

The Isles of Darkness Mage: The Awakening Setting Document

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Awakening - Theme and Mood

Themes

Power - The Awakened have remarkable capabilities only a thought away. The Arcana can reshape the world, and let the Awakened leave their mark on this Fallen World. What will you do with this Power? Will you try to open the eyes of the sleeping world to the Truth? Will you explore ancient ruins or bizarre other worlds? Will you use it to gain riches and influence, or better the lot of humanity? The choice is yours, as are the consequences.

Hubris - With Power comes the ability to reshape the world. And with the ability to reshape the world comes a detachment from the rest of humanity. How do you temper the Obsession, the Power and your own humanity? And when you start solving every problem with magic, have you ascended or fallen? Many of the key questions in Awakening are not “what *can* I do?” but rather “what *should* I do?”.

Obsession - Mages are obsessed with the Supernal. They live in a world they know to be a Lie, but with every glimpse of the Supernal Truth hidden within it they come to better understand both what has been lost and what they can be. It is this driving need to understand the world around them that makes them seek out Atlantis, to entreat with strange and powerful beings, and to wage a war over whether or not Magic should be available to all. The Awakened burn brightly in their obsession, sometimes illuminating those around them, sometimes creating an inferno that consumes all in their wake.

What this means for you: When creating a character, and playing the game, consider the Obsession that drives your Mage. Maybe they wish to forge wonders from Perfected Metals, maybe they wish to understand a particular outside Realm, perhaps they just wish to prepare the minds of their family for a mass Awakening. Whatever it is, this Obsession should drive your character and their actions. This Obsession should put you at odds with your Wisdom and morality - what are you willing to do, to sacrifice, to subvert in order to achieve your own goals? Increases in personal magical power lead to enhanced understanding of the world around you - do you fall to Hubris and use this Power wisely, or do you funnel it into your Obsession, while the Consilium burns around you?

Mood

Who watches the Watchmen? - Britain is the most Surveilled Nation on the Planet. The Panopticon have risen in power and now have their insidious tendrils in many innocuous aspects of everyday life. But more than that, the Guardians of the Veil keep an eye on their allies to prevent abyssal incursions. And worse, your colleagues may well be willing to do whatever they need to fulfill their own Obsession, at whatever price to you. Mage is a world where nothing is as it seems, and everything seems magical.

I'd like to quote the MET Book here: *"This meritocracy does not consider sex, sexuality, ethnicity and the like to determine worth - this bigotry is beneath the Awakened Perspective."*

Paths

Every Mage treads a Path Supernal that links their soul to the realms of magic. In D&D terms, this is your 'Race' - and Acanthus is always an Acanthus, but can be a Free Councillor or a Mystagogue. There are five paths: Acanthus, Mastigos, Moros, Obrimos and Thyrsus. We are changing nothing from the core book with regards to the Paths, and suggest that you read up on them in the Core Mage the Awakening Rulebook, or for Tome of the Watchtowers for a more in-depth view. You can find some inspiration and quotes to help you below:

Acanthus - Enchanters on the Path of Thistle

"I'm the darling of the Financial Sector - known far and wide for playing the Junk Bond market and making fortunes. I'm also known for losing my shirt when the Junk Bonds crumble. But that's the joy of the market - you never know what it's going to do, and if you're going to bet, then bet high and bet hard. All this flash and bravado though, that's just a hobby, something to get the blood pumping. People never notice me with my more sedate investments, nurturing the portfolio - adding some stocks here, cutting some there. That is the real focus of my work, watching something small mature into something beautiful. After all: Mighty Oaks, from Little Acorns Grow...."

- Midas, Silver Ladder

"The greatest power that humans have? Stories. We manage to connect the dots between disparate events and make meaning out of them. We tell them as a social tool to teach and enlighten. And we use them to warn our children of the monsters in the dark. But more than that, we use them to teach that those monsters can be beaten. A good story will stand the test of ages, and still be relevant. It's like seeing the past, and future, all at once."

- Homer, Mysterium

Mastigos - Warlocks on the Path of Scourging

"All Warfare is based on Deception. Hence, when able to attack, we must seem unable; when using our forces, we must seem inactive; when we are near, we must make the enemy believe we are far away; when far away, we must make him believe we are near." So said Sun Tzu in his treatise 'The Art of War'. In many ways the Arcanum of the Path of Scourging are the perfect combination: With Mind I can make my opponent think me weak or strong. With Space I can be both far away and right behind him. Yes, truly we Warlocks have the advantage when it comes to Misdirection."

- 'Smith', Guardian of the Veil

"Do not lie there on the floor! Stand up and face me once more. Consider the moves you made, the moves I made. Consider the interaction between my hand at your shoulder, and the foot at your ankle. Why did I beat you? Is it because I am bigger than you, stronger than you, faster than you? No. It is because I test myself constantly and I have fought more worthy opponents than you. It is precisely because you are you bigger, stronger, faster than I that I have dedicated my life to perfecting my own Arts. Now, stand up and fight me!"

- Fa Kyu, Adamantine Arrow

Moros - Necromancers on the Path of Doom

“My grandmother has shared with me the wisdom of her family my whole life. When I was stressed in my exams, she taught me the ways to clear my mind. When I was indecisive over which University to choose, she helped me pick the path. When I met the man of my dreams, she counselled me over how to act. And when he broke my heart, she taught me the ways to make him learn his lesson. She sits with me and guides me in all things. I only wish I’d met her when she was alive...”

- Pax Mortis, Adamantine Arrow

“As above, so below. That’s what they say. I work with metals, they feel so strong, so *right*, you know? That heavy weight in your hand, you can feel the importance of them. And metaphysically too. Iron, it doesn’t just make swords and ploughshares, but carries oxygen around your blood. How can you deny its importance? *Perfected Iron*, well, that’s a whole other ball game. I mean, it’s just flawless. We actually remove all the impurities from the Fallen World from it. Yes, metals are *wonderful....*”

- Varna, Free Council

Obrimos - Theurges on the Path of the Mighty

“I awoke to the beating of Angels’ Wings, and to pillars of Fire. I am Ares, God of War. I bring the Fire to my enemies. I am Vulcan, God of the Forge. I melt and reshape metals to my whim. I am Hermes, the Messenger God. Your telephones and Internet are mine to command. I am Thor, God of Lightning. Your National Grid is my weapon. I am Zeus, God of Weather. My breath sinks ships, or guides them to their port. I walk the path of the Mighty, and none shall stand against me.”

- Providence, Adamantine Arrow

“We walk the Path of the Mighty, yes. And when the enemies of the Awakened stand before me, I will rage before them. But we are judged to a higher standard, and we must hold ourselves to that. The Fallen World is a Prison and a thing of Beauty. We must help those who cannot see to open their eyes. I work with the poor, the needy. I take their minds off the prison of debt and drugs and violence. I let them explore the world around, and I nurture that spark of the Supernal in them.”

- Barchiel, Silver Ladder

Thysus - Shaman on the Path of Ecstasy

“The sky and the sea and the forest are my playground. I run with the wolves, and fly with eagles. I am shark and I am dolphin. I am hunter and hunted. We are all part of a great cycle of life - live, love, fuck, fight, die. Do it all again. Beat those drums so it rings in your ears, dance until you drop, love with all your heart.”

- Herne, Apostate

“I stand between the darkness and the light, helping those whose time has come too soon. My knowledge of the human body is beyond that of any normal doctor, no matter how great their skill. With my voice, my Will, I can convince the very cells of a body to obey me. But all things are in balance, and I combine the newest of technologies and techniques to further my understanding of the

illnesses and injuries that I treat. The Supernal Truths that are unearthed in research universities are staggering and only serve to further my knowledge of the Art.”
- Nightingale, Free Council

Orders (and other social groups)

Here's where things get shaken up a bit, or rather, here's where we go back to grassroots. We want each of the Orders to have their own themes and strengths and styles. We want the Silver Ladder to Lead, the Arrow to Fight, the Guardians to Spy and the Mysterium to Research. And we want the Free Council to rail against the Diamond, to convince them that the Old Ways are not the Best Ways.

The Diamond:

Key Themes - Tradition. Hierarchy. Establishment.

The Diamond can trace their organisations' roots back to Atlantis. They are the Spiritual Successors of the original Atlantean Mages. Everything they do is steeped in centuries, millennia, possibly even Aeons of Tradition and History.

Each of the Diamond Orders has a Hierarchical structure, and it's worked this way since time immemorial. The Orders are Mystery Cults, some more obviously than others, and secrets are revealed as you climb the ladder. Democracy's all very well for electing politicians, but Hierarchy has proven results.

Mentors pass on secrets and resources to students who pass them on as they become mentors. As members rise up in the Hierarchy, so they help those beneath them, for a price. The Diamond Orders are Established, entrenched, calcified.

Silver Ladder (Thearchs) - The Priest-King-Bureaucrats of Atlantis. Born to rule in the absence of the actual Kings of Atlantis. They are Oxbridge, they are the Old Boys Network, they are the political movers and shakers. But Power is Wisdom and Wisdom is Power, so they're not shy on their magical knowledge either. After all, Political Power comes from the Barrel of a Duel Arcane.

Tenets: Diamond - The Awakened are One Nation. Thunder - Imperium is the Right of Humanity. Star - The Silver Ladder is the Path to Victory. Blood - The Sleepers Will Follow.

The Mysterium (Mystagogues) - Knowledge is Power and has a Price. A Mystery cult of initiations whose meanings are as lost as the knowledge they seek. Sure there are Supernal truths within their actions, but we're not quite sure 'what'. They should always be at the forefront of exploration and archaeology... if only to stop the Guardians stealing artefacts away. And the Mysterium aren't afraid to arrange the occasional 'accident' if that's what it takes to keep them at the forefront of said endeavours.

Tenets: Knowledge is Power. Knowledge must be Preserved. Knowledge has a Price.

The Guardians of the Veil (Guardians) - a Murder Mystery Cult, of riddles, enigmas, secrets, masques and evils that men do. They are the martyrs, damning themselves that others need not. They do *not* just outright murder people who use vulgar magic, but it remains an option for those who breach the veil or are otherwise damaged in the soul (after all, the Diamond Wheel of reincarnation means that they'll do better next time. Probably).

Tenets: Paradox Strengthens the Abyss as Punishment Answers Pride. Sins for a Just End Grant Wisdom to the Awakened. Merit Must Guide the Fallen World.

The Adamantine Arrow (Arrow) - the Army of the Awakened. They fight the good fight, protecting against the evils of the world, whether that be Seers mind controlling sleepers, cryptids breaking through from another world, or sleepers meddling with Things That Should Not Be. Where the Arrow cause a mess, the Guardians clear up. They follow their military hierarchy, but think freely too. They are warriors and philosophers, knowing when to fight, and when to talk.

Tenets: Enlightenment is Honour. Adaptability is Strength. The Supernal is Self. Service is Mastery.

How does this affect me?

As a player, if your PC is in a Diamond Order, they have resources and tradition to back them up. But remember that there is an obligation to toe the Order line as well. Mystagogues who consistently give information away for free are in direct violation of the Order Tenet "Knowledge Has a Price" and should expect to have their Metaphorical Library Cards revoked. Actually, in this case, it's probably *not* Metaphorical... and that should be *really* bad. You are the latest in a long line of great people and you have a tradition to live up to, to learn from, and to promote to future generations.

As an ST, you should remember that the Diamond is the dominant political force in the 'Pentacle' game. The Silver Ladder have their cryptopolies, infiltrating the important strata of society and carrying out the Thearchs' wishes; the Mysterium have grand libraries filled with arcane law; the Guardians have their networks of agents to bury The Truth, or turn the other way when a quiet blade needs to be utilised; And the Arrow have comprehensive training and medical facilities, the better to hone their skills. Each Order fulfills an archetype within the stories that you tell, and these tropes should be enforced and reminded - The Mysterium is not just a secret lending library, it's a byzantine Mystery Cult whose ritualistic meanings are obfuscated through the mists of time. The Silver Ladder don't just make a phone call to get resources deposited - they contact the Secret Order of the Moon, and exchange coded phrases and secret handshakes. The Guardians leave messages in dead letter drops, or written in the mirror in steam in their agent's own handwriting...

The Free Council

Key Themes - Decentralisation. Change. Vision.

There's no overarching Free Council Authority, instead it's an Assembly of Free Councillors, of equals who talk to each other and seek out best practice. But each Caucus values freedom, and what is the norm for one Caucus might be verboten in another.

Newly formed, the Free Council are adapting and evolving as they find their way in Atlantean Society. They can throw out old ideas, reject the bits that don't make sense, and embrace new theories and ways of doing things. The Free Council don't measure on past performances, they measure you on what you're doing *right now*.

The Diamond Orders look *backward* to Atlantis for their knowledge, Traditions and meaning. The Free Council look *forward* to a better future. Their Will made Manifest, the greatest Free Councillors have a Vision of a better tomorrow, and let nothing stand in their way.

The Free Council (Libertines) - still new, only ~115 years old, but their history can be traced back to the apostates and outcasts of Atlantis. They don't look back to Atlantis, they look forward to the

future (the Singularity?). They don't have the resources and infrastructure of the other Orders, but they're getting there and moving, adapting, changing faster than the others can.

Tenets: Democracy Seeks the Truth; Hierarchy Fosters the Lie. Humanity is Magical; Human Workings have Arcane Secrets. Destroy the Followers of the Lie.

How does this affect me?

As a player, prepare to get some dirty looks when you mention 'democracy' - the Diamond orders are entrenched in Hierarchy and Mystery Cult setup - but don't let that stop you from railing against it. The Free Council look forward, not back, so don't feel you have to stick with Traditional ideas, or that you can't throw out your hard work if something better comes along. The Free Council are the most embedded within Mundane Society as equals or subordinates - The Silver Ladder command their minions, but the Free Council see humanity as a great source of learning. Most, if not all great advancements in human technology have come from sleepers - there must be a reason why. You don't have to be an Engineer or a Scientist to be a Libertine either - Politics and Revolution are frequent and well respected areas of expertise. Just remember, whatever it is that you do, you're looking forward and trying to build a better tomorrow.

As an ST, the Free Council are the youngest, the least entrenched, the most radical. If anyone's going to be trying new (dangerous?) ideas, then it's the Libertines. Change, Dynamism, Cutting Edge, these are all philosophies to remember when portraying your Libertines. Some are rash and violent upstarts, looking to tear down the system, but many are content to work with the Diamond, to bring them closer to the Libertine viewpoint by demonstrating just how much success new technology and processes can have.

In both cases remember - the Free Council may have differences of opinion with the Diamond, but the Pentacle stands united against the Seers of the Throne, Banishers and Abyssal Mages.

Apostates

Apostates are those mages who are not members of an Order. Those mages who are newly Awakened are expected to join one of the five Pentacle Orders, or at least being the induction process, within the first year or so of entering Awakened society. While it is not compulsory to do so, the benefits in terms of teachers, resources and colleagues to network with are quite substantial. Those who do not join Orders and remain Apostates are treated with some suspicion, and treated a little like rebellious teenagers ("Oh grow up, and join an Order!").

While it is often expected that a Mage will stay in an Order for their entire life, it is not unknown for an individual to feel that their current journey requires them to change Order (Perhaps an Adamantine Arrow tires of the political ambivalence towards prosecuting a War against Banishers, and decides that the Leadership philosophies of the Silver Ladder are more appropriate). If a Mage becomes an Apostate having left an Order with a view to joining another Order, then this period of Apostasy is viewed as a necessary step in their continued development. If, however, they leave without any intention of joining another Order, then they are viewed with the same suspicion as long term Apostates.

