if the expedition was to survive and succeed.

Keep in mind, the role of a Wandering Poor character on an expedition to the New World was to serve as manual labor. These were not the hardened veterans of foreign wars as seen in Lane's expedition, nor highly skilled craftsmen of a particular trade as seen in White's; these were menial laborers: men who served under the whims of their betters, living with the slight promise of a better tomorrow at year's end.

CHARACTER CREATION

A Wandering Poor character must take the Social Status Virtue Wandering Poor (-1) to denote their lowered status in Elizabethan England. Poor (-3)

reduces the character's starting XP, appropriate for a wanderer who was forced to rely on the charity of others, and Poor Living Conditions (-1) accurately reflects the short and miserable lives of the Wandering Poor. This gives a Wandering Poor grog more flaws than such a character is normally permitted, but all these flaws are accurate. Life as a Wandering Poor was hard indeed. Wandering Poor are not educated, and should not have virtues which grant Academic Abilities at character creation. Wandering Poor should start with poor quality equipment, their provisions having been supplied solely by the expedition.

SUGGESTED VIRTUES & FLAWS

To lessen the loss of experience points caused by the Poor flaw, take the virtue Well-Traveled. This will mark a Wandering Poor character's time on the road, traveling from parish to parish, licensed or not.

As their role at Roanoke is predominantly physical in nature, virtues should be taken to heighten this aspect of the character, such as Enduring Constitution, Long-Winded, Reserves of Strength, and Tough. Depending on how the characteristics are chosen, this would allow the Wandering Poor character to defend himself in a fight.

Wandering Poor already have five points of flaws, but if the Storyteller permits a little customization, a minor Personality Flaw is helpful in roleplay. If the storyguide or player wishes to play into the contemporary wisdom of Elizabethan England, that the poor are idle by choice and not circumstance, then Slothful is appropriate.

RECOMMENDED CHILDHOOD PACKAGES

With the exception of the Covenant-Born Upbringing, all childhood training packages are permissible for a Wandering Poor character.

When taking the Traveling Childhood Package, consideration must be given to which Living Language the child was exposed to on the road and what those circumstances were. The England of Queen Elizabeth's reign is not the cosmopolitan mecca we think of today; there is a strong streak of xenophobia inherent in all Englishmen, and it was a common practice to deny immigrants of lesser means entry into the country. However, immigration did occur on a much smaller scale, mainly Protestant refugees from France, Germany and the Netherlands.

Age 20:

Area Lore: Area A 2, Area Lore: Area B 2, Area Lore: Area C 1, Bargain 3, Brawl 3, Folk Ken 3, Guile 3, Living Language: German 1, Native Language: English 5, Profession: Beggar 5, Survival 2

Age 35:

Area Lore: Area A 3, Area Lore: Area B 2, Area Lore: Area C 2, Area Lore: The Newfoundland of Virginia 1, Bargain 3, Brawl 4, Folk Ken 4, Guile 3, Legerdemain 1, Living Language: German 3, Native Language: English 5, Organization Lore: Military Outpost of Roanoke/Roanoke Colony 1, Profession: Beggar 6, Survival 3

Age 50:

Area Lore: Area A 3, Area Lore: Area B 2, Area Lore: Area C 2, Area Lore: The Newfoundland of Virginia 1, Bargain 4, Brawl 5, Carouse 1, Folk Ken 5, Guile 3, Legerdemain 1, Living Language: German 3, Native Language: English 5, Organization Lore: Military Outpost of Roanoke/Roanoke Colony 2, Profession: Beggar 7, Profession: Laborer 2, Survival 4

CONCLUDING NOTES

This Wandering Poor character adheres strongly to the contemptuous image of the idle poor in Elizabethan England. His most developed skill is

TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATION

Along with a newly developed theology, the Roanoke colonists bring with them three technological advances that will set them apart from the Mythic Europe of the 1200s: Plate armor, rapiers and muskets.

Now, it would be absurd for even the wealthiest of Gentlemen-Adventurers to don a complete suit of armor. After all, drowning at sea was all too real a danger in their chosen line of work. But it was not at all unheard of for the Gentleman-Adventurer to sport some plate armor accoutrements, the most common of which was a plate armor gorget.

Unlike their medieval counterparts, which were intended to be worn in tandem with a complete suit of armor, Renaissance-era gorgets were pieces of well-tempered steel covering a simple doublet. These gorgets were also much larger, complete with a collar to safeguard the neck and a sheet of metal that would extend downward to cover the sternum and protect the heart. Due to advances in metallurgy, the gorget is much lighter and sturdier than anything a non-Verditius armorer could provide in Mythic Europe.

Gorget	Protection	Load	Cost
Plate	2	0.5	Expensive

The rapier was created circa 1500 by the Spanish, coming into its own as the weapon of choice among the aristocracies of Europe during the 16th and 17th centuries. Rapiers are characterized by a hilt that sweeps backward, protecting the hand wielding the weapon, and a slender, long blade ending in a point. This made the rapier an ideal piercing weapon, prompting armorers of the time to add a solid collar to the gorget.

	Ability	Init	Atk	Dfn	Dam	Str	Load	Cost
Rapier	Single	3	5	2	6	-1	1	Exp.

Lastly, we have the muskets. Unlike the graceful elegance of a rapier, a musket is a clumsy, uncivilized weapon. It takes an average of 20 seconds to fire a musket and prepare another shot. If a character is utilizing a musket in combat, he must sacrifice one additional round of combat to reload.

For the purposes of this write up, we have used a modified version of the Crossbow entry in *Lords of Men* on page 138. The column entitled "Using Crossbows" applies here, save that a musket is not easy to use and the three extra botch dice for an untrained Ability does apply.

	Ability	Init	Atk	Dfn	Dam	Range	Load	Cost
Musket	Musket	5	5	0	10	25	2	Exp.

Profession: Beggar, and his highest social skill is Guile. Possessing little disposable means, his Bargain is underdeveloped. He relies on his Folk Ken to select marks for Legerdemain.

His various area lores, which will be three hundred years out of date in Mythic Europe, count as his Worthless Abilities.

To turn a Wandering Poor character into a full fledge companion, try to avoid those skills that would give the character additional experience points, since the disparity in points between the Gentleman-Adventurer and the Wandering Poor is what simulates their economic standing in Elizabethan England.

THE CONJURER

"[The Carolina Algonquians] have commonly conjurers or jugglers which use strange gestures, and often contrary to nature in their enchantments."

Thomas Harriot, A Briefe and True Report of the New Found Land of Virginia

BACKGROUND

The Carolina Algonquians were the indigenous peoples of the Newfoundland of Virginia. Much like the Iroquois with their shared language, there coexisted several local tribes living throughout the region, all answering to their own respective werowances (or chieftains) and sharing a common tongue, though dialects differed from tribe to tribe.

The Algonquians were a settled people, dwelling within villages that had something in common with those found in the English countryside; their center was an open, communal space. Those deemed most important lived nearest, while the rest lived closer to the farmlands. The population of a village did not exceed two hundred people. Agriculture was paramount to the Native Americans' lifestyle in the region, most notably in the planting of corn, beans, and tobacco. Though they were a settled people, a nomadic tradition of hunting-and-gathering still persisted, important for the tribe's survival during the harsh winter months. Meals were cooked, prepared over a fire.

The local tribes who interacted with the various Roanoke expeditions were the Choanoke, Croatoan, Moratuc,

WENDIGO, APEX PREDATOR

Magic Might: 20 (Corpus)

Characteristics: Intelligence +2, Perception +2, Presence -3, Communication -3, Strength +9, Stamina +3, Dexterity +1, Quickness +2

Size: +3

Season: Winter (1200 XP)

Confidence: 1 (5)

Virtues and Flaws: Magic Human; Great Quickness x2, Improved Characteristics x2, Keen Vision, Puissant Brawl, Puissant Hunt, Tough; Anchored to the Forest, Hunger for Corpus Magic, Magical Monster, Weakness (Human Flesh)

Magic Qualities and Inferiorities: Gigantic x2, Greater Power (Howl of the Wendigo), Ignem Resistance, Improved Attack x2 (Large Teeth), Improved Confidence, Improved Damage (Large Claws), Improved Defense (Large Antlers), Improved Initiative (Hooves), Improved Soak, Major Virtue: Essential Nature (Apex Predator), Minor Virtue (Frightful Presence), No Fatigue; Monstrous Appearance; Acclimation Prone, Limited Speech

Personality Traits: Ravenous +4, Emaciated +3, Single-Minded +2

Combat:

Large Teeth: Initiative +2, Defense +15, Attack +21, Damage +12

Large Claws: Initiative +2, Defense +16, Attack +17, Damage +16

Large Antlers: Initiative +4, Defense +17, Attack +15, Damage +12

Hooves: Initiative +7, Defense +15, Attack +14, Damage +10

Soak: +8

Wound Penalties: Light (1-8), Medium (9-16), Heavy (17-24), Incapacitating (25-32), Dead (33+)

Fatigue Levels: N/A

Abilities: Area Lore: North Atlantic Coast 6 (The Newfoundland of Virginia), Athletics 6 (Sprinting), Awareness 6 (Prey), Brawl 9+2 (Large Teeth), Hunt 9+2 (Man), Ignem Resistance 9 (Ice), Stealth 6 (Concealment), Survival 6 (Winter)

Powers:

*Howl of the Wendigo**, 5 points, Initiative -3, Mentem

R: Voice, D: Sun, T: Bound

This bloodcurdling scream is enough to imbue a night with an overwhelming sense of fear to those unfortunate enough to hear it. The Wendigo tends to howl prior to making an appearance — as if announcing to all that it is now on the hunt. The spells boundaries are confined to the creature's hunting grounds; those fortunate enough to be outside the

edges of the forest are spared any ill affect. All targets affected must roll a stress die, adding his Stamina and adding or subtracting any appropriate Personality Trait to see what the effects are. The nature of the Personality Trait used determines how it affects the Stamina roll. A Trait like Brave makes you resistant to fear, while one like Cowardly reduces the result of your roll.

0 or less Scared to death (literally)

1-5 Incapacitated with fear, permanent -1 to Stamina

6-9 Incapacitated with fear

10-15 Flee, fight at -6 if cornered or obstructed

16+ Carry on, -3 on all rolls

Rego Mentem 50 (Base 10, +2 Voice, +2 Sun, +4 Bound)

*This is a revised version of “*Visions of the Infernal Terrors*” on page 152 of **Ars Magica Fifth Edition**.

Equipment: N/A

Encumbrance: 0

Vis: 4 pawns of Corpus vis in his stomach.

Appearance: The Wendigo is a creature of pure, cannibalistic malevolence. Its sole purpose is the devouring of human flesh to slate a hunger that will know no end.

This creature is little more than a giant, emaciated corpse, standing over 12’ in height and weighing under six hundred pounds; its epidermis is covered in matted hair and stretched taut across its entire person, revealing its skeletal structure in gruesome bas-relief. High upon its brow is a crown of antlers, assisting the creature in forest stealth. It is believed that the Wendigo once vainly gnawed off its own lips attempting to end its curse, exposing a maw of jagged, rotting teeth. Its anorexic arms end in claws, its disjointed legs in cloven hooves.

As a creature associated with winter, it has long since developed a high resistance to ice.

Legend has it that the creature was once a man who — upon indulging in cannibalistic urges for its own survival — was subsequently cursed to wander the woods, devouring men to survive. Each man it devours allows the creature to increase in height, but its hunger is never sated. Whomever the Wendigo was, he has long since been lost.

This particular write up is for an ancient Wendigo, one that has come into its own power and stature. If Storyguides wish to use a less potent variant in their own campaigns, then think about decreasing its Magical Might score and lessen some of its Magical Qualities. The creature is designed to tear through grogs and even companions, and will prove a challenge to fighting magi.

If the Storyguide wishes to make him even more of a threat, reallocate his Abilities to give the creature a Penetration score. Without Penetration, Howl of the Wendigo will prove ineffectual against most magi's Parma Magica.

Neusiok, Roanoke, Secotan and the Weapemeoc.

Relations between the colonists and the Carolina Algonquians were strained despite Thomas Harriot's tireless efforts to overcome the language barrier. While the language barrier was overcome in short order, the cultural barrier was not. As with the colonists of Jamestown in the early 1600s, those of the late 1500s depended on the Native Americans for succor; their survival was dependent upon the Carolina Algonquians' agriculture. The English colonists saw this as a weakness on their own part and, over time, became embittered. Victim shaming was ingrained in Elizabethan society: the weak allowed themselves to be victimized. To compensate for this perceived weakness of self, the English colonists overcompensated with displays of outward strength, resulting in bloody conflicts.

In addition to the werowance's residence, the largest in all the village, one of the houses built near a village's open space would have belonged to their Conjurer.

Information on the Conjurer comes to us by way of Thomas Harriot's *A Briefe and True Report of the New Found Land of Virginia*, published in February 1588.

While each village had a priest, the conjuror was "a much younger man, wore a woodpecker in his hair and an animal face on his breechclout to indicate his office. He was linked to the older, individualistic hunting cult, and his role was magical" (Kupperman 55). Harriot writes that the Conjurer derived his powers from a personal connection with some supernatural entity; his conjecture being that this was some sort of demon in the classical Judeo-Christian sense. (While of all the writings we have from this colonists, Harriot's are by far the most scientifically objective, he still cannot refrain from drawing superfluous comparisons to his own faith and



passing moral judgements accordingly.) However, this conjecture falls short of taking into account the Conjurer's role in Algonquian society. The Conjurer was a medicine man with the power to commune with dead animal spirits, specifically those who were improperly killed. These spirits were seen by the Algonquians as responsible for spreading disease, and it was the Conjurer's task to appease them, thus bringing about cures. In addition to these supernatural abilities, he also understood the power of herbal medicine.

Lastly, due to his otherworldliness, the Conjurer was an outcast both respected and feared by the people he served.

CHARACTER CREATION

A Conjurer must take the Social Status Virtue Conjurer (0); this will denote his estranged relationship to his fellow villagers. Much like the Wandering Poor's prerequisite Flaws, the Conjurer must also take two Supernatural Minor Virtues at character creation: Animal Ken and Second Sight. Animal Ken allows the character to speak with animals, and Second Sight

allows him to see spirits; thus a Conjurer with scores in both will be able to speak with the spirits of improperly killed animals.

In addition, a Conjurer is allowed a Magic Item, his Fox Loincloth, at character creation.

Fox Loincloth

The Fox Loincloth is a garment worn about the waist to cover the wearer's modesty. It is made from the pelt of a Fox of Virtue (as per *Beasts of Virtue* described in *Realms of Power: Magic*, page 55) that has been enriched to bring out its intrinsic magical virtues.

It is said that the fox kills and eats snakes and so the correctly enriched pelt of the Fox of Virtue can transfer a certain resistance to venom and poison to its wearer.

To do so, the Fox of Virtue (Magic Might 10, two pawns of Animal vis) must be caught and skinned on a new moon. It must then be tanned in order to preserve it and then buried for a further month, wrapped around three venomous serpents.

When the pelt is retrieved it may be fashioned into a loincloth, which grants the wearer Rapid Convalescence to any wounds caused by or associated with venom or poison.

SUGGESTED VIRTUES & FLAWS

This write up of the Conjurer assumes him to be a Supernatural character complete with virtues and flaws.

While some may want to make him a Gifted Companion, especially considering how his social standing is so in line with how the Gift works in Mythic Europe, for the purposes of this article it is important to imbue this character template with an otherworldliness that even an experienced Hermetic magus might consider new and unique, even if commonalities exist between them. After all, regardless of the circumstances by which a Hermetic Magus from Mythic Europe encounters the Conjurer, he is still from the New World, and that alone should be alien to the magus on some level. By giving him Supernatural Virtues and Flaws, we hope it will convey that sense of otherworldliness while still working within the game's preset mechanics.

To that end, it is highly recommended that a minimum of one Supernatural Flaw—though no more than two—be taken at character creation. In a letter by Governor Ralph Lane, he did declare that the Conjurer—or “flyer,” as he called him—was able to make predictions of the future; thus “Visions” would be an excellent Supernatural Flaw. Visions is a story flaw and so normally inaccessible to Grog; if the Storyguide wishes to avoid story flaws, use Lesser Malediction instead. Judged Unfairly is highly recommended as a personality flaw.

ON CIRCULAR TIME

Circular Time is discussed in greater detail in *House of Hermes: Mystery Cults*—House Criamon (pages 44 to 74). The basic conceit is that time—like a clock face—has neither a true beginning nor end; such concepts are manmade constructs based on our limited perception of time's passing. Reincarnation, in turn, allows for one to continually travel this unending prison.

Semitae's princeps, Gerfallon of Criamon (*Heirs to Merlin: The Stonebenge Tribunal*, page 130) had to travel to the counter-cyclical alam—outside the

Circle of Time where all time exists simultaneously—only to have himself enter Final Twilight upon his return. Gerfallon's arcane connection to Mythic Europe, what allowed him to reenter into normal time with the colonists of Roanoke in tow, were the etchings he made in the Snowdonian Mountains in 1180.

The event was too taxing to repeat a second time, and Gerfallon, like a true Criamon, was not known to write out his notes in anything but riddles. If a PC has decided to take Virginia Dare on as an apprentice, then the PC may wish to find a new route to return her or risk Final Twilight themselves.

RECOMMENDED CHILDHOOD PACKAGES

Due to the Conjurer's connection to an “individualistic hunting cult,” it is recommended that he adopts a Feral Childhood Upbringing. This will give the character a lot of the skills he will need to commune with spirits and live in the wild. In addition, this would help to explain his alienation from the remainder of the tribe.

Age 15:

Animal Handling 2, Animal Ken 4, Area Lore 2, Athletics 2, Awareness 2, Brawl 2, Herbalism 2, Hunt 3, Living Language: Algonquian 2, Profession: Medicine Man 1, Second Sight 4, Stealth 1, Survival 3, Swim 1

Age 20:

Animal Handling 2, Animal Ken 5, Area Lore 2, Athletics 2, Awareness 2, Brawl 2, Herbalism 2, Hunt 3, Living Language: Algonquian 3, Profession: Medicine Man 2, Second Sight 5, Stealth 1, Survival 3, Swim 1

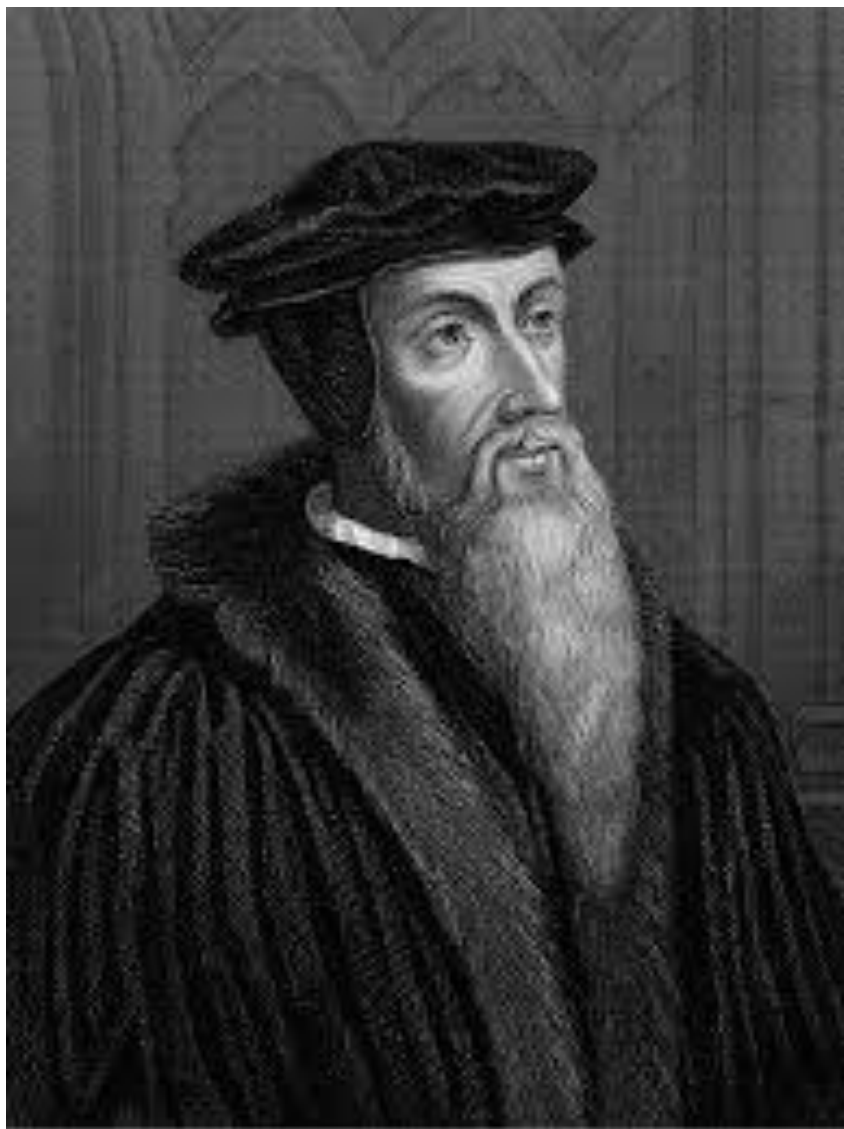
Age 25:

Animal Handling 3, Animal Ken 5, Area Lore 3, Athletics 2, Awareness 2, Brawl 2, Herbalism 3, Hunt 4, Living Language: Algonquian 3, Profession: Medicine Man 2, Second Sight 5, Stealth 2, Survival 3, Swim 1

CONCLUDING NOTATIONS

Harriot draws a clear distinction between the Conjurer and a priest. While both are treated in terms of mysticism, the separation lies in their ages. Of the priest, it is said that their place in the village is established by experience and wisdom, but Conjurers are much younger men. Whether this is due to a Lesser Malediction that ensures no Conjurer will live past a certain point, or due to a rule within their hunting cult is not made clear in the writings we have. To that end, the ages provided are much younger than those in traditional Grog Templates.

If the Conjurer becomes a time-lost character in Mythic Europe, the 30 experience points in both Area Lore and Living Language: Algonquian will apply to Worthless Abilities.



To transition the Conjuror to a Companion, consider the Mythic Companion route. This will afford the character more virtues. Take those virtues and flaws that heighten his otherworldliness, while staying within established game mechanics.

Please note that this Grog template assumes a lone wolf approach to the “individualist hunting cult” (hence the Feral Childhood Package). If you are considering taking this character past the Grog stage, give some thought to developing what this Native American hunting cult looks like. Are there initiations? Is there a hierarchy? If so what is it? Is there a pack mentality? Why did Harriot not see any old Conjurors in his anthropological survey of the indigenous people? The answers

to these questions will aide in fleshing out this character much farther than this write up has room to do.

STORY SEEDS

LAST, BEST HOPE

We shall nobly save, or meanly lose, the last best hope of earth.

Abraham Lincoln, Annual Message to Congress: Concluding Remarks, December 1st, 1862

With the onset of the Renaissance and the burgeoning Scientific Revolution, modern science has come into its own. As more and more advances are made in the arenas of mathematics, life and physical sciences, mankind’s understanding of the world around him is no longer defined by the myths of yesteryear.

In the harsh light of these ever-evolving cultural worldviews, the Realms of Power — those pillars of everyday life in Mythic Europe — have irrevocably been altered: the Divine is presently warring with itself in wake of the Protestant Reformation, allowing for the Infernal’s rise in power; Faeries are all but extinct, banished to the outermost edges of Renaissance life, and Magic has waned.

Since the late 1300s, the Order of Hermes — once vast and sprawling — has entered a protracted period of severe winter. Fewer and fewer Gifted children were born to each subsequent generation. Those who were born had their Gifts inexplicably harmed; it was all too common to discover a Gifted child with several Major Hermetic Flaws, making them of little use.

With no new magi to replace the previous generation, entire traditions of Magical Theory were lost to the ages: first esoteric societies like the Disciples of the Dead, then entire Houses. Hardest hit were the True Lineages; House Guernicus became less interested in preserving its line and became a Society instead; Bonisagus just went extinct. In such an environment of chaotic change, with no countervailing force to place any checks on their machinations, House Tylalus thrived. Covenants began to disappear as their magi died off or went into twilight, leaving those behind to fend for themselves in a world that became increasingly more hostile to those with the Gift.

With so much upheaval taking place, some magi gave way to the lesser angels of their nature. The first Tribunals to

fall were those of the British Isles, as desperation gave way to age old rivalries in a war that threatened to reignite a Second Schism War across Tribunal lines. Next to fall was Normandy, finally succumbing to its own lack of magical resources; now a single covenant manned by a single Flambeau magus remains. Once Normandy fell, several other Tribunals followed suit, with most magi relocating to the Rhine, birthplace of the Order. The Final Grand Tribunal was held in Durenmar in 1492; there were less than two dozen magi in attendance. The Order was annulled by nigh unanimous consent, the sole holdout being that obstinate Flambeau magus in Normandy.

Since then, the last vestiges of the Order have dedicated their livelihoods to recording their experiences and preserving what knowledge was attained during the Order's 725 yearlong existence.

Final Twilight had come to the Order of Hermes and the world would never know its like again.

That is, until the birth of Virginia Dare.

Granddaughter of Governor John White, Virginia was born to Ananias and Eleanor White Dare on August 18th, 1587; her name marked her as the first English child born in the New World.

She is also the first Gifted child born in the last century.

With nary a magus to train her in her time, it is no accident she and her fellow colonists find themselves relocated to Mythic Europe. For the Order's last best hope of a renewed spring has been summoned backwards in time to be properly trained. Those responsible are the wandering Criamon covenant of Semitae, who have accomplished a major breakthrough and disrupted the passage of Circular Time.

