ESOTERIC TRADITIONS

In the Sword Marches, there are certain powers and abilities that defy conventional training or practice. These abilities become ritualized and access power sources that are supernatural in order to bring about their effects in the mortal world. These abilities are called Esoteric Traditions. Esoteric Traditions regardless of exact type are abbreviated as EST.

Esoteric Traditions are unique talents that are selected by the practitioner at the time it gains the Trait that gives it access to these effects. They are used to personalize the model so that no two of its type are the same, giving Players an opportunity to create interesting power combinations as they see fit.

In Game terms, certain Traits grant models access to Esoteric Traditions. The base Trait counts toward the model's Starting Traits Maximum and has a Supply Point cost of its own. However, the difference from other Traits is that the Player has the choice of what effects he wants to build into the Trait from the Esoteric Tradition it accesses.

A model may have up to its CMD/2 Rating in Esoteric Traditions for the Trait granting it such.

It is not required that a model purchase any Esoteric Traditions if the owning Player doesn't want to buy any, or can't due to points limitations.

Furthermore, the individual Esoteric Tradition effects do not count as additional Traits, just effects applied under the main Trait that allows for their purchase. If, for some reason, the model lost the main Trait, all Esoteric Tradition powers or effects tied to that Trait are lost as well.

When a model buys an Esoteric Tradition for its Trait, it cannot change it later. That effect is part of the main Trait and cannot be removed or altered. If the model did not purchase its maximum number of Traditions at the outset, it may purchase them later with Experience Points.

A model may not purchase the same Esoteric Tradition more than once. Also, any bonuses granted by Esoteric Traditions that come from the same type of Esoteric Tradition cannot be stacked or combined. For example, if an Esoteric Tradition granted a +3 to a model's CBT Rating, another use of this same EST type used by another model on the first model would *not* become a +6 bonus.

A build example: Drew wants to have a Priest in his Warband so he buys the Priest Vocation Trait for a model. He then must choose the kind of Priest he wants to have, and decides on a Templar. He writes Priest (Templar) in the Traits block on his Warband Muster for this figure. Since his model has a CMD of 5, he can buy up to 2 Templar Rites. He then chooses Holy Healing for 15 SP and Sacred Circle for 5 SP. He adds these in parenthesis on his Muster as Priest (Templar: Holy Healing, Sacred Circle)+1. The total cost for the Trait and two Rites is 30 SP. If through Experience Points he is able to buy a CMD 6 Rating for this model, it would then have a new maximum number of EST slots of 3, and he could then use EXP to buy one more Rite and add it with the others for his Priest Trait.

Traits and Esoteric Traditions

The following is a list of Traits and the type of Esoteric Traditions they may have:

Alchemist – Alchemical Formulae
Arcanist – Magic Spells
Priest – Mystic Rites

POWER CHECKS

Sometimes an Esoteric Tradition will require that an opposed roll be made to see if the model using the given power will be successful in applying its power's effect on its enemies. This is resolved in all cases by the Power Check.

A Power Check is a normal Check that uses a single d10 by each Player to resolve. The model executing the Check uses its CMD Rating and adds any bonuses from its applicable Trait and Gear. For example, if a model had a CMD Rating of 5 and Arcanist+2, then the Power Check to cast a Magic Spell it has would be the sum of 7 plus a d10 result. The opposed roll factors will be explained in the EST entry. Sometimes it will be a Difficulty Check and at others a Ratings Check

from the target of the effect. Each EST will state what is being used for all opposed rolls.

If the Power Check is successful, then the effect of the EST is applied. If it fails, then no effect occurs and the Action is ended. If a Move of any distance is allowed by the EST, then it is resolved first and then the Power Check is made.

Some EST do not require a Power Check. Their entries will detail how their effects are to be applied.

Success Bonus

For some Esoteric Traditions the amount by which the Power Check exceeds the opposed result will enhance features of that Esoteric Tradition. In all cases the EST description will state what a Success Bonus will do to the effect.

One of the most common versions of this uses the Success Bonus as a point for point Damage Bonus for Attack Spells. Refer to each entry for further details.

Esoteric Defense

If a model with the Alchemist, Arcanist, or Priest Trait uses an Esoteric Tradition and makes a Power Check against an enemy model with the same Trait, the enemy model can add its Trait's bonus to its opposed roll if any.

For example, Akaton Theurge has Arcanist+2 and a CMD Rating of 5 for a total Power Check of 7+d10. He targets Z'Helgar the Wicked with an EST that uses a CON Check for the opposed roll. Z'Helgar has a CON Rating of 4 and also has the Arcanist Trait with a +3 bonus. Z'Helgar adds the bonus to his CON Rating of 4 for a total opposed roll of 7+d10 as his Esoteric Defense.