The biggest group of neutral Apostates are the non-Pentacle aligned “Barbarian Mages”. Throughout History there have been groups of these mages who have eschewed the Traditional Pentacle orders, either because of lack of interaction, or because the local culture was more pervasive. There are loose groupings of these Barbarian Mages around the world, and for this Chronicle we have given some form to the British Tradition, a group called the Brilu.

Solitaires

Solitary by Choice or by Circumstance

While it is true that Solitaires are, on the whole, distrusted, not all Solitaires are equal. Mages generally recognise three types of Solitary.

The New Awakened:

The new Awakened is Solitary simply because she is new, and has not had a chance to know other Mages well enough to form a Cabal. These people are expected to either be fostered by a Cabal (later joining that Cabal or another when they are ready), or to find a Mentor. Generally, a Solitary student will be fostered by the Mentor's cabal, but it is also acceptable for the new Mage to remain Solitary but Mentored for a time, and for the Mentor to then assist them in finding a Cabal.

The emphasis here is that this is a temporary state. The New Awakened is not rejecting the sacred institution of the Cabal; they simply do not have one yet. If this state persists for too long, other Mages may suspect issues; either that there is something wrong with the Mage that means no one wishes to be in a Cabal with her, or that she is really Solitary by choice.

Solitary by Circumstance:

The most respected Solitaires; this Mage's word may be just as good as that of a Mage in a Cabal – more trustworthy, in fact, than a member of a rival Cabal. That is because these are, essentially, Cabal Mages – they are just temporarily without Cabal. These Mages were members of Cabals that broke up, surviving members of Cabals that were killed, and so on. Especially in the latter case, there is far less scrutiny among Awakened of how long the Mage remains a Solitary. The loss of a Cabal or Cabalmates is as serious as the loss of a close family member or spouse, and no one would expect someone to move on hastily to a replacement.

Some have persisted for years or even their entire lives without Cabal in this state – particularly 'orphaned' Mages, who will sometimes opt to carry on the ideals of their Cabal themselves rather than adopt new ones, out of respect to their fallen compatriots. Such Mages are most common in the Adamantine Arrow, due to the Order's high mortality rate, and can gain great respect as unbiased, independent Adamant Sages, or singularly dedicated Talons who replace their duty to their Cabal with unflinching dedication to their Order. In the Guardians, they can be seen as unbiased observers, incapable of a conflict of interest since they have no Cabal they might bend the rules for. The traditional mindset of the Silver Ladder, however, has less place for such people and expects them to return to the sacred institution of the Cabal before long.

Solitary by Choice:

This is the archetypical Solitary, distrusted and even despised for their stubborn refusal to commit to a Cabal. To more traditionally-minded Mages, they are almost a Heretic; the Cabal was forged as part of the path to Atlantis, after all, and they are actively choosing to go against that. More modern Mages may not care about this aspect so much, but there are more practical considerations as well; it is a common belief that a Mage on his own is more vulnerable to madness, Hubris and the call of the Abyss, since they have nobody close to them to keep them in check or notice any odd behaviour.

It is entirely possible for a Mage who is Solitary by choice to be a respected member of their community, but they will find they have to work a little harder to prove that their solitude is not making them vulnerable to corruption, or that they are already corrupt in a way they would not be able to hide from a Cabal.

Source: Sanctum and Sigil (Cabals chapter)

What this means for me: Mage the Awakening is meant to be a social game, with cabals, Orders and Consilia all providing social links, resources and safety for an individual. Without any one of those links, a Mage's life becomes harder. Sometimes cabals and Orders just don't work out, though, and we should accept that in our gameplay. However, if you decide to consciously eschew these links, then you must accept that your game will become harder, as characters trust you less.

Barbarian Mages in the British Isles

What follows below is not a replacement for an Order, nor any suggestion that the Brilu are equal in size or power to the Modern Day Orders. Instead, it is an insight into a little explored part of the Mage Setting as written by White Wolf. There are likely to be other Barbarian Mage societies globally, and maybe even locally.

Mage lore suggests that when the Diamond Orders expanded to the British Isles, they did not find these Isles Sleeping. On the contrary – early Britain was well-inhabited with Barbarian Mages, their origins unknown, their links to Atlantis uncertain, and their magical ways strange and terrifying.

The Barbarians blamed Atlantis and its descendants for the existence of the Abyss, and did not take kindly to Atlanteans trying to settle in their land and poke at their sacred places of power. Thus began a war that left deep scars on the magical resonance of the land, some of which can still be felt today.

As a result of the war, there is no official history kept by the Diamond Orders that goes into any detail about the early British Mages and their practices. The Mysterium attempted to collect artefacts and speak with survivors, but more often than not they found what had once been a wondrous relic inert and non-magical in their hands, and the survivors hostile.

What is known is that the original push of the Diamond Orders did not wipe the Barbarians out; they were merely pushed to the corners of Britain: the wildest and most rural parts of Scotland, Cornwall, Wales and Ireland. In these parts of Britain, a few Mages still practise today who claim to trace their magical traditions back to the wild Mages of Britain, a legacy untainted by the war in Atlantis and innocent of any part in the creation of the Abyss. For the most part, these Mages regard themselves as neutral Apostates, having little to do with the Seers or the Pentacle. As a community, these Mages call themselves Brilu.

Much like the Kabbalistic Mages, the Brilu know the Watchtowers by different names, and believe a different origin story for them.

According to the Brilu, when the Aynbri (non-Brilu Mages) fought and created the Abyss, the world was bereft of magic. Hearing their people's prayers, five of the Ancient Gods built Watchtowers in their realms to allow people to continue to Awaken. (A variant of the story has five of the Aynbri who ascended to the Supernal converting to the worship of the Ancient Gods, and by this being given the power to create the Watchtowers). These beacons are:

The Horned Tower watched over by Cerannos, the Horned God (The Watchtower of the Stone Book, Thyrsus)

The Three-pronged Tower, watched over by the Morrigná, the three sister Goddesses of War and Death (The Watchtower of the Lead Coin, Moros)

The Thundering Tower, watched over by Taranis, the Sky-God (The Watchtower of the Golden Key, Obrimos)

The Bright Tower, watched over by Brighid, Goddess of Fire, Light and Fortune (The Watchtower of the Lunargent Thorn, Acanthus)

The Chainbound Tower, watched over by Ogmios, the Binding One (The Watchtower of the Iron Gauntlet, Mastigos)

Every Brilu, thus, has a patron God among the Ancient Ones, the God whose Tower prompted his or her Awakening. Although the Ancient Gods have names, they are usually referred to only by title unless being called directly.

Cerannos, The Horned God:

The Horned God crops up throughout ancient West European folklore. To the Brilu, he is the God of the Wild and of Hunters, the essence of vitality and the wildest of places – what others might call a Verge – where the secrets of the hidden world of the Shadow peek through into our own.

Cerannos embodies life and healing, but his ways are alien to us and it can be tricky to learn his particular sense of what is 'right and wrong', especially for modern humans. Essentially The Horned God's way is that the strong devour the weak, thereby attaining greater strength, and that all debts are repaid in kind, good or ill. Natural resources are to be utilised, but not drained so that they cannot replenish themselves. Outsiders have observed that learning the Way of the Horned God is a good primer for dealing with the Spirit world and the way its inhabitants behave.

The Horned Gods' followers, the Wilder, are the healers, hunters and shamans of the Brilu, looking after the people and ensuring that the community is on good terms with the local spirits.

He is usually invoked by the wearing of green, wreathing the body in furs and leaves, and sometimes the wearing of antlers or horns on the head. Other means of honouring The Horned God include hunting an animal and symbolically sharing the feast with him when the animal is eaten, the tending of wild plants, and offering service and food to nature spirits.

The Horned God is the Patron of the Thyrsus or Wilder, and his Arcana are Life and Spirit.

Taranis, The Thundering God

The Thundering God has many analogues in other mythologies, from Jupiter to Zeus to Thor; the prevailing emphasis is on awesome power and a destiny for leadership. The Thundering God and his followers feel that right and wrong are theirs to judge, and that injustice should be met with severe reprimand – something they are not incapable of dishing out. Taranis is not all thunderbolts and proclamations, however – his right to lead comes from wisdom, in particular the wisdom of knowing when magic is best used, and when it is best reserved.

The children of the Thundering God are often leaders and judges in the Brilu community, and their ability to nullify the magic of others is rightly feared.

Taranis is invoked by wearing purple and gold, jewels and crowns, and wielding wands and amulets of precious metals, often inscribed with a thunderbolt. Other means of honouring him include using drums and metal to mimic the sound of thunder, exposing oneself to the elements, fasting from the use of magic and meditation on the meaning of wisdom.

The Thundering God is the Patron of the Obrimos or Highborn, and his Arcana are Forces and Prime.

Morrigna, The Threefold Goddess

The Morrigna or Morrigan are three Goddesses who are one Goddess, commanding the realms of War, Death, and Madness. Badb Catha is the Crow, an omen of war and death foretold. Macha is the peace of the grave, the gentle plain beyond and the remembrance of the dead. Nemain is the fury and insanity of battle, decay, and the ending of all material things.

Just as there are three Morrigna, there are three main roles for the Moros in Brilu society. The followers of Badb Catha are the Necromancers, those who stand between the living and dead, serving as warmasters with their zombies, or mediums, passing on messages from the dead. The followers of Macha are the perfectors, the artisans and smiths who work with the dead stuff of the world that it might better serve the living. The followers of Nemain specialise in entropy and destruction, harnessing the powers of Death and Matter to kill and destroy where necessary.

The Morrigan as a group are invoked by wearing black, white and feathers, particularly crow feathers, using implements made of bone, leather and silver, the use of blood in rituals and by casting rites in darkness. Badb Catha specifically likes bird skulls and the presence of items that were on a body as it died, Macha likes the wearing of white and the use of perfected metal implements, and Nemain is fond of blood and the destruction of objects to gain her favour.

The Threefold Goddess is the Patron of the Moros or Crows, and her Arcana are Death and Matter.

Brigid, The Bright One

Brighid is a Goddess of good fortune and strange occurrences. She appears unpredictable to most, but to those who know her there is no greater champion. She watches over the domains of protection, hope and prophecy, as well as artists, poets, singers and snakes. She is usually represented with one half of her face young and beautiful, and the other half ravaged with time.

The followers of Brighid are the scribes, diplomats and prophets of the Brilu and are often called upon for blessings of good fortune whenever there is an important task to be done. Their sacred places are always in extremely good condition, as it is well-known that terrible curses befall those who tamper with them.

Brighid is invoked by colouring the hair red, wearing white, red, and coloured ribbons, and by singing and speaking poetry. Other ways to honour her include lighting candles or small fires (which are often held still using the Time Arcana to represent Brighid's eternal flame), visiting crossroads, painting one half of the face, and the use of items and places that represent the in-between or boundary between two qualities or places.

The Bright One is the Patron of the Acanthus or Witches, and her Arcana are Time and Fate.

Ogmios, The Chainbound God

Ogmios is the God of eloquence and language, and of the ties that bind people and places together; thus, he is also a God of travellers. He is often compared to Mercury, but he has an altogether darker praxis. He is depicted with chains coming from his tongue, and the men who are ensnared by these chains will follow him willingly, even into death.

Rightly then, the Spellbinders are feared, because theirs is the power to ensnare the hearts and minds of men and women, and, through knowing the connections between people and the land, they need not even be near you to cast their magic upon you. Ogmios' followers are the Brilu's spies, but are also frequently found as trusted seconds-in-command to Highborn in the village or Crows in battle; their ability to manage and anticipate the behaviour of humans is, after all, second-to-none.

Ogmios is invoked by the wearing of grey and blue, the wearing of chains and piercings (often of the tongue), speaking Briyeth (which he is said to have invented), and the wearing of masks and disguises.

The Chainbound God is the Patron of the Mastigos or Spellbinders, and his Arcana are Mind and Space.

Brilu for STs

The Brilu as a rule are neutral Apostates, and regard the Pentacle and the Seers as merely two different factions of Aynbri, Mages with no regard for the Ancient Gods whose Hubris and warlike

ways led to the creation of the Abyss. Complicating matters further, while the Brilu's ancient laws are similar to the central precepts of Gold Law, the language of their Precept of Secrecy does not distinguish between Sleepers and non-believers, meaning that in its strictest interpretation, Brilu cannot discuss magic with Pentacle Mages – but can discuss it with the Muintir, the community of Sleepwalkers who follow the Ancient Gods.

While generally speaking they are secretive and reclusive, Brilu will respond to Seer and Pentacle Mages' invasion of their territory, and are likely to do so with force – particularly where traditionalist Brilu still hold animosity toward the Atlanteans for the existence of the Abyss.

Plotoooks/ideas:

- The Mysterium learn of the possible existence of a relic dating back to the war between the Pentacle and the Barbarians – but do the ancient magical protections surrounding it still pose a threat? Will modern-day Brilu take offence to the plundering of their history – or are they trying to get the relic themselves?
- The area claimed by the new Consilium borders on Brilu land – will the barbarians be new allies, or a threat to the Consilium?
- It becomes apparent that the area claimed by the Consilium contains a shrine to one of the Ancient Gods – will the PCs loot it, or let it be? What happens when Brilu arrive to make a pilgrimage to the shrine?
- A splinter group of hardline Brilu consider themselves still at war with the Pentacle, who must be punished for the creation of the Abyss. Can the PCs broker peace? Or will they fight?

Brilu for PCs

The descendants of Britain's native magical tradition provide a fascinating cultural background and different approach to magic, and with commitment to the concept, they can make great PCs.

It is important to remember, however, that by dint of being a PC, your character is unlikely to be a typical Brilu. While playing a pure Brilu traditionalist – Apostate, not interested in taking a side in the war with the Seers, etc – might be interesting as a niche concept, rejecting Order and animosity with the Seers is unlikely to get you far in the Pentacle, and it shouldn't. There will be a lot of plot that doesn't include you, and that's how it should be – the game is written for *Atlantean Mages*.

It may be a better idea, then, to play a Mage brought up in the Brilu tradition who has, for whatever reason, chosen to join the Pentacle. Your character may well experience conflict between their native culture and the one in which they now exist, which can be interesting – and the people back home may not always be supportive of your decision to leave.

Playing a Brilu:

If your PC was raised according to the traditions of the Brilu, you will want to consider these merits and variants:

Briyeth (High Speech variant): A Mage trained in the Brilu tradition does not ordinarily learn High Speech, but may learn Briyeth (translated, the 'tongue of power'), a magical language from which (according to the Brilu) the old Celtic tongues were derived.

Briyeth functions as High Speech to add +2 to Improvised Magic, rites from the Brilu Magical Tradition and rites codified by a Brilu to be compatible with Briyeth, but cannot be used to empower rites learned from an Atlantean tradition. Similarly, a Brilu may learn High Speech, but High Speech will not empower Brilu rites. Briyeth can be used, in all cases, to inscribe a rune to extend the duration of a spell, with the same effects as Atlantean runes.

Some very old spirits native to the British Isles may understand Briyeth, and as the Brilu have historically been good to the Spirits, speaking Briyeth to them may incur a social bonus at the ST's discretion.

No spell can be empowered by chanting in both Briyeth and High Speech.

Magical Tradition: Brilu (oo)

Prerequisites: Awakened, Occult 2, Academics or Occult speciality in Brilu or Ancient British Magic

Effect: As a Brilu, your character is part of an ancient magical tradition that connects the Arcana to the worship of Ancient Gods, who have chosen the Brilu as their conduits in the world.