A portion of the island of Roanoke materializes off the shores of Stonehenge Tribunal, including the colony itself, her colonists, and a contingent of Native Americans. The Wendigo, a creature indigenous to the Atlantic Coast, is an unforeseen hitchhiker and immediate threat to the PCs. (Note that there is historical precedence for the island's relocation, as centuries of erosion have laid claim to much of the original island, including the colony itself.)

If the Storyguide decides to use "The Last Best Hope" as her means of bringing the Roanoke Colony into Mythic Europe, consider making Virginia Dare a later incarnation of one of the PCs, possibly the one most eligible to take on an apprentice. The ongoing narrative thrust would be for the PC to train her future self, returning her to the sixteenth-century to usher in a new spring.

IF IT BLEEDS...

If it bleeds, we can kill it.

Dutch, Predator (1987)

"If it Bleeds..." is less concerned with the means on how these time-lost travelers arrived in Mythic Europe than it is with what are we to do with them here, specifically as how it relates to the sudden appearance of the Wendigo. As the title implies, this is a martial adventure, suitable for fighting magi and their shield grogs; the emphasis is on hunting the beast and killing it.

As presented in the Magical Bestiary entry, the Wendigo is an apex predator. He thrives best within a woodland environment. For grogs and companions, he is a true threat. If you wish to make him more of a challenge for seasoned magi, increase his Magical Might and give him an additional 50 experience points in Penetration.

If applicable, have the Wendigo attack the covenant's vis source. If none are applicable, the creature could help

lead the surviving PCs to a new vis source.

Regardless, once the PCs begin to investigate this new threat, begin weaving in the Roanoke colonists. Perhaps contact has been made with a local township or even some of their covenfolk. People are in an uproar about strangers in unusual dress with "sticks of fire." Then, have the PCs discover the surviving colonists themselves; the colony has materialized inexplicably within the woods alongside the creature.

Storyguides could run "If it Bleeds..." as means of introducing "Last, Best Hope", as nothing here negates what is in that write up.

SUCH STUFF AS DREAMS ARE MADE ON

Our revels now are ended. These our actors, as I foretold you, were all spirits, and are melted into air, into thin air: And like the baseless fabric of this vision, the cloud-capp'd tow'rs, the gorgeous palaces, the solemn temples, the great globe itself, yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve, and, like this insubstantial pageant faded, leave not a rack behind. We are such stuff as dreams are made on; and our little life is rounded with sleep.

Prospero, The Tempest Act 4, scene 1, 148–158

In Such Stuff as Dreams are Made On, the player characters find themselves as actors in a mock version of William Shakespeare's *The Tempest*.

While traveling at sea, perhaps as a finale to another adventure, the PCs are beset by a storm, the eponymous tempest. The deck heaves in protest, towering waves crashing against the ship's hull. Sea water batters timber as grogs are washed overboard. The storm worsens as a sudden, inexplicable drowsiness descends upon those remaining.

When the PCs come to, it is in a world not their own. For this is the New World.

Their ship has run aground upon the shores of Roanoke Island. Like Antonio and his entourage, the PCs are stranded. Any attempt to use their magic normally is rebuffed in this strange land, adding insult to injury. Spells utilizing the Form of Intellego ate the only exception, for this is the dreamscape, and all spells must use Intellego to be cast in a dream. (The Magic in Dreams insert in *The Mysteries, Revised Edition*, page 103.)

Anyone with a high enough rank in Profession: Sailor can determine that the ship can be made seaworthy again, but it will require timber. Exploring their newfound environs leads the PCs to make several discoveries, not the least of which is a colony of Englishmen. Though these colonists speak the King's English, it is a dialect that is at once foreign but understandable.

For the colonists themselves, this is the year of their Lord 1590 — not 1220. Three years have passed since Governor White departed for England, and their situation has grown even more dire. A creature unlike any other is stalking them. Each night it comes, each night it feasts, and each morning the colonists are fewer in number.

Once the PCs piece together that they are, in fact, in a dream, the question becomes: Whose dream? There are several options available to Storyguides, the answer to which will reveal the key the PCs need to use to wake up and return to their proper place and time.

One is to use a Gifted Virginia Dare. In this setting, Virginia becomes a stand-in for Miranda. After all, in 1590, Virginia is three-years old, the same age Miranda was when she and Prospero were stranded on the island. Perhaps this Virginia has even had her Gift opened by another magus of Mythic Europe — one known to the PCs in

their Mythic Europe present — utilizing Dream Magic. In her terror over the attacking Wendigo, Virginia has summoned the PCs to protect her. In this version, the dream would end and the PCs would return to the waking world of 1220 by banishing the beast and protecting the remainder of the colony.

The second option is to create Prospero's stand-in as either one of the colonists or one of the Native Americans. In the play, Prospero is seen as the protagonist; he is the rightful duke of Milan who's been wronged by his kin, left to die stranded on an island, and he is a magician in his own right. His power is great; he is seen to control spirits such as Ariel, as well as control the weather. In this version, Storyguides could convert the Conjuror Grog Template to Mythic Companion status and add additional the virtues of an Elementalist or Dream Magician. With a Prospero-like character doing the dreaming, the resolution of the story would be to discover the circumstances for which he (or she) was wronged and provide a suitable redress.

Finally, the Storyguide could decide that the PCs are in the dreams of William Shakespeare himself. It is believed that the Bard wrote *The Tempest* in 1610-11. By then, Roanoke had been deemed the Lost Colony; Jamestown had been founded in 1607 and expeditions inland only turned up the scantest of rumors of blonde-haired, blue-eyed Native Americans, the descendants of Roanoke. Perhaps Shakespeare dreamed of the Lost Colony on the eve of penning *The Tempest*. In order to complete Shakespeare's dream, the players must re-enact the play to a close, using their magic to complete the anachronistic gaps in the narrative. Once the play is complete, the PCs awake; their vessel is adrift, but no more the worse for wear.

Regardless of the identity of the dreamer or how their dream is resolved, the PCs awaken with a glimpse into the future. It is up to them to believe it real

or to dismiss it as naught more than a dream.

FURTHER READING

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GEOMANTIC STORYGUIDING

You know how it goes: you've planned a meticulous story for your players and everything is going swimmingly until the characters do something unexpected. "Is the house next door to the merchant's hall occupied?" The question throws you. The players have a cunning plan that could circumvent the encounter you'd planned. You could just give them a "Yes, it is occupied" to try to get them back on track. However, what you really need is some inspiration for a more interesting answer which will reward their inventiveness.

Inspiration can come from lots of sources, but I have had a great deal of success using geomancy. This divination technique was used for gaining glimpses of hidden secrets and predicting the future. However, rather than using it for divinatory purposes, I use the imagery of geomancy to prompt my imagination. Using divination tools as storyguide aids is not new; White Wolf produced a Tarot deck for Mage: The Ascension for exactly this purpose, and there have been other games that have gone a similar route. What appeals to me about geomancy is that there are only sixteen possible outcomes to remember from geomancy; much easier than the 76 cards in a standard Tarot deck. Furthermore, geomancy has a provenance in the twelfth and thirteenth century of Mythic Europe, making it thematically suitable for **Ars Magica**.

Geomancy became a staple part of the European occult tradition in the thirteenth century. It possibly originated in the pre-Islamic Middle East or perhaps Persia. Bernardus Silvestris is credited with the poem *Experimantarius* in the 12th century, a translation of an astrological geomantic work. The *Ars*

Geomantiae of Hugh of Santalla was the Latin translation of an Arabic work; Gerard of Cremona provided several other texts on the same subject. Cornelius Agrippa is the most accessible author, with the full text of his Geomancy can be found online. Although this was written in **the twelfth century**, it is based on earlier material and describes the science of geomancy with very little variation from the texts of centuries earlier.

All these sources describe methods of forming and interpreting one of the sixteen geomantic configurations. *Between Sand and Sea: Mythic Africa* (pages 110–112) has rules for geomancy as used by Mythic African characters, and a great illustration of a geomancer at work on page 109. However, this article is about how a *storyguide* can use geomantic principles to:

Provide answers to simple questions, with a little more detail than a simple 'yes-no';

- Help plan a story;
- Give inspiration for unexpected plot elements;
- Create storyguide characters on the fly.

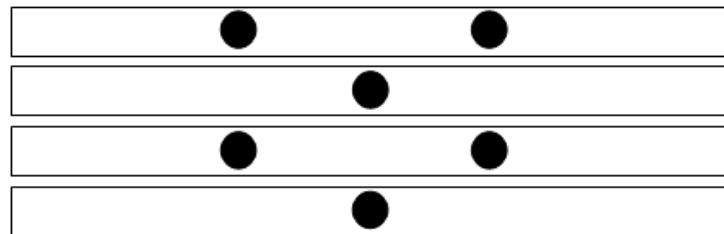


Figure 1: Geomantic bones, showing the configuration called Acquisitio

By MARK SHIRLEY

MAKING THE GEOMANTIC CONFIGURATIONS

I made my geomantic bones from four flat sticks — cheap stripwood from a hardware store, ½ inch wide cut to 5 inches long. Lolly sticks from a craft store would do just as well, or even cardboard. It is nice if the sticks have a bit of heft to them. Mark one side of each stick with two dots and the other side with one dot. These are mixed up in one hand and then laid down; the pattern of dots form one of the sixteen possible geomantic configurations.

Alternatively, four 6-sided dice can be modified with sticky labels to have either one dot or two on each face. A period Arabic geomantic device called a qirr'a consists of four brass dice mounted on a rod running through the middle of two opposing faces; the other faces are marked alternatively with one or two dots. The dice are spun on the rod then laid on a flat surface to make the configurations. Such a device can be easily built at home with a drill to make the holes in the dice, a rod to join them,

and some beads to stop the dice from falling off (Figure 2). Make sure one of the beads is a different colour or shape, so you know which is the top of the device. Another arrangement for this device is one where the faces of the four dice are marked with the four combinations possible in each half of a configuration (see Figure 2). Four dice therefore allow two geomantic configurations to be cast at once (you can separate the configurations with a ring glued onto the rod), or you could just make one with two dice.

There are other ways that configurations were generated in medieval times, but these typically took longer to perform than a simple stick or die toss. For one such method the practitioner would jab at a tray of sand with a stick to make four lines of dots, then count whether he had an odd or even number of dots in each row to form the configuration. Others would grab four handfuls of stones from a bag and count the number of stones in each one. These methods perhaps gave geomancy its original name, meaning "divination by earth". More complex methods include taking a random Bible passage and counting the number of letters in the first four words. Any system for generating four random numbers that can be reduced to a

pattern of odd or even could potentially be used.

THE GEOMANTIC CONFIGURATIONS

If you can remember the configurations and their basic meaning, the use of geomancy becomes a lot quicker. Fortunately, each of the configurations has a mnemonic related (vaguely) to its meaning and its shape. Next to each image is a glyph often used in medieval times (although there were several variants); these are supposed to resemble the shape of the configuration and can help remember the meaning. Each configuration is also associated with a planet.

Via, The Way (Moon)



Action, journeys, roads, travel, personal determination and individuality, openings

Mnemonic: a straight line

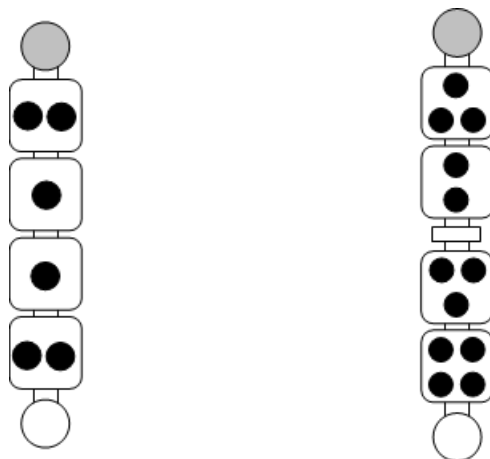


Figure 2: Geomantic dice; the grey bead marks the top. The array on the left shows *Coniunctio*; the array on the right shows *Puella* at the top and *Rubeus* on the bottom.

Caput Draconis, The Dragon's Head (Lunar Node)



Beginnings, profit, shrewdness, birth, innocence, trust

Mnemonic: A forked tongue

Puella, The Girl (Venus)



Peace, passivity, intuition, healing, birth, indecision, womenfolk

Mnemonic: a feminine torso

Fortuna Maior, The Greater Fortune (Sun)



Power and success, winning, stability, long-term improvement, friends, celebration, property

Mnemonic: success descending from the heavens

Puer, The Boy (Mars)



Aggression, passion, war, leadership, initiative, rashness, menfolk

Mnemonic: A sword or erect phallus

Acquisitio, Gain (Jupiter)



Getting and obtaining things, prosperity, improvement

Mnemonic: two bowls turned upright

Carcer, The Prison (Saturn)



Obstacles, illness, setbacks, delays, stubbornness, worry, indecision, negative emotions, sin

Mnemonic: An enclosure or chain

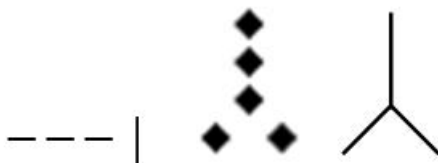
Tristitia, Sorrow (Saturn)



Sadness and mourning, pain and suffering, loneliness, major loss

Mnemonic: broken arch or stake driven into ground

Cauda Draconis, The Dragon's Tail (Lunar Node)



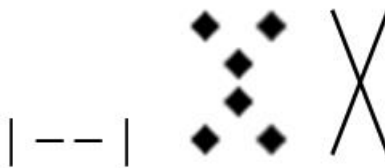
YES if sign applicable to the question, otherwise...

YES	NO	MAYBE
Fortuna Maior (emphatic)	Cauda Draconis (emphatic)	Via
Fortuna Minor (conditional)	Caput Draconis (with surprise)	Populus
Acquisitio	Puer	Coniunctio
Laetitia	Rubeus	Albus
Puella	Carcer	
Amissio	Tristitia	

Endings, evil, bad luck, death, stupidity. Can only be good with respect to ending or completing things

Mnemonic: a forked tail

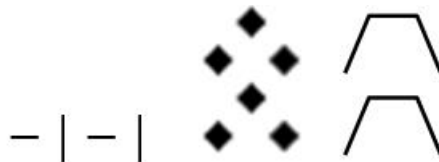
Coniunctio, Union (Mercury)



Joining and recovering things, attraction, love, marriage, social relationships, agreements (pronounced "con-YUNK-tee-oh")

Mnemonic: crossroads

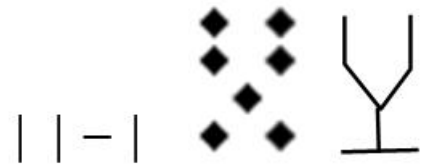
Amissio, Loss (Venus)



Loss, something unobtainable, poverty, conflict, disagreement, arguments

Mnemonic: two bowls turned upside down

Albus, The White (Mercury)



Wisdom, purity, moderation, spiritual growth, mysticism

Mnemonic: upright glass

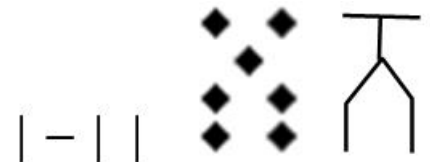
Fortuna Minor, The Lesser Fortune (Sun)



Success through hard work or help, instability, short-term success, luxury, pride

Mnemonic: success rising from the earth

Rubeus, The Red (Mars)



Inversion, disaster, caution, retreat, temper, upheaval, treachery. If this was

thrown as the first configuration in a divination, a medieval geomancer would immediately stop, trusting in the warning that fate had given them.

Mnemonic: an overturned glass

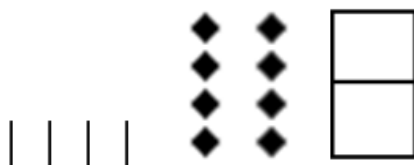
Laetitia, Happiness (Jupiter)



Happiness, joy, contentment, good health, creation, positive emotions, virtue

Mnemonic: arch or rainbow

Populus, The People (Moon)



Neutrality, group decisions, family, friends, news, messages

Mnemonic: a group of people

SIMPLE QUESTIONS

Sometimes all that is needed by a storyguide is a random determination between two options.

Questions such as “does this town have an apothecary?”, “is there a sentry at the postern gate?”, or “did the sword land near my feet?” are things that the setting, story, or rules might not be prepared to answer.

Rolling a die, flipping a coin, or even deciding arbitrarily is simple enough to settle such matters, but geomancy can sometimes add a little more to the story than a simple “yes” or “no”.



This is my most common use of geomancy during gameplay, using it to determine all manner of details that cannot be resolved using game mechanics.

To get an answer to a simple question, pose it as a yes/no question and generate a geomantic configuration. If the configuration relates to the question, then the answer is “yes”, even if it is a negative sign.

Otherwise, “Yes” is indicated by signs related to the Sun, Jupiter, and Venus (see the nearby table). In the case of the Fortuna Maior, the answer is an emphatic “yes!”, with the Fortuna Minor the answer is “yes” but with a condition attached.

The answer “no” is given by signs of Mars, Saturn, and the Lunar Nodes. Cauda Draconis is an emphatic “no!”, whereas the Caput

Draconis indicates a “no” with some sort of surprise attached.

The answer is “maybe” if Moon or Mercury signs come up.

Until I had this table memorised, I had this table written on a sticky note inside the cover of my rulebook. A storyguide's screen would also be a good place for it.

The configuration that gives the answer might provide a little more information to the situation. Here are the three questions from above, with possible answers from the same three configurations:

Does this town have an apothecary?

- ♦ **Puella:** yes, there is an apothecary and healer. She's a folk witch who lives on the outskirts of town who performs minor healings for those who brave her reputation. (Puella is associated with women and healing)
- ♦ **Coniunctio:** there is an apothecary, but he's just got married and is more interested in spending time with his new wife than opening shop. Come back next week. (Coniunctio is associated with marriage)
- ♦ **Carcer:** No, the previous apothecary got sick, and moved to the next town to convalesce with his daughter. (Carcer is the sign of disease)

Is there a sentry at the postern gate?

- ♦ **Puella:** yes, a somewhat girlish youth still afflicted with acne. Rather than actively patrolling for intruders he is sitting passively, bored. (Puella is the sign of a passive personality)
- ♦ **Coniunctio:** There is a guard, but he's distracted by his leman, so there might as well not be.

This might make sneaking by a little more tricky, but doesn't prevent it. (Coniunctio represents love)

- ♦ **Carcer:** there is no sentry, but the gate is barred from the inside (Carcer is the sign of obstacles)

Did the sword land close to my feet?

- ♦ **Puella:** yes; it has landed with the point facing the character rather than the hilt (purely because of the shape of Puella)
- ♦ **Coniunctio:** It actually landed closer to an ally than to the character, but he might be able to kick it over (Coniunctio represents allies and companions)
- ♦ **Carcer:** No it did not, and what's more, it has slid under an exposed tree root and the hilt has got caught. It is going to need a Strength roll to free it. (Carcer indicates setbacks and imprisonment)

PLOT ELEMENTS

Plot elements can be derived from the expanded meaning of the geomantic configurations. These can be used when planning stories, or in the middle of a plot when your players do something unexpected. I've never felt constrained by the geomantic method: sometimes I ignore it altogether if a better idea comes along that doesn't fit the configuration I've thrown. Sometimes I don't like the configuration or can't find a way to work it in, so I rethrow. This is quite rare, however: the configurations are broad enough in meaning that there is usually some mileage in whatever chance ordains.

GEOMANCY IN PLANNING STORIES

Usually I have a clear idea on each story I plan. Occasionally, this story is not sufficient for a game session: there might be only one big encounter, or consist mostly of just one type of specialization such as politics or investigating. I use the geomantic bones to add second or third threads to the story. These might be unconnected to the main plot, but act as distractions or activities for the supporting cast to pursue while the main character(s) are wrapped up in the principal objective. Sometimes these sub-plots are more than distractions, but weave back into the main plot bringing with them background information.

EXAMPLE OF GEOMANCY IN PLANNING STORIES

I'm planning to trap the player characters in a castle just as it comes under siege. Although I have my larger plot sorted, I need to add a bit more flesh to it: a distraction with false leads, and some general background of what is going on peripheral to why the characters are there.

I divide story elements into four categories:

- **Situation** (the setting and the set-up)
- **Obstacles** (difficulties the characters will face)
- **Assistance** (help the characters receive)
- **Achievements** (rewards of success)

I create geomantic configurations for each category, and start to build the story.

Situation: I already know this is going to be a castle, so I use just one

configuration to add more details. I get Via, and add a personality trait to the lord of the castle: he's strong-willed and determined to find his own path, and that's what has lead him to the situation that provoked the attack on his castle. Maybe he's defied his liege.

Obstacles: Obviously the siege is going to be a major obstacle, but I want more to confound the characters than just the main plot. Amissio gives me conflict and loss. The siege fits well under this heading, but this configuration is not meant to pertain to the siege, but a side plot. Perhaps the lord's chief servants are at odds with each other, making an effective defence difficult. I also get Fortuna Minor, normally a positive sign. In this case, all the characters' hard work is turned back on themselves, making the situation worse. I'm not sure how to work this in yet.

Assistance: Rubeus is thrown, one of the worst signs there is. How can disaster be made to help the characters? One of the meanings of this sign is "treachery", and I decide that one of the besieging force is secretly working to help the

characters. To find out why, I cast again, getting Coniunctio. Of course — it's an old friend of the covenant.

Achievements: Just one configuration here (I don't want to be too nice to my players!). I get Amissio again. Poverty and conflict is hardly a good reward for the characters, unless this is inflicted on their enemies. That seems like cheating to me, so I redo the throw. Puer: I can work with that. If the characters succeed they will earn the respect of a powerful knight who can repay the favor in a number of ways. I decide that this will be the marshal, not the lord himself, and look for ways to weave that into the story.

Once all the categories have got concepts attached, I go back and rework the ideas to fit them better together. The Obstacle of Fortuna Minor might be due to the characters' Gifts, but then that can't affect the favor of the marshal who is to become a reward. Why not? Perhaps he is Unaffected by The Gift. Why would that be? Maybe his mother was Gifted, and he was somehow attenuated in the womb. She might be the old friend providing the assistance from across

the battle lines — and this also gives her the motivation to do so: she's trying to save her son. This is starting to look like a worthy story...

GEOMANCY DURING PLAY

The other use for geomancy for the storyguide is during play. My players are experts at going about plots the "wrong" way; that is, a different way to the one(s) I'd considered. Of course, in reality there is no 'wrong' way, but I seem particularly bad at predicting their approaches. However, if the characters go off at a tangent, it is far more fun to let them play out the plot in their way than try to railroad them back onto the 'right' way,

Given this, I tend not to script stories, but provide situations and consider possible solutions to those situations. I usually prepare individual scenes that are waypoints to the objective, and try to gently nudge the player characters towards those scenes. Without knowing what the player characters are going to do, I can't prepare in advance all the scenes I might need. That is where geomancy can help. One or two throws of the bones can give me inspiration for an improvised scene. Certain configurations have come to mean particular situations to me: Populus denotes an opportunity for investigation or a clue; Puer indicates a fight; Rubeus a disaster; Coniunctio a social encounter; Albus assistance, and so on.

I try not to rely on improvisation like this to forward the plot; most of the times I am using geomancy to fill in the details of unplanned scenes. Sometimes fortune intervenes and I can work these improvisations back into the main story.

