CONSTRUCTS OF MAGIC

The world is – literally – made of Emotions. Both matter and energy are a form of processed Emotions, which flow in an ever-going cycle, and interact with each other. The more complex the Emotions are, the more advanced Construction are produced. In game terms, processed Emotions are represented by Traits.

- Level 0: Emotional pools give birth to simple objects and items. Every rock and every pint of water are created from such a small quantities of Emotions. Level 0 Constructs are made of but 1 Trait, which constitutes their very nature (e.g. "Sharp knife" for a knife). Constructs divested of all their Traits cease to exist.
- Level 1A: With emotions flowing in streams, living creatures – such as plants or bacteria – are born. Level 1A Constructs are made of exactly 2 Traits, and are automatically reduced to Level 0 if ever dropped to but 1.
- Level 1B: Emotional rivers are enough to produce sentience. With no less than 3, and no more than 4 Traits, Level 1B Constructs are represented by living and feeling animals.
- Level 2A: To gift with intellect and self-awareness, whole lakes of Emotions are required. Level 2A Constructs, such as humans, have at least 5 Traits, and 8 Traits at the most.
- Level 2B: Creatures bred from emotional seas are able to perceive and understand more than meets their natural senses. They are extraordinary individuals, who merge their talents with hard work and intuition in order to achieve unachievable. Level 2B Constructs consist of 9 to 12 Traits.
- Level 3: Emotional oceans stand for the most advanced individuals possible, similar to gods in their power. Obtaining such a scope of complexity is unheard of without becoming a subject to powerful magic or at least without some unnatural longevity (Ascension, Immortality or Transcendence are required) as such a number of Traits (13 to 16) can hardly be learned within a normal lifespan.
- Level 4: The most complex Constructs possible are emotional floods that over-flow all the coinciding Emotions. The cosmic consciousnesses – able to produce true gods, nirvana-like collective intellects, or weaves of biased fate – are no longer represented by Traits. Such Constructs are never limited with material or emotional forms (automatic Transcendence), though they can still interact with reality, possibly through avatars. Level 4 Constructs are empowered or weakened via Annihilation Effect, though it usually takes another Level 4 Construct or a joined effort of tremendously powerful cabal of Level 3 Magi to achieve such a goal.

EFFECTS OF MAGIC

Emotions can interact with each other beyond material level. The more powerful caster's will and passion, the more powerful magical effects can be achieved.

- Level 1: Even basic magic may be employed to gift the caster with extrasensory perception and petty emotional control. Common cantrips include weaving illusions, benign reality shifting, and telepathy. In game terms, Level 1 effects can be specifically employed to perceive through target's senses, to read target's mind, to plant simple suggestions, to initiate nonverbal conversations, to temporarily change target's Traits (affixed Traits must be known or otherwise available to the caster), to sense surrounding for emotional flows, and to turn Fillings into Dents (or vice-versa). Level 1 effects are also strong enough to completely heal all target's Stuns; or to heal or aggravate all target's damages by a level.
- Level 2: More complex forms of magic are great for remote manipulation and advanced emotional influence. Common effects include mind control, telekinesis, thermo-kinesis, weather control, and simple transmutations. In game terms, Level 2 effects are also employed to kill or damage, to animate or mend, to cure, to permanently change target's Traits, to temporarily divest target of Traits, or to augment target with Traits (affixed Traits must be known or otherwise available to the caster).
- Level 3: Advanced casters are able to control Emotions directly. They can thus manage entropy (which includes perceiving target's past or future; as well as shifting target's age; as well as obtaining immortality), complex transmutations (which allows permanent divesting of or augmenting with chosen Traits), and unrestricted shape-shifting. Level 2 effects are also commonly used for flash-travel (target is temporarily turned into a beam of tachyons and undertakes FTL journey), and for exteriorization (or out-of-body experience).
- Level 4: Master casters can shape reality with their whims. They know how to weave pure emotions (or how to increase their control over Annihilation Effect, and how to Transcend), how to shift space (which makes them able to teleport), and how to shift time (only selective changes are possible though, such as moving creatures or items through time or modifying specific time lines).