Foci: The Focus for a Brilu rite is the presence of a conduit to the Ancient Gods; this is a Brilu in garb associated with his or her God, with the correct Briyeth symbols woven into her clothes or daubed on her skin. The conduit must act as is appropriate to the God she is channelling while preparing for and casting the spell.

Environment: The Environment for the Brilu rites is the land itself, and the mystic energies running through it. If the caster has not previously identified the correct spot to cast from in this location, she must accumulate 5 successes on a Wits+Occult roll to sense the correct spot. This counts as part of the preparation time for the spell. Each roll takes one minute, and the Brilu must not stop communing with the land until it is complete, or she will have to start again.

Suggested modifiers:

+3: The Caster is local to or very familiar with the area where the spell will be cast

+2: The Caster is in a rural or wilderness environment, within the British Isles

-1: The Caster is in a noisy, built-up area

-1: The Caster has never visited this location before

-2: The Caster is in a foreign country

-3: The Caster is in a type of environment (desert, tundra) that does not exist anywhere in the British Isles

Variable: Someone has tampered magically with Space in this area, or attempted to hide or alter the ley lines.

Suggested modifiers for casting a Brilu Rote:

+5: The Caster is in an Ancient British place of power, such as Stonehenge, Glastonbury Tor, the Green Chapel, etc

+4: The spell is cast by a group of five Brilu, each embodying one of the Ancient Gods

+3: The Caster spends an hour or more in meditation, communing with the Ancient Gods

+1: The spell is of an Arcana claimed by the caster's Patron God

+1: No non-Brilu Mages are present

-2: The Caster's faith in the Ancient Gods has been publicly questioned recently

-3: The Caster bears a Paradox Brand

-5: The Caster does not believe in the Ancient Gods

Brilu Rotes

[TO COME]

Other Merits and specialisations:

These aren't Brilu merits in particular, just Merits from various books and specialisations that would be common among the Brilu. Intended as a guide to players thinking of playing a Brilu or STs building one.

Language (WoD): Gaelic, Welsh, Gallic, Kernow

Brilu often speak the Celtic languages they believe to be derived from Briyeth, their High Speech. This not only connects them to their heritage, but can be a means of speaking that is unlikely to be understood by outsiders.

Outdoorsman (Midnight Roads)

The Brilu perform a lot of magic outside and are innately connected to the land – thus, they're often good at surviving in harsh conditions. This Merit is particularly common in the Wilder and Highborn.

Pleasing Aura (Book of Spirits)

Common among Wilder.

Allies or Contacts: The Muintir

The Muintir are Sleepwalkers who believe in the Ancient Gods, and revere the Brilu as the Chosen of the Gods. As such, it is not difficult for a Brilu to ask favours of them, especially if it is 'the will of the Gods'.

Mentor:

Unless a Brilu has left their people or is the eldest of her Path in the local community, she almost certainly has a Mentor. The bond with a Mentor is usually formed almost immediately after Awakening, and lasts until either the Mentor or the student dies. Brilu do not simply decide they do not need mentors anymore as Atlantean Mages do; it is a given that even if a Brilu surpasses his Mentor in magical power, he can still benefit from the wisdom of age in other facets of his life.

Geomancer:

They just like Geomancy. Also the Geomancy spec can be applied to the Wits+Occult roll to find a suitable spot for casting a Brilu Rote.

Occult specialisations: Brilu, Geomancy, Hedge Magic, Magical History of the British Isles, Divination

Academics specialisations: Ancient British Languages, Celtic History, Native Wildlife, Geography of the British Isles

Science specialisations: Botany, Native Wildlife

Medicine specialisations: Herbal medicine

Survival specialisations: Rural Britain

Brilu 'Consilia'

Brilu don't have Consiliums as such, but while they are mostly autonomous each area under their control does have a non-interventionist Council of Elders for making big decisions when necessary. There's no politics as to who sits on this Council; it is simply the Eldest (counting from the date of their Awakening) member of each Path in the area. The roles are predefined by the Elders' Paths;

The Highborn (Obrimos) is the leader, who breaks ties and whose wisdom will sway the rest of the Council on important decisions.

The Spellbinder (Mastigios) is a vizier-like figure, advising the other Elders and ensuring that the Council's edicts are followed by local Brilu.

The Witch (Acanthus) is essentially the Herald, performing diplomacy and announcements as well as using her divining skills to advise on the future of the area.

The Wilder (Thyrusus) sees to the physical and spiritual health of the populace, seeing that their mundane needs are met and functioning as the group's ambassador to the local spirits.

The Crow (Moros) deals with external threats and is in charge of ensuring that the local Brilu are trained in the skills necessary to repel threats from the Aynbri or other potential threats. In times of peace, the Elder Crow will lead funeral rites for any Brilu who die.

Pronunciation Guide:

Brilu: *BRI-loo* (the i is short as in 'pick') - The Barbarian Mages of Britain, and the Magical Tradition descended from them. Also, the members of that tradition, and an adjective describing things of that tradition. Plural is same as singular.

Aynbri: *AHN-bri* (short i as above) Literally, any Mage who is not Brilu, but usually used to refer specifically to the Pentacle and Seers as a single group. Also, an adjective describing things associated with those Mages. Plural is the same as singular.

Briyeth: *Bri-yeth* (short i) The magical language said to have been created by the Chainbound God, the root of all Sleeper Celtic languages.

Muintir: *Mwin-teer* (rhymes with winter) Sleepwalkers who believe in the Ancient Gods, considered associate members of the Brilu.

Cerannos: *SEH-rann-oss* The Horned God, Patron of the Wilder (Thyrus)

Morrigná: *More-rigg-nah* The Threefold Goddess, Patron of the Crows (Moros)

Morrigans: *More-rigg-anns* The sister Goddesses who make up the Threefold Goddess.

Macha: properly speaking, the 'ch' is like the 'ch' in 'leibchen'; '*Ma-ha*' is close enough. The Goddess of purity, perfection, contemplation, wide open plains and the afterlife. One of the Morriganes.

Badb Catha: *Babb-Kath-a* The Goddess of war and imminent death. One of the Morriganes.

Nemain: *Nee-mayn* The Goddess of entropy, destruction and the moment of death. One of the Morriganes.

Taranis: *Ta-rah-niss* The Sky God/Thundering God, patron of the Highborn (Obrimos)

Brigid: properly speaking, the 'gh' is like the 'ch' in 'leibchen'; '*Brigg-hidd*' is close enough. The Bright One, patron of the Witches (Acanthus)

Ogmios: *Ogg-me-ohss* The Chainbound God, patron of the Spellbinders (Mastigos)

Supernal Magic

There are classically five degrees of magic, and 13 practices within them:

Initiate: Knowing, Compelling, Unveiling

Apprentice: Ruling, Veiling, Shielding

Disciple: Weaving, Fraying, Perfecting

Adept: Patterning, Unraveling

Master: Making, Unmaking

Traditional Mentors will teach their students how to form the Imagos - they don't teach "Supernal Vision", they teach "The Practice of Unveiling in the Prime Arcanum", it's not "Psychic Assault" but "The Practice of Fraying in the Arcanum of Mind". You can find details of these in MT:A p19, 131.

Testing for Mastery

One of the important themes for Awakening is that Mages are Wise. They rely upon the respect and judgement of their peers, and listen to the opinions of their fellows. Another important concept is that of the mentor/student relationship. With these in mind, as a setting and theme point, rather than a rules one, we are making the distinction between having an Arcana at 5, and being a Master.

Having an Arcana at 5 means that mechanically, you've learnt the practices of Making and Unmaking for that Arcana, and can cast any spell that requires that Arcana at 5 or below. Being a Master means that you have an Arcana at 5, and have been tested by a peer – someone who also has that Arcana at 5, and has been tested for Mastery. Without being tested, you're not afforded as much respect within Awakened society – sure, you can do it, but you've not earned the respect of someone who's done it properly. This can be either an NPC, or a PC who has been tested for Mastery.

To get around the Catch 22 of "but how can I be tested if there are no other Masters?", we are creating sufficient NPCs to be able to test. VSTs will also be encouraged to create an appropriate NPC if they do not wish to use one of the existing ones, and a player wishes to be tested.

The test can take a form that the mentor deems appropriate – it could be a demonstration of skills, a short quest, a practical demonstration of the Arcana, etc. Once a PC has been tested, it is expected this will be announced to Awakened society as a whole – so that the mages can welcome another Master to their ranks.

Of course, for those who wish to challenge this standard, declaring yourself a master without testing and/or coming up with alternate means or protocol for testing is entirely encouraged for Free Councillors, Apostates, or anyone with an anti-authority bent to do, and everyone else to be politically enraged about!

Legacy attainment Gnosis requirements

After a fair bit of discussion, we have decided to move the Gnosis requirements from these. The reasoning behind this was to make legacy attainments more... well, attainable in a lower XP chronicle, without forcing people to spend a majority of their XP on Gnosis to see the higher levels of a legacy – which certainly for canon (aka in the books) legacies, are somewhat of a tried and true path, that you can't do without a mentor. Even in this chronicle, with the high levels of XP, Gnosis 7 seemed a stretch for a large amount of people.

With that in mind, we are moving the Gnosis requirements for canon legacies to 2 for the first attainment, 3 for the second attainment, and 5 for the third attainment. Any sanctioned custom legacies, or legacies created during the next chronicle, will have attainment Gnosis requirements of 3, 4 and 6.

In line with this, and the lower power level for the chronicle, we are moving the approval level for Gnosis – up to 5 will be Local approval, 6 and above will be Genre approval.

Archmastery

We have decided to not allow PC Archmasters within the chronicle. Archmasters are to Mages what a human being is to an ant – powerful and inscrutable. They're not people you generally chat with. They're not on your speed dials. They've got their own problems, on the other side of the Pax – problems that generally keep them away from lesser concerns. To join them is to withdraw from the Fallen World. As such, they're not suitable for player characters in a chronicle that is focused on Awakened and other supernaturals in the World of Darkness.

We are, however, keen to include the path to Archmastery as a roleplaying and setting point. The culmination of that journey will be a choice for the player – Do you wish for your character to become an NPC under the GST's control, or simply fade away? Or do you want your character to fail at the final hurdle, becoming a cautionary tale? The choice for this will remain firmly with the player.

In this way, we hope to make the path to Archmastery an interesting and fun quest, run by your VST, for a good, characterful end to a character that doesn't end in death – or for a thing to explore. You can get so far down the path and then decide... no, my future remains in the Fallen, helping my fellows.

As a note, the path to Archmastery (including any costs or requirements) and the point of no return on it is still a work in progress. Due to the XP squish, the paths laid out in published material are potentially not appropriate. We will continue discussions and welcome feedback or thoughts on this.

The Magic of Names

As there has been a lot of confusion over Names and their Power (and be certain, that Names have Power), we have decided to explicitly define the types of Names and their Powers below:

Birth Name / Legal Name / Real Name - In many instances, these are the same thing. This is the name that an individual is born with, grows up with, uses and identifies themselves with. It is the name they

carve on the Watchtower, and as such, knowing the Real Name of a person confers great power (This is represented by the fact that if you do not know the real name of your target, the difficulty of achieving a sympathetic connection is increased by two degrees on the sympathy chart. Which means that *even if your target is standing in front of you*, you are taking a -4 penalty because of sympathetic links. We shall ignore, for now, the fact that if your target is within sensory range, that you're probably *not* using sympathetic magic...).

If you change your name, legally, then the metaphysical weight of your Real Name carries across to whatever you change your name to - there is a great metaphysical power in the ritual act of changing your name, and the Establishment carries great metaphysical inertia with it. Think about it - how many bits of paper do you need to change? How much of the Fallen World changes because you change? As we say elsewhere: As Above, So Below.

Original Name - In some cases, the name you use now is not the name you were born with. Perhaps your family moved and changed their name to be more local, perhaps you were put into witness protection, perhaps you got married, or chose to distance yourself from your family. Either way, your Original Name is *not* your Real Name now. We've decided that this Original Name still contains Power, but not as much as the Real Name. In mechanical terms, this gives you a Sympathetic connection of Described (-10 penalty) which is *not* modified by the two steps as mentioned above.

Shadow Name - In order to mask the power of the Real Name, Mages use Shadow Names around each other. These Names give a hint to a Mage's personality and temperament - A Mage named after a God may display a large ego, or great power, or more likely be associated with that god's domain (e.g. Thor, God of Lightning, is probably an Obrimos or at least a Forces Mage). In most cases the Mage chooses the name for themselves, although it is common for a mentor to bestow the Mage's first Shadow Name upon them. As Mages change and grow older and Wiser, so their Shadow Names change, and many change their Shadow Name upon forging their soul into a Legacy.

True Name - A True Name is a gift from an Archmaster, a powerful spell that strips all sympathetic connections from any given name. The Mage could plaster their Original, Legal Birth Name all over the media and no-one would be able to use it for their benefit (except perhaps the Archmaster who gifted it in the first place...). This is represented by the sympathy level "Unknown", and thus sympathetic magic *cannot be performed* upon this target. There are exceptions, of course...

A word on New Identities: As far as we are concerned, these are just mundane Shadow Names, and do not provide any additional Sympathetic power. Therefore, even if you know a Mage's 'public' name (i.e. their New ID), unless you know their Real Name, you still suffer a two step penalty to casting sympathetic magic on them.

Order Secrets

The Five Pentacle Orders have, over the ages, codified a series of rites that utilise their unique Order Secrets. These Order Secrets are different interpretations of the Supernal Truths that are found in the

Fallen World, as indicated by the way that the Mudras are formed (Silver Ladder use hand symbols for authority, the Free Council use slang hand gestures). Each Order gains a spellcasting bonus of +1 to rites which contain with 3 specific skills (as determined by the Order). But there are other Order Secrets - The Guardians pass down the personality altering mental exercises known as Masques, while the Adamantine Arrow teach their Supernal Kata. There are more mundane secrets too - the access codes, passphrases, handshakes, gestures and so on to the secret or well defended Order buildings or magical resources. And with a struggle for resources, the knowledge of where the Mysterium have weaknesses in their archives may prove valuable to a Thearch looking to prove their mettle.

Consilia and other Political structures

The First Principles of the Consilium

Consilia began, ultimately, as something more like a Free Council Assembly – the Cabals of an area would gather to discuss issues, and the group as a whole decided how to resolve problems. These decisions became precedents for future judgements, and when recorded by the Cabals' Lorekeepers, became the Lex Magica of an area.

“As the politics of power shifted, the mages involved with these experimental Consilii decided it would be best if, instead of relying on ever-growing codes of laws, they could mirror the only constant in their lives — the Supernal energies flowing from the higher realms. In order to do this, the first Consilium mages proposed that a ‘proper’ Consilium would possess at least one representative from each Path. In each case, that representative would be the most skilled and experienced mage in the region. The five ‘Councilors’ would then act as the voice of the Supernal Realm, as channeled through the Watchtowers. Their Arcane connections would portray a glimpse of the higher realm’s vision of what ‘true’ justice should be.”(Sanctum and Sigil, p43)

This form of Consilium was spread and advocated for by the Silver Ladder until it became the dominant and standard model; and to this day the Silver Ladder consider a Consilium that does not have a Councillor of each Path to be broken or invalid; the union of five Councillors connected to the five Watchtowers is what gives the Consilium its Supernal authority.

No Taxation without Representation!