EXAMPLE OF USING GEOMANCY DURING PLAY

Going back to the example at the start of the chapter. I had planned



	Element	Body	Height	Hair colour	Hair type	Sex	Age
☐☐	Earth	Lean or average	short	brown	sparse and/or straight	Woman	Middle-aged
☐☐☐	Water	Fat or bulky	short to average	flaxen	sparse and/or curly	Woman	Old
☐☐☐☐	Air	Fleshy or lithe	average to tall	dark	plentiful and/or straight	Man	Child or youth
☐☐☐☐☐	Fire	Lean or muscular	tall	red/blond	plentiful and/or curly	Man	Young adult

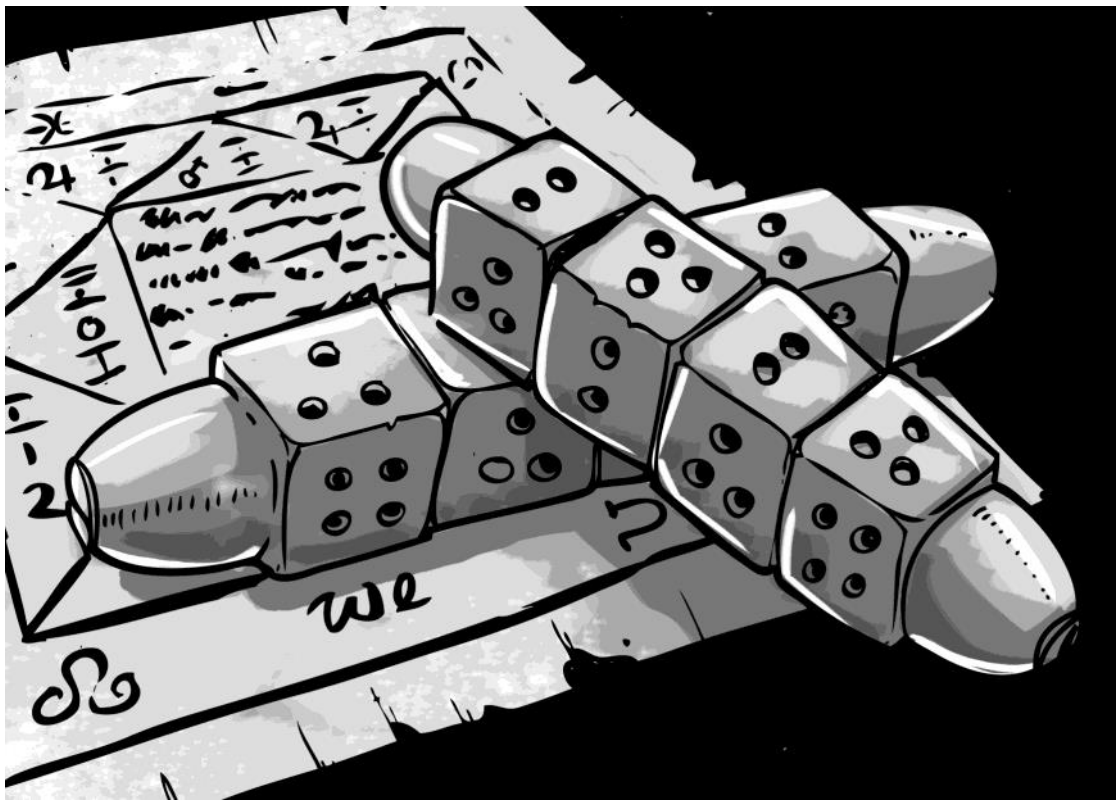
	Element	Personality*	Reaction to Gift	Profession, with examples
☐☐☐☐	Earth	Melancholic: caring, loyal, creative, pompous, pessimistic, envious	Worry	Those who Toil (crafts): smith, carpenter, weaver, seamstress
☐☐☐☐☐	Water	Phlegmatic: calm, reliable, peaceful, lazy, stubborn, selfish	Fear	Those who Toil (professions): mercer, farmer, labourer, drover, maid, cook
☐☐☐☐☐☐	Air	Sanguine: friendly, amorous, compassionate, obnoxious, gluttonous, weak	Hysteria	Those who Pray: priest, monk, tax collector, scholar, musician, artist
☐☐☐☐☐☐☐	Fire	Choleric: courageous, determined, optimistic, proud, angry, cruel	Anger	Those who Rule: soldier, knight, bailiff, overseer, guildmaster, reeve, abbees

* *Art & Academe page 40 gives a longer list of Personality Traits for each of the four humours.*

for the characters to go straight to the Merchant's Guildhall, but they are wary of my plots, and decide to stake out the place first from a nearby tenement. So I reach for my geomancy bones and form a configuration. I'm in the habit of playing with my geomantic sticks while narrating the story, so my players don't know which parts of my stories are improvised and which parts are scripted. The sticks come up with Carcer. When the characters try the door of the dwelling, they found a mostly empty dwelling, but one door was locked. Behind it was a

pair of children, hiding or trapped in the room. I couldn't decide whether the children should be victims (of abuse or kidnapping, for example) or perpetrators (thieves caught in the act), but a second casting helped me out: Tristitia. The children had been trapped here since their parents left for market and not returned. The mysterious disappearance of people were the reason that the player characters are staking out the merchant hall in the first place, so this became a connected subplot.

Rather than interpreting Carcer literally, I could have had the room occupied by someone bed-bound by a dreadful disease (since Carcer also means illness), and the very act of entering put the characters' lives in jeopardy. If a more positive sign had come up, Coniunctio, for example, then the outcome would be different. In this case, the tenement could have been occupied by a married couple who have been together for fifty years. One is blind, the other is deaf, but they are still very much in love. Or maybe the intruding characters come across a pair of lovers in



flagrante delicto... Without too much thought I could come up with a couple of examples for each of the sixteen configurations.

Any of the situations above lead the player characters opportunities for roleplaying, and may even provide inspiration to the storyguide for a side story, or even an adjunct to the main plot. I find it a great method for prompting the imagination in an emergency.

STORYGUIDE CHARACTERS

Not everyone that the player characters talk to during the course of a story is a proper storyguide character. All the important actors in each scene are detailed, but occasionally player characters want to talk with the local blacksmith, or go in search for a witness to an event. I use humoral theory in conjunction with geomancy to come up with these storyguide characters

on the fly. In Mythic Europe, an individual's complexion is related to his dominant humor. Complexion affects appearance as well as personality; with one or two geomantic configurations I can generate a fully-fledged bartender, dockside harlot, village priest, or gentlewoman.

Inherent in this process is assigning each half of a configuration to one of the four elements. indicates Earth, Water, indicates Air, and Fire. One casting can therefore reveal two things about a character, because each configuration is made up of two elemental halves. Say I want to know the personality and reaction to The Gift of a random individual approached by a player maga. I cast Laetitia, which consists of Water over Earth. Consulting the chart below, I know that this character has a Phlegmatic personality from the water element (I choose "peaceful" as a descriptor), but reacts to The Gift with worry due to the earth component. She's concerned that the pretty young

maga will lure her husband away. If I want to know more about this character, I can cast more times to get more detail from these tables, but overall the character's encounter with her will be fruitful, since Laetitia is a helpful sign.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

I hope you have fun with this! Once you've got the basic meanings of the configurations sorted in your head, you'll be surprised at how useful the technique can be, and how synergistic it can be with storytelling games like **Ars Magica**. It has certainly had a positive effect on my gaming experience.

THE FRIENDS OF THE APACEI OF VINILANDIA: A MYSTERY CULT

The most popular medieval stories of foreign lands and cultures are riddled with mystifications and tall tales – from the legend of Saint Brendan’s sea voyage in a curragh over the letter of Prester John to the travel memoir of Jehan de Mandeville. How do Hermetic magi, being typically less credulous than their medieval contemporaries, react to apparent mystifications by their peers? Especially, as the Code of Hermes protects the privacy of the magi involved?

MAIUSCULUS

Maiusculus filius Petroniae – see [Maiusculus and Ater on page 34](#) – was an unassuming Tytalus from the Rhine Tribunal, who initially had little success in carving a place for himself there. He had defaulted on a loan of two rooks of Form vis, and in 1200 the Tribunal obliged him to pay three rooks to his creditors until the end of 1201, or face the Wizard’s March.

He then disappeared for five years, only to return with four rooks of Animal vis. His creditors accepted these as redemption of the debt, and the March against Maiusculus was called off.

MAIUSCULUS’ TRAVELOGUES

Only those directly involved would still remember these troubles, had Maiusculus not also brought back lively, inspired descriptions in writing of his travels through the Magic realm to the country Vinilandia and back, and of his adventures there.

A PATH TO VINILANDIA

These tell first, how Maiusculus went into hiding in a Magic regio within a cave he had before discovered near Plauen, a holding of the Teutonic Order in the Mark of Meissen. Deep in it and riding Ater, his trusty black horse familiar, he found access to a vast steppe in the Magic realm, and from there through a monstrous skeleton out again into a mundane land he had never heard of before. This land he baptized Vinilandia for the wild grapevines he found in abundance there.

VINDEMITOR AND THE APACEI

As Maiusculus tells, he found there the Apacei, a people of free farmers and hunters, under their noble king Vindemitor. These were beset by Vikings who had found, subdued and settled the Eastern coast of Vinilandia, and were raiding inland under the control of the insidious Order of Odin. Feeling honor-bound to help Vindemitor against these greedy, brutish raiders, he brought his magical powers to bear, and in several adventures defeated and repelled the Vikings. So the Apacei hail him as their great warmage Maiusculus Pugil, and he starts to gently teach them Christian doctrine and respect for magi.

RETURN TO HIS SODALES

After about five years among the Apacei, Maiusculus took leave for some time, gathered some of the gifts received, and promised to return soon. Then he mounted his faithful Ater to return to the steppe in the Magic realm, and from there to the cave near Plauen and among his sodales.

By BERENGAR DREXEL

THE TRAVELOGUES’ RECEPTION

Soon after having resolved the troublesome business of the vis debt, Maiusculus began to tell about Vinilandia and to read from his travelogues to interested sodales.

Many magi of the Rhine Tribunal feel oppressed and stifled by its rigid culture and hierarchy, perpetuated through centuries of cooptation by those at the top. Maiusculus’ adventures show a single magus in charge of his own destiny: this alone would have fascinated many. He told them in a fresh, simple and inspiring Latin, and their readers felt addressed directly by a proven and successful warmage.

SERIOUS FROM FENGHELD

Many magi from Fengheld (*Guardians of the Forests*, pages 82 to 85) are heavily involved in the politics and debates of the Order. So this covenant has set up facilities to rapidly replicate and widely distribute texts for Hermetic magi, to influence decision making before Tribunal meetings (see *Transforming Mythic Europe*, pages 27 to 35 and 101 to 103). Between Tribunals, they are often unused.

When Serious, Tremere Master and in charge of Fengheld’s detailed logistics, had read Maiusculus’ adventures, he saw a way to put these facilities to good use during off times and generate an income from them: with Maiusculus consenting

and sharing into the earnings, he had many replicas from his travelogues made, for sale through the Redcap network.

It turned out, that these are very popular not only with bored magi, but also with apprentices, for whom they sometimes replace the Travels of Fedoso as first Latin reading, and as their ideal of a magus' life.

Even though Serious in the meantime has tried also with other texts, only the loyal readers of the travelogues securely return his investment in publication, and hence became the foundation of Serious' reputation with his House.

DOUBTERS OVERCOME

Given the dubious standing of Maiusculus in the Order, his tales were doubted immediately, and checked as soon as they became popular. Two young Bonisagi from Durenmar, who specialized in regios, found the cave and a Magic regio within, but despite thorough study no way from there to the Magic realm.

When after two years Maiusculus prepared to return to the Apacei, he was accompanied into the cave not only by Serious and many avid readers of his travelogues, but also by Dorana of Irmele's lineage (*Guardians of the Forests*, page 85), and again the two young magi from Durenmar. Within the regio Maiusculus took leave from all, mounted trusty Ater and disappeared – while his attendants were unable to follow or even understand where he had gone.

And when after three years he returned through regio and cave, bringing more gifts from the grateful Apacei and more tales, he found many readers transformed into followers and believers.

BODO THE HERMIT

In the meantime Bodo the Hermit of House Criamon (see [Bodo the](#)



[Hermit and RumTumTus on page 34](#)), a Rhine magus concentrating on the many layers of meaning in the written word, had thoroughly studied Maiusculus' tales. And in them he had found, as he wrote, the essence and reason of being a magus, and indeed the justification of the Gift in creation.

God could indeed not have provided the Gift – he wrote – without a purpose in his plans for mankind. The travelogues of Maiusculus showed the purpose of the Gift and of the Order of Hermes: to help those peoples the furthest away from the salvific history of the life of Christ in finding their way to salvation, and in defending themselves from the brutes blinded to it by greed and hybris. Indeed, the purpose of the suspicion generated by the Gift is, to drive magi from their comfy covenants and onwards to new worlds awaiting the help and guidance only they can provide.

This explanation fired up the imagination of many a Rhine magus, especially among those at the receiving end of that Tribunal's pecking order.

THE FRIENDS OF THE APACEI

The magi most impressed by Maiusculus' tales and Bodo's interpretation soon founded a Mystery Cult, the Friends of the Apacei, to follow in the footsteps of their hero, and become valiant warmages and gentle leaders of oppressed peoples.

Some train to eventually join Maiusculus in Vinilandia, but the most ambitious followers plan to seek out other peoples in need, to comfort and deliver them.

LEADERS

With Maiusculus in Vinilandia, Serius organizes the cult's communication, while Bodo interprets the travelogues for the followers and designs Initiation Scripts (see *The Mysteries*, pages 12 to 19).

When back from his travels, Maiusculus brings new tales and things from Vinilandia and performs the initiations, but does not interfere with details of organization and interpretation: after all, his prime concern are the Apacei, and Serius and Bodo do a good job at the home base. So Maiusculus typically stays only about a year or two with the cult, before departing again.

After some conversation with Maiusculus concerning tales among the Apacei about an earlier warmage, Bodo recently proclaimed it proven, that Tytalus did not disappear into the Maddenhofen Woods, but instead went to the Apacei to become their very first great warmage, and the first paragon of the true purpose of the Order.

APACEI LORE

The Cult Lore Ability of the Mystery Cult, the Apacei Lore, is available to everybody reading Maiusculus' travelogues. Studying them is easy and pleasant: those of the first travels, put together, form a Level 4 Quality 12 summa, while the subsequent ones each work as tractatus of Quality 12 or 14. So many apprentices have already an Apacei Lore of 3 at gauntlet, and this is also the minimum to join the Mystery Cult.

Bodo's interpretations are commentaries (*Covenants*, page 90) of these travelogues, and form the base of the initiations. Their Quality is 8, with the commentary bonus included.

INITIATIONS

The initiations designed by Bodo for the Friends of the Apacei focus on preparation for the spiritual challenges

awaiting the future warmages, not on raw magical power available from the Order of Hermes anyway. So the Friends of the Apacei learn to be steadfast and confident in the face of danger, and to resolve interpersonal problems without resorting to magic.

Maiusculus administers these initiations in the cave, and those to the first two levels always just after returning from Vinilandia.

- 1) **Brave (Animosus/Animosa):** To Essential Brave +3 (*Realms of Power: Magic*, page 43), Ordeal Optimistic (Minor)
- 2) **Warrior (Miles):** To Puissant Brawl plus Personality Trait Forceful+1, or to Inspirational plus Personality Trait Leader+3
- 3) **Chieftain (Regulus/Regula):** To Self-Confident plus Personality Trait Confident+3, Ordeal Higher Purpose (Defend the Apacei) and at least a season of work supporting Serius or Bodo

TO VINILANDIA

Many Friends of the Apacei see it as their ultimate goal to cross the Magic realm and join Maiusculus in Vinilandia. They learn the language of the Apacei, as explained in the travelogues, and design spells to use in the Magic realm or Vinilandia.

But Maiusculus is very conscientious, explaining that he does not wish to crowd or confuse the Apacei. And his travelogues indeed show him capable of handling the challenges of Vinilandia alone.

Anyway, the only traveling companion to Vinilandia that he so far has ever accepted is Ater.

STRIKING OUT ON ONE'S OWN

From the very beginning, Bodo suggested another course of action to the Friends of the Apacei: they shall consider Maiusculus as their ideal and emulate him by venturing forth from the lands settled by the Order, befriending and delivering those peoples in need that they encounter, and thus becoming great warmages on their own.

STORY SEEDS

Maiusculus and the Friends of the Apacei can serve several purposes in a campaign. They can be used to shake up the Rhine Tribunal, to provide background or competition to a group of exploring magi in 1220, or to challenge the philosophy of overly stayed and careful Hermetic player characters, and to induce them to embrace exploring.

POLITICAL REACTIONS

Before the publication of the travelogues, the few Tytali at the Rhine considered Maiusculus as pathetic and an embarrassment. In the meantime most have agreed to watch how his followers affect the Tribunal, and to lend a hand stirring where needed.

The followers of the Priory of Saint Nerius (*Realms of Power: The Divine*, pages 91 and 94, *The Lion and the Lily*, pages 42 and 107) have decided to consider Maiusculus a fraud, his believers dupes, and Bodo a reckless huckster of ideas he stole without understanding from Nerius' autobiographical account in Durenmar. They have little influence at the Rhine, but found unlikely allies among the magi from Heorot (*Guardians of the Forests*, pages 90 to 91), who fear, that a new wave of rancor against Vikings could hinder their research into the wizards of the North.

Some Seekers (*Houses of Hermes: True Lineages*, page 15) have seen the gifts of



the Apacei which Maiusculus brought back, and can't make head or tail of them. So far they have agreed with Dorana (*Guardians of the Forests*, page 85) to wait and see, and not to jump to conclusions. In this they agree with Caecilius of Durenmar (*Guardians of the Forests*, page 58), the Quaesitores, and the Gilds (*Guardians of the Forests*, pages 27 to 29).

But the Gilds might soon find their hold on many younger magi broken, who would rather join the Friends of the Apacei. And as embodiment of fragmentation, they are unlikely to come to a timely joint response to mass initiations at the cave near Plauen.

Will the first dozen of Braves, Warriors and Chieftains force the stuffy Rhine Tribunal to change, and turn it into a place more respectful to younger magi? Many a young antogone from House Jerbiton (*Houses of Hermes: Societates*, page 43) would sympathize with them.

SEARCHING FOR THE TRUTH

It took some time, before the Heorot magus Theoderich of Augsburg discovered in Sorø Abbey on Zealand Adam of Bremen's late 11th century *Gesta Hammaburgensis ecclesiae pontificum*, and found at the end of its last book, the *Descriptio insularum*

aquilonis summarizing Viking discoveries, a reference to the same Winland, which Maiusculus claims to have discovered and named himself. While this casts some doubt on Maiusculus' scholarship, it also corroborates the existence of Vinilandia and its discovery by Vikings.

While Heorot magi then questioned Maiusculus' representation of the Vikings as greedy brutes, other Rhine magi point to their role in the records of 9th and 10th century Tribunals dealing with the Order of Odin, which matched his description. Perhaps the magi from Heorot overly identify with the subject of their research?

The two young regio specialists from Durenmar, who had been shown up by Maiusculus at his return to Vinilandia, in the meantime have pondered their defeat. They have found records of regios, which Magic beings used to pass into the Magic realm without others being able to follow (*Realms of Power: Magic*, page 21). So couldn't Ater, who is known to have a Magic Might Score, have carried his master Maiusculus into the Magic realm? The travelogues don't address this, and Friends of the Apacei neither confirm nor deny. But as so far no magus can reconstruct Maiusculus' stay in the Magic realm and his further travels, Ater's importance to them is quite moot.

In the end disbelievers always point to Maiusculus' refusal to take others with him. Maiusculus explains, that he will not risk the well-being of his charges just to impress some sodales, and the Friends of the Apacei consider this the strength of mind expected of a true chieftain and paragon.

FAERIES AT WORK

With Maiusculus' first travelogues out some 14 years, and their circulation limited to the Order of Hermes, faeries would not jump in and start pretending to be Apacei on their own.

But Bodo in one of his commentaries did explicitly challenge the role of the Faerie queen of Madsenhofen Woods (*Houses of Hermes: Societates*, page 73, *Guardians of the Forest*, page 104) in 'Tytalus' disappearance. This queen has some contacts to magi, especially to Tytalus pilgrims on the trail of their Master.

And lo – such a pilgrim has recently found strange grapevines and felt stalked by Vindemitor in Madsenhofen Woods. This reinforces the belief that Tytalus indeed disappeared there. And those most desperate to reach Vinilandia have now begun to bypass the intractable Maiusculus and look for a path through these faerie woods.

FINDING THOSE IN NEED

Those Friends of the Apacei following Bodo, and looking for other peoples in need of great warmages to deliver and lead them, typically form small groups, to first ease research and later share the challenges of warmagehood.

Between such groups there is always competition: especially names and locations of peoples looking suitable are jealously guarded once believed to be found.

The first group venturing forth without telling where so far has never been heard of again.

Some other Friends of the Apacei have gone to the Baltic and plan to befriend the Estonians. Being actively obstructed by the Danes and the Livonian Brothers of the Sword, they begin to consider these as the greedy brutes in need of vanquishing.

APPENDIX: NPCs

MAIUSCULUS AND ATER

Korla was born to a Sorbian family in a Pomeranian backwater with Viking

NEW VIRTUE CREATIVE MYSTAGOGUE

(Minor Hermetic Virtue)

The character must be from a House that is a Mystery Cult and has a signature ability: Heartbeast, Enigmatic Wisdom or Faerie Magic.

After each adventure in which the character took part, the player rolls a

stress roll for that signature ability + Intelligence against an Ease Factor of 18. At a success, the storyguide should come up with a specific, not yet found Initiation Script, fitting for the character, the adventure and the House, and give the character a bonus of at least the roll – 15 for its validity check according to *The Mysteries Revised Edition*, page 18, if she experiments to discover it.

BODO THE HERMIT AND RUMTUMTUS

Bodo lives as a hermit magus in the Thuringian Woods, where his parents Kleon (*Guardians of the Forests*, page 39) found final Twilight in reckless experiments. He is quite unable to live among mundanes, but – especially when using Haunt of the Living Ghost (*ArM5*, page 144) or Passing through Seeming (*Houses of Hermes: Mystery Cults*, page 65) - handles Hermetic magi well and has access to most libraries of the Rhine Tribunal.

He is an experienced mystagogue following the Path of Seeming, which is devoted to looking for the Enigma hidden in the cracks in the fabric of the world (*Houses of Hermes: Mystery Cults* page 64 to 67). But as over the years the Enigma eluded him, Bodo decided to widen these cracks for a closer look.

His familiar is the inscrutable tomat RumTumTus. After observing RumTumTus' elaborate antics around Hermetic magi, Bodo decided, that those parts of the world most in need of widened cracks were the magi themselves.

Bodo found Maiusculus and his travelogues soon after 1205. They inspired him to create a new Mystery Cult around them, to show the gap

between the reality and the potential of each individual magus - including himself. If by this some fissures in the world beyond the Order appear as well, to Bodo this is a welcome side benefit.

He created the Initiation Scripts for the Friends of the Apacei first for his Cramon path, and then adapted them to the newly emerging Cult Lore of the Friends (see *Legends of Hermes*, page 49 box). So he could present them to Maiusculus already in 1208.

APPENDIX: LITERATURE

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Karl_May

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Old_Shatterhand

<http://karl-may-wiki.de/index.php/Old-Shatterhand-Legende>

https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Drachenh%C3%B6hle_Syrau

[http://www.karl-may-gesellschaft.de/kmg/primlit/reise/gr/Karl May: Reiseerzählungen](http://www.karl-may-gesellschaft.de/kmg/primlit/reise/gr/Karl_May:_Reiseerz%C3%A4hlungen)

<http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/8147> Rudyard Kipling: The Man Who Would be King

<http://hbar.phys.msu.su/gorm/chrons/bremen.htm> Adam of Bremen: Gesta Hammaburgensis ecclesiae pontificum - (search 'Winland')

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brendan#Legendary_journey Summary of the Navigatio Sancti Brendani

<http://legacy.fordham.edu/halsall/source/otto-prester.asp> Otto of Freising on Prester John

<http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/782> English translation of the Itinerarium of Jehan de Mandeville

MAIUSCULUS

Characteristics: Int +3 (Imaginative), Per -2 (Dreamy), Pre +1 (Genial), Com +5 (Storyteller), Str +1 (Strong Fists), Sta +2 (Unrelenting), Dex +1 (Dextrous), Qik +1 (Deft)

Size: 0

Age: 54 (39)

Decrepitude: 0

Warping Score: 2 (3¼)

Confidence: 2 (9)

Virtues and Flaws: The Gift; Hermetic Magus, Improved Characteristics (×3), Inspirational (Bonus: +3 to targets' Personality Traits), Minor Essential Virtue (Brave), Self-Confident, Strong-Willed, True Friend (Familiar Ater), Free Expression, Great Communication × 2, Good Teacher, Puissant Brawl, Driven (Prove your worth to your sodales), Weak Parens, Weak Scholar, Deficient Form (Mentem), Compulsion (Bragging)

Personality Traits: Boastful +2, Loyal (Familiar) +3, Brave* (Pre) +3, Driven +3, Energetic +2, Extroverted +2

Reputations: Dubious Dreamer (Rhine Magi) 3, Great Warmage of the Apacei (Followers and Friends) 5

Combat:

Dodge: Init +1, Attack N/A, Defense +7, Damage N/A

Fist: Init +1, Attack +8, Defense +8, Damage +1

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

Knife: Init +1, Attack +8, Defense +7, Damage +3

Soak: +8

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: Latin 6 (Storytelling), Artes Liberales 3 (Grammar) (3), Code of Hermes 2 (Privacy), Finesse 2 (Precision), Magic Theory 5 (Inventing Spells) (16), Parma Magica 3 (Mentem), Magic Lore 3 (Magic realm) (8), Chirurgy 1 (Bind Wounds), Stealth 1 (Natural Areas), Awareness 1 (Alertness), Survival 1 (Woods), Athletics 1 (Hiking), Brawl 4+2 (Fist), Swim 1 (Rough Water), Animal Handling 1 (Horses), West Slavonic 5 (Sorbian), Order of Hermes Lore 3 (History) (3), Ride 4 (Travel), Scribe 1

(Copying), Bargain 2 (Vis), Carouse 2 (Power Drinking), Leadership 3 (Inspirational), Charm 1 (First Impressions), Folk Ken 3 (Magi), Guile 3 (Elaborate Lies), Area Lore: Swabia 1 (Black Forest), Area Lore: Bohemia 1 (Bohemian Forest), Area Lore: Holstein 1 (Rügen), Area Lore: Pomerania 1 (Woods), Area Lore: Vikings 3 (History), Area Lore: Saxony 1 (Woods), Apacei Lore 8 (Vindemitor)

Arts: Cr 14, In 0, Mu 0, Pe 0, Re 8, An 14, Aq 0, Au 0, Co 11, He 0, Ig 0, Im 6, Me 0, Te 0, Vi 0

Equipment: Fur Armor (Soak: 5) (Soak: 5; Protection: 3; Quality Armor: +2); Travelogues from Vinilandia (of eleven years)

Encumbrance: 0 (1)

Spells Known:

True Rest of the Injured Brute (CrAn 20) +30

Soothe Pains of the Beast (CrAn 20) +33

Purification of the Festering Wounds (CrCo 20) +27

Gentle Touch of the Purified Body (CrCo 20) +30

Phantasmal Animal (CrIm 20) +22

Phantasm of the Human Form (CrIm 25) +22

The Gentle Beast (ReAn 25) +24

Endurance of the Berserkers (ReCo 15) +21

Lifting the Dangling Puppet (ReCo 15) +21

Seven-League Stride (ReCo 30) +21

Vis: Gifts from the Apacei: 8 Pawns of Animal (Bundle); Physical Form: Pelts

BODO THE HERMIT

Characteristics: Int +3 (Erudite), Per +1 (Astute), Pre +1 (Intense), Com +1 (Precise), Str -2 (Unathletic), Sta +1 (Unswerving), Dex 0, Qik 0

