

it of that type may serve a magician of that tradition (see *Spirit Services*, p. 177). For examples of spirit associations with magic, see *Spirits*, p. 294.

As part of the concept for a tradition, the relationship between magicians and mentor spirits—and some understanding of what a mentor spirit *is*—must also be established. Mentor spirits may be anything from ancestor spirits to loa, totems, abstract concepts, or personal demons who whisper the secrets of the universe.

DRAIN ATTRIBUTE

Every tradition relies on Willpower to resist Drain. In addition, each tradition uses one other mental attribute (Intuition, Logic, or Charisma) to assist in Drain resistance. The attribute used is the same for all members of that tradition and may not be changed later.

EXAMPLE TRADITIONS

Two traditions with a significant presence in *Shadowrun* are hermeticism and shamanism. Hermetic magic is intellectual. These magicians see the universe as a complex pattern of forces that can be controlled with the right formulae and rituals. Magical knowledge comes from intense study and research. Hermetic magicians often call themselves *magés*.

Shamanic magicians focus their magic through their relationship with the world of nature and the power of emotion and inspiration. To them, the world is a swirl of natural energies, most of which have personalities of their own. Shamanic magicians are referred to as *shamans*.

The Hermetic Tradition

Concept: The scientific study of magic as a complex pattern of elemental forces that can be controlled with the right formulae and rituals.

Combat: Fire

Detection: Air

Health: Man

Illusion: Water

Manipulation: Earth

Drain: Willpower + Logic

A hermetic magician's ability to perform magic comes from the study of a complex set of theories that describe mana, the dimensions of astral space and how they interact with the physical world. The science of thaumaturgy, as this discipline is called, draws those who rely on logic and reason as their means of evaluating the world. As with any vibrant field, while the basics are largely agreed upon, the theories as to how it all works and what magic can do are as varied as the magés themselves. By seeking understanding, magés can perform magic through ritual and focused power of will.

Hermetic magic was studied widely even before the Awakening. The reasoned, intellectual nature of thaumaturgy appealed to corporate and government interests, who fostered hermetic magic even as society at large retained its skepticism. Once shamans like the Ghost Dancers proved the power of magic to the public at large, however, people took serious

interest in the arts of the mage. While both traditions were eventually legitimized in the eyes of the public, far more magés work for corporations than shamans do even today. (*You* try telling Coyote he only gets an hour for lunch.)

Magés are scholars who study and practice magic using tried and established formulas and procedures. Magés continuously research the theories and laws of magic, seeking a deeper understanding of the structure of the universe. As their knowledge increases, so does their power.

Magés summon spirits that represent the basic building blocks of the universe: air, earth, fire, and water. These are called elemental spirits in hermetic theory. In addition, they may summon a “fifth element” of consciousness: the spirits of man. The realization of these elemental spirits of the mind are a recent development and magés differ on what they believe these spirits to be. Some refer to the spirits of man as ghosts, while others call them mind or consciousness elementals. Some few even view these entities as ancestor spirits.

The Shamanic Tradition

Concept: Magic comes from a shaman's connection to the power of nature and the spirits. These latter forces are the manifestation of the living earth; her children, the spirits, guide and aid the shaman, often through the auspices of a mentor spirit they call a totem.

Combat: Beasts

Detection: Water

Health: Earth

Illusion: Air

Manipulation: Man

Drain: Willpower + Charisma

When the Awakening brought magic to the world, native tribal shamans were some of the first to successfully use it. Shamanism also developed in many urban areas during the boom in occultism at the close of the 20th century. These “urban shamans” discovered the old ways worked in the cities just as well as in the wilderness. Shamans are in tune with the natural flow of the energies of life and magic.

To a shaman, the world is filled with living spirits, powers the shaman calls on for magical aid. Shamanic magicians summon spirits that are tied to nature: air, earth, water, beasts, and man. To a shaman, these are the spirits of the natural world. They are spirits of the skies and storms, of the mountains and valleys, of lakes and rivers, of birds and rats, and the spirits of the mass of humanity, for even man is a part of nature. Communion and trafficking with such spirits is a venerable and honored tradition among shamans.

Most shamans have a mentor spirit called a totem who gives the shaman magical power and knowledge. The shaman, in turn, follows the ideals represented by the totem and works toward its goals where applicable. Many shamans find that this totem expresses itself through them when they use magical skills, often changing their appearance slightly to suggest their totem animal. This phenomenon is called a shamanic mask (see *Noticing Magic*, p. 168). A player can choose whether or not this effect is apparent for her character.