There are three main ways in which a traditional Consilium is run:

Common Law (favoured by Mysterium, some Guardians)

- Rarely have a written Charter, but do have a list of precedents
- Rarely have a Consilium Sanctum
- Judgements are enforced by the united will of the Cabals (and fail to be enforced where there is significant disagreement)
- Err on the side of nonintervention, leaving Cabals to mind their own business until called upon to do something
- Do not collect taxes and thus have few resources at their disposal as a Consilium.
- These Consilia frequently shift borders, details of rule and Cabal composition. They do not last for long, historically, but the paperwork involved in the changes is minimal.
- Prevalent in those areas with lower populations, which are mundanely political unstable, or are remote and rural. Or, in OC effects, where the Consilium is the same size as the Domain.

PROS: Individual freedom, less politics if you don't like that sort of thing

CONS: Less safety, less oversight if people decide to break Rule 7, no political game as such.

Civil Court (favoured by Silver Ladder)

- Uses a written Charter with exhaustive lists of precedents to reflect every crime, judging crimes strictly based on precedent without much reference to the individual circumstances
- Have an official Consilium meetinghouse which may be a Sanctum

- The Charter is often rewritten as people play politics to get their precedent or wording in
- Judgements are enforced by the power of the Consilium structure, but as almost all challenges made are legal and political, it is never clear how well the leadership would fare if the populace went strongly against them.
- Takes a small levy from its members
- Uses the Herald as a diplomat to keep public support in favour of the Council and Hierarch
- Meets once a year to discuss proposed changes to the Charter
- Councillors may override the Hierarch with a two-thirds majority
- These Consilia tend to last longer than Common Law Consilia because of the inertia required to overcome the entrenched political positions. The longest surviving Consilia tend to be
- This is the dominant Consilium Model where there are higher populations, where the landscape is mundanely politically stable, and in more urban or 'civilised' areas. Or, in game terms, where the Consilium is spread across several Domains.

PROS: Ordinary Mages feel involved without having to be in control, moderate freedom, moderate safety. Has good political game.

CONS: Inefficient, often corrupt, often dominated by one Order. Politics can become too all-consuming for non-political characters and players.

Tribunal (favoured by Adamantine Arrow, some Guardians)

- Often have a written Charter, with extensive Rights and Duties
- Have a Consilium Sanctum, usually heavily warded, often a Demense
- Judgements are enforced by the power of the Consilium structure and its powerful Sentinels. Public rebellion or disobedience is unwise. However, while the leaders do not require the support of the people, they will rarely enact legislation they feel will be extremely unpopular.
- Levy heavy taxes, and/or require Cabals to be ready to perform many tasks or favours should the Consilium demand it.
- Not a format we expect to see frequently, and not one that should be written without the explicit consent of the playerbase to start with.

PROS: Safety, efficiency, simplicity. Political game high stakes and exciting.

CONS: Lack of freedom, leadership difficult to replace or disagree with, can smack of 'he with the most cheese is in charge'

Traditional Consilium Positions

The positions of the Traditional Consilium are (in the order they were created):

- **The Councillors**, created by the Thyrsus. Appointed by simple majority vote among existing Councillors, but not usually successful without the approval of the Hierarch. One of each Path. Symbol: The Tree.
- **The Hierarch**, created by the Obrimos. Chosen from the Councillors, by the Councillors. Their role is to be the symbolic or actual leader of the Consilium, and they are supposed to be the Wisest of the Wise. Symbol: The Ring.
- **Provosts**, created by the Mastigos. Their role is to assist the Councillors and be their personal voice/eyes/ears etc. Chosen by their Councillor. Symbol: The Staff.

- **The Herald**, created by the Acanthus. Appointed by the Hierarch, but may be nominated by the Councillors. Their role is to carry the proclamations of the Consilium. Symbol: The Horse.
- **Sentinels**, created by the Moros. Appointed by the Hierarch, though the Councillors can overrule him with a majority vote if they feel his candidate is inappropriate. Their role is to protect the Consilium against threats and deal with internal disputes where Mages will not listen to reason. Symbol: The Mace.
- **Leigeman/Leigewoman**. Not an official position, but a title roughly equivalent to 'prominent member' or 'member in good standing', conferred on those who have proven loyalty and usefulness to the Consilium. Most positions will be appointed from among the Leigemen/women, and most Leigemen/women have a 'sponsor' among the higher ranks of the Consilium who may be grooming them for power in exchange for the occasional favour.

Consilium Charters:

The official document of a Consilium is not its Lex Magica, but the Consilium Charter, which is similar in structure to a Cabal Charter.

The Declaration: The shortest section, which states how the Consilium came to be formed, what its boundaries are and the purpose and aims of the Consilium. Usually this is as general as 'to promote peace between Cabals and safety for all members from outside threats', but it may also provide a clue as to what type of justice system (below) the Consilium prefers.

Rights: This lays down what the Consilium as a body is empowered to do, including to what extent it may interfere with the private business, property or person of a Mage or Cabal in order to fulfil the aims of its Declaration. This will determine how far a Sentinel can poke her nose into your business to investigate wrongdoing, and generally what punishments are permissible in the Consilium.

Duties: The constituent Cabals' and Mages' duties to the Consilium, usually consisting of obeying the Consilium's laws, abiding by its rulings and the levy or taxes imposed on each Cabal or Solitary in the Consilium. The levy usually takes the form of a certain number of favours a month the Consilium may call on, but it may also take the form of Tass, or access to Lore or knowledge. One Cabal is usually called upon to maintain the Consilium's Sanctum or gathering space. This section will also state what may be done in the event of nonpayment of these levies.

Lex Magica

The Lex Magica itself is not a list of laws – the laws (including Gold Law) may be included in the Rights (as things the Consilium has the right to punish or prevent), in the Duties (as things the members have an obligation to do) or as a separate document. The Lex is a complex system of precedents stretching back to the formation of the Consilium, recording every instance of a judgement that had to be made. These inform the Hierarch's decisions, as in the Traditional Consilium, it is the Hierarch who makes all judgements whether on inter-Cabal conflicts or crimes, and where there is not an explicit list of Laws besides Gold Law, it is the Hierarch who determines whether a given action is undesirable under the Declaration of the Consilium (for instance, using the above Declaration example, the action is judged to compromise peace between Cabals or jeopardise the safety of the Consilium from outside threats), and thus whether it is to be punished or not.

Not a Charter, but...

Traditionally, at the founding of a Consilium, a Divination is performed by a Time Mage to see the future of the Consilium, and to identify any challenges to be overcome. Or, as we referred to it: Plot Hooks. Especially when DOOM is involved. We think that these Divinations provide a great flavour for the game, but also provide practical tools for the VSTs to work with.

Issues, Problems, Criticisms:

Provosts: With five mages being required for Councillors, requiring another five to be Provosts can create a 'role bloat' depending on the size of the playerbase for the game in question. As such, while they are recognised as a useful position, they are not deemed a mandatory position.

Path Councillors: According to Sanctum and Sigil, the Path in question are not required to select their councillor - the Path Councillor is selected by the Council. Whether a Consilium wishes to have their Path Councillor elected or selected will be down to them, but needs to be established within the Consilium Charter. It is not a Universal, Supernal truth that the Path has any involvement in this process.

Liegeman/Liegewoman: This is a non-positional title for those people who have proved themselves useful to the Consilium, but have no responsibilities or extra powers. This will be covered more when we talk about status.

Consilium Sanctums: In terms of secure meeting places, I believe that these are beneficial to the game as a whole, and as such Size and Security (and other security features) should be determined by the VST, and maintained by the VST. It is assumed that PCs will not spend their time 24/7 here, but instead shall use the building for official Consilium business, and as a location for holding Consilium meetings, trials, etc. Other facilities that provide direct mechanical benefits (e.g. Libraries, Workshops etc) should be primarily determined by the VST, but if used by PCs, then maintained by players.

Lex Magica: The Lex Magica is a series of Illuminations (rulings) made in every trial in the Consilium's recorded history. While it provides precedent for certain rulings, it does not provide a hard line on how future rulings should be made. The only certainties are those Common Precepts that the Consilium adheres to (near universally: Secrecy, Recognition, Protectorate, Hubris and War), and the Tetragrammaton (or variant as defined within the Charter).

And finally...

Why do Mages congregate in an area? Is it just because of the human population? Is it because of beneficial geographical features? Is it because of weird things to study? We believe it's a combination of the above... but as we're focusing on writing a game setting that explores the mysteries of the Fallen World and the Supernal, we're introducing a new mechanic:

As Above, So Below

Said by many mages to represent many things, this is a mechanic used for VSTs. Why do so many strange occurrences happen within the areas filled with Mages? We say that the presence of a Consilium creates a grounding rod for the strange and Supernal to manifest. We're not going to say it *definitively*, but it certainly *looks* as if the Civil Court method of rule, with 5 Path Councillors, creates a stronger sympathetic connection that causes the most strangeness to manifest.

The very presence of mages working magic alters the resonance of an area, which alters the geomancy. Why else do so many hallows spring up, where before there were none? Why else do they change size and resonance without any other input?

Radical Systems and Historical Examples

Since the Wars of Independence in the 1300s Scotland has had a Scales of Alethia style Consilium structure. This structure, has involved Diamond, Seer and Brilu sitting in the same Consilium, on the same council. The Consilium has occasionally fallen apart, had massive tears ripped in it, but it has held.

For any who have visited, avoiding the other side is simple. The general atmosphere has been one of tense peace (think 1970s USSR and USA sitting at the same table on the same side). There is a joint council chambers with records, and members of the Consilium sit on the same council with followers of the Exarchs. Rumours are about that both sides still fight each other, but using other agents (Again, USSR vs USA via the medium of Korea and Vietnam). There have been some big cases in the past where someone was caught and the punishment has always been harsh.

In the past 10 years rumours came out about the Consilium having trouble again, and a direct attack happening sometime in 2012. The Consilium has not functioned as a Consilium since then, but things are being brought back together."

For more details please contact the LST Scotland Awakening on scotland.awakening.lst@islesofdarkness.com

In Summation:

- There are two main consilium structures we expect to see: One is council role heavy, the other is council role light
- Generally, we expect to either see: Consilia made of a several domains working together (being role heavy), or made up of a single domain (role light). VSTs should talk amongst themselves, and with their players to determine what format they would like.
- A Consilium Charter of varying complexity needs to be written for each Consilium
- The Lex Magica is not a strict set of laws and punishments, and does not need to be written as one
- Divinations about the future of Consilia are big and clever
- Mages create channels for Supernal Truths (or, plotkits)

Through the Looking Glass - The Phenomenal World

The World of Mage: The Awakening has many layers of reality to it. For the most part the action will take place in the **Fallen World** - but even that description is poor, as the **Fallen World** is made up the **Material Plane** (the one you parked your car in), the **Twilight** and **The Hedge** (yes, *that* Hedge). Crossing the **Gauntlet** we find ourselves in the **Shadow** (domain of Spirits, also known as the *Hisil*), various **Deep Shadow Realms** (Hidden pockets of reality), the **Inferno**, possibly **Arcadia** (No not *that* Arcadia, the *other* one. Maybe.) .

Head down from the **Material Plane** and you find yourself in the **Underworld**, and from there the **Autochthonous Depths** and then the **Lower Depths**. Reach up and you pass through the **Dream** into the **Oneiros**, the **Temenos**, **The Anima Mundi** and stop at the **Ocean Oroborous** as the edge of the collected **Astral Realms**.

There are only two ways to go higher, and they both involve crossing the **Abyss**. The first is to Awaken as a Mage, usually during a Mystery Play, and follow the Roads that the Watchtowers are anchored to before signing your name and drawing down the Supernal through your Soul. The other, of course, is to achieve Archmastery... And then, somewhere between the Material Plane and the Supernal are **Emanation Realms** - pockets of reality aligned to the **Supernal Realms**.

(William Harper has a fantastic image depicting the layers of reality. I heartily recommend you look at his stuff at <http://willworks.deviantart.com/>)

The Fallen World - The Material Plane

The World around you that you think you know - a World where Politicians make and break promises, where crime is on the rise and violent crime is doubly so, where fear is prevalent and the peaks and troughs of humanity are more exaggerated. And in the darkness, there *are* monsters. But even here in the Material Plane you can find magic in all sorts of places - cracks in the fabric of reality lead from one plane to another, ghosts find their anchors in the bricks of the buildings they died in, magic flows through the earth in lines that meet at Nods and seep out at Hallows. Ancient Ruins from a Time and a Place that cannot be proven ever to have existed hide away, with untold Secrets to discover (or rediscover). Objects gain power from grand events and take on a destiny and life of their own. And it is well known that it's not just people who have Auras - it's places too, and the repeated emotional outbursts of the world can imprint their resonance on places. It's why those dark and scary alleys are dark and scary, after all

The Fallen World - Twilight

Twilight is the world we live in, but out of phase by a small amount. Those beings in there are frustrated by their inability to touch or interact with the real world, despite being so close. Ghosts and some spirits manifest and reside here, and it is also the realm that some mages (and other beings) can project their consciousness into. Twilight is often associated with Death, but it is not a Death realm, and nor is it the Underworld.

The Underworld

Home of lost or ancient ghosts and stranger things still, the Underworld is a realm of vast vaulted chambers, grand mausoleums, claustrophobic rough earth tunnels, or the twisting passages of a maze. There is no sky to this realm, as it rests both deep underground and beyond the reach of any mundane excavation. Awakened cosmologers usually describe it as one of the metaphysically lowest parts of the Fallen World that does not quite fall into the strange realms of the Lower Depths.

It's a grim world of muted greys and browns, with the occasional flash of bleached bone white or somber black. Sometimes it is lit by strange phosphorescence or the flickering flames of funeral pyres, other times it is hidden by the pitch darkness of the deepest cave. It's not a good place for the living to walk - even its upper levels are dangerous as the ghosts covet the colour and life of the living, and the deeper one goes, the stranger things become. Cross a river, and ancient laws come into supernatural force to bind the living and the dead alike to their rule. Break these laws, and odds are good that you'll never be heard from again.

There are some commonalities between the Underworld and the Supernal Realm of Stygia, which has lead more classically-inclined Awakened scholars to theorise that with the shattering of the Celestial Ladder, the largest shard carried with it fragments of Stygia and fell through the Fallen World to form its deepest point. Certainly Stygian Artefacts have been found in the Underworld, and many wonder about the origins of the bizarre dead-but-never-born entities known as chthonians that roam the hidden parts of the Underworld. These strange creatures more closely resemble spectres summoned from Stygia than the shades of human dead, although they profess to have no knowledge of anything other than their current realm.

Needless to say, this rumour of a Supernal connection has prompted more than a few Awakened to undertake journeys to the furthest reaches of the Underworld in search of knowledge, insight and power. Many of these travellers don't return, dying at the hands of angry ghosts, consumed by chthonic beasts, or starving in the bleak tunnels and caverns that make up the Underworld.

Those who do make it back to the world of the living often return with new insights into the nature of Death, strange liquid samples from the rivers of the dead, or even long-lost rites and magical knowledge gleaned from the ghosts of long dead Masters. But equally travellers who do return almost always bring with them scars, physical or mental, from their time in this harrowing realm. Whatever secrets the Underworld holds, they come at a price.

In the very deepest parts of the Underworld, the strangest alien places, it is rumoured that portals can be found to even stranger realms - some of the deepest of the Lower Depths.