Size: 0

Age: 75 (51)

Decrepitude: 0

Warping Score: 4 (9³/₄)

Confidence: 2 (7)

Virtues and Flaws: The Gift; Hermetic Magus, True Friend (Familiar RumTumTus), Read Object Memories, Sensitive Enigmatic Wisdom, Spirit Traveling, Affinity with Enigmatic Wisdom, Clear Thinker, Common Sense, Creative Mystagogue, Keen Vision, Book Learner, Puissant Enigmatic Wisdom, The Enigma*, Initiations (*Avenue of Gruel, Water and Starlight, Avenue that Assaults the Modesty of the Universe, The Avenue of the Unexpected Pages, The Avenue that is a Crossroad, Brave New World, Fist of the Warmage, Inspiration of the Warmage, Confidence of the Chieftain*), , Minor Essential Virtue (Brave), Inspirational, Puissant Brawl, Self-Confident, Pious, Blatant Gift, Restriction (Cannot affect glass), Disfigured (Stigmata on Head and Shoulders), Gild Enmity (Elder Gild), Cabal Legacy: Path of Seeming, Optimistic, Higher Purpose (Defend the Apacei)

Personality Traits: Brave* (Pre) +3, Confident +3, Deep Thinker +2, Forceful +1, Leader +3, Loyal (Familiar) +3, Optimistic +3, Otherworldly +2, Pious (Path of Seeming) +3, Widely-Read +3

Reputations: Dedicated (House Criamon) 3, Defender of Warmage-hood (Followers and Friends) 3, Defender of Maiusculus (Rhine Tribunal) 2

Combat:

Dodge: Init -1, Attack N/A, Defense +5, Damage N/A

Fist: Init -1, Attack +4, Defense +4, Damage -2

Kick: Init -2, Attack +4, Defense +3, Damage +1

Knife: Init -1, Attack +5, Defense +4, Damage +0

Soak: +6

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 1 (Passages of Text), Philosophiae 1 (Metaphysics), Latin 5 (Hermetic Usage) (8), Artes Liberales 4 (Rhetoric), Code of Hermes 5 (Political Intrigue) (2), Magic Theory 8 (Inventing Spells) (2), Parma Magica 5 (Mentem) (6), Penetration 5 (Intellego), House Criamon Lore 7 (Initiate Self) (17), Dominion Lore 2 (Auras), Faerie Lore 5 (Faerie Forests), Infernal Lore 2 (Demons), Magic Lore 5 (Magic realm), Concentration 3 (Spell Concentration) (6), Awareness 1 (Search), Survival 3 (Woods), Athletics 3 (Hike), Brawl 2+2 (Dodge) (10), Animal Handling 3 (Cats) (2), Low German 5 (Literary), Order of Hermes Lore 5 (House Criamon), Ride 2 (Travel) (5), Bargain 3 (Cooperation), Leadership 5 (Inspirational) (8), Teaching 2 (One-on-one) (12), Folk Ken 3 (Magi), Guile 5 (Elaborate Lies), Apacei Lore 7 (Making Scripts), Church Lore 4 (Saint Nerius), Enigmatic Wisdom 7+2 (Interpreting Signs)

Arts: Cr 18, In 14, Mu 5, Pe 5, Re 16, An 15, Aq 6, Au 6, Co 15, He 6, Ig 6, Im 5, Me 5, Te 6, Vi 18

Equipment: Fur Armor (Soak: 4) (Soak: 4; Protection: 3; Quality Armor: +2)

Encumbrance: 1 (1)

Spells Known:

True Rest of the Injured Brute (CrAn 20) +34

Soothe Pains of the Beast (CrAn 20) +39

The Wizard's Mount (CrAn 35) +34

Weaver's Trap of Webs (CrAn 35) +34

Bind Wound (CrCo 10) +34

Charm Against Putrefaction (CrCo 10) +34

Purification of the Festering Wounds (CrCo 20) +34

The Surgeon's Healing Touch (CrCo 20) +39

Gentle Touch of the Purified Body (CrCo 20) +39

The Severed Limb Made Whole (CrCo 25) +39

Restoration of the Defiled Body (CrCo 25) +39

Cheating the Reaper (CrCo 30) +39

The Leap of Homecoming (ReCo 35) +32

Hunt for the Wild Herb (InHe 5) +21

Intuition of the Forest (InHe 10) +21

Shriek of the Impending Shafts (InHe 15) +21

Converse with Plant and Tree (InHe 25) +21

Haunt of the Living Ghost (CrIm 35) +24

Discern the Images of Truth and Falsehood (InIm 20) +20

Posing the Silent Question (InMe 20) +20

Aura of Rightful Authority (ReMe 20) +22

The Enigma's Gift (CrVi 30) +37

Sense of Magical Power (InVi 2) +33

Scales of the Magical Weight (InVi 5) +33

Sense the Nature of Vis (InVi 5) +33

Piercing the Faerie Veil (InVi 20) +33

Piercing the Magical Veil (InVi 20) +33

Piercing the Divine Veil (InVi 20) +33

Piercing the Infernal Veil (InVi 20) +33

Sense of the Lingering Magic (InVi 30) +33

Sight of the Active Magics (InVi 40) +33

Wizard's Communion (MuVi 15) +24

Shroud Magic (MuVi 15) +24

Gather the Essence of the Beast (ReVi 15) +35

Circular Ward Against Demons (ReVi 15) +35

Opening the Intangible Tunnel (ReVi 30) +35

Aegis of the Hearth (ReVi 30) +40

Watching Ward (ReVi 30) +40

ATER

Type: Stallion

Characteristics: Int +1, Per 0, Pre +2, Com 0, Str +5, Sta +3, Dex -1, Qik +2

Size: 2

Soak: 4

Magic Might: 5

Cord Scores: Gold +1, Silver +1, Bronze +3

Combat:

Hooves: Init +5, Atk +2, Def +5, Dam +5

Soak: +1

Abilities: Apacei Lore 8 (Maiusculus Pugil); Artes Liberales 3 (Grammar); Athletics 5 (Running); Awareness 3 (Alertness); Fight 3 (Trample); Folk Ken 2 (Magi); Guile 4 (Elaborate Lies); Latin 6 (Storytelling); Magic Lore 5 (Magic Beasts); Magic Theory 3 (Invent Spells); Order of Hermes Lore 5 (Familiars); Survival 4 (Woods); West Slavonic 5 (Sorbian);

Familiar Powers:

Speech for Ater (Effect Name: Speech for Ater; Effect Level: 20; Effect Details: R: Touch, D: Conc, T: Ind, Frequency: 1/day, Concentration; Arts: MuAn 15; Design: Base 5, +1 Conc, +1 Touch; Total Effect Level: 20; Experimental Results: Special or Story Event: Ater leads Maiusculus into his native Steppes on the Magic realm.);

RUMTUMTUS

Type: Wild Tomcat

Characteristics: Int +1, Per +1, Pre -2, Com +4, Str -7, Sta 0, Dex +3, Qik +4

Size: -3

Magic Might: 35

Cord Scores: Gold +3, Silver 0, Bronze +2

Combat:

Claws: Init +9, Atk +8, Def +9, Dam -7

Teeth: Init +8; Atk +7, Def +8, Dam -7

Soak: 0

Abilities: Fight 4 (Claws); Athletics 4 (Jumping); Awareness 6 (At Night); Hunt 4 (Vermes); Stealth 4 (Stalking); Low German 5 (Literary); Latin 5 (Hermetic Usage) (8); Guile 3 (Magi); Leadership 4 (Magi); Artes Liberales 3 (Rhetoric); Order of Hermes Lore 4 (Familiars); Magic Lore 5 (Magic

realm); Magic Theory 7 (Inventing Spells); Apacei Lore 6 (Maiusculus Pugil); Area Lore: Thuringian Woods 1 (Hunting);

Familiar Powers:

Cat of False Determinations (Points: 6; Initiative: 0; Form: Vim; R: Touch, D: Conc, T: Ind, Pen: 5 – **ArM5**, page 157 Shell of False Determinations with D: Conc);

Shriek of the Impending Missiles (Effect Name: Shriek of the Impending Missiles; Effect Level: 21; Effect Details: R: Touch, D: Sun, T: Hearing, Requisites: Animal, Corpus, Terram, Frequency: 2/day; Arts: InHe 20; Design: Base 2, +2 Sun, +3 Hearing, +1 Touch; Total Effect Level: 21)

MUTATIS MUTANDIS: STEPPING AWAY FROM D10

Mutatis Mutandis, keeping all other things the same. That's the aim of this article and others in the series that follows. What elements of **Ars Magica** can we change for the better in isolation for you to try out in your own sagas while everything else stays the same?

The trusty old D10 has served **Ars Magica** pretty well through all of its editions so far. It provides a decent range of possible results, which are further expanded by the use of stress rolls to model the chance of great success or and possible failure, and this has led us all to botches, twilight, experimental breakthroughs, moments of inspired heroism, and sudden inexplicable death. Seen in that context, there seems nothing wrong with rolling D10.

With the ending of **Ars Magica Fifth Edition** though, it's worth taking a look at every aspect of the current game and asking whether there are other options that might serve a new edition better. That includes the type of dice used to resolve character actions and that's what we're going to look at in this article, the first of what is likely to a series of several that propose alternative ways of achieving core **Ars Magica** ends.

Importantly, while we look at alternative dice mechanics, we're not looking to change anything else in the game; only the current Fifth Edition dice mechanic is under scrutiny, but we may veer into related topics as we go and explore how a new dice mechanic might influence other mechanics.

WHY NOT JUST STAY WITH D10?

It's an important question; why not just stay with D10? **Ars Magica** has done just fine using D10 for the last twenty-something years and I dare say it could continue to do well over the next twenty-something years. But to help move the game system on, it is worth considering the options. It's useful to seek alternatives. We may, in doing so, identify compelling reasons for staying with what we have. But we may, in contrast, identify a way of doing things that opens up more opportunities, support changed or enhanced mechanics that provide a better play experience.

And this is all just an expanded thought experiment, but one which you should be able to try out in your own saga as we're not mandating any other changes to the game rules.

SO HOW DO WE INVESTIGATE THIS?

We're going to make some base assumptions. We are keeping numeric character statistics, including Characteristics, Abilities, Arts, etc. We're keeping Virtues, Flaws, and all the associated Qualities, Boons, Hooks, Inferiorities, etc. We're keeping Confidence Points, Casting Totals, Attack and Defense Totals – everything that you use and generate during play is kept just the same (although we'll cover

By GERALD WYLIE

a couple of exceptions to this that arise from our selected dice mechanic).

Importantly, we are keeping the central random element to action resolution, i.e. we're not removing dice from the game! So as we're keeping dice we'd like to see what the distribution of results would be across different schemes. To help with this we'll use <http://anydice.com/> for working out these odds. And there's a great page here <http://gwydir.demon.co.uk/jo/probability/calcdice.htm> to give us more information on dice rolls and probability.

We'll pick a few examples of the kind that might pop up in open play and we'll apply the different dice mechanics under discussion and see how they pan out.

SIMPLE AND STRESS ROLLS

One mechanic central to **Ars Magica** is the difference between a simple and stressed condition. In times of stress or crisis there is always the chance for great success and terrible failure. We can see that at work in spell-casting. Failure, through botching (rolling 0 on the initial dice roll followed by one or more 0 rolls in the subsequent pool of botch dice) is one of the ways in which a magus enters twilight, the unconstrained expression of their magic that may leave them scarred or enlightened.

Ars Magica, as currently defined, needs the capacity for dice rolls to generate catastrophic failure in order to trigger certain game elements. So in the

dice mechanics that we'll consider, we'll look for those opportunities.

What Does D10 Give Us?

Let's start with the existing D10 mechanic. Using the anydice.com tool we can clearly see that each number has an equal chance of coming up. There should be no surprise about that.

We can expect an average roll of 5.5, apparently, with a standard deviation of 2.87.

So it gives us simplicity. There's a single dice to roll, there's a single number that results, and there's an even chance of rolling a 1 and a 10.

However, **Ars Magica** isn't always that straight-forward. A Simple Die roll is easy and that's what gives us our 1-10

range. But when we consider a Stress Die roll, we actually have something more complex. Our new range for a Stress Die starts at 0, skips 1, and is then open-ended; if we roll a 1, then we roll again and add double that number, if that die rolls a 1 then we roll again and multiply the result by 4. The magnitude expands with each successive 1 we roll. If we roll a 0, then we look to roll a number of botch dice. Regardless of the resulting numbers there, we at least treat the roll as a 0, if not ignore the roll altogether and apply the results of any storyguide-decided botch case.

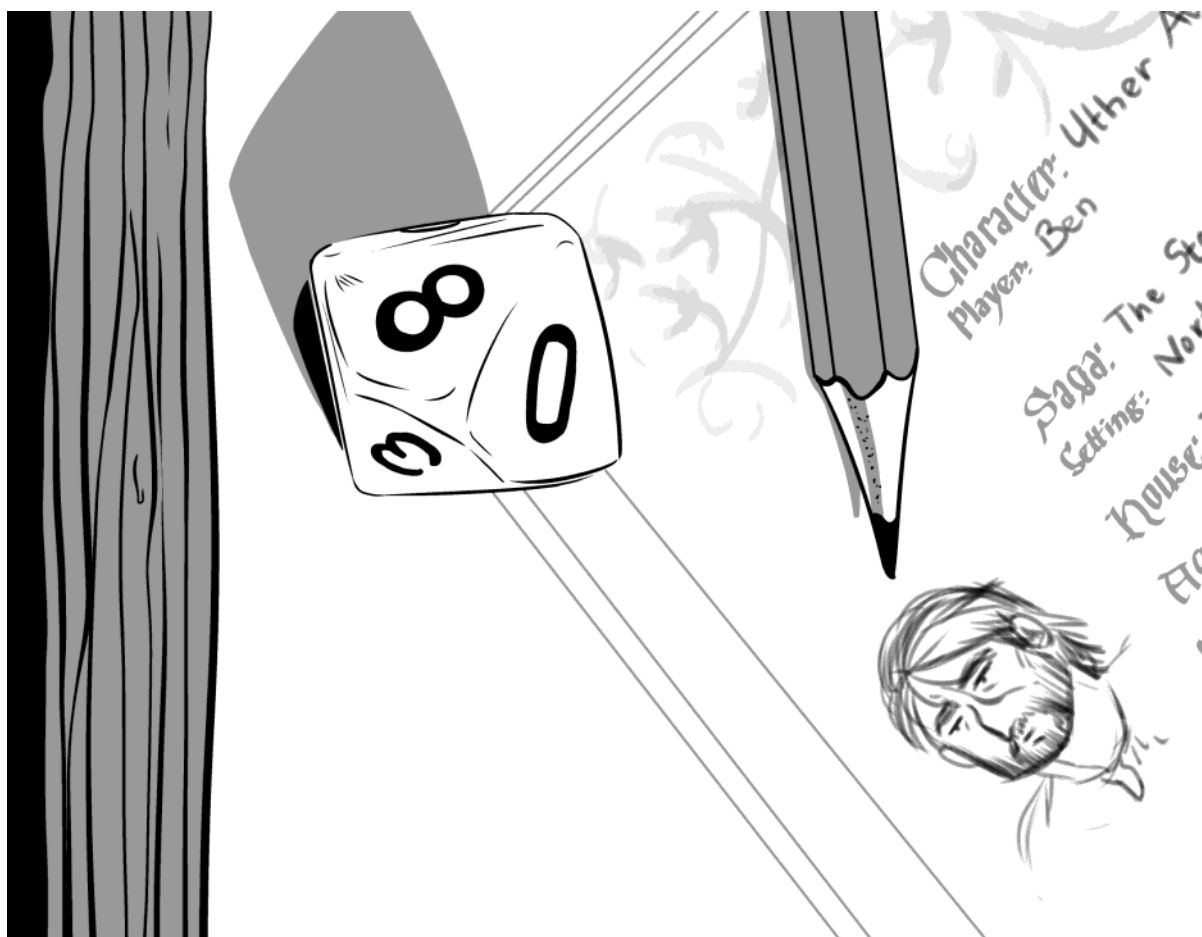
We have to ask how satisfying the equal chances of rolling 2 and rolling 9 (or any other number) really are. Given that the average of 5.5 is somewhat artificial, given the flat distribution, there's little dependability in the roll,

but we have a 50% chance of getting a 6 or more with each roll.

We do have a 10% chance of triggering great success or failure and we'll use this as a baseline when looking at the other options.

THE OTHER OPTIONS

Remember, sticking to the principle of mutatis mutandis, we're not changing any other facet of the game rules and mechanics at this stage. So we need alternative dice mechanics that allow for stress, simple, botch, and exploding success results.



1D20

If you're a gamer then you'll have more than a passing familiarity with a D20. It's common, so should be available to the gaming table, but let's look at how a D20 roll breaks down.

Like the 1D10, we have an even chance of any face coming up, which means there's the same chance of rolling 1 as there is as rolling 20. The average roll we can expect is 10.5 and the standard deviation is 5.77.

It's simple enough, but that number range is arguably too great. The die roll influences the Ability roll or Casting Total to too great a degree (although of course, this is a matter of personal judgement).

And with a 5% chance of rolling each of 1 and 20, using the extreme ranges on the dice to model great success and failure means that the chances of triggering these game elements drops below the current

2D10

One way to achieve a more dependable number range (by which we mean a range distributed over a curve rather than a flat line) is to use multiple dice. We'll look first at sticking with the D10 that we're currently comfortable with.

Looking at the table, the average roll we can expect is 11, with a standard deviation of 4.06.

As with the D20, the high potential range involved in 2D10 probably gives too much weight to the die roll and not enough to the character's own intrinsic inputs; there is a 10% chance of rolling 11 but a 90% chance of rolling 6 or more.

If we use the extremes as trigger points for botch or exploding success, we have a 1% chance of rolling double-1 and the same for double-10. That's before we even consider rolling again to see whether we actually botch.

2D6

Liking the distribution that multiple dice gives us, let's look at swapping out the D10 and replacing it with a D6.

Straight off, we can see that we have an average roll of 7 (standard deviation 2.42). This isn't too far off the 1D10 that we're used to and the top end of the roll is not too dissimilar to what we get out of a single D10 either.

We also have a richer dynamic to work with. Doubles could have particular meaning or the value of one particular die could be used to determine extremes of failure and success.

If we take a double-1 to represent a catastrophic failure risk, we can see that we have about a 3% chance of that occurring. This is a lower chance than rolling 0 on the 1D10 (which is 10%, of course), but still a viable risk.

1D6

For completeness (and as we'll come back to this below), we'll look at a basic 1D6 roll.

With one die, we again have a flat distribution of results and this time the range of results falls below that afforded by the 1D10. This may be slightly too restrictive for us, even though we have a 50% chance of getting a 4 or more and an average expected roll of 3.5 (standard deviation of 1.71).

DICE POOL

There are different ways to build and use dice pools. In games where we could expect character attributes or ability scores to be low (typically in the 1 to 5 range), we might build a pool based on the number of ranks in an ability. We might build the pool out of environmental factors – one base die, plus another for being in a favourable aura, plus another for being rested, etc.

The type of dice used in building the pool might also be important. A pool of D10s is just as viable as a pool of D6s and the type of die selected is dependent on just how the dice pool is to be used.

There are different ways to use the dice pool too. We could add the numbers, with the resulting roll equal to the sum of the faces shown. Or we could look for "successes", i.e. count the number of dice that roll over a certain threshold value set by the storyguide or the game mechanics.

And we can build certain challenges or advantages into the pool by subtracting dice, adding dice, or by adding dice that subtract from the total or otherwise have a chance of countering a success. The following chart assumes that we have a dice pool of 3d6 and that we have a single challenge die that is simply going to subtract from the positive dice in the pool.

Looking at the top end of the results, we can see that we have a small chance of rolling 15 and above, which is pretty high in itself. A Very Hard Ease Factor is 15, which highly-skilled characters are expected to succeed at just 70% of the time.

What we can see is that there's a chance of achieving a negative result in the case where we simply subtract the challenge die from the total. Could we use negative values to represent botches? Possibly, but that's a

complexity that we won't follow in this article.

As should become clear, dice pools run the risk of becoming quite complex both to design and to use in practice. They do offer some potentially nice ways to model stress and failure, however.

GRADUATED DICE POOL

The core concept is that rather than using a single die type, we use different dice for either different character attributes or DN for characteristic, DN for Ability, DN for bonus

We can see a similar dice scheme in the Cortex game system as typified by the (regrettably now defunct) **Marvel Heroic Roleplaying** game from Margaret Weis Productions. It's a great system in itself but it lacks the numeric stats found in **Ars Magica**. The dice involved are derived from affiliations, powers, distinctions, etc. The player builds a pool of dice from these elements, each of which may provide a different type of die.

The additional difficulty, using **Cortex** as the example, is that the resulting pool does not form a single numeric total. Without going into too much detail, you split the pool into success and effect totals. The success side of the equation is compared against a total generated by the storyguide, often based off a similar dice pool rolled by an adversary. If the player's success total is higher than the storyguide's then the effect total comes into play.

It's a nice system with much to recommend it, but it initially seems hard to apply to a game like **Ars Magica** where the key limiting factor is the detail involved in developing and using the Arts, which are character attributes with a fine-grained progression.

However, it is possible to use different die types for different attributes. Imagine that we roll a D8 to represent the Characteristic (say,

Stamina in the spell casting roll), and a D6 for each of the Arts involved in casting. An appropriate Virtue might add a further D6 or even a D10 (perhaps that's a way of differentiating a Minor from a Major Virtue). A Flaw might remove a die or require a die to be rolled in opposition.

I can well imagine various rules around challenge die – such as those arising from Flaws or circumstance – being used as part of the stress mechanic; the challenge dice can't add to the total, but roll enough ones and you botch, etc. So I think there's a way to build a dice pool mechanism into **Ars Magica** that doesn't explode the numbers as the Ability or Art scores increase and an enterprising reader may wish to contribute an article in future exploring a complete new dice pool mechanic for **Ars Magica** but it is not something that we're going to explore further in this article.

OUR SELECTED OPTION: 2D6

There's something to be said for the 2D6 option. Odds are distributed across a curve, so the highs and lows are confined to the extremes. The high end rolls are not too dissimilar from those available to a D10 (27.78% chance of 9+ for 2D6 against 20% chance of 9 or 10 on the 1D10).

But we now have an additional nuance in play; we don't necessarily have to roll both dice.

Hang on, this is starting to sound a little like a dice pool now if we can choose the number of dice to use. Well, that's true, but bear with me. Let's take a look at this.

I'm sure, like me, you've been round the table, been asked to make a roll (or have done the asking), and you roll the D10 – it comes up 0 or possibly 10. With trepidation, you look up at the

storyguide and ask "was that a stress roll?"

One of the frustrations I find with **Ars Magica** is having to think about what type of roll it is beforehand. There's nothing to prompt the player or the storyguide in the act of rolling and in any case it hands all narrative control to the storyguide, often post-hoc.

Right, bear that in mind. We'll come back to it.

THE BASE ROLL

The base roll for any action is 2D6. The player concerned takes 2D6 and rolls them together. The result is simply the sum of the faces shown. As discussed, this provides a result of between 2 (double 1) and 12 (double 6). We need mechanisms for representing great failure and great success, so we'll look at those next.

CHECKING FOR BOTCH

If the dice rolled present a double 1, then the action has a chance of botching. The value of the roll is immediately considered to be 0 and the player must roll an additional D6 pool. The number of dice in this pool is worked out by the storyguide based on situational factors (if climbing a rock face, for instance, the worsening weather may add an additional botch dice to the pool, as might the aggressive nesting sea birds disturbed by the climber).