POWER RADIUS

A model's Power Radius is equal to its CMD Rating plus any Stackable bonus from a Trait that grants the use of the EST in inches. For example, a model with CMD 5 and Arcanist+2 would have a 7" Power Radius. This is used whenever an EST grants the use of an effect at distance. This radius

is measured from the model's base in all directions.

All Traits that give access to Esoteric Traditions are not subject to any Long Range penalty when using a power at Range. Line of Sight will be required unless the EST states otherwise.

MAGIC SPELLS

Magic is a dangerous and fickle power understood by the initiated and feared by the commoner. It is a power that alters the very fabric of reality and grants supernatural dominance over the mundane world.

This section will discuss the use of Magic Spells as Esoteric Traditions taken by any Arcanists in a Player's Warband.

Aspects of Magic

Magic is divided into three distinct types, or Aspects, that define the nature of the supernatural energies or entities that each represents. These are broad categories that represent the more common features of the genre.

All Magic Spells have the Mystical Source Trait and the Source Trait associated with its Aspect; Ascendant Spells have Ascendant, Diabolic have Diabolic; Primeval have Primeval.

An Arcanist can buy and use Spells from any of the three Aspects. If an Arcanist only buys Spells from one Aspect, it's considered to be a Specialist and adds an extra +1to an Arcanist's Power Check result for casting Magic Spells from that single Aspect. A Specialist Arcanist also adds +1" to its Power Radius.

Finally, a Specialist Arcanist may purchase the Keystone Spell from its Aspect List. It must have at least one other Aspect Spell in order to take the Keystone Spell as a Specialist.

If at any time the Arcanist buys a new Spell from a different Aspect, it loses this bonus and is no longer a Specialist Arcanist. It immediately loses the bonuses for Power Checks and Power Radius and if it had the Aspect's Keystone Spell it loses that as well. Once an Arcanist loses Specialist status it cannot regain it.

Each Aspect has a different title for the type of Arcanist that specializes in that Spellcraft. Ascendant Specialists are called Archons. Primeval Specialists are called Druids. Diabolic Specialists are called Diabolists. Each Arcanist gains this label upon being declared a Specialist Arcanist.

Ascendant Aspect

Ascendant Magic comes from the higher planes of existence and represents the 'good', 'white', or 'high' magic source types. The practitioners of this spellcraft are usually champions of what is Holy or Righteous in their world. They have contact with Ascendant Beings such as Solaraphim, Angels, or Holy Spirits that lend power or aid to them in the physical world.

The Ascendant Aspect infuses the Material Plane with positive energies that yield potent benefits or boons to their users and allies. These Spells are more defensive and protective in nature, as well as granting clear sight and revelation of the Truth. They will also bolster or fortify the resolve of allies, purging their hearts of all fear.

Ascendant Spells

All Seeing Eye

With a commanding sweep of its arm or implement this magister hurls brilliant light across the field that reveals all enemy ambushers who lurk in the shadows.

As its Action, this model may Move up to 6" and make a Power Check Difficulty (5). If successful, this model Detects all enemy models in Ambush within 2 x its Power Radius. Remove all Ambush Tokens from affected models. These Detected models may not go into Ambush again this Turn.
10 SP

Godspark

Reaching into the Ascendant Realm this mage gathers a crackling bolt of cerulean energy with which to smite its foes with celestial might!

As its Action, this model may Move up to 6" and target a number of enemy models equal to the Caster's CMD/2 Rating that are within its Power Radius x 2 and Line of Sight.

This model must then pass a Power Check Difficulty (3+1 per model targeted). If successful then this model makes a single Damage Check with a base DMG of 5. Any Success Bonus on the Power Check acts as a Damage Bonus for the Damage Check. Each targeted model must make its own Resistance Check against the Damage Check total. This Spell ignores all but Braced Armor.

This Spell's effect has the Ascendant and Fire Source Traits.
35 SP

Righteous Rally

The Arcanist makes a Celestial Utterance that comforts a frightened ally and encourages it to get back in the fight.

As its Action, this model may Move up to 6" and target a single friendly Broken model within its Power Radius x 2 and Line of Sight.
This model makes a Power Check Difficulty (3) and if successful instantly Steadies the target model as if it executed a Steady Action. The target Broken model does not get to Move 3" like the Steady Action and only loses the Broken condition.
5 SP

Diabolic Aspect

Diabolic Magic comes from the lower Planes of existence and represents the powers of darkness, death, deviltry, and malice. This magic is considered 'dark', 'evil', or 'destructive' and includes demonism and necromancy. Practitioners in the dark arts are aided by fell powers from beyond the grave as well as those that occupy the lower Hells and are called Diabolicans.