The Lower Depths

The Lower Depths are a collection of realms of quasi-reality that exist a further step removed from the Supernal Realms than the Fallen World. While these realms are many and varied, they are all characterised by the near-complete absence of one or more of the Arcana, and an extreme dearth of

mana. This absence breeds a common quality in the residents of the Lower Depths - a keen hunger for whatever they lack from the Fallen World, be it warmth, matter, light, flesh, souls, or (most commonly) mana in vast quantities.

The Lower Depths, even the most hospitable ones that are only a hair's breadth away from the Fallen World, are dangerous places. Supernal magic may fail in unexpected ways, laws of physics may be absent, and the inhabitants are rarely welcoming to intruders from the Fallen World unless they look edible. But there's knowledge to be gained in such places, potent occult secrets to be uncovered, or deals to be done with the realms' native inhabitants. For an Awakened willing to brave the risks and with little care for Wisdom, a great deal can be gained from exploring these places.

While only a handful of these realms have been discovered to date - mainly those connected directly to the Fallen World in some form - Awakened cosmologers theorise that untold multitudes of these Lower Depths may exist. Of course, the further removed they are from the Supernal, the more they lack and the more dangerous they become. At an extreme, the furthest of the Lower Depths may just unravel the pattern of anything that enters it.

Mages who make a study of the Lower Depths are treated with some suspicion and caution from their fellow Awakened. There's much to be gained from the Lower Depths but always at a cost, and just enough tales of Lower Depth explorers sacrificing Artefacts or other Awakened to seal their deals or open irises to new realms exist to make people jumpy. Be too public about such study, and it may not take long before people start using the phrase "Left Handed" when discussing you...

The Gauntlet

Between the Physical Plane and the Shadow is a thin metaphysical membrane called The Gauntlet. The thicker the Gauntlet, the harder it is to cross from one to the other. Be glad there is a Gauntlet, however, for it keeps things that do not belong in the Physical Plane safely away.

The Shadow / The Hisil

A reflected realm of the Physical Plane, the structures are made of Ephemera, and the inhabitants are Spirits. Mostly spirits. This is the domain that sees most frequent interaction with the Uratha, the Forsaken, the Werewolves. And as such, the Shadow and its denizens are being managed by the respective Forsaken Reset Team and GST Forsaken, with collaboration from the Awakening teams.

The Inferno

Somewhere below the Material Plane (metaphysically at least) and linked to both the Shadow and the Lower Depths is the Inferno - the true domain of Demons. Great knowledge and power can be gained from consorting with the entities found here, but at Great Cost. More information on this realm is available from the Inferno team.

The Oneiros

The first and most frequent location visited in the Astral Realms, the Oneiros is also known as the Dream Space (but do not confuse it with The Dreaming or indeed Dreams themselves). It is a

reflection of the Mage's mental state, their hopes, fears, dreams and secrets. Within the Oneiros resides a Daimon - a reflection of the Mage's personality that drives the Mage to greatness. Within the Oneiros are realms - strong memories have their own realms (e.g. a near death experience), strong emotions (e.g. the love for your partner), but so do phobias and derangements. These last realms are dangerous places to visit for the unwise and unprepared.

A trip to the Oneiros is a very personal event, as a Mage delves into their very psyche. For this reason, the trip is usually first undertaken with the assistance of their Mentor, who helps the Mage acclimatise to power, and understand themselves.

We consider that Oneiros trips are very ST intensive, requiring some detailed conversations about the Mage's personality and how that translates into realms of the psyche. As such, we do not think that they are suitable for main room games, but work very well as Chapter Games as part of a Mentor-Student relationship, or for a cabal. Although solo Oneiros trips are viable, we feel that these sort of scenes and encounters are best shared with a small number of other people, to address the balance of ST Input:Game Time.

The Temenos

Where the Oneiros is the Dream Space of a person, the Temenos is the Dreams of People. Here you will find those cultural artefacts that have made an impact on a population (The Realm of Sherwood Forest, of SLA's Mort, Deep Space Nine, Jane Austen's Meryton (with increasing Zombie numbers)). More than this though, it is filled with dreams of Archetypes - of the conglomerate city of Metropolis, of networks of railways and subway stations, even to the domains of various Deities. If a Mage is famous enough, they might even have their own realm formed...

For the most part, the Temenos is filled with shadows and reflections, inhabitants who bear more resemblance to a computer game NPC than a real entity. But just as there are Spirits in the Shadow, there are Astral Entities in the Temenos, with their own intelligences and agendas. They can be spoken to, negotiated with, even commanded, but beware the actions that you take in the Temenos, for they can have repercussions in the real world.

Entering the Temenos is much less personal than entering the Oneiros, and there's a lot of fun that can be had, entering into the ideological archetype of the ruined city, or the Greatest of Libraries. Again, we recommend that these stories are told with small groups - suitable for small games, side scenes or chapter games. Travelling to the Temenos on your own is dangerous and expensive, and having a party of colleagues who you can trust upon is always wise.

The Anima Mundi

We have spoken of the dreams of an individual, and the dreams of Humanity, but the Anima Mundi can be best described as the Dreams of Things. Here a Mage will find realms of nothing but Rocks, or Trees, Water or Deserts. The Dreams of Things are by their very nature, Alien to Humanity and the price of travel, and the price of protection while there are both taxing to the mind and soul, but the benefits that can be reaped by speaking with a specific Archetype are great indeed.

As with all other Astral Realms, the Anima Mundi is not just a single plane, but a series of connected pocket realms. Each one is a self contained microcosm, but there are numerous entrances and exits to the various neighbouring realms. And all of these realms are connected to the Fallen by way of the

psyche. The greatest example of this is The Swath, a realm of the damage and ecological destruction that Humanity has wrought upon the planet.

Due to the broad range of scenarios that can be played out here, we recommend that players who choose to explore the Anima Mundi do so with a clear objective in mind, with a small - mid party size. Getting to the Anima Mundi can be a side scene or Chapter Game's worth of exploration all of it's own, so these trips should only be arranged with the consent of your ST, and with a reasonable amount of notice.

The Whorl, The Abyss, Emanation Realms, The Supernal

Find out more about these locations in play, but be warned that they are difficult to reach, and you may encounter many dangers along the way.

What this means for you: There are more places than Heaven and Earth to explore. While the focus of the game should *always* be the Fallen World (the Material Plane, the Twilight and the Shadow), there are plenty of other realms to explore. The Astral Realms are not just a place for Mind and Space mages (although I will be brutally honest and say that Mind and Space magic feature heavily in the most useful spells), as each realm abides by its own rules. Mage is a Storytelling Game of Personal Horror amongst other things, and there are great horrors that can be found within ourselves. But we believe that horrors, secrets and fears can be telegraphed well, and other players and PCs can be drawn into personal plots to make a stronger game overall.

The Abyss is not the source of a great evil, it is instead a source of something terribly alien and horrifying. It is a source of destructive power that seeks to break down reality, and many of the entities there can be bartered with by crazed mages desperate for power whatever the cost. The Abyss is not a Nightmare Realm, but it is a realm that can affect and infect a careless mage with nightmares. Creatures of Paradox create great antagonists, and provide a chilling reminder of the price of following your obsessions.

A Timeline of the Awakened in Britain

A long long time ago: The Daoine have been around as long as there have been people in the UK, and originally were allied with the 'Barbarian' mages (The Brilu)

122: Hadrian's Wall started. To protect the Romans against the Celts and Northern Tribes, and the Diamond mages against the 'Barbarian' mages (The Brilu)

122: Hot Springs (e.g. the City of Bath) built upon Hallows with restorative mana

What this means for you: The Romans left their influence in a lot of places all over the Country. Maybe those Roman Ruins hide more secrets than just what the Legions ate for dinner...? The Romans also left resentment amongst the native population - if you have Brilu present, you may want to consider their stance on the 'intruding' Awakened, and whether there are locations that are still fought over to this day.

793 - 993: Vikings raid Britain. Diamond & Brilu Mages fight until a Peace Accord is brokered. The Diamond will stand with the Brilu Mages against the Exarchs. It takes some time for the Peace to filter through though...

793 - 993: Orphans of Proteus Legacy officially founded as a result of the Viking 'Bear Shirts' interacting with the Adamantine Arrow

Pre 993: The Sodality of the Tor sides with the Brilu, until the Peace Accord is brokered

Pre 993: The Dreamspeakers side with the Brilu, until the Peace Accord is brokered

Pre 993: The Elemental Masteries form the bulk of the Brilu

What this means for you: The second invasion of Britain as classified by our Mage History seeks to redress the balance between the Brilu and the Romans, forcing the overwhelming invaders (the Romans) to broker Peace. How did the Vikings interact with the native and not-so-native British? Are the remains of the raiding parties laden down with trade goods that include Imbued Items? Did the burial rites that happen bind powerful entities to watery graves? Or release them...?

1348 - 1349: The Black Death sweeps England, killing millions. The Awakened are not spared, and a few translations of contemporary accounts suggest that the plague was resistant to even the most potent of magical cures. Several major magical sites are assumed to be lost at this time, and many Hallows fade in the following decades as they are left untended.

What this means for you: Awakening History is full of times when Lore is forgotten. What Order secrets were forgotten when the mages who tended them died? What locations were buried under mounds of corpses? What terrible spirits were birthed in the morass of hopelessness and plague?

1580 - 1650: The craze for witch trials across Europe creates a complicated environment for the Awakened. While comparatively few Diamond Awakened are targeted as a result of the witch hunts themselves, magical practice is driven further underground. Groups of Banishers, the Paternoster, and

(discreetly) the Guardians of the Veil all use the witch hunts to persecute careless Awakened and further their own goals.

Late 16th Century and early 17th Century: Alchemy, astrology, numerology and summoning of "angelic" supernal entities become magically fashionable in Awakened society following the influence of John Dee. Several Orders retrospectively claim Dee as a member, although if he was a sleeper, sleepwalker or truly Awakened is a matter of extensive debate.

Late 17th Century: Clavicularis Students of Les Enfants de Severite return to the UK

What this means for you: Here we have a rich vein of material for secrets (from the Black Death?) to be unearthed, and for Mages to Ascend to the Stars, while Orders fight amongst themselves. Perhaps a Supernal Summoning took place, which empowered an Order locally. Maybe the buildings that the Consilium meet in were built, and laid down according to secret, arcane patterns. Who knows what happens if you walk around the building in a certain pattern...? And who still bears the grudge from those witch hunts?

1707: Hegemonic Agents persuaded the Pentacle (& other) forces to throw their influence behind the Union, creating a Greater Empire (of England and Scotland)

18th Century: "The Grand Tour of Europe" was a process many students of the Silver Ladder and Mysterium took up, to broaden their understanding of their neighbours and the Art. This process was actioned after a successful Convocation.

What this means for you: If you want to add in some European connections, then the Grand Tour is a perfect means to do so. This period here covers the height of the British Empire, and arcane secrets from the New World and Asia bring new and strange ways of looking at a large homogenous Westernised magical system. Here we begin to see The Other represented, but what if these Others were more than just humans... or mages...?

Early 20th Century: The newly founded Free Council attempt to claim credit for a number of scientific discoveries, citing their "inspiration" of the sleepers involved in these technologies.

1914 - 1918: The Spirit Mages of both sides (Allied / Axis, Pentacle / Seer) try to bring their spiritual Allies to bear. The War almost reaches into the Shadow, only stopped by the Scions of God (Pentacle & Seer) spearheading a non-aggression pact between Shadow Denizens.

1922: The start of the Decline of the Hegemonic as the dominant Ministry in Europe as Ireland secedes from the Union, despite NI remaining.

1939 - 1945: The Daksha support Nazi views on Racial Supremacy and Eugenics, and are subsequently ostracised or worse

1939 - 1945: The Spirit Mages of both sides (Allied/Axis, Pentacle/Seer) take more of a backseat role in WW2, honouring the pacts made a generation before. However, this doesn't stop Awakened from getting involved, with a covert occult war taking place along side the sleeper conflict. Artefacts change hands, a complex operation of scrying and warding takes place by both sides, and dozens of artefacts, imbued items, grimoires, histories, records and even Atlantean ruins are lost to the fighting. A great deal more in the way of magical items and knowledge is moved out from the cities into the countryside, with a substantial portion being stolen or claimed for private collections along the way.

Post WW2: The Empire builders were crushed, and Mammon called in debts (actual ones, not just favours). The Empire slowly disbands into the Commonwealth.

What this means for you: The Early part of the Twentieth Century saw great changes, both physically and societally. War came to Europe and gender politics began to change. Great Weapons of Mass Destruction were built and deployed, as the nature of warfare itself changed. Here we see deals and truces being brokered between Mages of the Pentacle and the Seers of the Throne, as they realise that the Tiger has woken, and there are bigger threats than their own rivalries. What dark deals were forged in those days? Who sided with who? And what locations were bombed to rubble?

1960 - 1969: Summer of Love etc draws in Daksha students proponents of their philosophy (Age of Aquarius etc)

1970 - 1989: Upwell in young Awakened sent to study under the Clavicularis as a result of rising popularity of Demonology in pop culture

1982: The Falklands War takes place. Many among the Pentacle of the UK believe this to be an attempt by the Praetorian Ministry to bolster their influence

For more information on the Falklands War, we invite you to play at the February National in Glasgow.

Opposing Forces - Antagonists

While it is fair to say that the PCs may not always be *Heroes*, they will always be the *Protagonists* of the stories that we tell. And every story needs a source of conflict, usually in the form of *Antagonists*. The classic Awakening Antagonist Factions are: Banishers, Seers of the Throne, Abyssal Mages and Left-Handed Mages. Beyond that though, there are Spirits, Ghosts, Ghost Mages, Demons, Astral Entities, Hunters, Mundane People ... and there may well be occasions when Mages are drawn into conflict with Vampires, Werewolves, Changelings and stranger things.

We do not consider Antagonist factions to be suitable for PCs. This means no Seers of the Throne, no Banishers, no Abyssal Mages and no Left-Handed Mages.

We accept that there may be times when using Abyssal Magic is necessary, and so we define Abyssal Mages as those who use Abyssal Magic frequently, and with the intent to serve the will of the Abyss/Abyssal Entities and work towards the destruction of the Universe. The *Scelesti* are an example of Abyssal Mages.

We also accept that some Left-Handed Mages have been branded so for political reasons, and that the conflict that these Mages bring is positive and not negative. Therefore, we are defining Left-handed Mages as those whose works directly work counter to traditional Awakened morals (The Cannibalistic *Devourers of the Flesh*) or who have aligned their souls to the Abyss (*The Cult of the Doomsday Clock*), or Reapers (such as the *Tremere* or *Carnival Melancholy*, who eat souls and steal fortune respectively). Those who have been declared Left-Handed for political reasons (for example, the *Austere*) are more likely to be considered, provided that the players understand the consequences of playing such a character.

Further, while deep cover infiltration games are fun and cool, they are outwith the scope of the Awakening game that we envisage. We do not intend to run effectively another National game for the very few who engage in deep cover infiltration operations, nor do we expect there to be significant and high level infiltration of the Pentacle. Low level infiltration and subversion at a local games is cool, and we encourage STs to look at these plots if there is need for them; but the aim should be to destabilise local assets, and not to topple Ministries.

Seers of the Throne

The Seers of the Throne are a powerful organisation in the UK, with pylons found in every consilium. That said, they do not engage in open war with the Pentacle for the most part, preferring a cold war of influence, rumour and PR to take down their foes and using loyal or unwitting sleepers to do the majority of their dirty work.