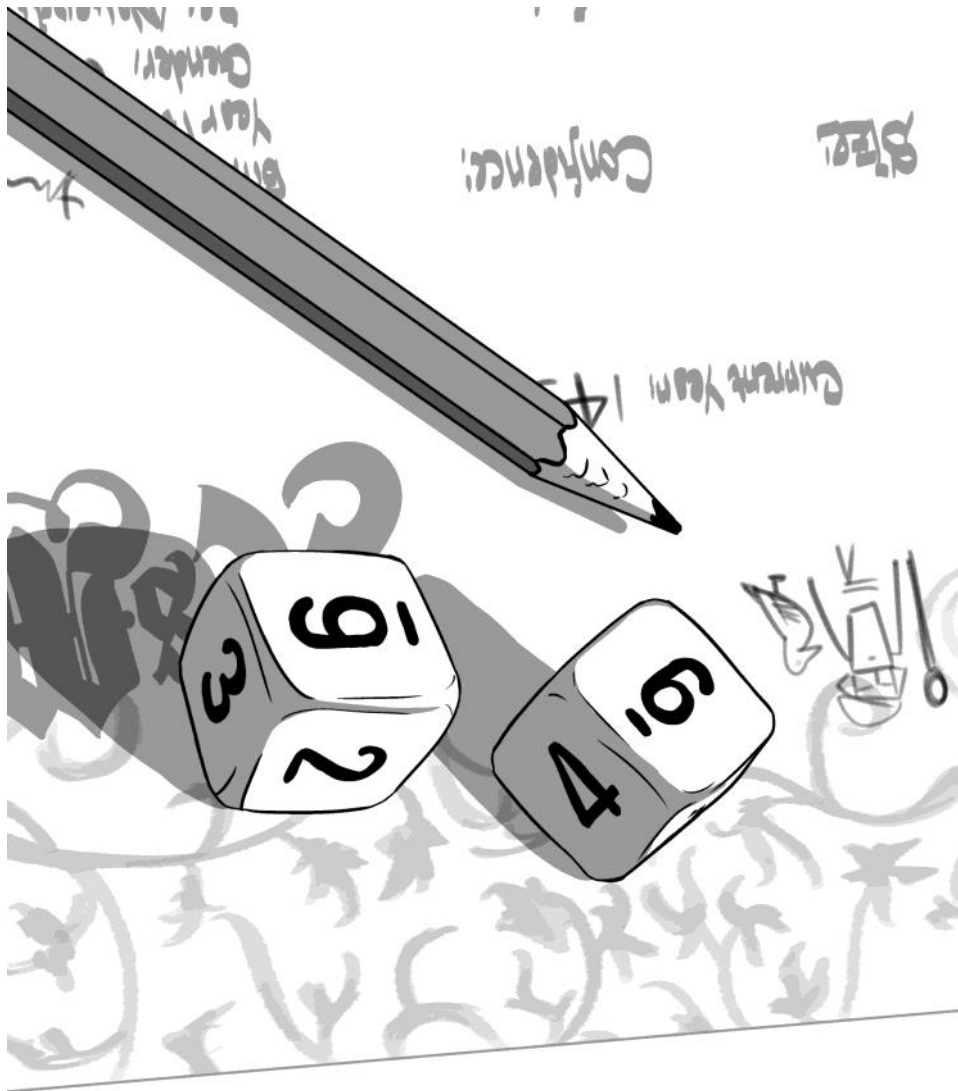
If any of these dice result in 1 then the action has botched, resulting in some form of injurious failure. The extent of that failure is represented by the number of dice that returned a 1.

How does this compare to the existing D10 rolls? Well, there's a 1 in 36 chance of a double 1 being rolled on 2D6 and a 1 in 10 chance of a 0 being rolled on a D10. So the odds on triggering a botch check are longer – we'd expect fewer of them around the table.

However, the odds of rolling 1 on a D6 are shorter than the odds of rolling 0 on a D10. If we have a pool of D6s then we'd expect more 1s to be rolled than 0s in the equivalent pool of D10s.

potentially arbitrarily large numbers – once you're past a certain threshold a big number is a big number. So we'll propose a simpler alternative that reduces the explosive nature of the

How does this compare? We have a 1/36 chance of triggering an extra roll under the 2D6 mechanic. Under 1D10, this is unsurprisingly 1/10. So we have an easier time getting an extra roll out



Bottom line; the risk of triggering a botch is lower, but once triggered the chances of incurring something deleterious are higher.

Success!

There are some options here. We could use the existing roll and double method, of course, but in the estimation of this author that ends up with some

numbers (and makes the maths easier).

If a double 6 is rolled, then a further die is rolled and the resulting number simply added to the total. If that die rolls a 6, then the player earns a further roll of the die, which is then also added to the new running total.

of the 1D10 mechanic. The potential rewards under 1D10 are also much greater; excluding a further reroll, we earn anything from a further 4 up to 20 on our roll. The additional 1D6, on the other hand, gives us an additional 1 – 5 (and if we roll a 6 then it's a 6 + a new roll).

The rewards are certainly more modest, but arguably more realistic. The

The rewards are certainly more modest, but arguably more realistic. The option remains to double the value of the die roll, which steers the mechanic back in line with the existing D10 stress roll, and troupes may prefer this for the extra kick of heroism it provides.

SIMPLE VERSUS STRESS

So far, so familiar. But what if the decision to use 1D6 or 2D6 actually represents something? What if the option to use 1D6 represents additional caution or, perhaps more accurately, the wilful staying within known capabilities?

Under normal circumstances, the player has the option to use just 1D6, which removes the possibility of extreme success and failure in exchange for limiting the possible value afforded by the roll itself.

Let's take the example of the character climbing the cliff. The storyguide sets an Ease Factor of 12. The character has a Dexterity of 3 and an Athletics (climb) of 6. The weather is bad, but not overly so, so rather than risk the character falling to his death, the player picks up a single D6 and, taking the cautious approach, rolls a Simple Die. He gets a 2, for a total of 11. Not enough. The storyguide describes how the character just couldn't find the route up the cliff.

With nothing but time wasted, the player describes how the character steels herself and sets out for another attempt. This time, the player picks up 2D6 for a Stress Die. The roll is not helpful. Double 1. What are the chances? The storyguide asks for a 3D6 check for botches. The player rolls 6, 2, and a 1. Ouch. The storyguide describes how the character made it half way up the cliff, looking for chances to take, and then... reaching for a handhold, the rock beneath her feet gives way. She's able to catch herself and prevent a fall, but she's now out of reach of that important handhold. It's cold, raining, and she's clinging to the side of a cliff

with neither a way up nor a safe way down.

THE STORYGUIDE'S GIFT

The storyguide may decide in advance that a roll should be Stress. In our cliff-climbing example above, the storyguide may decide that the weather is bad enough that the feat is not easily within the character's capability, that the element of risk is taken out of the character's hands and imposed by the conditions.

NOTABLE EXCEPTIONS

Spontaneous spell-casting should always be stressful, as should ritual magic. Other rules, such as laboratory experimentation, rolling for control of twilight, etc. follow the existing rules for Stress roll as appropriate. The decision to roll Simple of Stress resides with the player in the normal run of play in resolving normal actions.

OPTIONAL MODIFIED RULES

Changing the dice mechanic suggests additional changes that could be made. We'll consider a couple of them below.

CONFIDENCE

As the basic die that we're using has just six faces, we could start to use that die for confidence instead of just adding 3 to the total. So Instead of simply adding 3 to the total when using Confidence, add a die to the roll. It does NOT count towards botching. The Confidence score itself works exactly the same – an additional die may be rolled for each point in the character's Confidence Score.

Alternatively (or even additionally), Confidence could be used to remove dice from any botch check.

VIRTUES AND FLAWS

Again veering towards a Dice Pool, we can well imagine Virtues and Flaws affecting the dice rolled to resolve actions. For instance, instead of a Puissance adding a flat +3, it might instead add an additional die to the roll, one that does not contribute to a botch check.

And in the same way that spell mastery reduces the number of botch dice, Virtues might do the same. Counter to that, Flaws might add a die to the roll, a die that only counts towards whether the character botches or not. Or adds dice to a check for the botch itself against certain Characteristics or Abilities.

CONCLUSION

There's a lot to recommend the 2D6 mechanic. The distribution of possible outcomes is clustered around something useful rather than there being an equal chance of any particular number coming up. And investing the player with more control over the risk involved in the roll (choosing Simple over Stress) gives the player a sense of having more agency within the scene – there's a narrative implication in the character avoiding risk.

Those of you in active sagas, why not give it a go for a session or two. Let us know how you get on.

The 2D6 approach is not the only one that might work for **Ars Magica** and there may be mileage to be had in exploring a Dice Pool mechanic of some kind if the high resulting rolls can be squared away with the Ease Factors currently referenced in the core rulebook.

But what is clear is that aside from sentiment there's nothing tying **Ars Magica** to the D10 in future editions and alternative dice mechanics can easily support the game's rich gameplay.

THE CLOUDLANDS

By BEN McFARLAND

A KINGDOM ABOVE

This realm exists in all places and at the same time, only one place. Children's stories fostered its spread, seeing duplicates of various accuracy appear in Faerie after stories spread across Mythic Europe. The Cloudlands feel like a bucolic countryside of rolling hills, sparse forests and a few, tall, rocky peaks. Some regions sport nothing more than misty covered ground and earth, others host fields as plain the cultivated farms below, and others offer nothing but a firm but yielding surface of billowing cloud-stuff.

The structures and towns closely resemble the mundane counterparts of the people living beneath different parts of Aiolia, and one may cross vast distances in Mythic Europe far quicker in the Cloudlands than on the ground far below. One valley may mirror Normandy, while the next resembles Germany, and a day's walk brings one to the Balkans. The inhabitants often speak corresponding languages, but they are almost invariably giants of some kind, ranging from those about twice as tall as a normal man to some as tall as a church steeple. Livestock and crops also grow proportionally bigger, but anything brought back to the surface reverts to the proper size within a generation or two, and even the animals themselves seem to shrink over time. Minerals and metals, however, do not seem affected in this way, as those who've suffered from giant hurled rocks and weapons attest.



The weather seems to reflect the moods and demeanor of the most powerful creature living in each localized area. Thunderous, lightning charged clouds surround angry, violent giants. Dark, rumbling towers accompany brooding, pensive giants with no love of visitors. Calm, billowing clouds might just as quickly become storms as a giant discovers a thief has taken something of value. It is a gradually shifting landscape, where the only thing permanent is the constant change.

INHABITANTS OF NOTE

One might encounter several renowned creatures in Aiolia.

ALBINA, FIRST PRINCESS OF THE REALM

Considered by many to be the rightful ruler of the Cloudlands, she arrived with a group of her sisters in Antiquity after being set adrift. Banished for planning to murder all of their husbands, the thirty noble ladies each claimed a different region and took a giant consort while carving out their own domains. Albina maintains a nominal suzerainty over her sisters and rules with a disinterested touch from her own high citadel (Magic Aura 5). She keeps Gogmagog as her general and consort, and maintains many roving bands of giant warriors, which sometimes descend into mountainous areas of Mythic Europe to raid and pillage for her.

She loves candied pears and fine olive oil, two delicacies from her homeland which her subjects yet to suitably replicate for her, but enjoys fine and exotic meals. Albina occasionally acts quite suspicious towards strong male visitors, thinking they seek to steal her throne or supplant Gogmagog as her consort. She has ruled for a thousand years, having defeated several challengers from among her sisters and several former consorts. She keeps their skulls in a cabinet and takes them out at dinner parties and conferences with her



generals to entertain or force their bound spirits to discuss various matters.

Albina has no desire to upset the status quo, and no plans to extend her influence beyond Aiolia. In fact, she has strong laws prohibiting the inhabitants from flinging rocks down to earth below. It still happens from time to time, usually an accident, but sometimes a consequence of armies battling each other near Aiolia's edge.

BLUNDERBORE, GIANT AND BRIGAND

A raven-haired beast of a man who stands nearly twenty feet tall, Blunderbore leads a band of 15 giants, ranging from twelve feet tall to twenty-two feet tall. They carry two-handed clubs made from rooty trees or long, thick trunks studded with jagged sword blades. Three of the larger giants

actually wear Roman legionnaire armor and weapons scaled for their frames. All of them have oxhides stitched together to carry a few rocks for throwing. Blunderbore himself carries a shield made from a dozen steel shields hammered together, many still bearing the heraldry of their former owners, and a heavy, enormous sword, proportionately sized for him. His beard is a black, wiry tangle of hair, into which Blunderbore has braided various grisly souvenirs. His teeth are a yellowing, crooked grin, and his wide feet are caked with dried gore and mud.

He prefers to stick to regions close to the edge of Aiolia, where he can lead raids into mountain towns when the Cloudlands brush against the slopes and where unsuspecting shepherds or flocks might accidentally wander into their lands on foggy mornings or misty evenings. The giant loves honey, wine,

and ham, and can sometimes be bribed with a large urn of wine or a seasoned hock of pork. Blunderbore hates mules, and attacks them first whenever possible. He has been stranded in Mythic Europe a few times during raids, and hates being away from Aiolia for too long. When this happens, he constantly searches for a route back to the Cloudlands in high passes and foggy areas and is willing to barter before simply attacking if the target claims to know a way back.

GOGMAGOG, GIANT AND DEFENDER

Standing at a modest eleven feet tall, Gogmagog is instantly recognizable for his wild mane of bright red hair and thick, walrus-like moustache which joins his sideburns but leaves his chin bare. He wears a kilt made from a great black bear's hide, a shirt of leather armor



studded with riveted metal plates and wields an enormous two-handed sword said to have been forged by Weyland Smith. The giant wears heavy metal greaves with wickedly spiked knee-guards and loves to wade into the middle of a band of enemies, kicking those of smaller stature. He's followed around at all times by a pair of massive irish wolfhounds named "Nick" and "Knack," which he's trained to fight alongside him in battle. Gogmagog speaks with a welsh accent and is the first to tell the curious he has "no relation" to the biblical Gog and Magog.

He serves as the war-master and great general for Princess Albina, and enjoys his status as her consort. His own personal band numbers 25, including himself. Among the other giants sworn to the First Princess, Gogmagog is considered a shrewd leader who carefully considers the lives of his warriors. The giant clans in her realm follow his word as if it were hers, and if something ever happened to her, they would rally around Gogmagog as her successor and take great offense at comments about Gogmagog's height. He's very friendly and well-spoken in comparison to other giants, and an able diplomat. He thinks Albina could further consolidate her rule over the other princesses of Aiolia, but remains content with the status quo.

AIOLOS, SPIRIT OF THE FIRST WIND

Called the son of Poseidon in ancient mythology, Aiolos is indeed the father of the many genius loci wind spirits which roam Mythic Europe, such as the Mystral in Provence, Boreas in the North, or any of the winds which roam Mythic Africa. He manifests as a lithe, middle-aged man with a sun-tanned complexion and stark white hair. No matter how else he might alter his form, he always has white hair. For a potent spirit, his demeanor is fairly constant, though he tends to react quite chilly with individuals who antagonize him. News about his children always interests Aiolos, and he good-naturedly

complains about the amount of time since their last visit. All other wind spirits treat him with deference, recognizing him as their "honored ancestor," and refuse to fight in his presence or harm his messengers.

Aiolos lives in a thin, tall tower at the very heart of Aiolia, but this tower is never in the same place twice, and its gate opens to the air two bowshots above the ground. It has a Magic aura of 10. The First Wind entertains guests who visit, but insists all visitors make their own way up and down from the tower and there is no stair. Aiolos enters combat with a fearsome howl and demonstrates power just a shade weaker than a Kosmocreator. He easily flings lightning bolts, great blasts of manipulated wind, jagged chunks of ice or hail, and even terrible blades fashioned of nothing but air. However, he is often merciful, and quick to change his mind or lose his anger. Aiolos doesn't act chaotic or random in these moments; there is always a reason for the shifts in behavior, whether it is the vigor of his opponent, the beauty of the sun emerging from a cloud, or the calm peace of an unexpected snowfall. Those who surrender are treated quite well, so long as they honor their word.

LOCALES OF NOTE

There are many places throughout Aiolia which belong to no ruler or giant in particular, but have a value to travelers and visitors. These include abandoned structures, the Bronze Wall, and Icarus' Crater, among others.

ABANDONED GIANTS' HOMES

As giants can regularly meet violent ends, their homes can sit unoccupied and abandoned for some time. Many of these have treasures, other Magical Things, which the giants collected over time. Old pets and servants might linger, guarding the site out of loyalty, while other structures simply decay over time, perhaps being used as campsites for mundane travelers making their way across Aiolia. Each one is different, and

discovering one which hasn't yet been looted can be both very rewarding and dangerous.

BRONZE WALL

Surrounding all of the edge of Aiolia is a broad, thick bronze wall. This wall doesn't extend over the rim of the land, but rather acts like a protective band, which prevents someone from tunneling into the Cloudlands from the side. The band is almost always shrouded in clouds, but it is occasionally visible to those on the ground or if it is approached on the surface. The bronze does not tarnish, and it is extremely hard. Sages who have studied it believe the band helps keep the rock and earth of Aiolia afloat and protected from erosion, while others believe it is an enormous ring for enchanting the ground which comprises the region.

ICARUS' CRATER

When the greek legend plunged to the sea as his waxen wings melted, his father Daedelus did not see him strike the water. In truth, Icarus never drowned or even hit the waves, but instead impacted against the surface of Aiolia. This deep crater is filled with a titanic, scorched and dirt-blasted body which is half melted into the surface. Tiny feathers often blow about the floor of the depression, and the wax is still warm. The ghost of Icarus sometimes manifests here, willing to teach those who bring him the proper gifts of wine and olives from his namesake island, Icaria, near the island of Samos in the Aegean Sea.

QUIRKS AND THRESHOLDS OF THE CLOUDLANDS

Various aspects of magic act differently in Aiolia. Spontaneous auram magic is more powerful, and auram-based spells penetrate easier. Magi experience this benefit by doubling the final penetration of a casting roll for a formulaic spell, and treating their auram art as if it were 50% larger (or 5 greater,

whichever is more). For example, if one were casting a formulaic lightning bolt with a target of 35, a casting total of 40, and a Penetration skill of 3, the total penetration would be 16 (5 from the roll + 3 from the skill, doubled is 16.) Muto magic also benefits from this aspect, and spontaneous muto auram magic does not require exertion to benefit from a ½ multiplier to the casting score. Warping which occurs in this region manifests more as auram or muto effects, even if the source of the Warping was not auram- or muto-based. Twilight scars acquired in Aiolia follow the same pattern, and spellcasting botches include a small magnitude auram or muto effect, regardless of the intended effect. Vis found here is often in the form of wind-

carved stones, sometimes bird bones, or even extremely persistent bits of cloud-stuff. The general Magic aura of the Cloudlands is 3, with specific sites being higher.

THRESHOLDS

Many ways exist for completely mundane people to accidentally enter the Cloudlands; these open methods are called Thresholds and result in uncommon, unexpected visitors in Aiolia. Some of these methods include:

Flying

Characters benefitting from flying spells, riding large creatures, or even traveling on some kind of flying vessel

have been able to enter Aiolia simply by seeing it at a distance and approaching it.

Magical Botch

A teleportation botch in a very Auram-rich environment, or while in a fog bank, or during a thunderstorm or blizzard might result in the targets appearing in Aiolia, rather than where they intended.

Powerful Storms

Sometimes those traveling through a potent thunder- or snowstorm, while in strong Magic auras aligned with auram



or muto, find themselves emerging in the Cloudlands.

Mountain Cloud Bridges

In many high passes or mountain slopes constantly shrouded with clouds, there are hidden bridges leading to Aiolia. These paths remain fairly persistent and some people and giants use them regularly for trade or plunder.

STORY SEEDS

Several options exist for arcs set in the Cloudlands which don't involve simply exploring.

THE BILLOWING ROAD

For those who know how to reach it, Aiolia offers extremely fast transit between specific places on Mythic Europe where Thresholds allow easy travel. These routes are known by many giants, however, and they set traps and ambushes for the unwary. Such a trip is bound to be a string of encounters with hungry, greedy creatures working in concert and willing to rob and consume any smaller folk they find. Securing safe passage takes wits, a sharp eye, a silver tongue, and perhaps a bit of bribery.

SKYBORN CLOTH

To render a troublesome faerie or demon powerless, the characters need to fashion a blanket from a beast which has never touched the earth and never shed blood. This sends the covenant to the Cloudlands, where they must find a herd of enormous sheep living in a region of Aiolia with only white, misty cloud-stuff for ground. The tribe of giants which owns them is violently covetous of the animals and their gossamer-like wool, refusing to sell or barter for it. The magi must find a way acquire the wool without causing harm to sheep or causing the giants to move them somewhere with grassy meadows for safety.

BE IT EVER SO HUMBLE

By harvesting the rock above the Bronze Wall from the cellar of a giant's home, a magus hopes to fashion a floating castle of their own, using the enriched block as a cornerstone. They harvest this stone, only to be pursued by a group of giants who think the wizard has stolen something more valuable. It's entirely possible that, while the magus did not, one of his grogs did! What are the magi drawn into when they encounter this chase on the road?

SEEKING MORE SUNRISES

An Auram focused wizard looking to improve or experiment with their Longevity Ritual might look for vis-enriched cloud-stuff in Aiolia. Hunting for the strongest auras and the best materials brings them into conflict with Aiolos, who becomes personally interested in the Auram caster and decides to "test" the wizard, to see if they are worthy of the material they seek, the liquid cloud-stuff which flows in a fountain within his tower.

SET PIECE: THE MILL

Each article in the Set Piece series takes in a single archetypal location typical of many sessions across many, many sagas. It explores the potential in the setting, providing the storyguide with ready-to-play details, characters, and side-plots to ensure that the same old mill isn't just the same old mill.

In this article we look at the grain mill and variations on the theme as found across Mythic Europe. Found close to most villages, the grain mill turned harvested wheat and other grain crops into flour, used for making the staple of highborn and low, bread.

SETTING

The mill uses an external source of power to drive a geared mechanism that typically performs one specific task. The common example is that of a grain mill that uses power from a stream or the wind to grind cereal crops between two heavy stones. Other uses might be to drive bellows in a forge, or even a small windmill to pump water from a deep well.

Across Mythic Europe the most common form of mill is a water mill.

By GERALD WYLIE

This uses the power provided by a running stream to turn the wheel, although growing more common are windmills. Most often situated on hills or higher ground, windmills have a number of sails on the side of the building that catch the wind instead of water in order to drive a central shaft. In 1220, most of these windmills are static buildings, most effective only when the wind is blowing from a given direction, although advances have been made and some, termed post-mills,



APPEARANCE

Older watermills across Mythic Europe are undershot, that is the stream runs below the wheel, while mills built more recently tend to be overshot, or where the stream runs over the top of the wheel. The wheel itself is fixed to a shaft that runs inside a normally stone-built building. Stone is used for the strength required to house the grinding mechanism. More rudimentary watermills, cheap and easy to construct, rely on a horizontal wheel. These might be found in ancient ruins or long-dead covenants.

Most windmills are very similar to watermills with a stone construction and a central shaft around which a wheel of linen sails turn as they catch the wind. Rudimentary windmills (which might be found in basic workshops, if using them in the context of the rules in *City & Guild*) consist of a horizontal shaft, often exposed, with small sails mounted on one end.

THE STREAM

Watermills might be built alongside a natural stream, or a man-made channel. Either way, the banks are usually steep and the water fast and clear. In the case of overshot wheels, the mill is constructed by a fall or drop in the stream.

THE BRIDGE

Positioned on a stream, mills likely need a bridge or ford nearby to allow for the comings and goings of their materials and product. The upkeep of such bridges may be a responsibility of the mill-owner, or the bridge may be rented out and tolls charged against those crossing it.

As a structure allowing transit from one bank to another, bridges and fords might also attract faerie interest. Depending on how whimsical your saga is, this could be the archetypal troll beneath the bridge or it could be a faerie using the bridge as a symbol of



allow the sails to be turned into the wind.

Streams and the wind are not the only power sources for mills though. Ireland has a history of tidal mills, where the power of the rising and falling tide is captured, and mills powered by livestock tethered to a wheel can also be found.

Grain mills are almost universally owned by feudal lords and form important parts of their estates. Where cities enjoy authority in their own right, then mills might be owned by those cities and rent paid by their miller. In

particular, certain guilds (as described in *City & Guild*, page 34) might secure a monopoly on the buying, selling, and operation of millstones.

Where the mill is owned by a feudal lord, serfs and other tenants must pay a fee, termed “banalities”, to their liege for use of the mill. This normally takes the form of a portion of the flour milled from their grain and the miller is responsible for collecting this fee.

Mills used for other reasons, such as in a forge or a wood mill, are typically owned by the tradesman as part of their tools of the trade.

youngsters coming of age and leaving home.

THE BAKERY

A short distance from many mills, the bakery is a stone-built building with a chimney to draw the smoke of the oven fires away.

CELLARS

Grain to be milled and the resulting flour is likely to be stored in cellars below ground and away from the workings of the mill above.

Cellars provide opportunities to hide other things, secret diabolic interests, stolen silver, or even escaped captives. Cellars are also sources of catastrophe as water may find its way in and spoil both grain and flour, or rats may eat their way through the produce for some days without discovery.

AURAS

As a man-made structure, it might be rare for a grain mill to have any aura other than the Divine that might extend from the nearby village. However, the mill may have been built upon a faerie site or a magical stream, or constructed from magically warped stone from a long-abandoned covenant. Or if not magically warped stone, then what about an old altar stone to an old pagan god or perhaps even an infernally-corrupted false god?

Deciding upon an aura and then investigating what might possibly have caused it (the site of a martyrdom for a strong Divine aura, for instance), immediately gives the mill a distinct character. And the nature of the aura, its strength, and its source may warp the flour and resulting goods originating there.

Even where an aura of note might no longer be present, the history of the mill still influences its role in the story. For instance, a mill that was once part of a fallen covenant might still contain

devices once-enchanted by magi to improve living conditions at the covenant.

CHARACTERS

Typical characters encountered would be the miller and his family and the agent to which the miller pays his rent. This is likely to be an agent for a feudal lord or other landowner, such as a nearby town or city.

A selection of stock characters are provided at the end of this article.

SECRETS

Loot

A miller, supplier to the covenant, finds a stash of silver in his cellar and given over to greed, he begins to spend it. Little by little at first, and then, as the infernal starts to feed his feelings, more overtly. He turns aside from his duties, providing poor quality product to his customers, as he lives on his apparently God-given wealth.

But if the covenant do not visit him to shake him out of his wayward behavior, then those who lay claim to the silver arrive to demand its return. In



this case, the contrite miller seeks help from the covenant.

ON THE RUN

A young man breaks into the mill cellars to shelter from the storm. He is hungry and has been running from someone. He is discovered by the miller's daughter, who agrees to keep him secret and to get word to a nearby covenant of scholars.

The young man, it transpires, is apprenticed to another Hermetic magus. The apprentice knows enough about magic to know infernalism when he sees it and he knows enough to extinguish arcane connections to himself. But it is only so long before his master finds him.

The apprentice seems to be telling the truth, but can his assessment be relied upon? Should the magi return the

apprentice to his master or accuse another magus of diabolism on uncertain evidence?