RULES OF MAGIC

Magic is a craft of will and passion, and thus may originate from unintended dreams or desires, from lingering collective urges, as well as from dedicated effort. It is not easy to disturb the natural flow of Emotions, though.

- The basic Difficulty for casting magic is quadrupled sum of target's Construct Level, intended effect Level, and Scale.
- Influencing individual Constructs does not affect Scale (which defaults to 0); some forms of magic can be employed to affect more targets at the same time, however. Scale 1 stands for small packs of living beings (e.g. wolves) or for complex objects (e.g. for a house). Scale 2 stands for large groups (e.g. for an army) or for huge areas (e.g. for a long valley). Scale 3 stands for epic quantities of targets (e.g. for citizens of the whole country) or for whole lands (up to continent size). Scale 4 stands for entire planets, and Scale 5 is of even greater cosmic degree.
- Distance also influences Scale: targets within eyesight or connected through emotional proxies are Scale 0; targets located on the same continent are Scale 1; targets located on the same planet are Scale 2; while targets located in the same galaxy are Scale 3.
- Rituals can be employed to make casting easier. Such ceremonies require sacrifices, which universally consist of precious items or living beings (all offerings must be destroyed or killed). Rituals are based on separate tests, and have Difficulty of 5 per Complexity Level minus Construct Level of the offering (Scale applies for combined sacrifices) minus Construct Level of the caster (Scale applies for group rituals). Special bonuses and penalties are possible, depending on specific rites. Successful ritual grants bonus to casting equal to +3 per Complexity Level. Thaumaturgy increases the bonus to +5 per Complexity Level. Unsuccessful rituals can cause adverse effects, e.g. affect following casting tests.

- Annihilation Effect occurs when opposite Emotions meet and cancel each other. E.g. if a target has Fillings of different color than the Fillings fueled into the casting (i.e. White Fillings for Black or Gray ones; Black Fillings for White or Gray ones; or Gray Fillings for any colored ones), the target's Fillings are automatically employed to counter the magical effect. If the target has fewer Fillings than the fueled ones, all the target's Fillings are lost (or turned into Dents), and the magic succeeds (though is usually reduced in effect). Otherwise, the caster can chose to fuel more Fillings into the effect – which automatically exploits as many target's ones as possible. If the caster cannot spend more Fillings than the target, the magic fails altogether (appropriate number of target's Fillings is still lost). Allies can add their Fillings into the clash at will. Annihilation Effect never happens if no Fillings are fueled into the casting.
- Controlled Annihilation Effect is a Level 4 magical effect. If employed, the caster can chose to produce desired effect and at the same time prevent the target from automatic countering with own Fillings (which includes direct annihilation of target's Traits or Fillings on a 1 to 1 basis). If the Fillings are not opposite, they can be used to empower the target (or the magical effect) as well.

MAGICAL TRAITS

There are numerous Traits that fit casting magic and performing magical rituals. Many of them are also special in other ways.