The Ministry of Panopticon has unprecedented sway in the most surveilled country in the world. While they may not be the top dog globally among the Seers, they certainly are in the Britain. The feeling of being watched that many Awakened get when walking through an area covered by CCTV

isn't always baseless paranoia, and while the Panopticon's sight isn't omniscient they have certainly capitalised on post 9/11 fears to gain a strong foothold in the UK's surveillance culture.

They're followed at a distant second place by the Praetorian Ministry, who have connections to much of the military establishment and traditions of the UK. Conflict is good for the Praetorian Ministry, and the assorted conflicts around the world over the past few decades has helped to shore up their previously waning power. However, fewer of their membership are soldiers in any nation's army than before, as they've embraced the arms trade (on both a legal and illegal level) and PMCs as good foundations to accomplish their goals.

The Hegemonic Ministry ranks third, although the other Ministries know that they are clinging to that place by their fingertips. They've still got connections in the political establishment, and have enough sway to make life very difficult for the Pentacle at a local government level, but genuine influence on politics at a national level is slowly but surely creeping away from them. Social media and politics by petitions and email are concepts that are hard for the Hegemonic Ministry to control. However, this makes them no less dangerous, as they desperately cling to what they have like a wounded animal. They're the Ministry whose pylons are most likely to come to direct conflict with other pylons as they sabotage their theoretical allies and take their resources. The Hegemonic Ministry has a particular grudge towards the Free Council, as they blame the Nameless Orders and their Great Refusal for much of their current misfortune.

Ranking fourth is the Lesser Ministry of Mammon. They have their eyes firmly set on the Hegemonic Ministry, and greater ambitions still. They don't intend that prefix of "Lesser" to last much longer. Capitalism is king in the modern day, and money its blood. Agents of Mammon are found everywhere there's business to be done, and have over the last half-century established a position of unprecedented power for themselves. Of all the Ministries, Mammon is the most likely to deal with the Pentacle, although such deals are almost universally heavily weighted in their favour.

And finally the Ministry of Paternoster works quietly behind the scenes. They've fallen a long way from their pinnacle of power as the UK has become increasingly secular, but unlike the Hegemonic Ministry there's no air of desperation about them. While organised religion has diminished in importance, the sleepers still want something to believe in and the Paternoster are happy to provide. Minor sects, online spirituality discussion groups, cults of personality and celebrity and more have become the tools of the Paternoster. As long as the impure worship of the sleeping soul isn't directed towards the Father or heretical fragments of Supernal reality, the Paternoster care very little precisely what their sleeper followers believe in.

What this means for you: Surveillance and counter-surveillance is the name of the game in today's post-9/11 espionage world. Be careful what you say to people on the phone, or in public spaces, and take precautions on protecting your mundane identities. That CCTV camera up there might be watching someone over there... or it might be watching you. Don't go charging into situations, guns blazing - that's a brilliant way to get yourself countered, caught or killed. Remember, that a mage's greatest power is their ability to think and prepare in advance.

The Seers know this, and use it to their advantage. They play the influence game, infiltrating and subverting power bases: The Police, the Council, the Church, Violent Crime, Businesses, Universities these are all ideal organisations to claim as their own. Unless you get there first, of course.

Also, remember that the Seers are *winning* globally, and hold greater resources than the Pentacle, but that they are also not pressing the advantage in Hot Wars. They are consolidating their Power Base and winning the Hearts and Minds of sleepers, so that the Pentacle find it harder to recruit, and to perform their own magic. So, do you risk raiding the Seer facilities and incurring their wrath in exchange for the Arcane resources that you find there? And dare you risk endangering weaker members of your Consilium in retaliatory strikes?

Banishers

Imagine that you have a terrible fear and hatred of Magic. Now imagine that you are *capable* of casting Magic. Banishers, in all their forms, hate and fear magic and Mages, including themselves. Some of them just go mad and kill themselves. Others pick up a rifle and axe and go out and hunt down the witches out there. Banishers are as varied as any other Mage: Some have great understandings of magic, some eschew it entirely, some work together in cells to hunt down other Mages, some remain solitary vigilantes.

The nature of the Banisher condition is complex and in-depth, and understanding it to the point of curing it globally is beyond the scope of this game. However, it is clear that there are two general routes to becoming a Banisher. The first is a terrible tragedy - for whatever reason an Awakening goes *wrong* and the Abyss cracks the soul as it Awakens. These Banishers are hardwired into a pattern of fear and hate, and many manifest abilities that appear to be connected or powered by the Abyss. That is not to say that they bend their knees before the Abyss, because that is just as much a target of their fear and hatred as Supernal magic. The second route is much more insidious: A mage can become *infected* with the Banisher condition. Transmission vectors and pathology are still unknown, but there is empirical evidence that interacting with Banishers, engaging them in dialogue can cause a mage to have some sort of a breakdown, and emerge as a Thaumophobe. Naturally, this makes Banishers *very* dangerous.

There is a third sort of Banisher - one whose phobia and fear is psychological and not hardwired into the soul. Usually they have been brainwashed by demagogical Banishers or others. While they are no less capable than their fellow Banishers, they are not contagious, and with the appropriate application of deprogramming, they can be brought back into Awakened society. Unfortunately, unless questioned (and risking infection), there's no real way to identify the difference.

Banishers do not have the resources, hierarchies and establishment that Orders and Ministries do (There may be exceptions, of course, pending GST plots and stories). Instead those who are not solitary tend to have a core of fervent followers. Indeed, in many ways there is no practical difference between a Banisher Cell and a Hunter Cell, save for the magical abilities the Banishers may have. Instead, the Banishers have Zeal and a willingness to take otherwise unacceptable risks to destroy their enemies. Many is the sad occasion when a Mage discovers they are being targeted by Banishers upon finding their loved ones kidnapped, tortured, killed or worse.

Many Banishers also seek to destroy the trappings of Mages - causing distractions to draw the Awakened out, only to then burn their libraries, or smash their artefacts. The Mysterium in particular suffer at the hands of these Banishers.

It should also be noted that the Seers of the Throne and Abyssal mages are not immune to the predations of the Banishers - all Awakened are viable targets, as they all represent a manifestation of the Banisher's fear and hatred.

Finally, there are many symptoms that can characterise a Banisher's condition, but you should not confuse the symptoms for the condition: Causality and Correlation are two different things.

What this means for you: Banishers pose a direct threat to your character's life, and their Obsession. They do not wage the covert influence war of the Seers, instead they go for direct brutality, empowered by a form of religious zeal. They cannot be cured, but just killing them perpetuates the cycle of violence that proves them right. Banishers are scary, because they can appear just like normal mages, up until the point they've transmitted their condition to you.

For STs, Banishers provide an excellent example of the ways that magic can wreak havoc in the lives of those around the players. Banishers are clever, cunning and utterly ruthless. They also have the ability to pose moral dilemmas for the players - how do you deal with a Banisher?

The Mad

The ultimate cautionary tale of the intersection between Hubris and Obsession - the Mad are broken Mages who have fallen through their Hubris and are now fixed into obscure patterns of behaviour based around an obsession. At the very basic level, they are Mages with Wisdom 0, but they should not be treated as just 'nutjobs', or a collection of derangements. Their very souls have shattered under the stress of Hubris and this fundamentally changes their patterns of behaviour and the way that they interact with the Supernal.

The occultation surrounding their shattered souls makes The Mad hard to find, track or even identify. Only the insane logic that governs their life can be used to stop them. And once encountered, they frequently manifest powers and understandings of the Supernal that normal Mages cannot control or conceive of.

What this means for you: The Mad should be treated as a puzzle to be solved, and a lesson to be learned. Only by understanding them can you hope to defeat them, but understanding them should highlight the dangers any character faces when pursuing their Obsession and not heeding the warnings of Hubris.

Left-Handed Mages

Not actually left-hand dominant as some pedants might suggest, those who tread the Path Sinister are those who eschew the traditional teachings of what is right and wrong, what is safe and sane. But Left-Handed mages are less about what they do, and more about their mindset when they do it: Empowering a spell with the abyss does not necessarily make you a Left-Handed Mage. Removing a single soul does not make you a Reaper. Dealing with an Acamoth does not tarnish your soul

irrevocably. But the further down the Path you go, the harder it is to return. Left-Handed Mages are those who can never return.

The term 'Left-Handed' is a catch-all term that encompasses a broad array of sins. Some of these are merely sins of political convenience - for example being a member of a radical abyss fighting legacy declared 'Left-Handed' by a council to allow them to act against political enemies with impunity. Some, however, like the cannibalistic *Flesh Devourers*, or the soul eating *Tremere* are Left-Handed because of the heinous crimes that they commit.

The *Scelesti* are the best known Mages who deal with the Abyss, brokering treaties with Abyssal entities, and enacting the Agendas of the insane beings who wallow in the Abyss. While the *Scelesti* are technically those in the legacy of the same name, that legacy also has a myriad of iterations, each one slightly different from the next. All of them, however, deal with Abyssal entities. The *Tick Tock Men* are not *Scelesti*, but they *also* make pacts with Abyssal entities in their efforts to destroy reality. The *Tremere* are the best known of the Soul-Reapers, but other legacies also enact this crime. In some ways the crimes of the *Tremere* are more understandable - their own souls have been taken and destroyed and they steal other souls to feed upon and retain their powers. But the *Carnival Melancholy* steal souls in order to gain fortune and lived a fated existence.

As with the Mad and the Banishers, The Left-Handed mages provide another faction within the Awakened society, posing a danger to Pentacle and Seer mages alike.

What this means for you: While the Seers may bankrupt an industry to cause despair and depression, their crimes are *nothing* compared to Left-Handed Mages. The Seers wish to control reality, the Pentacle wish to free it, the Left-Handed Mages wish to destroy it, or twist it into a heinous perversion. The dangers they pose may well be enough for Pentacle mages and Seers to work together to defeat these mutual enemies.

Other things

The realms Phenomenal are wide ranging and host to a plethora of things stranger than just Mages. Ghosts and spirits are probably the most common of these things, but there are others too, like:

- Cryptids: Manifested creatures of flesh and spirit from another realm, not be confused with...
- Claimed: Abominations caused by a spirit possessing a body and warping it.
- Supernal Entities: Creatures from the Realms Supernal, somehow manifested in the real world
- Astral Entities: Shadows, patterns, creatures made from enforced human (and natural) consciousnesses
- Gulmoth: Small Abyssal spirits
- Acamoth: Bigger, more malevolent Abyssal entities that can forge deals with willing participants
- Demons: Denizens of Inferno, summoned to Earth, that can wreak havoc and create sin
- Temple Guardians: Strange entities made of magic and stone and other materials, put in place when Atlantis was intact to guard sacred or important places

What this means for you: As an ST there are many things that you can use to provide puzzles and stories for your players. As a player, there are many cryptozoological entities to study and interact

with. Not everything will survive death to be stuffed and mounted in your hall, but not everything needs to be killed, either...

The Rules of Magic

Arcane XP

As we're playing a lower XP chronicle, to keep in step with the other genres, the monthly cap for Arcane XP has been currently set to 1. We are going to revise the list of what earns arcane XP, and what doesn't, plus what it can be spent on – current thoughts are Arcana and Gnosis, plus potentially some Arcane XP required for Gnosis (and potentially other things) above 5. This is subject to change, but we wanted to keep the cap as low as possible so as to not disrupt the shared continuity XP levels, whilst still allowing this fundamental part of the Awakening genre.

Learning Times

For the most part, learning times have been conflated with the XP spend. Thus it takes the same amount of time to learn a one dot rote, as it does to learn a five dot rote, as it does to improve your shooting ability, or your stamina.

However, for Arcana and Gnosis, we have some additional rules:

Learning magic without a teacher is hard. As such, the optional rule from Met:A “Increasing Tutelage” (p205) will be in play: This requires the PC to spend one DT action per month per dot of the arcana they are attempting to learn. e.g. Learning Death 3 requires 1 DT action a month for 3 months.

Learning magic with a teacher is *less hard*, but still difficult. As such, learning an Arcana from Initiate to Adept (1 - 4) requires 1 DT action, and confirmation from a teacher. This teacher can be a mentor, another NPC, or a PC. If a PC, then confirmation is required in writing, but it will not require an action.

Mastering an Arcana is also difficult, even with a teacher. As such, Mastering an Arcana requires 1 DT action, and a teaching action from a teacher. This teacher can be a mentor, another NPC, or a PC. If a PC, then confirmation is required in writing, and will also require a downtime action.

Finally, learning a single arcana is hard, and as such, a PC can *never* gain more than a single level in an arcana in a month, although they can still apply their knowledge to other arcana. E.g. Bob the Mage cannot go from Death 2 to Death 4 in a single month, however he can go from Death 2 to Death 3 and also Forces 2 to Forces 3 in the same month.

For Gnosis, we have decided that levels 1 - 5 can be acquired as normal (i.e. just make a note in your downtime and spend the XP). However, at level 6+ there will be a requirement for a downtime action as well. Please also note, as mentioned elsewhere, that 6+ is the transhuman level and will also require an approval.

Casting in Downtime

It is assumed that Mages use magic in their daily life. Therefore, for each downtime action that they submit, they may have up to (Gnosis / 2) spells active for the duration (in addition to any pre-casts).

e.g. When investigating an Ancient Pyramid, a PC with Gnosis 3 may cast an additional “Speak with the Dead” and “Temporal Wrinkles” to help locate the secrets hidden within. However, it is also assumed that magic can be wielded like a weapon or a tool, and any number of Instant Action spells without a prolonged or similar duration may be cast, subject to the ST’s approval (e.g. Having woken the mummy in the Pyramid, the Gnosis 3 PC may then cast as many “Psychic Assaults” or “Healing Hearts” as the ST deems necessary to escape, but the PC may not boost their attributes as those spells have a prolonged or similar duration).

A player may spend a DT action to Ritual Cast a spell (expressing one or more effects, if combined). Regardless of the actual time it would take to cast, because of the abstraction of the downtime system this always costs one action. Again, for ease of execution a PC will always receive a number of successes equal to their pool (plus any modifiers they can apply). e.g. A PC with Gnosis 3 and Mind 5 wishes to boost all of their social attributes ahead of an important negotiation and so decides to ritual cast this. They have a pool of Gnosis 3 + Mind 5 + High Speech (2) for a total of 10 successes that can be applied to duration, potency and target factors (if appropriate).

A PC gains one set of pre-casts per month. This is calculated by multiplying Gnosis and Unmodified Stamina (e.g. a PC with Gnosis 3 and Stamina 4 has 12 successes). These successes can be divided amongst as many spell factors and spells as the player decides, so long as the total success do not exceed their total number of pre-cast successes.

It is assumed that these will start from the day of the PC’s home game and will expire when the duration runs out (e.g. a PC who enters play with a Death Shield with a duration of 4 days will not have that Death Shield at the game they attend a week later).

If you wish your PC to have additional spells active for particular games, then these will need to be cast using an a downtime action to ritual cast the spell.

If you do not wish to calculate pre-casts, a PC may elect to start the game with one Shield and one Sight active for the game.

A Player may spend one DT action to codify a rote that they wish to learn (or have created through custom approvals). During this downtime a PC will either cast the spell 10 times (if it is an instant action to cast), or (Gnosis) times if it is an extended action. This assumes that the PC does not gain the benefit of the spell. If you wish the PC to gain the benefit of the spell while codifying, then the regular rules for downtime casting apply. Please note: *Learning* rites is a free action as usual, this only applies to *codifying* rites.

Spells that affect Downtime

- One Mind / Two Thoughts [Mind 1]

Allows you to work on two separate mental projects as part of a single downtime action, making 3 Extended Action rolls (or 4 with Good Time Management) on each project.