DISEASED BREAD

An outbreak of sickness affecting the covenant and their agents can be traced to bread and/or flour bought from a local faire. The flour was contaminated with ergot, or Saint Anthony's Fire (*Art & Academe*, page 50) and there is no telling how far and wide the disease might spread. The only way to be sure is to locate the mill that ground the flour.

STAGING ACTION IN THE MILL

Every location brings unique options for action and the mill is no different, from opportunities to take cover,

numerous weapons freely to hand, and the risks of crushing, drowning, or even explosions.

SACKS OF GRAIN

Sacks of grain or flour can be used as improvised weapons and throwing or swinging one at an opponent counts as using a bludgeon. They can also be used as cover, when hiding behind them, or even as a large shield (treat as a heater shield) if carried and used to fend off attacks.

Spilling grain on the floor might make for a slippery or treacherous ground, perhaps forcing a Dexterity roll or imposing attack and defense penalties.

ROPES AND PULLEYS

The mill, especially a windmill, provide opportunities for verticality in



the action. Operating on multiple levels with plenty of stairs, ladders, hatchways, and ropes leading from one to another, characters might give chase up and down the mill, even passing each other as one goes up the stairs and another slides down a rope.

With all the opportunities to duck behind posts, to climb ropes, and drop down through hatches, characters have a better chance of disengaging than normal. Defense totals generated in order to disengage from combat (and only to disengage) gain a +5 bonus in exchange for an exciting description of how the character uses their environment to disengage.

For instance, give plenty of opportunity for characters to cut the ballast free and be hoisted into the air by a rope, either of their own accord or by a rope caught unknowingly around an ankle. Though slightly more limited, indulge your swashbuckling side and also allow for rope swings across the mill too.

CLOUDS OF FLOUR

Clouds of flour may be kicked up accidentally or by design. This reduces visibility and this might give combatants a Defense bonus as they become harder to hit. In extreme cases, the clouds might be so thick that Perception + Awareness rolls are needed to differentiate friends from combatants.

Disengaging from combat becomes very easy in such conditions. If a player character can kick up a cloud of dust and flour, then treat the attempt to disengage as automatic.

CAUGHT IN THE WORKINGS

The moving gears of the central mechanism are a constant threat. Cloaks and robes may get caught in the mechanism, which could restrict movement or pull combatants into the mechanism itself.

The damage due to being caught in the cogs of the mechanism, or pulled through the mill, depends on the size and strength of the mechanism, but given its job the damage should be significant and at least on a par with being clubbed with a Warhammer (+12). This is considered a non-combat damage total, so this damage bonus is added to a stress die.

Characters may become trapped in the mechanism through combat botches or by being grappled by another combatant and pushed in. On a successful grapple attack, the attacker may push their opponent into the mechanism instead of keeping hold. That attack total is retained and the entrapped character may attempt to free themselves in the next round by making defense rolls against that total. If the attempt fails, then they take damage automatically each subsequent round (on a scale determined by the storyguide).

THE WATER WHEEL

The water wheel can be used for traversal; characters can climb the wheel and be taken up the side of the mill and into open windows above. Conversely, characters might become trapped in the wheel and dragged down into the stream.

Being dragged into the water likely causes spell-like damage (i.e. no attack roll) of +8 and forces a deprivation check.

THE SAILS

Just like the water wheel, the sails of a windmill can be ridden. Characters can hold onto the sail and be swept high into the air. Of course, it may require a Dexterity + Athletics roll to keep hold all the way back down to the bottom, but it's an excellent way of disengaging from a fight, putting distance between combatants, or getting a height advantage for a leap.

FIRE AND EXPLOSIONS

Even in Mythic Europe, if you set fire to a cloud of flour in a flour mill, you end up with an explosion. Millers knew of this danger all too well. Any time there's a cloud of flour, any attack or defense botch causes a hot spark as weapons clash and ignites the cloud. Any simple Ignem flame effect has the same effect.

The size of the explosion is dependent on the size of the mill and the flour in the air; the storyguide is free to decide but such explosions are often big enough to blow doors and window shutters out if not even blast holes in walls and bring buildings down.

Getting caught in such an explosion is not a good idea. A small explosion might do +5 damage and a larger explosion +10. However, as page 181 of *ArM5* states, complete immersion in a source of fire quadruples the damage bonus. It's the same with explosions. Characters actively running from an explosion are considered partially immersed. Those who find decent cover are also considered partially immersed.

WORKSHOP INNOVATION

Grain millers are tradesmen every bit as much as a tanner or a weaver and under the rules presented in *City & Guild*, the miller can innovate in his workshop, or mill, in order to improve the quality of his goods.

Watermills may be upgraded from an undershot mill to an overshot mill to improve their efficiency. This might involve carving out a drop in the stream or repositioning the mill altogether. Either option likely requires engineers of some kind.

Windmills might be upgrade from fixed sails to a post-mill, allowing the sails to be turned into the wind.

(Continued on page 57)

BRESSAL THE MILLER

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

Size: 0

Age: 29 (29)

Decrepitude: 0

Warping Score: 0 (0)

Virtues and Flaws: Craftsman, Puissant Blacksmith, Gossip; Generous, Lame, Weak Characteristics, Unaffected by The Gift

Personality Traits: Loyal +3, Generous +2, Cowardly +1

Combat:

Bludgeon: Init +0, Attack +7, Defense +5, Damage +3

Grappling: Init +0, Attack +6, Defense +6, Damage +1

Fist: Init +0, Attack +5, Defense +5, Damage +1

Dodge: Init +0, Attack N/A, Defense +5, Damage N/A

Soak: +2

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: Area Lore: Village 3 (personalities), Athletics 4 (jumping), Awareness 1 (search), Bargain 2 (goods), Brawl 5 (Grappling), Carouse 3 (stories), Chirurgy 2 (crushing injuries), Climb 4 (inside the mill), English 3 (Anglian), Folk Ken 2 (peasants), Gaelic 5 (local dialect), Guile 1 (tall stories), Profession: Miller 5 (wheat), Stealth 1 (hide), Survival 1

(camping out)

Equipment: Water Mill; Heavy Leather Apron

Encumbrance: 0 (1)

Appearance: A handsome man with thick hair and a pleasant smile that shines out from the middle of a short beard. His hands are rough through toil and his arms and shoulders tough and sinewy, but his legs are mismatched with the right longer and straighter than the left. His affliction is the result of his life's single act of bravery – diving into the river as a child to rescue his father who had slipped and fallen.

Poor Bressal, they all agreed. Poor Bressal, doting on his wife as he did. Poor Bressal that she was so unkind to him. And poor Bressal that she drowned and left him with a daughter to raise all alone.

Bressal had never thought himself a strong man. He was always physically robust, despite his pronounced limp, but forever brow-beaten by his wife, to whom he was devoted. She drove his business, managed his affairs, and pulled him through each day. But when she drowned, her skirts having been caught in the great water wheel, he discovered that he could run his mill and raise his daughter.

He remains cowardly and easily swayed by those in authority and simple intimidation, but he is content with his lot and day by day takes the easiest path in life.

He is blissfully unaware that his daughter has The Gift, assuming that the unwarranted suspicion others view her with is a something passed from mother to daughter.

(Continued from page 56)

Upgrading the mill is sufficient to provide 1 Innovation Point. There should be no material cost applied to the characters for this, although we can assume payment changing hands, as the upgrade is paid for through Labor Points (as per *City & Guild*, page 65).

mechanism up to an automated hammer or similar device and extend the list of available specialties to include Items.

Mills themselves may be enchanted, or at least the work of the millstone may be replicated through an enchanted device.

only can each activation of the device mill ten cubic paces of grain into flour, but the millstone can be activated 24 times during the day. Assuming the millstone can remain supplied, a team of grogs may be required to load the millstone with grain and then take away the resulting flour.

The quality of the flour is dependent on a Dexterity + Finesse roll against an Ease Factor of 6. Low enough that for normal day-to-day use it can be assumed that a grog with some basic training in Finesse can manage the process.

(Base 5, +1 Touch, +1 Concentration, +2 Group, +5 levels for 24 uses per day)

MAGICAL MILLS

Mills may be installed in covenants and more specifically in Hermetic laboratories. The mill is a Mechanism, as per the Laboratory Feature described in *Covenants*, page 120. As such, it normally provides specialties against Vis Extraction and Rego. However, enterprising Verditius may hook the

The Enchanted Millstone

Rego Herbam 30

Pen +0, 24/day

R: Touch, D: Concentration, T: Group

This device, formed from an old millstone, has been enchanted such that grain placed upon it is ground into flour. A huge quantity of grain can be milled by the stone in a single day. Not

ÚNA, THE MILLER'S DAUGHTER

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

Size: 0

Age: 11 (11)

Decrepitude: 0

Warping Score: 0 (0)

Confidence: 1 (3)

Virtues and Flaws: The Gift; Peasant; Second Sight, Boundless Energy*, Inconspicuous*, Improved Characteristics, Piercing Gaze; Suppressed Gift*, Low Tolerance

* See Apprentices, pages 11 to 13

Personality Traits: Taciturn +2, Curious +1

Reputations: Strange (Among villagers who know her) 2

Combat:

Dodge: Init +1, Attack N/A, Defense +4, Damage N/A

Fist: Init +1, Attack +2, Defense +3, Damage -1

Kick: Init +0, Attack +2, Defense +2, Damage +2

Soak: +2

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: Area Lore: Home Village 2 (children), Athletics 1 (sprinting), Brawl 2 (Dodge), Charm 3 (customers), Concentration 1 (ignoring distraction), Etiquette 2 (elders), Folk Ken 2 (farmers), Guile 2 (concealing activities), Milling 1 (running the mill), Gaelic 5 (conversation), Second Sight 1, Stealth 2 (keeping quiet)

Equipment: Young girl's clothes

Encumbrance: 0 (0)

Appearance: Úna wears young girl's clothes chosen by her widower father. She has curly dark hair, roughly cut, and dark eyes. She often wears an empty and disconcerting smile.

BROTHER CRUNDMÁEL, THE LORD'S MAN

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

Size: 0

Age: 31 (31)

Decrepitude: 0

Warping Score: 0 (0)

Confidence: 1 (3)

Virtues and Flaws: Clerk, Strong-Willed, Sharp Ears, Clear Thinker, Temporal Influence, Noncombatant, Oath of Fealty, Avaricious

Personality Traits: Avaricious +3, Cruel +2, Loyal +1

Combat:

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

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: Area Lore: Anglian estates 2 (personalities), Area Lore: Munster 3 (geography), Artes Liberales 2 (logic), Autocrat 4 (noble manors), Church Lore 3 (personalities), Civil and Canon Law 1 (laws and customs of Anglia), English 5 (Anglian), Etiquette 2 (nobility), Folk Ken 3 (nobles), Gaelic 3 (Munster), Guile 2 (hiding his own affairs), Intrigue 2 (alliances), Latin 4 (academic usage), Leadership 2 (household staff), Norman French 5 (County of Rouen dialect), Philosophiae 2 (moral philosophy), Theology 3 (biblical knowledge)

Equipment: []

Encumbrance: 0 (0)

Appearance: []

Brother Crundmáel is an avaricious man. He has put his own wealth and comfort above his obligations to his lord and his tenants. Overcharging the Irish peasantry, who he holds in undisguised contempt, he uses the excess taxes to fund his own comforts and keep his own armed and armored men loyal to him.

MHEADHA THE WATER NYMPH

(Based on the Genius Locus described in *Legends of Hermes*, page 103.)

Magic Might: 20 (Aquam)

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

Season: Summer

Confidence: 1 (3)

Virtues and Flaws: Magic Spirit, Ways of the River

Magical Qualities and Inferiorities: Focus Power (Crafter of Water), Focus Power (Master of Water), Greater Power (Presence), Lesser Power (Emissary of Stone and Water)

Personality Traits: Secretive +2, Infatuated with Bressal +2, Aggressive +1

Abilities: Area Lore 5 (nearby undersea environs), Awareness 5 (submerged humans), Bargain 5 (sahirs), Folk Ken 3 (sailors) Guile 2 (pretending to be mightier than it is), Intrigue 2 (assessing threats), Living Language: Gaelic 5 (Munster)

Powers:

Crafter of Water, variable points, Init -4, Aquam: Mheadha can duplicate any non-ritual Creo or Rego Aquam spell at a cost of one Might point per magnitude of the effect. The level of the spell cannot be greater than 20. Within her river, Mheadha is present everywhere, and this allows her to create most effects with a Range of Personal or Touch.

Emissary of Stone and Water, 3 points Init -3 Aquam Terram, The spirit constructs within itself a human-shaped form of water that can interact with people by use of speech and the clumsy and slow manipulation of objects. While the shape is made of inanimate material and cannot be damaged in the same manner as a creature, it is not particularly stable and can be dispersed by a strong current or being hit with a large object. This form can leave the location of the spirit, but the spirit cannot perceive and control the form more than a small distance from its borders. (Base 5 +1 Concentration, +1 Part, +1 Rego requisite, Terram requisite is free, Lesser Power, 1 Mastery Point spent to lower Might, cost: 20)

Master of Water, variable points, Init -4, Aquam: Mheadha can duplicate any non-ritual Muto or Perdo Aquam spell at a cost of one Might point per magnitude of the effect. The level of the spell cannot be greater than 20. Within her river, Mheadha is present everywhere, and this allows her to create most effects with a Range of Personal or Touch.

Presence, 0 points, Constant, Imaginem: Mheadha is aware of everything that goes on in and around her river, and she is present at every location therein (see *Realms of Power: Magic*,

pages 103 and 106 for a more in-depth description).

Vis: 4 pawns of Aquam vis are manifested annually as stones on the riverbed, if not harvested this vis will not accumulate.

Appearance: Mheadha occasionally manifests a human-shaped conglomeration of water and pebbles to communicate. This shape is only a marionette controlled by the spirit. Mheadha herself is the river in which she resides.

It was Mheadha who drowned Bressal's wife. Mheadha sees in Bressal something few others see, and that is a sweet and harmless man of whom others take advantage. His screaming harridan wife simply had to go. Mheadha reached up out of her river one evening and pulled her into the water, binding her to the wheel and watching as she drowned. Perhaps her attention to Bressal is formed of guilt as it was also Mheadha who attempted to drown the old miller who so wantonly drew upon her strength. He would have drowned too had Bressal not selflessly rescued the old man, breaking his leg in the act.

And so she listens for threats to Bressal, prepared to intervene again, in whatever way necessary. It may be, with his daughter's Gift, that Mheadha may soon be forced to act again.

HEDGE WIZARDS:

A SAGA OF MINOR MAGICS

By ROBIN BLAND

The Mythic Europe of *Ars Magica* offers a much broader palette than just the Order of Hermes can fill. So much work has been done by a large number of authors across numerous supplements to provide alternative traditions for players to take up. This article looks at ways a troupe may adopt published materials to tell stories in Mythic Europe with the minor characters and traditions coming to the fore.

WHY HEDGE WIZARDS?

Hedge Wizards are cool. No doubt about it. They get to do cool stuff that Hermetic Magi can't do and they live outside the strict rules and monitoring that the Order of Hermes imposes. So this means fewer people in game and out looking over your shoulder telling you what you can and can't, should and shouldn't do. In playing Hedge Wizards, you have arguably a saga more

embedded in the world of Mythic Europe than when playing Hermetic Magi.

They also tend to be less powerful than Hermetic magi. This can lead to more interesting challenges and more thoughtful resolutions to stories. Imagine a small giant taking cattle from a nearby landowner. The average Hermetic covenant has the magic and the resources to mount a punitive response, probably leading with fire and



SUB ROSA

supported by a turb of grogs. Hedge Wizards tend to lack the overt offensive magics that come pretty easily to Hermetic magic. And their defenses are nowhere near as strong as the Parma Magica and the Aegis of the Hearth, which means they have to tread carefully where Hermetic Magi may choose to walk with impunity.

The rate at which Hedge Wizards increase their power also tends to be different. There is an assumption (certainly made in this article) that Hedge Wizards need to spend time supporting themselves. Of course, this is because they traditionally exist outside of the covenant, which essentially undertakes the day-to-day work on behalf of Hermetic Magi and frees them from the responsibility for supporting themselves.

By virtue of their powers alone, Hedge Wizards have the capacity to provide a much more nuanced texture to a saga. The same kinds of stories can be told and the same challenges posed as in a standard Hermetic saga, but the resolutions will almost certainly differ, given the different capabilities on offer.

MAKING THINGS MORE MYTHIC

It isn't just that Hedge Wizards have more diverse abilities, thereby sharing capabilities across the troupe. Hedge Wizards also have less recourse to simple hand-waving to overcome obstacles.

Take regionnes for example. Crossing a regio boundary is a simple Hermetic InVi 20 effect. Simple enough to learn as a formulaic spell or to invest in an enchanted item and also reasonably easy to cast spontaneously (or at least ceremonially). The Hermetic magus is excused the need to find the proper way to cross the boundary and enter the regio. This problem is actually hinted at in *The Contested Isle: The Hibernian Tribunal*, page 26, in the story of Bróccín against whom the beasts and

birds turned as he did not enter the regio correctly.

Items of Virtue also become more important to Hedge Wizards. Lacking a universal magic resistance as they do, Hedge Wizards may benefit from the zero-penetration effect of enriched Items of Virtue and the Virtues they bestow. This means that finding Items of Virtue becomes a potentially important source of power, far more important than the vis that those items might also contain.

The same can be said of extraordinary vis (*Realms of Power: Magic*, page 119 onward). Spell and enchantment-like vis enhances the Hedge Wizard's power with effects perhaps not available to their tradition, and so the acquisition and use of such vis is again of more value than just the number of pawns of vis the item contains. Such things are typically curiosities to Hermetic Magi, unlikely to see much use in open play. For Hedge Wizard characters, however, these are more likely to become valued resources likely to be used in open play to supplement the powers available to the troupe.

The language used around the table also becomes richer and more diverse during a Hedge Wizard saga than it might in a standard Hermetic saga. For instance, a Gruagachan character might talk about their Fetch (an incorporeal, magical animal spirit considered an extension of the Gruagach themselves), and a Folk Witch might talk of her familiar, and a Sorcerer of Soqotra might talk of their spirit aide. Folk Witches might brew potions, while Learned Magicians create amulets, and a Gruagach might consider enchanting a tattoo. So not only are the powers inherently different, but the language used to discuss similar concepts also differ.

For a game that trades on the magical elements of Mythic Europe, using Hedge Wizards in your saga serves to enhance the presence and

wonder of those magical elements, giving troupes more to explore and experience.

OKAY, BUT WHAT DO WE MEAN BY HEDGE WIZARD?

For the purposes of this article, we're using the term in a very broad sense. Any non-Hermetic tradition described in the Fifth Edition is considered *Hedge*. We're being that inclusive as we want to promote the use of all the non-Hermetic traditions that have been described across numerous Fifth Edition supplements.

We're including non-magical traditions too, which includes the various divine, infernal, and faerie means of achieving supernatural effects. Why should a Folk Witch inherently recognize a Goetic Sorcerer as acting against the Code? The Code doesn't exist as far as either tradition is concerned and so the Goetic Sorcerer is free to ply their trade alongside Folk Witches and Learned Magicians and masters of rune magic alike.

As we're considering Gifted practitioners, we certainly want to consider those from *Rival Magic*. They come along with their own baggage as far as allies and enmities are concerned and possibly their own rules and governances, but these can be downplayed or embraced as the troupe desires.

WHAT ARE THE OPTIONS?

Just as you would with a Hermetic saga, you and your troupe must decide where you want to set your stories. Tribunals themselves become less important, but the published tribunal supplements all provide excellent source material for the mundane aspects of their respective regions. This means that you can largely ignore the Hermetic cultural aspects of those books (along

with any code of conduct expectations) and just get on with telling stories about your Hedge Wizards. So the decision is less about the play style supported by the each tribunal (high politics in Thebes and the Rhine, conflict in Hibernia, feudalism in Normandy, etc.) and more about interests in particular regions.

Those same tribunal books provide a guide to traditions appropriate for the region described, but you don't need to feel constrained. The *Hedge Magic Revised Edition* book (and the *Rival Magic* and *Ancient Magic* books) can pretty much be leveraged anywhere with a little rationalization. If you'd like a Muspelli character in medieval Byzantium, then negotiate that with the troupe and explore how and why the character ended up there. No problem.

One interesting aspect of Hedge Traditions is that many provide game

support for Gifted and Non-Gifted practitioners. Those with the Gift are typically more powerful, but being Non-Gifted means fewer problems arising from possessing the Gift, both within the association of magi and with those outside the circle. This is a flexibility that is not generally open to Hermetic magi (Gentle Gift aside) and means that a sagas may use a broad array of Mythic Companions with strong ties to the Traditions in play.

You need also to decide whether the character of the covenant has a place in your Hedge saga. The covenant is a (or the) central character in a standard **Ars Magica** saga, but it is by and large a Hermetic concept – the *Parma Magica* gives the opportunity for magi to live and work side by side while members of other Gifted traditions tend to keep each other at arm's length.

The covenant itself, as in many of the Hermetic-leaning supplements, can be pretty much anything you like as long as it provides an impetus for the player characters to join together in the face of common challenges. So it could be a traditional covenant (of jointly-owned buildings, servants, specialists, guards etc.) or it could be separately held property or interests in the same town in which the Hedge Wizards live. The covenant could be formed along family or clan lines, held by fealty to a common lord, or even a promise to uphold a common aim or promote a common cause.

We'll explore these options later.



THE ROLE OF THE ORDER OF HERMES

One of the central factors in a Hedge saga is how the Order of Hermes is represented. The Order is a sprawling political beast, with lands governed by Covenants that look to Tribunals for Order, but which are populated by potentially jealous individuals who owe allegiance to disparate Houses. Not all magi will view Hedge Wizards in the same way and attitudes may change over time, but it may be sensible to set a prevailing opinion in your Hedge saga so that players and characters know roughly where they stand.

FRIENDS

The Order may consider itself a friend to non-Hermetic magical traditions, in a similar way to how the traditional Irish magi view Hedge Wizards in Hibernia. Tensions may exist, of course, but the Order is generally well-disposed to lesser practitioners. Visitors to Hermetic covenants can expect to be well-received and they might expect to trade freely in goods, services, and information.

Hedge Magi may be used to get around key clauses in the oath sworn by members of the Order. For instance, a magus may use a Hedge Wizard proxy to gather intelligence on Hermetic rivals without betraying his own oath not to use magic for such a purpose. Similarly, using Hedge Magi as intermediaries, Hermetic Magi maintain a sensible distance from any mundane interference.

Suspensions arising from possession of The Gift aside, this makes life a little easier for the Hedge Wizards as they have potential allies to turn to and even customers for some of their more unique abilities. Such a saga might provide Hedge Magic characters with

powerful patrons at the cost of undertaking clandestine operations.

RIVALS

Rivalries occur at all levels and do not necessarily result in all out conflict. There are numerous opportunities for Hedge Wizards to find themselves rivals to Hermetic magi. Contested vis, aura, and regio sites, the taking of magical creatures as familiars, the search for apprentices; these are all obvious magical sources of conflict. But Hedge Wizards who serve one lord will inevitably fall into rivalry with magi aligned with another.

Magi must have links to the mundane world and wherever these links exist there exists also the potential for the Hedge Wizards in the saga to hold opposing loyalties or interests. How the Hedge Wizards negotiate these rivalries can make for an important thread through a Hedge Wizard saga.

ENEMIES

Hermetic magi make for powerful enemies, whether individually, as a covenant, or as the entire Order.

Individual magi, perhaps driven by jealousy or ideology, might make life very difficult for Hedge Magi that cross their paths. Some might even go out of their way to hunt down Hedge Magi. Such a magus might be itinerant to a degree, actively seeking out famous or powerful Hedge Magi, which in turn gains them a reputation among the non-Hermetic traditions.

Covenants may be founded with the intention of removing Hedge Magic from their environs, to keep resources for the Order, or to preserve a certain purity in the practice of magic. Members of such a covenant might hold deeply-ingrained beliefs of the dangers of Hedge Magic, perhaps seeing it as a power too complex and dangerous for mundanes to have access to.

The Order itself grew from a position of forcing many Hedge Wizards into its ranks and there are a number of reasons why the Order might seek to do that again. It may be an ideological victory won by hard-liners in the Order. It might be a response to an apparent shortage of Gifted individuals for a growing Order to take as apprentices. Or it could be a response to the stagnation of Hermetic magic, a need to find and integrate new powers in order for the Order to continue to gain magical power.

Given the prominence of the Order of Hermes in the core game, deciding up front the role the Order will play in your Hedge Magic saga is particularly important. It may change and develop over time, but it is best to go in with a clear vision of where that relationship starts from.

REMOVE THE ORDER

You can quite happily play a Hedge Magic saga without the Order of Hermes.

You might set your saga before the founding or the growth of the Order, in which case your Hedge Wizards might encounter prominent characters from that period.

You might set your saga in an alternative timeline in which the Order was never founded, or took a very different path.

You might set your saga in the aftermath of a Schism War that ended with the destruction of the Order. Individual magi and their covenants might survive, but the Order itself is done for.

You might set your saga in the shadow of a grand mystery – where did all the magi go? Their covenants, libraries, and artefacts still survive but the Order itself and all the magi suddenly disappeared. Covenfolk keep the covenants running for their masters’

eventual return, but the Order's magical influence is certainly over. For now.

SO HOW DO WE DO THIS?

CHOOSE YOUR CHARACTERS

The appendix at the end of this article provides a full list (as far as we can see) of supernatural traditions described in *Ars Magica Fifth Edition*. There is an embarrassment of riches there and the options run from craftsmen touched by the supernatural to runesmiths to infernal summoners to faerie wizards to practitioners of the *Ars Notoria* and any number of witches and scholastic wizards. Whether your player wants to hunt monsters, raise the dead, tend to their community, study from books, or spend time in devotion, there's something there for them.