- Traits that represent specific traditions and schools of magic are usually fitting casting and/or ritual tests. Some of them can provide +1 bonus to tests related to certain effects.
- Traits representing Karmic Bonds or other close relations stand for emotional currents between its possessor and another individual(s). They fit all the casting and/or ritual tests, whenever target owns such a Trait, or is on its receiving end. They also negate the Scale for distance between the bonded Constructs.
- Empathy Trait makes its possessor sensitive to emotional flows. Among others, it fits all the casting and ritual tests.
- Thaumaturgy Trait represents experience in performing magical rituals. It fits all the ritual tests, and makes them extra efficient (+5 to casting per Complexity Level rather than +3).
- Vampirism Trait allows its possessor to perform a very special kind of rite. When Vampire ceremonially hurts a living victim, every resulting Hurt Wound steals one of the victim's Traits (which turns into Dent). Each stolen Trait can be employed as immediate Filling or as +1 bonus to the following casting test (+2 with Thaumaturgy). No other ritual can be performed at the same time, when Vampirism is employed.
- Craft Traits represent know-how of creating and employing Dents. Colored Dents are crafted with magical effects of Level 2 or more, and are Traits in every respect but one – they fit nothing. Whenever someone neighboring Dent-owner Focuses on own Trait, however, the Trait is drained into the Dent: the original Trait is immediately turned into a new color-less Dent, and the original Dent is turned into a Filling. The Filling is identical to the drained Trait in every respect but one – Focusing on it works a bit different. White Dents are created with White Craft and always turn into White Fillings. White Fillings (as well as color-less ones) cannot be Focused on, and can be turned back to White Dents only with Level 1 magical effects or Annihilation Effect. White Dents can fuel casting, providing +2 per Dent, which turns them into Trait-less White Fillings – or White Cracks. Such Trait-less White Cracks can be turned back into White Dents through rest or meditation. Black Dents are created with Black Craft and always turn into Black Fillings. Black Fillings can be Focused on, though Focusing automatically turns them back into Black Dents. They can also fuel casting, which provides +2 per Filling, though such Fillings are also immediately turned back into Black Dents. Gray Dents are created with Gray Craft (which prerequisites either White Craft or Black Craft to work) and always turn into Gray Fillings. Gray Fillings can be Focused on and can be used to fuel casting, just like Black Fillings; while Gray Dents can fuel casting, just like White Dents (turning into Trait-less White Cracks).
- Art Trait is an advanced form of Craft, and prerequisites Craft to work. It makes Dents (for White Art and Gray Art) or Fillings (for Black Art and Gray Art) provide +4 rather than +2 to casting tests. It also allows White mages to turn all White Fillings into White Dents with rest or meditation rather than with Level 1 magical effects or Annihilation Effect; as well as it allows Black mages to Focus on their Black Fillings without turning them into Black Dents.
- Paired Dent is either a permanent result of Crafting (e.g. when a mage augments an item with a Dent to turn it into an emotional reservoir) or a temporary result of Trait draining (e.g. when someone Focuses on a Trait in a neighborhood of a Dented Construct, the Trait is "transferred" into the very Dent, and the Focused person obtains a Dent instead - which is temporarily paired to the Construct). Construct with a Paired Dent is treated as if a Karmic Bond between the construct and its originator was always in effect.
- Illumination Trait allows its possessor to perceive Emotions directly. It fits all the casting and ritual tests, and makes its owner aware of all the beings within the eyesight – along with their Construct Level. Illuminated individuals can thus perceive world even when blinded, deafened, or otherwise handicapped, and are gifted with innate danger sense.
- Ascension Trait empowers Emotions of its possessor. It fits all the casting and ritual tests, and effectively increases Construct Level of its possessor by 1. It also allows its owner to learn more than 12 Traits (as per Construct Level 3). Resting heals all the Stuns of the Ascended, who also tends to live longer than normal.
- Immortality Trait stops aging for its possessor. It also allows its owner to learn more than 12 Traits (as per Construct Level 3). Furthermore, resting heals all the Stuns of the Immortal, and all his Wounds by a level.
- Transcendence Trait turns its possessor into a being of pure emotions. Such beings are free of form: they can exteriorize at will, they can automatically possess dead bodies, they have easier time when possessing others (+1 bonus to respective casting and ritual tests), and are impossible to kill (when their body is destroyed, they are just OBE instead). Resting automatically heals all the Stuns and Wounds of the Transcended; they can also completely re-create or re-shape own bodies within 1 day. Eventually, the Trait allows its owner to learn more than 12 Traits (as per Construct Level 3).