- Multitasking [Mind 3]

Allows you to work on three separate mental projects as part of a single downtime action, making 3 Extended Action rolls on each project.

- Co-location [Space 4]

Doesn't give extra downtime actions, but can be useful for other purposes. If combined with One Mind/ Two Thoughts or Multi-Tasking, can be used to appear to be in two/three locations at once, although only physically present in one. See One Mind / Two Thoughts and Multitasking above for more details on these effects.

- Manifold Presence (as above) [Space 5]

You can have two independent versions of yourself with Mind 1, or three with Mind 3. Any beyond that mirror the actions of the original mage. If used in downtime, it gives the mage the ability to do Teamwork by themselves on an Extended Action with no Mind, do two separate Extended Actions in a single downtime action with Mind 1, or three separate Extended Actions with Mind 3. Only one of these actions can involve spellcasting.

Note: Spells cast on the original body DO NOT copy across to other iterations. Additional target factors must be added if you wish to target all iterations of a PC (e.g. to increase all their dexterity). One body is considered the 'Primary' body, and it is this one which can cast spells and has the soul present - although this may change on a round by round basis.

- Sleep of the Just [Mind 3]

Can be used to give another set of Extended Action rolls on a given (non-physical) project.

- Delayed Rest [Mind 2]

No effect on downtime actions - however may have other benefits.

- Hurried Rest [Mind 2]

Gives an another set of Extended Action rolls on a given project.

- Forgo Rest [Life 1]

No effect on downtime actions - however may have other benefits.

- Body Control [Life 2]

No effect on downtime actions - however may have other benefits.

- Autonomous Servant [Forces 3]

With Mind 1 allows one of the One Mind / Two Thoughts extended rolls to be physical, as long as it being done by invisible force fields isn't an issue...

With Mind 5 and Space 2 this effectively creates a temporary Retainer at a level equal to (successes /

5, to a minimum of 1), with the appropriate benefits this gains. And don't forget, it's still an invisible force field...

- Marionette [Prime 4]

As the PC is required to concentrate on the spell, this provides no effect on downtime actions - however may have other benefits.

- Forge Tulpa [Prime 5]

No effect on the number of downtime actions gained - however may have other benefits.

- Temporal Pocket [Time 4]

After spending a DT action to ritual cast, the PC gains a number of additional downtime actions equal to the Potency + 1 of the spell while within the spell's area of effect. e.g. Bob the Mage casts Temporal Pocket with a Potency of 3, he gains 4 downtime actions as a result.

Note: The bubble is considered to be a small but undefined area, and all equipment that is required must be present inside it for extended actions to be viable. Power supplies and network connections are likely to be significant issues for power tools and computing equipment inside the pocket. Also, the PC ages normally, and should be aware that frequent use of Temporal Pockets will make them age relatively faster than others around them.

- Faerie Glade [Time 5]

After spending a DT action to ritual cast, the PC (and any number of others, subject to ST approval) gains a number of additional downtime actions equal to the Potency +1 of the spell, while within the spell's area of effect. e.g. Bob the Mage casts Temporal Pocket with a Potency of 3, he gains 4 downtime actions as a result.

Note: The Faerie Glade starts with a 1 yard radius (as per the spell factors), and all equipment that is required must be present inside it for extended actions to be viable. Also, the PC ages normally, and should be aware that frequent use of Temporal Pockets will make them age relatively faster than others around them.

MET vs. Tabletop rules

Unless stated here or in the addenda, we will be using the full tabletop rules as presented in Mage: The Awakening.

Due to the absence of Downtimes in M:TA, it is assumed that the downtime rules presented in MET: A where appropriate will be used (see specific spell effects, and the Increased Tutelage times as examples).

Where appropriate, please replace any duration of "a day" with "a chapter" (except in the specific duration factors).

We are using the optional rules "Relinquishing Control of Spells" MET:A p151, "Mana bleed" MET:A p64, **XXX**.

Imbued Items and Artifacts

Imbued Items are a valuable, flexible and very varied tool. As such, every Imbued Item will have the mechanics associated with it stored on the database. In the event that the item is transferred between PCs, this record will also accompany the transfer.

The XP cost associated with acquiring an Imbued Item has not changed from the Tabletop rules.

For PCs crafting Imbued Item, the spells must be cast with DT ritual casts as per any other spell casting. However, we recognise that costs associated with relinquishing spells permanently and undispellably are very high, therefore it should be assumed that the alternate relinquishment cost spells from Tome of the Mysteries (pp 128 - 132) should be relatively well known within "Imbued Item Crafting Circles" and that they *only* apply to relinquishing spells on Imbued Items.

Artifacts follow similar rules to Imbued Items, in that they all are considered custom items with custom mechanics which must be logged in the database with their appropriate approval. Each Artifact should also be provided with a brief (usually no more than 500 words) provenance and history. Remember Artifacts are Legendary and should be treated as such, not just as another mundane tool.

Artifacts can *not* be made by PCs.

Mana, Tass and Hallows

Starting Mana Pool is calculated using the following formula for the first game of the month/cycle:

Willpower + Dots in Hallow + Composure (for Legacies only) + Any other bonuses - (1 per non-rote, non-Ruling Arcana precast) = Mana Pool

Willpower is calculated from Base Resolve + Base Composure - Permanent dots sacrificed.

The mana pool a PC ends a game on is used to calculate the starting mana pool of the next game they attend that month: End Mana Pool + 1 = New Mana Pool

If a player does not keep a record of their ending mana pool, they are assumed to start with *half* of the Starting Mana Pool as calculated above.

Tass can be created in two ways - by letting it naturally crystallise at a Hallow, or by using the Prime 3 spell "Create Tass" at a Hallow. In either case, by extracting the mana from a Hallow and solidifying it, that Hallow's mana output is unavailable for the rest of the month (for starting mana purposes, for example). Unless the Hallow is drained completely dry, then the Hallow's ability to negate the first point of mana per spell roll remains.

The "Create Tass" spell has a duration, however, and at the end of that duration the tass dissolves into ambient mana. Additional duration factors can be added as normal to store tass for longer.

Hallows are the magical lifeblood of Mage society. While they are common, they should *not* be abundant - rare is the cabal that controls more than one, for example. Each Hallow should be logged with the LST and DST, and have the resonance recorded.

Hallows which are not tended to gather crystallised mana in the form of tass. A Hallow which has not been tended to in some time should be a prized acquisition for an opportunistic mage, which means it is important for mages to tend to their Hallows lest they be lost to other parties.

It should also be remembered that strange effects can occur around Hallows, not least the strange crystallisation of pure magic that occurs. As such, these need to be logged with the DST so that other supernaturals within the Domain have the opportunity to discover them, as should be true for the strange locations found in White Wolf books (Permanent Hedge Gates, Loci, Anvernian Gates, Geomantic Nexi etc).

Creative Thaumaturgy, Rotes and Availability of Imagos

Unless otherwise stated elsewhere, all spells can be cast using Creative Thaumaturgy, as that is the essence of the understanding of Practices and Magic in the Mage: The Awakening system. However, it should not be assumed that all spells can be cast *perfectly* using Creative Thaumaturgy, especially if a Mage is casting the spell for the first time, or is adapting a spell they already know, or is under pressure or other detrimental effects. The act of casting a spell requires understanding and forming the imago of the spell, and each spell's imago is unique, although many will share similarities.

Thus, when faced with a (for example) Cthonian entity for the first time, a mage *may* cast a spell which affects it, however as the pattern of the entity has not been studied, they should be heavily penalised (-3 to -5) for their lack of knowledge and understanding of the spell and its intended effect. Once the Cthonian has been studied for some time (a few rounds with a relevant sight, perhaps), then the penalties should be mitigated, as the Mage's understanding of the subject has increased, and thus the shape of the imago is more appropriate in their mind. This is not to say that a Mage who frequently uses Creative Thaumaturgy to create the same effect should also be penalised - here the imago burns brightly in their mind.

Every *spell* written in the Mage: The Awakening books has an associated *rote* with it, thus the Fate 5 spell "Swarm of Locusts" has a corresponding rote "Fortean Storm". Rotes are codified forms of spells, which contain Order Knowledge and Philosophies within the forms and mudras. As such, Order Rotes are frequently jealously guarded secrets, because they allow for Orders to cast certain spells better than other Orders, and thus gain an advantage.

It should be assumed that all spells and rotes within the core Mage: The Awakening and Tome of the Mysteries books are commonly available to all PCs within a socialised setting (Apostates may well find it difficult to acquire any rotes at all), unless specifically addenda'd otherwise.

It should also be assumed that all other Order Rotes are considered commonly available to Order members, and difficult to acquire for non-Order members. This may manifest as extortionate teaching prices, or Thrall favours being used to acquire the rotes. It should be remembered that these are Order Secrets, although the Imagos are available to all, the codified forms are jealously guarded. Thus,

the Free Councillors in play should be much more likely than members of any other Order to be using the rites from the Free Council book (for example).

There are also areas of magical study which beyond the average mage, and require time and dedication to understand both the spell and the effect. It should be assumed that spells that deal with the Astral Realms (beyond the Oneiros), entities from realms other than the Fallen (e.g. Supernal Realms, Underworld), or the Abyss will be uncommon, prized and more difficult to learn than other spells, and the associated *rites* even harder.

Some legacies have developed their own spells and rites that align with the philosophies of their legacy. As such, these are considered commonly available for members of those legacies, and uncommon for anyone else.

Finally, some unique artefacts, Grimoires and entities may have the ability to teach specific unique spells and their rote forms. It should be considered *impossible* to learn these except via the specified manner (e.g. through the particular Named Grimoire).

Consequences

Stories in Mage the Awakening are often about Consequences - changing the landscape to suit your whims can disrupt the nearby ley lines, or alter the local spiritual ecology. Destroying the storm-spirit in your territory can change weather patterns, and affect local crops. Banishing the ghost, rather than helping it complete a task on earth can mean that a murderer remains at large... and kills again.

The Universal Setting document talks about the Consequences that can befall any PC in any genre. But here are some examples of other Consequences:

- Using vulgar magic causes an abyssal manifestation to occur
- Using magic indiscreetly causes a sleeper to learn of the existence of mages
- A poor cover up of a crime scene leads to police or reporters investigating further
- Frequent use of fire magic leads to the Emergency Services appointing a specialist Arson Investigation Unit
- Any of these may lead to Guardians of the Veil investigated frequent offenders, and bringing charges
- Making deals with demons may (will) lead to morality/Wisdom loss, and more undesirable side effects
- Neglecting a Hallow leads to it being drained by opportunistic mages
- Deciding not to use a mind shield causes a spread of a memetic-virus
- Frequently casting a specific type of magic changes the resonance of an area, attracting the attention of hungry spirits and then Werewolves
- Using violence as a first resort results in manhunts, both mundane and magical
- Stealing a cultural artefact from a church incurs the wrath of the vampire who claims it as territory.
- Or the Hunter group based there...

With Great Power...

Gnosis is the power stat for Mage: The Awakening, but more than that, it is a mark of the strength of the connection between the Mage and the Supernal. The stronger the connection, the greater a mage's understanding of the world(s) around them, and thus the greater power they can wield.

In real, mechanical terms a higher Gnosis brings with it a greater chance of risking paradox, as the connection widens and more of the abyss can be drawn down by accident. To counter this, higher Gnosis characters end up relying on more and more mana and tass, or invest in rote forms of spells, or allow others with a weaker connection (Gnosis score) to work those acts of magic. Further, if a Mage loses control of her wisdom, then her pattern may lose cohesion, and mana may bleed out in the Fallen world (as per the optional rule on p65 of MET:A).

In less mechanical terms, a stronger connection (higher Gnosis score) begin to see and understand the world differently. And as the world is heavily fabricated by The Lie, they may withdraw into their own studies, seeking an escape. The greatest and most successful of these transcend the conventional

limitations of magic, and evolve their patterns into Archmasters, gaining the understanding to work Imperial Mysteries.

... Comes Great Responsibility

Wisdom is not just the morality stat for Mage: The Awakening, it's the measure of how well a Mage remains humble with their god-like powers in the face of the half-understood truths around them. It is also a measure of how damaged a Mage's Soul is, and how much influence they have on the effects of the Abyss in the fallen.

High Wisdom mages are careful with their use of magic - not using it frivolously or without regard for the subjects and effects of the spells. An example sin at Wisdom 10 is 'Using magic to accomplish a task that could be achieved just as well without it'. Those mages with the highest Wisdom radiate trustworthiness to spirits and the like, who become more positively disposed towards them. Mages with very high Wisdom also gain some manner of control over the abyss, increasing their chances of combatting it, and also decreasing the duration of any paradox that they incur.

Consequently, Low Wisdom mages put spirits on edge, causing them to be less positively inclined to deal with a Mage. The Abyss does not heed the banishment commands of a Mage, and paradoxes manifest for longer. More than that, though, a Mage with Low Wisdom thinks nothing of wielding the vast power that they have for trivial purposes, or using violence to expedite a problem solving process.

Wisdom is the measurement of a Mage's control over their own Hubris - the lower down the scale they fall, the more likely they are to fall into the clutches of Hubristic ideas. Hubris leads to carelessness, and carelessness leads to breaches of the Veil. And we all know what *that* means...

A note on Wisdom Sins

Following a lengthy discussion regarding the nature of Wisdom Sins, we have clarified amongst ourselves and with the original texts that spells which *indirectly* help cause damage do *not* require a Wisdom 4 Sin check for the Hubris of 'Using Magic to harm someone with intent'. This means that mages who 'buff' others, either through stat boosts or enhanced weapons, are not using magic to harm others. The presiding ST may decide that this does count as a Wisdom Sin at a higher level (7, for example) however.

Removing the Soul of another Mage is *always* a Wisdom 1 sin.

Playing the Game

Mood, theme, personalities and styles

As mentioned throughout, Mages are Obsessed with something. When coming up with your character, then you should think about what drives them to keep exploring the world around them, and to develop their own skills and techniques. Power for Power's sake is a poor character choice for a protagonist. Buying Gnosis, Arcana, skills and rites should never just be a case of "Oh, I've got some XP, I'll just buy more powerz!", think about how your XP spends are influenced by their Obsession, but also by the world around them.

Being a protagonist in a game is your responsibility - the more you put in, the more you get out. If you just want to play a character who sits quietly and doesn't like talking to people, then you will need to think why and how that character interacts with the world around them, and more importantly, the game you are playing. We thoroughly approve of talking through your character story arcs with your LSTs, so that they can write hooks to involve you, but there comes the expectation that if you ignore all the hooks then they cannot be held responsible for your lack of engagement.

Similarly, if you decide to play a character who is obnoxious and anti-social, you should not be surprised if your character is excluded from things, or treated with less respect and kindness than you might like. That said, if you accept the consequences of your actions then there is nothing to stop you playing such a character.

Character vs. Environment, Character vs. Character

Mage the Awakening has been written to include levels of politics and resource management in it. It is expected that Mages should be at least a little bit selfish - after all if there were enough resources to go around, and everyone worked in harmony, then Atlantis would've risen again. It is expected that the stereotypes of the Orders are to be played up (Guardians dislike people using vulgar magic wantonly, the Mysterium dislike people giving knowledge away for free, the Free Council don't believe in the Hierarchies of the other Orders) and we expect *friction* to occur - Conflict is the Essence of Drama - when opposing views come together.