So talk to your players and get a feel for the kind of magic they fancy having a go at. You should be able to look down the index and find some good options to fit and then it's a case of checking the description of those traditions in the supplements themselves.

One of the rewarding things about running a Hedge Wizard saga is that you're suspending the normal expectations. It's hard to build a character that uses infernal magic into a standard Hermetic saga as the Order has rules against consorting with the infernal and *Quaesitores* who investigate and *Hoplites* who enforce. But in a Hedge Magic saga, if you have a player that wants to play a Goetic Sorcerer, then go ahead and let them. The Learned Magician played by the player one seat along may chide them for meddling in the ungodly, but they have no authority to set the *Quaesitores* on them. Despite the possible influence of the Gift, a Hedge Magic saga has the

capacity to actually be a little more forgiving.

DECIDE WHAT ROLE THE ORDER OF HERMES PLAYS

As discussed above, there are a number of ways to involve the Order of Hermes, from simply ignoring it, to setting it up as the ultimate foe and everything in between.

MANAGING DIFFERENT POWERS

This is actually one of the most rewarding aspects of a Hedge Wizard saga; each magus character has different powers. Look across at Hermetic magi in play and in many situations a magical solution could have been provided by any character around the table. The differences sometimes amount to how much vis might be used or how much time it might take. The maths is the same across the same Arts and the same spell-casting options (broadly) apply.

This can often leave some players feeling redundant. That's especially the case where some might not feel confident enough to jump in and have a go. A more experienced or more outgoing player or character will tend to receive more of the limelight.

But enter a set of Hedge Wizards each with their own particular fields of interest and powers and the storyguide suddenly finds it easier to design challenges for each of the players. To aid their patron at the tourney, the Learned Magician may craft a charta to provide fortune on the battlefield, while the Rune Wizard may carve a Hagalaz rune script into his sword to further aid him in battle. A Folk Witch might brew a healing potion for her patron to consume in the event of injury and a Gruagachan might bestow a blessing to make his sword-arm true. The type of aid is different, with each character using effects unavailable to the other. There is a very different narrative feel to

each that goes beyond the wizard's sigil that sometimes differentiates Hermetic Magic.

So we're sold on the idea that having different power sets is a good thing, but how do we actually manage them? Well, you let the players do that. It is their responsibility to learn their character's capabilities and how to invoke them. As storyguide, you should be familiar too, but you don't need to run it. It is actually no different to what we end up doing with Hermetic Magi once we factor in Virtues, Flaws, and Mysteries.

All the players need is ready access to the supplement that describes their chosen tradition and support from the storyguide in following the prescribed routes to progress and power.

WHEN IS A COVENANT NOT A COVENANT?

In its simplest terms a covenant is an agreement. The word itself does not imply a castle, manner, or lands of influence.

Even within a standard Hermetic saga, the agreement that binds the magi together is more important than the stone and mortar of the walls or the strength of the aura.

SETTING

The Hedge Wizards might share a living space, but if you draw from multiple traditions the characters likely come from different walks of life and have connections to different communities. Learned Magicians might maintain their business and their studies in towns or cities, while Witches live within their rural communities.

So the setting can be quite broad, covering all the lands the characters are drawn from, or narrowed down to a common meeting place perhaps sponsored by a wealthy member of the covenant or a patron.

SUPPORTING AND MINOR CHARACTERS

The covenant of the Northern Seas described in *Through the Aegis* suggests a useful model that can be used in your Hedge Magi saga. Supporting characters, companions essentially, may be distributed and need not live in close proximity to the principal characters.

The Hedge Wizards might not even maintain a turf of grogs – with no castle walls to patrol the need for a patrol at all seems to disappear, hiring muscle as and when they need it.

Covenfolk are also less likely to feature in the same way. Instead, it is more likely that each member of the Hedge covenant has their own household, their own servants, or neighbors. The different demands of their magical traditions also means that

there is less need for things like a common library, which means less need for a librarian, a scribe, and an illuminator. Instead, just like hired muscle, Hedge Magi buy the services of specialists as and when needed.

In some ways, this extended roster of supporting characters enhances the richness of the setting. A scribe who lives and works one street over is more embedded in the world and more able to introduce stories to the saga than a scribe maintained in a traditional covenant.

STUDY AND ADVANCEMENT

Most Hedge Wizards have a need to support themselves and so the Poor and Wealthy Virtues and Flaws affect the time they have available for study and story as you'd expect.

Individual characters must also maintain links with their own traditions if they expect to progress – some traditions operate in the way of mystery cults and initiate their members into every deeper powers while others share learning through books or tuition. This again reinforces the texture of the saga; books are unique to traditions rather than being regarded as a shared set of resources for simply gaining experience points in an Art.

DEALING WITH THE GIFT

The Gift is a problem, but there are ways of dealing with it.

The most basic option is to get over it. I.e. the Hedge Magi suffer the effects, but allow their sworn covenant to offset some of the penalty – they have a common understanding, a common goal, and while the Gift raises



suspicions between the Hedge Magi their loyalty to each other helps to overcome some if not all of the underlying suspicion.

You could introduce a breakthrough able to be taught to Hedge Wizards that nullifies the effect of the Gift in others in a way similar to that of the Parma Magica. Or it could hide the Gift of the bearer, but at the cost of some penalty to their magic.

Or one of the Hedge Wizards might create a charm or amulet of some description that makes the bearer of it immune to the negative effects of the Gift. Such a device might be ritualized and worn only when the covenant assembles, and so it becomes symbolic of and important to their cooperation.

TELLING STORIES

Most of the Gifted traditions have means and ways of extending lifespans and these could, for a specialist, be as effective as the Hermetic longevity ritual. But the reality is that Hedge Magic sagas are likely to be played out over mortal lifespans rather than those significantly enhanced. It is more likely for Hedge Wizards to parent their own children and to attempt to pass their magic down to the next generation and this is an important thematic distinction with Hermetic Magi.

PAY ATTENTION TO THE TRADITIONS

The different traditions have different places in the social order and occupy different roles within society. So build storylines that support those traditions. Older members of those traditions seeking to pass on their knowledge before they die, communities looking for help from their cunning folk, nobles looking for astrologers with great powers, ancient threats from the cold north, blood feuds

from generations back, etc. Build stories that build from the foundations of the Hedge Traditions played in your saga.

LEVERAGE THE MAGIC AROUND THE TABLE

It is important to design stories with the powers of your Hedge Magi in mind. This is perhaps easier to do than with Hermetic Magi as the powers possessed by each Hedge tradition are more narrowly-defined. If none of your chosen traditions are particularly suited to healing or medicine then throwing sickness or plague scenarios at them doesn't necessarily play to their strengths. But if you have Learned Magicians or Craftsmen Touched by (Supernatural Realm) then you might have merchants and nobles come looking for wondrous devices and thereby draw your Hedge Wizards into their circles.

Design stories and elements that support the Hedge Wizards in their different ways of working and magical requirements. Be prepared to shift the limelight between specialties and build opportunities into your scenarios that in turn support those who might see the un-seeable, or those who might retreat to their libraries to find the answers, or those who might summon spirits. Discovering the identity of a murderer is more of a challenge when the characters cannot read the minds of everyone in the castle, but horoscopes charted by the Learned Magician might get the party some way there.

LEVERAGE THE SUPERNATURAL WORLD

The Supernatural world across Mythic Europe becomes more important in a Hedge Magic saga than in one concerning the Order of Hermes. Hermetic magi, thanks to the ever-present Parma Magica, cannot often take advantage of objects of virtue (as described in *Realms of Power: Magic*), which automatically limits their

inclusion in a saga – Hermetic Magi are more likely to enchant devices or spells to similar effect. With their lack of general magic resistance, Hedge Magi can fully embrace objects of virtue and the search for them can be an important part of stories.

As discussed earlier, vis too, especially spell-like vis and vis with other powers, is more than just a novelty to a Hedge Wizard. These things will often have powers that go beyond what the Hedge Wizard herself can achieve so they are important for adding capability rather than as an interesting diversion. Chances are that they will be used within a Hedge Magic saga – experience shows that they tend to be glossed over in a Hermetic saga. So make these things available. Make them part of the story and give your Hedge Wizards the opportunity to leverage them.

Regionnes and auras are as important to the Hedge Wizard as they are to the Hermetic. But Hedge traditions span all four of the supernatural realms, which gives you greater opportunity to include places of non-magical supernatural interest that the characters can take advantage of.

It's the same with the inhabitants of those realms. Without decisive and powerful PeVi spells to destroy demons, magical beasts, faeries, and even Holy creatures they all become forces to be reckoned with. A flippant Hermetic magus tasked with ridding the village of the ghost that haunts it can quite easily destroy the thing. Hedge Wizards given the same task might lean towards resolving the reason for the haunting, not just the haunting itself.

And of course, without easy recourse to destroying every supernatural threat that crosses the path, Hedge Wizards must tread warily; each demonic force becomes an antagonist rather than an obstacle and every magical creature becomes a symbol of ancient forces rather than a source of vis or a familiar. So focus on

these entities as characters with motivations. Take the creatures presented in issue 18 of Sub Rosa and consider how different the Hermetic magus might deal with them compared to the Gruagach or the Vitki.

LET THEM SHAPE THE WORLD

Allow the Hedge Wizards their place in the world. Let them build mundane and magical relationships as they see fit – being freed from the rigors of an oath to the Order of Hermes means the freedom to shape the world and their place within in.

Let them support princes over kings, to brew love potions designed to trap the heart of a princess, etc. and set them challenges in expectation that they can and will bring their powers to bear. Importantly, any future complication for doing so should arise naturally from their actions and not from some authority imposed over their actions.

CONCLUSION

Ars Magica has such a richness of setting and rules that it seems criminal to focus just on the core book and the Order of Hermes. While nobody will claim that any of the traditions described in **Ars Magica Fifth Edition** are historically accurate, many of them certainly feel more thematically embedded in the world of Mythic Europe than the somewhat abstract Order of Hermes. The Hermetic magic system, with its fifteen Arts and its highly-flexible laboratory system is a masterpiece of design, but handing that same thing to the five guys and girls around the gaming table can be a restriction in itself.

Hedge Wizards, at the cost of running several different rule-sets, open up the world; Witches have different concerns to Elementalists, who have different concerns to those who practice Holy Magic. There is less room

for players to get lost in the mix as the characters they play fill a defined niche, unlike Hermetic generalists who can achieve pretty much anything given enough vis and a ceremonial casting circle.

And a Hedge Magic saga allows the players and the characters to influence the world around them far more than the use of Hermetic magi allow. A Hedge Magic saga is one in which magicians advise nobles, sell their services to merchants, raise up devils from the depths to barter for information, and seek out faeries and dragons for protection.

Hedge Wizards are sometimes vulnerable and their powers are often limited, but embedded in the world as they are, they are able to combine those limited magical powers with greater influence in that world and the story potential is endless.

SAGA: HISTORY ONCE REMOVED

Before the Order, there was Bonisagus and there was Trianoma. These two magi, through magical and political foresight, were the catalyst that saw the founding of the Order of Hermes. But what if these two magi had never met? What if history had been different by the slightest of degrees and Trianoma had not lived through her early encounters with other magi, or Bonisagus had succumbed to the very magic that he was experimenting with?

The founders of the Order of Hermes would never have been brought together, would never have learned what Bonisagus might have taught them, and the world would never have seen the Order of Hermes.

This is ripe territory for a Hedge Wizard saga. Indeed, this is a saga in which those traditions detailed in *Rival Magic* might be brought to the fore either as player characters or as

Required Reading for a History Once Removed

ArM5

Rival Magic

Hedge Magic Revised Edition

Realms of Power: Magic

Realms of Power: Faerie

Realms of Power: Divine

Realms of Power: Infernal

Optional

City & Guild

Art & Academe

significantly powerful adversaries or partners. Without the Order of Hermes imposing a join or die ultimatum and controlling interactions with mundane authorities, magical traditions are free to forge alliances with mundane rulers and communities; magic is free to find a place in the politics of the world.

CENTRAL THEME

Unfettered magical influence in the world. There are no oaths against mundane interference or diabolical dealings. Your Hedge Magi get to shape their place in the world any way they see fit.

CHARACTER CREATION

You get to let your imagination run riot. Any Hedge tradition, any of the traditions described in *Rival Magic*, even those found in *Ancient Magic*, they're all fair game. You might limit them such that they are in keeping with your chosen Tribunal (you might not allow Murabitin in a saga set in the British Isles, for instance), but that's down to you and your players.

Make sure that you pick Gifted versions of these Hedge Wizards for your main characters, but you can also go all out and have Mythic Companions if you like in order to increase the magic level in this saga.

SAGA: MAGIC REDISCOVERED

Take one of the ancient and lost magical traditions from *Ancient Magic* and tell the story of Hedge Wizards trying to rebuild and reclaim their magical heritage.

The Hyperborean Magic chapter in *Ancient Magic* is particularly suited to such a saga. The magic is powerful, varied, and it follows a very particular theme.

THE CENTRAL THEME

To bring a lost form of magic back to the world, following the clues to rediscover ancient texts, find those few who remember the means and methods, and to relearn the abilities and virtues needed.

CHARACTER CREATION

It makes sense for players to each create a Gifted member of the same ancient magical tradition.

STORIES

Much of the saga might be spent on the road, following rumor and legend, looking for sites of interest, books, and other texts.

The characters might need to negotiate access to libraries, using their growing magical powers to solve problems for their hosts in return.

And they might come across magical beasts and spirits who can act as teachers, mystagogues to initiate them into new Virtues, or as guides directing them towards others of their kind.

They may encounter seekers from the Order of Hermes, themselves intent on claiming the same magical heritage for themselves. Such seekers could be allies, but are more likely to be cast in the role of jealous rivals.

Required Reading for Magic Rediscovered

ArM5

Ancient Magic

Hedge Magic Revised Edition

SAGA: RIVALS TO THE ORDER

To use *Rival Magic* to the full, it is possible to run a saga where all characters are drawn from a single rival tradition and its supporters and seek to hold the Order of Hermes at bay or even push them out of a given region. This saga is overtly combative and sets up the Order of Hermes as very definite enemies.

The focus here is to use one of the traditions detailed in *Rival Magic* or a tradition outside of Mythic Europe and for those characters to forge alliances necessary to oppose the Order of Hermes and its possible expansion.

This saga is a great opportunity to invest in new means of magic that players might not have so far explored, to experience new powers and new limitations, and to make those work in their favor.

Events may move quickly at times, given the flexibility of Hermetic magic and the possibility of the Order sending well-prepared magi to investigate and retaliate. Conflict may build rapidly, but there is always room for subterfuge, assassination, or politics.

THE CENTRAL THEME

A true alternative to the Order. Use the core rulebook for all the **Ars Magica** mechanics and then indulge yourself with one of the brilliant rival

Required Reading for Rivals to the Order

ArM5

Rival Magic

Optional

Hedge Magic Revised Edition

Between Sand & Sea

Lands of the Nile

traditions. You get to play at the edges of Mythic Europe and use novel game mechanics and magical powers that you might otherwise only enjoy from a quick read-through.

CHARACTER CREATION

Main characters should be drawn from your chosen rival tradition, of course, but it's possible to host a renegade Hermetic magus too. Perhaps one escaping Hermetic persecution (or justice, as others might see it).

Companions and grogs should be able to open and protect supply lines and lines of communication. Agents working on behalf of the central magi are important too.

SAGA: NEW TO THE ORDER

House Ex Miscellanea accepts new magi from traditions outside of the Order of Hermes. In this saga, the players take the roles of Hedge Wizards recently accepted into House Ex Miscellanea. Taught the Parma Magica, they have rudimentary magic resistance, but they must rely upon their magical heritage for their powers in place of the Hermetic Arts.

They should be established in a covenant, likely sponsored by some

friendly to their cause and opposed by others not so well inclined.

This saga sees these Hedge Wizards carve out their own niche within their Tribunal and learn how to integrate their own traditions into Hermetic magic. The challenges of finding and training apprentices are acute, given that the apprentice must be trained in the ways of Hermetic magic.

This is a complex and challenging saga to run as you will be taking old primal traditions and slowly developing the characters and their descendants into fully-fledged members of the Order of Hermes, creating new lineages within House Ex Miscellanea as you do so.

Given that, we would anticipate long periods of study to pass between stories, allowing characters to invest the time needed to experiment and integrate their magical traditions.

THE CENTRAL THEME

Integration with the Order of Hermes. Take lowly characters and progress them through from Hedge Magi to Hermetic magi. It may take more than one generation, so this is a saga concept built around moving quickly through time. There will be plenty of down-time as the original Hedge Wizards start to integrate, followed by stories of the crucial events in a magus' life; the taking of apprentices and the binding of familiars. The saga should move quickly enough that those apprentices replace their masters and combine their heritage with their own Hermetic learning.

CHARACTER CREATION

Characters in this saga are Gifted members of their respective traditions and they are created according to the rules appropriate for their magical tradition. In addition, they may put points into Parma Magica and Magic Theory. They do not have the Hermetic Arts opened.

Required Reading for New to the Order

ArM5

Hedge Magic Revised Edition

Covenants

Apprentices

Realms of Power: Magic

Optional

Rival Magic

Given the Order's proscription against dealing with the infernal, those wishing to play infernally-powered characters should take Flaws appropriate to the additional scrutiny they no-doubt receive.

SAGA: THE CONNACHTA SAGA

A reading of The Contested Isle: The Hibernian Tribunal shows quite clearly a Tribunal in conflict. Most of the native Hermetic magi object to the influx of continental Hermetic magi, who for their part largely consider the traditions of the natives to be at odds to the interests of the Order of Hermes. The entirety of the province of Connacht is given over to hedge wizards, practitioners of minor magics who find themselves protected by treaties forged centuries past.

THE CENTRAL THEME

The Connachta Saga presents options for its central theme and the one you choose influences the level of conflict you expect to see within your saga.

Required Reading for the Connachta Saga

ArM5

Contested Isle

Hedge Magic Revised Edition

Realms of Power: Magic

Realms of Power: Faerie

Realms of Power: Divine

Realms of Power: Infernal

Optional

City & Guild

Art & Academe

Rival Magic

SURVIVAL

If the continental magi get their way then the old treaties may be broken and the Hedge Wizards of Hibernia may face a fight for survival. The characters may face aggression from magi entering Connacht to steal what belongs to the Hedge Wizards. They need to protect their lands and their supporters and ultimately protect their magical traditions from extinction.

CREATION OF A NEW ORDER

The Coill Tri is a loose collection of Hedge Wizards, an order imposed from outside to give the Order of Hermes an entity with which to deal. But the Coill Tri provides an opportunity. Could it become the Order that the Hermetic magi think it? The Hedge Wizards in this saga must bring the traditions of Ireland together politically and unite them behind a single ideal. In doing so, they can strengthen their position and protect the old magic of Ireland from the newcomers.

PROTECTING THE CONNACHT BORDERS

While the old treaties hold, some continental magi still cross the borders into Connacht, that province given over to the Hedge Wizards. It may take cunning and bravery to protect Connacht's resources from raiders and this saga gives players the opportunity to protect against raids and then to counter-raid against their enemies.

EXPELLING THE CONTINENTAL MAGI

Why not take the fight to the newcomers? Destroy their resources, raid against their covenants, and protect against reprisals. Build and reinforce alliances with the Irish Hermetics, gain their support, and use them for protection at Tribunal.

EXPELLING ALL HERMETIC MAGI FROM IRELAND

Go one step further. Drive Hermetic magi from Ireland. There is magic enough in the old races. Could they be united? Could they be brought back to Ireland, brought back to the light, in order to rid Ireland of foreign magic? It might seem a doomed aim, but through this saga the player characters break the curse that prevents the giant Fomórach from returning to Irish soil, and they break the curse that confines the Tuatha Dé Danann to the dark places of the world. They even return the Fir Bolg kings to glory. With these allies, the Coill Tri could mount a devastating attack on the Order of Hermes in Hibernia.

REASSERT THE RIGHTS OF THE HIGH KING

The fight might not be against the magical invaders but the mundane. Free from rules preventing interference in mundane affairs, the Hedge Wizards of the Connacht Saga might bolster the Irish kings and fight against the Norman English lords that sit over them. Leave the magical problems to

the Order of Hermes; they are forbidden to interfere in the mundane so the way is clear to protect the High King and return his power to him.

CHARACTER CREATION

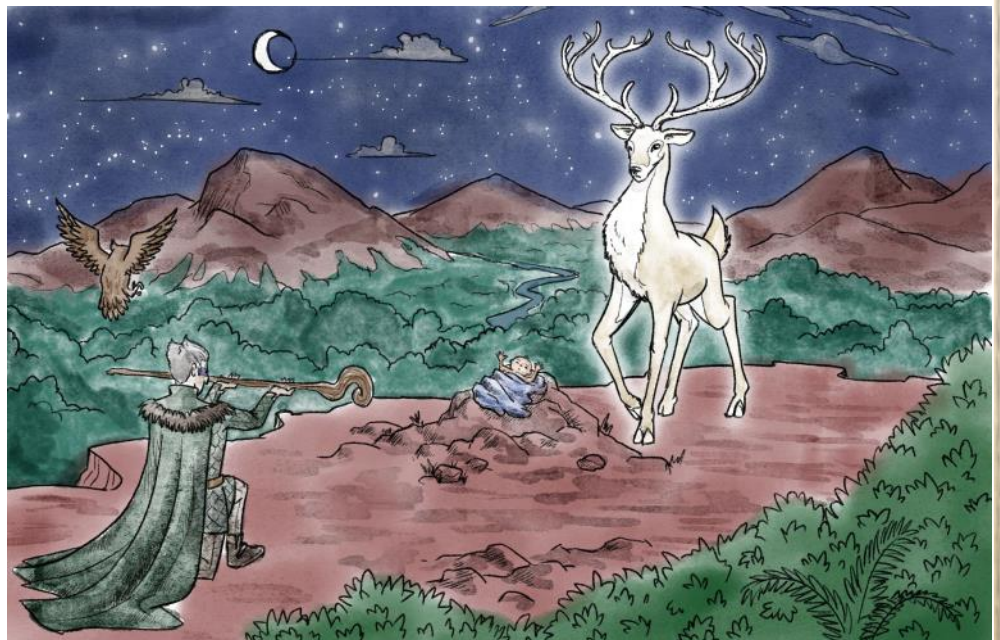
Many Hedge Wizard traditions are available to players in the Connachta Saga, although work may be required to align Elementalists to a Hibernian aesthetic. Certainly, Folk Witches, Learned Magicians, Vitkir, the Gruagachan, and Nightwalkers can all find a place. As can wondrous craftsmen, who may make useful companion characters.

Characters should be drawn from Ireland's rich heritage and players should consider those who carry the blood of the Fomórach, the Tuatha Dé Danann, and the Fir Bolg. As a result, some may gain the Ríastradh battle transformations, making them terrifying and deadly in combat.

Consider Bards, too. They are important figures in Hibernian society and many have access to supernatural powers manifesting through their poetry and storytelling. Lastly, the Divine is also strong in Hibernia with a number of unique saints to be petitioned. A character with True Faith and

knowledge of these saints, their relics, tombs, and areas of concern could easily draw upon their Divine powers.

Martial companion characters might learn the Clesrada and gain the ability to perform heroic feats beyond the power of mortal man.



APPENDIX: AN INDEX OF MAGICAL TRADITIONS

The following is a list of all magical traditions (and those aligned to other realms) that have appeared in **Ars Magica Fifth Edition**. We have

included the Ex Miscellanea traditions separately within this list as they provide access to magic and mindset not covered by the broader label of Hermetic Magus.

Other Hermetic Societates, for instance those outlined in *Realms of Power: The Infernal*, may not be included.

For the others, they are a mix of Gifted and Non-Gifted traditions. There are of course other Supernatural

Virtues that provide access to useful and sometimes potent powers that could be combined to create new traditions, but these Virtues are not listed.