This Aspect of magic leeches life energy from the Ascendant and Primeval Planes and twists it into unholy waves of ebon magic that can infuse mortals with perilous power that consumes all within its dreadful grasp. Mutation, pestilence,

death, and suffering are all spread by this type of spellcraft.

Diabolic Spells

Curse of Chaos

Whilst gibbering mind-slaying incantations of entropic madness, this Arcanist levies a tangible maleficence upon its victim that hinders the body and mind in a chaotic confluence of word and deed.

As its Action, this model may Move up to 6" and target a single enemy model within its Power Radius x 2 and Line of Sight.

This model must pass a Power Check Difficulty (5). If successful, the target model is Cursed for the remainder of the Turn. On the target model's next Ratings based Check it will be at a Ratings/2 penalty from the effects of this Spell. Only the next Ratings based Check is affected by this, or until the Turn ends if no Check is made by then.
10 SP

Death Ray

Pointing its finger, tentacle, or staff, this Arcanist casts a black ray of death that flashes across the battlefield to claim the life of its victim.

As its Action, this model may Move up to 6" and target a single enemy model within its Power Radius x 2 and Line of Sight.

This model makes a Power Check opposed by the target model's normal Defense Check versus Ranged Attacks. If the Power Check succeeds, then this Spell has a Base Damage of 4 with any Success Bonus used as Damage Bonus instead. This Spell has the Brutal and Poison Gear Traits and Cold Source Trait.
25 SP

Phantasmal Fear

Conjuring its victim's greatest fear, this Arcanist weaves a dread phantasmal image that drives the wretch mad with terror, causing it to flee the battlefield post haste.

As its Action, this model may Move up to 6" and target a single enemy model within its Power Radius x 2 and Line of Sight. This model then makes a Power Check opposed by the target model's CMD Check. If successful, the target model immediately becomes Broken and Moves up to its Hustle distance in any direction of the Casting model's choosing. It follows all normal rules for being Broken thereafter.

If the Power Check fails, then this Spell has no effect and the target model is Immune (Panic) for the rest of the Game. This Spell automatically fails if used on a model that is Immune (Panic). A target of this Spell may use its Warlord's Command Radius when making its CMD Check if within its reach.
15 SP

Primeval Aspect

Primeval Magic is tied to the Natural Invictus, Faewold, and Material Plane of existence. This magic is elemental, primal, and in tune with natural forces or power sources.

The Primeval Plane is the physical world. All of the energies and manifestations of the Naturae Invictus and Universal Harmonic of Creation are bound together on this Plane. Interwoven with this Material Plane are the energies of the Ascendant and Diabolic Planes. These forces are in constant opposition and seek to tip the Natural Balance to their favor. The protectors of the Primeval Realm will vigilantly defend this harmonious balance and prevent either of these Aspects from gaining dominance in the physical world.

Primeval Spells

Clutching Vines

Infusing the ground with primeval power, the Arcanist creates magical tendrils that spring up to ensnare all creatures within reach.

As its Action this model may Move up to 6" and make a Power Check Difficulty (5). If successful, this model places a 25mm Vine Token anywhere within its Power Radius and Line of Sight.

Once placed, all models within 5" of the Vine Token are subject to the Heavy and Entangle Traits, and are considered to be within Difficult Ground. This effect lasts until the end of the Turn.
15 SP

Creeping Fog

Muttering in the Ancient language of the first Hierophants of Ypthia, this Arcanist breaks open a portal to the Faewold and draws through it the obscuring breath of the Earth Dragon.

As its Action, this model may Move up to 6" and make a Power Check Difficulty (3). If successful, the Arcanist places a 25mm Smoke Token anywhere on the tabletop within its Power Radius x 2 and Line of Sight.

If there was any Success Bonus on the Power Check, then another 25mm Smoke Token may be placed for each point of the Success Bonus. When placing these additional Tokens, the Player may place them in any configuration as long as all Smoke Tokens are touching each other's' bases and form a 'chain' back to the original Smoke Token.

The Smoke Tokens created by this Spell follow all normal rules for Smoke Tokens and will last until the end of the Turn.
10 SP

Hunting Spear

Summoning the essence of the Wild Hunt, the Arcanist creates a magical spear in its hand that hurtles across the field to find its prey.

As its Action this model may Move up to 6" and target a single enemy model within this model's Power Radius x 3 and Line of Sight.

This model makes a Power Check opposed by the target model's normal Defense Check versus Ranged Attacks. If the Power Check succeeds, then this Spell has a Base Damage of 4 with any Success Bonus used as Damage Bonus instead. This Spell negates any Cover the target Defending model may have and confers the Impact Trait to this effect against the Defender's ARM Rating.
20 SP