That said, while Mystagogues and Guardians may argue over who gets to keep a dangerous Artifact, we also expect the Pentacle mages to work together against common enemies. We also expect a social contract of inclusion where possible - every character, every *player*, started somewhere, and inviting new players/characters along to investigate puzzles, raid tombs or slay demons leads for more fun games for *everyone*. Killing other characters for their actions is not going to be banned, or outlawed, but we would ask that anyone thinking of doing that consider all other options *first*. Long running feuds provide more conflict, more drama, than brutal tit-for-tat executions.

Shadow Names and the Mask you wear

We've already covered that Mages have Shadow Names to protect their real identities. But this is a game that we play, and there's no small element of using shorthand codes to depict complex metaphors. Consider which is more representative of a Silver Ladder powerbroker - is it a player in a sharp suit? Or is it a player in a suit, with a stole covered in the Atlantean Glyphs for the Silver Ladder, and their Path Arcana? What depicts a Guardian of the Veil better than a player with a mask on them (even if they never wear it)?

Out in the world outside, then hiding one's real identity is very important, lest your enemies or the sleepers discover it. But when attending the meetings that games represent, then the Mages reinforce the Supernal connections that represent them. It's already clear that certain materials and objects have Fallen Sympathies (see pp 89-90 of M:tA for more details on specifics), so it's no great stretch of the imagination to carry that into clothing - for example, the Acanthus who wears brightly coloured clothes and wreaths themselves in thorns truly believes that they *do* become a little closer to Arcadia.

If you want to go the whole hog and make some formal robes, then here are some comments to help you:

An apprentice or trainee Mage (one who has yet to join an Order or learn an Arcana to Adept) does not have a hood on his robe, traditionally the Mentor would present him with a hood in a ceremony.

Masters of Arcana would traditionally wear a symbol of their Arcana (a clock for Time, etc) or the High Speech Rune for that Arcana on their clothing or bodies.

The Diamond Orders have ceremonial robe colours associated with them:

Silver Ladder: Silver/Gold

Guardians: White/Grey

Arrow: Red/Black

Mysterium: Blue/Purple

Appendix A - Legacies

This list is not the be all and end all, this list is likely to change with the Addenda and updates to it, and does not include Custom Legacies, which will need approving and Peer Review. Similarly, some attainment effects may alter from those published.

Entering into a legacy requires a Gnosis of 2, a legacy teacher, and other legacy specific requirements. If the teacher is a PC with the appropriate other requirements (i.e. has reached the second attainment), then entering into the Legacy only requires LST approvals (from all LSTs as appropriate), however, the GST should be Notified. If the teacher is an NPC, then this becomes a GST Approval.

Entering into a Legacy always requires a DT action, as does mentoring someone into it - the act of Shaping your Soul is not an easy one.

The Legacy teacher, if an NPC does not need to be a Mentor (o to ooooo), although it can be.

Approved PC Legacies

- Ascended Adept - Obrimos, Mind. WW40301 Tome of the Watchtowers, pg125.
- The Austere* - Guardians of the Veil, Matter. WW40305 Guardians of the Veil, pg172. *NOTE: This legacy is considered Left Handed politically, and should be played as radical anti-abysal terrorists. There is a high chance of character death and other consequences should you chose to play one. They may not be suitable for your game.*
- Awakening Gambit - Acanthus or Adamantine Arrow, Mind. WW40103 Adamantine Arrow, pg151.
- The Bearers of the Eternal Voice - Mastigos or Guardians of the Veil, Mind. WW40305 Guardians of the Veil, pg163.
- Bene Ashmedai - Mastigos or Silver Ladder, Spirit. WW40105 The Silver Ladder, pg156.
- The Blank Badges - Acanthus or Free Council, Other. WW40308 Free Council, pg94.
- Bokor - Moros, Death. WW40301 Tome of the Watchtowers, pg95. *NOTE: Moros Only.*
- Brotherhood of the Demon Wind - Mastigos or Adamantine Arrow, Time. WW40103 Adamantine Arrow, pg157.
- Choir of Hashmallim - Obrimos, Prime. WW40322 Summoners, pg188.
- Clavicularis - Mastigos or Silver Ladder, Mind. WW40100 Legacies: The Sublime, pg13.
- The Concord of Serpents - Mastigos, Mind. WW40322 Summoners, pg192.
- Cryptologos - Mastigos or Free Council, Mind. WW40308 Free Council, pg97.
- Daksha - Obrimos or Mysterium, Life. WW40100 Legacies: The Sublime, pg23.
- Daoine - Acanthus, Fate. WW40100 Legacies: The Sublime, pg33.
- Dreamspeaker - Thyrsus or Free Council, Mind. WW40101 Legacies: The Ancient, pg14.
- The Eleventh Question - Guardians of the Veil, Time. WW40305 Guardians of the Veil, pg166.
- Eyes of Ain Soph - Obrimos or Mysterium, Prime. WW40102 The Mysterium, pg166.
- The Fallen Pillar - Thyrsus, Life. WW40100 Legacies: The Sublime, pg43.

- The Fangs of Mara* - Mastigos, Mind. WW40100 Legacies: The Sublime, pg138. *NOTE: These are considered Left-Handed for political reasons and are generally distrusted. They may not be suitable for your game.*
- Forge Masters - Moros, Prime. WW40101 Legacies: The Ancient, pg72. *NOTE: While the misogynistic aspects of this legacy are still in play, we do not expect players to conform with them. However, if you choose to act counter to the philosophies of the Legacy, then you should expect other NPCs to act accordingly to your contrary behaviour.*
- The House of Ariadne - Acanthus, Time. WW40100 Legacies: The Sublime, pg53.
- Imagineers - Thyrsus or Free Council, Spirit. WW40308 Free Council, pg100.
- The Keepers of the Covenant - Thyrsus or Silver Ladder, Fate. WW40105 The Silver Ladder, pg160.
- Liberators - Mastigos, Mind. WW40301 Tome of the Watchtowers, pg67.
- Lords of the Inanimate - Thyrsus or Silver Ladder, Matter. WW40105 The Silver Ladder, pg164.
- Neocologists - Thyrsus, Spirit. WW40301 Tome of the Watchtowers, pg155.
- Orphans of Proteus - Thyrsus, Life. WW40000 Mage the Awakening, pg346. *Note: Thyrsus Only.*
- Perfected Adept - Obrimos or Adamantine Arrow, Life. WW40000 Mage the Awakening, pg349.
- The Pure Sovereigns - Obrimos or Silver Ladder, Life. WW40105 The Silver Ladder, pg168.
- The Pygmalion Society - Acanthus, Mind. WW40100 Legacies: The Sublime, pg63.
- The Reality Makers - Mastigos or Silver Ladder, Prime. WW40105 The Silver Ladder, pg171.
- Reality Stalker - Mastigos or Mysterium, Space. WW40102 The Mysterium, pg173.
- The Scions of God - Silver Ladder, Spirit. WW40100 Legacies: The Sublime, pg73. *NOTE: Silver Ladder only.*
- Singers in Silence - Acanthus or Mysterium, Death. WW40102 The Mysterium, pg169.
- The Sisterhood of the Blessed - Acanthus or Silver Ladder, Fate. WW40105 The Silver Ladder, pg174. *NOTE: The majority of members of this Legacy are female. Male members may be held to a higher standard than their female peers.*
- Skald - Acanthus, Mind. WW40101 Legacies: The Ancient, pg82.
- The Sodality of the Tor - Thyrsus, Fate. WW40100 Legacies: The Sublime, pg83.
- Sphinxes - Mastigos or Mysterium, Fate. WW40101 Legacies: The Ancient, pg91.
- Stewards of the Celestial Orrery - Obrimos or Silver Ladder, Time. WW40105 The Silver Ladder, pg178.
- The Stone Scribes - Moros or Mysterium, Fate. WW40100 Legacies: The Sublime, pg95.
- Storm Keeper - Acanthus, Forces. WW40301 Tome of the Watchtowers, pg38.
- Stygian Heralds - Moros, Death. WW40322 Summoners, pg201.
- Subtle Ones - Mastigos or Guardians of the Veil, Mind. WW40000 Mage the Awakening, pg352.

- Tamers of Fire - Obrimos or Elemental Masteries, Forces. WW40101 Legacies: The Ancient, pg39.
- Tamers of Rivers - Thyrsus or Elemental Masteries, Matter. WW40101 Legacies: The Ancient, pg48.
- Tamers of Stone - Moros or Elemental Masteries, Space. WW40101 Legacies: The Ancient, pg57.
- Tamers of the Cave - Mastigos or Elemental Masteries, Death. WW40101 Legacies: The Ancient, pg28.
- Tamers of Wind - Acanthus or Elemental Masteries, Forces. WW40101 Legacies: The Ancient, pg65.
- Thread Cutters - Moros or Guardians of the Veil, Fate. WW40101 Legacies: The Ancient, pg100.
- The Threnodists - Mastigos or Free Council, Space. WW40100 Legacies: The Sublime, pg107.
- Thrice-Great - Obrimos or Silver Ladder, Spirit. WW40101 Legacies: The Ancient, pg110.
- The Transhuman Engineers - Obrimos, Forces. WW40100 Legacies: The Sublime, pg118.
- Uncrowned Kings - Moros or Free Council, Mind. WW40000 Mage the Awakening, pg355.
- Votaries of the Ordained - Moros or Guardians of the Veil, Fate. WW40305 Guardians of the Veil, pg169.
- Walker in Mists - Acanthus or Mysterium, Space. WW40000 Mage the Awakening, pg358.
- Whipping Boys - Obrimos, Life. WW40312 Keys to the Supernal Tarot, pg87.
- Wraiths of Epochs - Moros or Mysterium, Time. WW40102 The Mysterium, pg180.

Approved Antagonist Legacies

Please note that STs may use any approved legacies for their antagonists, however, the following are explicitly NPC only.

- The Architects of the Future - Acanthus or Seers, Time. WW40321 Seers of the Throne, pg167.
- The Carnival Melancholy* - Acanthus or Silver Ladder, Death. WW40105 The Silver Ladder, pg182.
- Chrysalides - Thyrsus or Seers, Life. WW40321 Seers of the Throne, pg170.
- The Cult of the Doomsday Clock* - Moros, Time. WW40100 Legacies: The Sublime, pg128.
- Devourers of the Flesh* - Thyrsus or Adamantine Arrow, Death. WW40103 Adamantine Arrow, pg160.
- Dreamers of the Black Sun - Mastigos, Mind. WW25201 Shadows of Mexico, pg107.
- Echo Walkers* - Obrimos, Life. WW40101 Legacies: The Ancient, pg121.
- The Legion - Other, Life. WW40322 Summoners, pg204.
- Logophages* - , Mind. WW40101 Legacies: The Ancient, pg131.
- The Masters of Destruction - Moros or Seers, Death. WW40321 Seers of the Throne, pg173.
- Princes of the Many Masks - Acanthus or Seers, Life. WW40321 Seers of the Throne, pg175.
- Scelesti - , Other. WW40000 Mage the Awakening, pg361.

- Secret Order of the Gate - Seers, Space. WW40321 Seers of the Throne, pg178.
- Timori* - Banisher, Other. WW40104 Banishers, pg153.
- Tremere Lich - Moros, Death. WW40000 Mage the Awakening, pg363.
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Appendix B - The Seers of the Throne

In an effort to make it clearer what it is safe and dangerous, accepted and not-accepted to know about the Seers of the Throne, we have produced a short list of topics and genre levels. This is largely based on the Old Chronicle's 'What is safe to know' document, and I would like to thank the previous authors for their solid work.

Be aware that gaining the 'Seer' Speciality is a Genre Approval, and that gaining any of the Genre Approvals below will put your PC on a List. It is not a good List. They will not be checking it twice. They will just be responding to it with increasing force.

What Is Safe To Know (AKA Local Approval)

Generically:

Serve the Exarchs - this is openly admitted, they seek to serve the god kings that keep the world imprisoned.

The Iron Pyramid - the hierarchical structure is also openly known, if not the exact hierarchy.

Pylons - these are like cabals.

Tetrachates - these are like Consilia. They are headed by a Tetrarch.

Ministries - these are non-geographic portfolios of belief. The names of the greater Ministries are known. The Panopticon and the Pretorian are famously well known, along with the portfolios of 'information' and 'war,' the Hegemonic as 'organized power', Paternoster as 'religion' and Mammon as 'greed'. There are rumours of other Ministries, too, but whether these are misinformation campaigns, errors in communication or truths are not confirmed at this level.

They prevent Awakenings - they seek to rule the world with an iron fist and keep it asleep, the best way to do this is to prevent more mages existing.

They fight the Abyss- the Seers hate the Abyss as much as the Pentacle.

They are not all dedicated, but there are always rumours of priests who have learned from the Exarchs themselves (OC: people with prelacies).

Seers of the Throne have access to magics unavailable to other Awakened. They are believed to be gifts of the Exarchs and only appear to the most dedicated of their followers.

They just know things - the Exarchs talk to them, somehow, somewhere, the Exarchs are everywhere and their hands actively direct their agents. You can hide from them, by being inconspicuous, but if you make noise _and_ know forbidden secrets, they will come for you. It's known that they view _teaching_ their secrets even more poorly than simply knowing them. This is presumably a by product of the Exarchs 'Controlling Reality'.

Ochemata - People tell stories of these and their capabilities. They are thought to be Astral Entities and the property of the Exarchs. These get sent against people who really, really piss off the Exarchs in person.

Specifically:

Pylons - Understanding the membership of and movements of a Pylon at local level is considered Local Approval. This must be gained through in-game actions, whether uptime scenes, downtime influences or something else appropriate.

Individual Seer Positions - Again, being able to identify individual officers within the Seer's structure is a Local Approval.

e.g. A Free Council cabal spend their time stalking the local Seers who tried to recruit a newly Awakened Mage. Through their actions, they learn that the Pylon involved meet in a local nightclub, in the upstairs office. One of the Seers owns the club. They frequently host meetings there, where other Seers show some respect to the Pylon Leader. Other members of the Pylon are highly placed within the community and use their influence towards controlling people through money. It is reasonable to surmise that this is a Mammon Pylon, and the Pylon Leader holds some position of office. This is all Local Approval.

What It Is NOT Safe To Know (AKA Genre Approval)

Ministries/Tetrachates - All Ministries have their own structures and officers. There are rituals and secrets which go hand in hand with membership. Gaining access to the secret rituals of membership for a particular Ministry (e.g. being able to perform the correct mudra in an identification spell) is a Genre Approval.

Knowledge of the workings of Lesser Ministries and the reliability of whether any particular one is a front, a half-truth, an actual truth or a lie is a Genre Approval.

Understanding how the Hierarchies work, and the roles and importance of the individuals within is a Genre Approval.

Being able to recognise a Great Seal is a Low Approval, but understanding what it is, and how it works is a Genre Approval.

Exarchs - Being able to Name an Exarch is considered a Genre Approval.

Being able to identify Prelacies in action is not a Genre Approval, but study of them and understanding how they work *is*.

Knowing that the Seers use Sleepwalkers is *not* a Genre Approval. Knowing the names of any of the specific lines (e.g. the Myrmidons), *is*. Needless to say, study of these lines is also a Genre Approval.

Access to any Rotes from the Seers of the Throne book, or ones which are marked as Seers of the Throne elsewhere is a Genre Approval. Creative Thaumaturging these spell effects is not. Codifying any of these Secrets into Order Rotes is *definitely* a Genre Approval.

Study of the Ochemata is a Genre Approval. Being able to identify one as it targets you, is not. Also, any knowledge relating Ochemata to Archmasters generally is a Genre Approval.