TRADITION	BOOK	DESCRIPTION
Amazons	Rival Magic	A tribe of warrior women found predominantly on the island of Amazonia in the Caspian Sea. Their sorcerers
The Ars Notoria	Realms of Power The Divine Revised Edition	Powerful ancient magic that imbues the caster with knowledge. Knowledge of the Ars Notoria may be
Augustan Brotherhood	Rival Magic	A secret and powerful fraternity of court wizards who hide in plain sight, protected by their powerful patrons in
Ba'al Ov	Realms of Power The Divine Revised Edition	Jewish practitioners of Necromantic summoning magic, a practice strictly outlawed by the Halakha.
Ba'al Shem	Realms of Power The Divine Revised Edition	Itinerant practitioners of Divine magic in the Jewish tradition, specializing in folk healing and creation of seggilot (amulets, fusing folk knowledge and Divine magic, that are worn for physical and/or spiritual benefits).
Beast Masters	Houses of Hermes: Societates	A tradition found within House Ex Miscellanea, proficient with the summoning and control of wild
The Blue Men of the Desert	Between Sea & Sand	Tuareg nomads, Warped over time by repeated exposure to the powerful Magic auras of the deep desert and the
Borrowers	Realms of Power: Faerie	A tradition of Faerie Wizards
Canaanite Necromancy	Ancient Magic	An ancient magical form of necromancy allowing the magician to communicate with and command the dead.
Columbae/Swynwyr	Houses of Hermes: Societates	A tradition found within House Ex Miscellanea, possessing warding techniques more powerful than those
Craftsmen Touched by (Realm)	City & Guild	A craftsmen touched by one of the supernatural realms and able to craft wondrous items as a result

TRADITION	BOOK	DESCRIPTION
The Cult of Orpheus	Houses of Hermes: Societates	A tradition found within House Ex Miscellanea, exploits their deep emotional connections to those around them to enhance their magical powers.
Damhadh-Duidsán	Houses of Hermes: Societates, Realms of Power: The Infernal	A tradition found within House Ex Miscellanea, descended from shape-changing, giant-blooded Gaelic wizards. There is an infernally-corrupt variant that uses the maleficia to supplement their own magic.
Dark Gnostics	Realms of Power: The Infernal	The Dark Gnostic tradition is made of up those who preach that sinful acts have moral value. They may still worship one God, but because they encourage evil acts in
The Daughters of Four Fathers	Between Sea & Sand	Beautiful female skinchangers who take the form of doves.
Defixio Magic	Ancient Magic	A means of binding magical effects and curses to small tablets and tokens of lead. Defixiones allow their creator to use a Supernatural Ability or spell against a target that is not sensed and for which the creator has no Arcane
The Donatores Requietis Aeternae	Houses of Hermes: Societates	A tradition found within House Ex Miscellanea, possessing the Banishing virtue, which they use to drive supernatural forces from protected areas. A young tradition of magi with religious backgrounds that exists to ensure that the spirits of the dead reach their final resting place.
The Dread Host	Realms of Power: The Infernal	An Infernal cult of saints, where the living members venerate the dead, drawing them out from oblivion and binding them into Infernal relics.
Elementalists	Hedge Magic Revised Edition	Traditions that exert supernatural authority over the raw elements of nature, and even cause them to come together into animate creatures known as elementals.
Experimental Philosophers	Art & Academe	Using the knowledge of the world afforded by the study of medicine, philosophiae, and artes liberales to enhance natural abilities and properties.
Faerie Bargaining	Realms of Power: Faerie	A tradition that uses the Ars Fabulosa to summon and bargain with faeries, using the faeries' powers as their own.
Faerie Doctors	Realms of Power: Faerie	A human who speaks to the faeries on behalf of the peasants, explaining their concerns and wishes. Likewise, the local faeries know that the faerie doctor supports their flow of vitality by reinforcing the tales and lore of their kind within his region of influence.
Faerie Rites:	Realms of Power: Faerie	Hedge Wizards practiced in Faerie Methods and Powers. Able to combine these arts to varied and powerful faerie effects.

TRADITION	BOOK	DESCRIPTION
Folk Witches	Hedge Magic Revised Edition	Folk witches are a widespread hedge tradition in Mythic Europe, and many small towns count one or two folk witches among their citizens. A witch might speak with the animals of the wild, curse one's enemies, or dowsing for much more than water. She might fly among the clouds, see with the second sight, or heal people and animals alike. Or she may even have the power to take the shape of an animal herself.
Franciscans	The Curch	A Holy Tradition found within the religious Franciscan Order, favoring the Holy Methods and Powers of Intervention, Meditation, Purity, and Understanding.
Geomancers	Between Sea & Sand	Practitioners of Geomancy, a divinatory practice based on repeatedly and seemingly randomly inscribing a series of marks in sand or earth.
Goetic Sorcerer	Realms of Power: The Infernal	Practitioners of the Goetic Arts, through which they summon, bind, command, and destroy demonic forces.
Gruagachan	Hedge Magic Revised Edition	A tradition of hedge wizards descending from ancient Pictish priests of the god Gruagach. Shapechangers with the power to grant and take blessings and curses.
Hermetic Haruspexes	Houses of Hermes:	A tradition of diviners within House Ex Miscellanea.
Hermetic Sahirs	Houses of Hermes: Societates	An Islamic tradition with House Ex Miscellanea that summons and bargains with Jinn.
Homunculi Wizards	Realms of Power: Faerie	Wizards or Hedge Wizards who draw their Gift from their bod with a strange kind of faerie known as a homunculus.
Hyperborean Magic	Ancient Magic	Magic songs or hymns said to derive from the ancient Greek Apollo.
Inducers	Between Sea & Sand	A minor tradition that practices a limited form of illusion magic.
The Inenden	Between Sea & Sand	Lower-caste, outcast magical Tuareg craftsmen who create superior, excellent, and wondrous items.
Kabbalist	Realms of Power The Divine Revised Edition	Divine scholars of Jewish Holy Magic.
Karaites	Houses of Hermes: Societates	A Jewish sect of Holy Magicians within House Ex Miscellanea, their magic comes from the Divine rather than the magical.
Karaities	Realms of Power The Divine Revised Edition	A Holy Society adhering to distinct Jewish teachings.

TRADITION	BOOK	DESCRIPTION
Language of Adam	Ancient Magic	The power of naming, of assigning a being a name that truly and succinctly describes it, might be considered to be the very first form of magic, the most ancient magic in the whole world.
Learned Magicians	Hedge Magic Revised Edition	Scholars with an understanding of magic. Able to cast spells and to create amulets and charms invested with power.
Legacy of Heron of Alexandria	Ancient Magic	Crafters of enchanted items with flexible powers. Notable for being able to craft true awakened automata
The Lineage of Pralix	Houses of Hermes: Societates	A tradition within House Ex Miscellanea that seeks to preserve hedge traditions by inducting them into the Order. The power they possess allows them to analyze and study magic, which has made them experts on exotic
The Luciferans	Realms of Power: The Infernal	A debauched Infernal Tradition. Some indulge the sin of pride, believing themselves to be pious and pure instead of corrupt and infernal.
The Maestro	Art & Academe	An artist touched by magic and able to weave that magic into their works
Malocchi	Houses of Hermes: Societates	A tradition of Italian magi within House Ex Miscellanea who practice the magic of Entrancement.
The Mobeds	The Cradle and The Crescent	The mobeds are a holy tradition found in and around Persia, with Initiations that grant them unique holy
The Mulhidun	Realms of Power: The Infernal	Found to the north of the Persian city of Mosul, the Mulhidun summon and control demons, and put them to work.
Murabitin	Between Sea & Sand	A Divine Mystic Tradition of amulet crafters and dream interpreters
Muspelli	Rival Magic	Invoking the power of the old Scandinavian Jotun giants, these shapeshifting wizards harness powerful effects. These wizards serve the Jotun with purpose; to bring about Ragnarok and the end of the current world.
Nightwalkers	Hedge Magic Revised Edition	Un-Gifted folk magicians with the ability to allow their spirits to roam while their bodies are unconscious or in an altered mental state.
Ollamhain	Realms of Power: Faerie	The Ollamhain (pronounced “ah-luh-VAIN”) are Irish poets, sages, and performers who have had many dealings with the Fair Folk, as they call the faeries, and who claim special kinship with them.

TRADITION	BOOK	DESCRIPTION
Order of Suleiman	The Cradle and The Crescent	Composed of sahirs, usually unGifted Muslim summoners who wield magic spells and devices similar to their Hermetic counterparts, and who command jinn or other spirits in
The Paulicians	The Sundered Eagle	A heretical Infernal Tradition native to Greece
Perfecti	Realms of Power The Divine Revised Edition	The Perfecti and their followers, the Cathars, are a group of holy men and women that developed in Southern France in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. They consider themselves Christians, but profess dualist doctrine that is contrary to Roman practices.
The Pharmacopoeians	Houses of Hermes: Societates	A tradition of magi within House Ex Miscellanea who can trace their ancient lineage back to Crateuas: author of the first pharmacopoeia, illustrator of the first herbal, and the original Root-Cutter. Their magic relies heavily on the curative magic in herbs and plants, which makes them some of the Order's best healers.
Potteresses	Between Sea & Sand	Female craft magicians found in North Africa. They craft enchanted pots, which those drinking from gain magically enhanced abilities. Leatherworking is a similar craft, but the practice is carried out by men.
Rippers	Between Sea & Sand	A very limited form of magic practiced in North Africa, Rippers have the power to rend cloth or to disembowel animals.
Rune Magic	Ancient Magic	Deep magic that uses the power of runic inscriptions to create effects immune to forms of magical resistance
Rustic Magic	Houses of Hermes: Societates	A tradition of folk magicians within House Ex Miscellanea who generally eschew interaction with the Order of Hermes and its covenants, and instead live among the common people in villages and other rural communities, whom they consider to be their covenfolk. They have developed a form of magical craft that allows them to build spells and enchanted devices from mundane objects
Scinnfolk	Houses of Hermes: Societates	A minor tradition found within House Ex Miscellanea that possesses an eclectic knowledge of natural magic and faerie charms which is passed down orally from master to pupil.
Seirenes	Houses of Hermes: Societates	This tradition within House Ex Miscellanea is comprised of a group of magae who practice a form of lyrical magic taught to their founder by the sirens of legend. The music of the Seirenes allows them to influence the thoughts and actions of their listeners and is especially effective when performed in a trio.
The Settuten	Between Sea & Sand	A tradition of Berber and Tuareg sorceresses.

TRADITION	BOOK	DESCRIPTION
Sorcerers of Soqotra	Rival Magic	A caste of sorcerers found on the island of Soqotra, in the Arabian Sea's Gulf of Aden. Soqotran magic is intimately tied to the natural forces of the island, and these forces are represented by the local tree spirits.
Sorginak	Faith & Flame	The sorginak are Basque folk witches descended from (and some still serving as) the priestesses of Mari. Their magic revolves around the use of Supernatural Abilities, but their inner mysteries are more sinister in nature.
Storm Wizards	Against the Dark	An old but lonely Gifted tradition that summon and use storms. Almost exclusively male, these bearded giants make their solitary homes in caves well above the
Strigae	Realms of Power: The Infernal	Infernal traditions of night witches found across Mythic Europe. Most often working in threes or in covens of 13.
Stringla	The Sundered Eagle	A stringla is a variety of witch found in the Byzantine Empire; some areas (such as Mykonos) are reputed to be positively infested. These depraved women seek specifically to undermine the power of the Church and the dominance of man over woman.
Sufis	Realms of Power The Divine Revised Edition	Practitioners of a Holy Tradition who engage in both personal and group rituals intended to bring them into closer proximity to God and give them mystical
Tattoo Magicians	Between Sea & Sand	North African variety of Learned Magicicans (Hedge Magic Revised Edition) that express their powers through temporary tattoos and other inscriptions.
Tempestaria	Houses of Hermes: Societates	This tradition of weather witches in House Ex Miscellanea known as Tempestariae are experts in weather magics that exceeds the capacity of his Hermetic powers.
Vampire Hunters	Against the Dark	Possessing Supernatural Virtues, these Hedge Wizards focus on hunting, banning, and slaying particular types of supernatural foes.
Vitkir	Hedge Magic Revised Edition	Masters of rune magic
Volkhvy	Realms of Power: Faerie	A tradition of Faerie Wizards
Wise Folk	Realms of Power: Faerie	A tradition of Faerie Wizards
Witches of Thessaly	Houses of Hermes: Societates / Realms of Power: The Infernal	An infernal tradition of witches found at the edges of the Order of Hermes.
The Witch-Hammers	Realms of Power: The Infernal	This Infernal tradition is very unusual, in that it is an example of infernalists who primarily work against other infernalists.

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OLDE-BRITTANIA

GEOGRAPHY

The Duchy of Olde-Brittania is a portion of land slipped between Celtic Brittany and the tip of Normandy. It is an equilateral triangle of approximately 150km of coastline. Its shore runs almost straight, from Saint-Pabu (today the French town of Tréguier) up to Cherbourg. Thus, one should not mix up Brittany on the one hand, which is an armorican Duchy, whose capital is Nantes, and the smallest Duchy of Olde-Brittania on the other hand, whose capital is the city of Ponant.

LOW OLDE-BRITTANIA

The northern part of the Duchy is bordered by fairly steep cliffs, covered with white chalk. It counts numerous coves where all kinds of criminals, smugglers and pirates took refuge between two trips on the English channel. The only harbor worthy of the name is the city of Brisantine, which controls the trade routes of the Britain Isles.

Off the coast, the monastery of Mt. Saint-Michel is one of the most popular places of pilgrimage of entire Western Europe, which ensures the hostels and the monks a comfortable affluence. The proximity

to the Duchy of Normandy, recently snatched from the hands of prince John, induces complicated diplomacy.

BRISANTINE

The town itself is spread on the banks of a large bay where the sea waves crash. It is an open cove, virtually indefensible in case of landing. On the countryside, the feudal castle is its sole protection.



By **Benôit Léoutre**

With thanks to **Louis Allert**

for proof-reading

The bulk of the ducal fleet (a few sailboats and a large war galley built with the funding of the Knights Templar) is supposed to ensure the defense of merchant ships, but the local Lord often takes them to fight against English pirates.

The burghers of the city have founded powerful corporations and they have recently asked the Duke to bestow them a municipal charter, which would then allow them to apply to the Hanseatic League. While awaiting for this happy day, Lord Conrad of Lisbourg ruled the city with an iron hand by taxing transactions.

ROUGEPAARD

Although the Rougepard family clearly originated from Normandy, she received its land in exchange for loyal services to the Olde-Brittania dynasty, two centuries ago. Since then, the small town has become one of the biggest cities of the Duchy.

The houses are clumped around the powerful walls of the fortress. The garrison of Rougepard is

STORY SEED: THE RENEGADE

It is rumored that an illegitimate child of the count may be plotting in the shadow, trying to come back to the spotlight, with the help of a hideous woman with a black coat. The rumor reported that the young man would have made a big deal during the Crusades. He may have brought some relic, an Arab witch or a pact with the devil...

still large, reinforced by the bands of idling mercenaries since the end of the wars.

THE DUKE'S LAND

The center of the Duchy reports directly to the ducal power. Land, Woods and cities are under its law. These towns and castles are also well-filled with skilled garrisons.

PONANT

The city of Ponant is a small town surrounded by high walls, protected by a large amount of turrets. The town itself can accommodate ten thousand souls, perhaps thirty thousand with the adjoining suburbs. Homes are spread out over the entire width of the valley, grouped around the steeples of churches. A broad bridge laid enables visitors to cross the river, which goes around the walls of the city by the West.

At the center of the city, a powerful fortress dominates the other buildings with its massive silhouette : the ducal castle, a stunning building with

encumbered embrasures. It looks more like a pure fortress than an opulent residence.

At the top of the towers, above the Saint-Louis posterns and the main crossroads, banners remind everyone who is the master of this land : they are decorated with the red and gold, Sun symbol of the dynasty Soleval, and Duke Charles II in particular, who prevails on the Duchy.

HIGH OLDE-BRITTANIA

The southern part of the Duchy extends to Brittany, watered by the main river. There are large wooded areas alongside the islets of stand. The border region is often crossed by armed gangs, Bretonnian or French Conquerors, which increases the misery of the surrounding villages.





The goblin folk is well-displayed in those lands. They roam from the moors of Britain, accompanied by giants and sprites. The dark woods are haunted by hordes of hungry wolves, while a few Benedictine hermitages are trying to clear the thick forests.

The poor villagers who cannot suffer the war and bad fairies jokes sometimes know despair. In that case, they ask for the aid of witches who live hidden in remote valleys or on the top of hills. Abandoned cemeteries, Roman ruins and standing stones whisper there long forgotten secrets.

LES HERBAGES

Les Herbages is a cosy town founded opposite the old feudal castle. The bishopric gave enough money to build powerful walls. Thanks to that, the population is safe from enemy attacks. An Academy of siege machines provides the Duke some trebuchets, ballistae and catapults which make the fame of the city.

An entire neighborhood is reserved for the large Jewish community, which is the most important in the whole country. It has a synagogue, a ritual pool and a rabbinical school where famous thinkers practice Kabbalah and the art of Merkavah (see *Realms of Power: The Divine*).

STORY SEED: THE CHOSEN ONES

Children who are born in the village of St. Arthur, where the Saint's tomb lay, have white hair and gold like eyes. Local priests interpret that phenomenon as divine gift. They may perceive magic, ghosts and unholy tinges. The true source is up to the Storyteller.

STORY SEED: MUNDANE PROBLEMS

Several covenants have Bjornaer House Masters who are involved in the wars between the Dukes of Olde-Brittania and French Brittany, a behavior that the Tribunal and High Lady Blanche of Bonisagus have repeatedly punished. Such condemnations don't prevent the more obtuse ones, like Ralf The Bear, who continues to engage himself and his students in the struggle between mundanes factions.

LOCAL HISTORY

ANTIQUITY

The forgotten ages of mankind tell us few about the first inhabitants of the land. Many standing stones witness the passage of the first villagers. Legends still evoke the spectra of primitive priests, haunting the woods. Some old men may say that primitive kings had great and powerful treasures.

STORY SEED: THE ANCIENT SEAWALL

One of the scholars of House Criamon, a middle-aged woman with black hair and pale eyes, sends messengers to the four corners of the kingdom. She studies a magical singularity permeating the ground, the forests and the inhabitants of Olde-Brittania.

Her first discoveries seem to show that the land should have sunk in an earthquake, several millennia ago. But it didn't. She suspects a powerful enchantment of maintaining the region afloat. Such a power predates the Order of Hermes and appears beyond the scope of contemporary Hermetic magic.

STORY SEED: THE STELE'S COVENANT COLLAPSE

A group of young Magi, who have been welcomed as sodales, survey steals of Vis resources, then discover that their whole covenant has been destroyed in the collapse of its regio. Such a disaster was what alarmed the Tribunal of Normandy, which has dispatched three investigators. One of them is Anvinus of Tremere, an uncompromising and dreaded Quaesitor.

Anvinus will find somebody to blame, one way or another.

At the time of the conquests of Julius Caesar, Olde-Brittania was populated by various Gallic tribes whose names are lost. It was part of Gaul and already enjoyed trade with the Roman Britannicum. Brisantine was a thriving harbor, while the Roman roads cut campaign. Several shrines to Hercules and Nymphaea decorated sources.

Towards the end of the 2nd century, the Gallo-Roman civilization reached its peak. At that time, the imperial cult attempted to wipe out the Druids, whose ceremonies were forbidden. Some took refuge in the deep forests.

DARK AGES

Many barbarian tribes crossed the area without stopping. The population fell and the land became a rural and deserted country. Then inhabitants of Great Britain Island settled here. Fleeing the massacres made by the Saxons, they resettled back the old deserted villages, under the direction of an energetic chieftain, Solevalus.

He repelled himself several times the armies of the Franks, and allowed the Foundation of a first independent state. Thereafter, his descendants swore loyalty to Charlemagne, which allowed them to retain their land. One of the chieftains, Erynn of Ponant, became official knight of the Carolingian emperor.

That was the beginning of the Duchy of Olde-Brittania, who quickly regained its independence under the reign of Louis le Pieux, unable to defend that region from the Viking extortions. The heirs of Solevalus founded the Soleval dynasty and escaped more and more the royal power. They managed to keep their independence against the kings and then the dukes of Celtic Brittany and newly-founded Normandy.

STORY SEED: THE PRETTY COUNSELLOR

However, it is rumored that another woman has more influence on him. She is said to be a lovely lady with a skin whiter than ivory. She never leaves her side and advises him in all his affairs. The gossips and the clerics warned the young Duke several times, recalling that she was never going to the mass. She may be an ambitious Magus, a playful fairy, or a devious succubus. Whatever are the true objectives of this intriguing woman, the friendship of the duke gives her the means to carry them out.

LAST CENTURIES

The reigns of the recent Capetian kings have threatened the integrity of the Olde-Brittania's borders. Partnering with the former English and Celtic-Britannian enemies was the sole option. Last dukes played intrigues and conspiracies, allowing them to thwart the attempts of annexation.

Philippe Auguste in particular, with his aggressive expansion policy for the royal domain, was very close to seize Olde-Brittania at the same time as Normandy. It is said that it is only through a pilgrimage to Mont Saint-Michel, undertaken by the late Duke Charles Ier, that the French were unable to seize his land. As a grateful move, the Duke left his country to free the Holy Land. He then was killed there.

His son Charles II de Soleval is the current duke. Eager to show its value, he already fought in his youth during the wars of Normandy. Although he was serving at the time as squire of a French knight, he is now looking for any support which could strengthen his

authority and sovereignty. It is in this purpose that he married the daughter of a powerful German lord.

CHURCH OF OLDE-BRITTANIA

The entire province is strongly Christianized. The Britons were already mostly enthusiastic observants. They brought with them the worship of various saints, who are not known outside the borders of Olde-Brittania. The most important ones are saint Pencoste, who is prayed for good health, Saint Edmila, worshipped for her righteous modesty, and Saint Dipak, a conqueror and a ruler of ancient

England. All Olde-Brittanians also have a great devotion to the Virgin Mary.

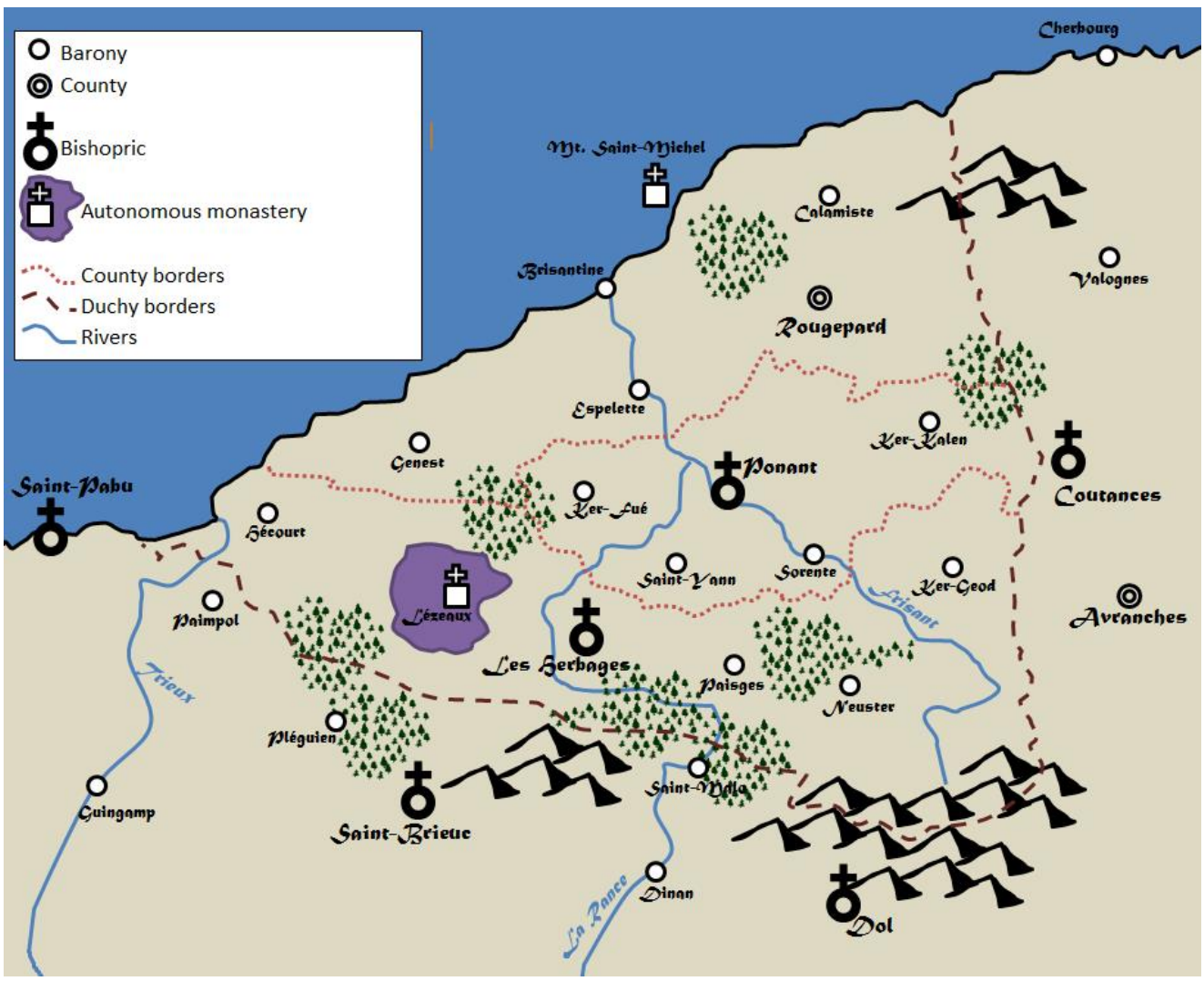
The Olde-Brittanians have the strange particularity of venerating Saint Arthur, inspired by the Breton king of the same name. His relics are hold in the Cathedral of Ponant's treasure, where he is presented as the protector of their Duchy, and the defender of its independence.

The Duchy is divided into two dioceses, the Ponant diocese and the Les Herbages diocese. Several monasteries and convents are scattered in the countryside, where the monks and sisters exchange and trade with their French and English counterparts.

The country is also a home for a number of hostelries owned by the Knights Hospitaller, Franciscan hospices, fortified farmhouses and stables; as well as a handful of commanderies of the popular Knights Templar.

THE ORDER OF HERMES

While living within walking distance of the Tribunal of Normandy and his main covenant of Falaise, the Magi of Olde-Brittania rarely attend the calls of the Great Tribunal. There are only a few covenants in the land, but a great number of Magi travel as vagrants.



Some present themselves as members of House Ex Miscellanea, but it is likely that a large number of those theorists of the megaliths are actually clandestine Druids.

The Duchy's cities include their share of Jerbiton House musicians and Tytalus House plotters, while many Redcaps crisscross the country. Some of these travelers are also Merinita House Magi, who have excellent relationships with the local fairies, especially since those faery damsels fear the imminent awakening of Morgane le Fay. Her tomb indeed would be hidden somewhere in the mountains of the Brittany borders.





COMING SOON

SECRETS & LIES

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