

The Academy Arcane

The Academy Arcane is suspended within a nameless void. The void has an atmosphere and glows with a very faint twilight-blue hue. The light comes from no source; it diffuses in all directions equally. The structure itself is made of a deep gray marble. An energy, not exactly a source of light, plays in the mortar between the stones. A very faint wind continuously breezes through its hallways. Sometimes a thunderstorm or snowfall will materialize around the tower. It is unclear if this is some ancient Wizard's enchantment or whether it is a property of the air in which the tower floats. A maxim looms above the entry: "No Sacrifice Too Great for Knowledge." The bricks of the tower are inscribed with runes of permanence to prevent their wear. Some bricks have their runes defaced and show the weight of the years upon them. Feral Arcaniforms (creatures created by Sorcery) roost in the broken parts of the tower. A flock of crows follows in the wake of the Academy, living off the refuse and corpses of its inhabitants.

The tower itself is huge; a hundred-sixty spans of a Harpy's wing at the base. It is set into a parcel of land called the Academy Grounds. The Grounds are quite dangerous, though. It is home to all sorts of dangerous Arcaniforms and one could accidentally stumble into the meetings of various secret societies, none of whom take kindly to interlopers. All the trees on the Academy Grounds are dead. Brown, decaying topiaries of arcane sigils lie dead in perfect rows. In the language of the Old Tongue of Academy, the sigils speak of dueling championships long forgotten. There was once a statue of the goddess of magic on the top of the Academy, but it was shattered by some forgotten event. Identifiable pieces dot the landscape; a piece of scalp, a demur hand, a cylindrical chunk of arm.

The entrance to the tower is made of gold, human bone, obsidian, and pearl. The interior is made entirely of gray brick reinforced with a wooden structure. Candelabras dimly light the passageways, but inhabitants carry alchemical phosphor or produce illumination by sorcerous means. Wizards roam the halls, opening doors using small pseudo-spells or creating entrances entirely where they feel there should be one. Stairs form from the wall itself, as bricks dart forward to create a walkway for pedestrians. The ambient aethers of the Academy Arcane allow for magical and mechanical flight (this is not true of all Worlds). Consequently, hot-air powered balloons and witches brooms zip through the interior of the Academy.

The Academy is, at its core, a university; each of the five sections of the structure belong to one of three Colleges or one of the two administrative organizations. The structure itself is three-hundred and thirty-three stories tall, although this is deceptive because the 13th and 77th floors randomly disappear. To add to the confusion of spacial relationships, individual rooms can be far larger than the volume of the tower would seem to be able to contain. The Library alone is the size of a large neighborhood. The various palatial estates held by the Sorcerer's Houses occupy a space the size of an ordinary dormitory. Indeed, it had once been an ordinary dormitory but has since undergone extensive enchantments. Wizards don't let simple things like the so-called "laws" of physics get in the way of their lifestyle. They are more like guidelines, anyways.

Academic History

The Home Country

The Academy Arcane was not always adrift in the netherworld void. It was once a part of a great utopia. So successful was their division of labor that their civilization became a single, great city that spanned the whole of the place. The structures they built were large enough to be considered worlds in their own right; they had only a single theater, with amphitheaters, gladiatorial arenas, and animated paintings. Their police headquarters was a single bronze cube in the middle of the city, which housed savvy street officers, hard-nosed investigators, and even a prison. The people of this culture were educated to a degree unseen elsewhere. Their universities, all specialized in a single subject, were grand architectural feats. Their wizard's academy was preeminent amongst all institutions, for only they possessed the secrets of the cosmos. Their discoveries and expertise enriched the people. They even discovered an advanced form of Sorcery based upon sacred mathematics fundamental to the universe itself. Ultimately, it was all for nothing. The Deans of the Academy Arcane began having visions of a doom that would shortly befall the wise people of the utopia. The wise people didn't believe the Academics; they rejected metaphysical fact. They were mired in a way of thought that could not believe that such chaos was possible in their perfect society. The Deans would not stand idly by while their Colleges and people were annihilated. They simply took their tower and left for the void between worlds. It wasn't long after that the people of the Academy abandoned their Old Tongue in favor of a more standardized grammar. It was simply more useful for explaining difficult abstract concepts of metaphysics. All portents show that that the Home Country was annihilated. A chapter closes.

The method used to separate Academy from Home Country is hazy at best. Those who were present do not speak of it as a Wizard's agreement. Therefore, scholarship has had to take up the task of recreating events as they happened. Professor Abraxas Rex has put forth a theory that the secret of this technique was pilfered from The Supreme Being who is oft referenced in Home Country art and literature. This being is described as being "a host or multitude" of beings incarnated into a single being of omnipotence (begging, perhaps, the question of how anyone could possibly steal anything from it). Professor Phillipa Artemis has claimed that her alchemical investigations have uncovered metaphysical residue of a Greater Working of Twelve Theorems (With Proofs), the magic of numbers. There are other, less referenced peer-reviewed publications on the subject of the Academy's departure, but suffice to say that the nature of this voyage continues to be quite controversial.

It is true that the students of the Alma Mater, the Academy, were taken without their consent. However, their sacrifice is enshrined in the Degrees of the Elements forever. Wizards call upon the greats, such as Tunaat, Gazamok, Zer, and Vesmyrio, to activate their cantrips. Six dozen more pseudo-spells exist outside of the Degrees; these are used for interfacing with the Academy's aetherial resources. Nobody can say much of these long-gone souls. Certainly there are plaques, cast to commemorate their academic honors and Wizard Duel championships. Some secret societies claim to walk in the footsteps of the first Students, reenacting the magical rites which are somehow fundamental to the Academy's well-being. In time, the first Students gave way to later generations. It was a wild age when Faculty mingled with Students and a new breed of magician, schooled in a wide array of occult techniques,

emerged. It is unclear where the Degrees of the Elements originates, but this is the period when it became the standard School of Sorcery taught to students. It became preeminent among other Schools because of its vast array of utility, its difficulty of mastery, and much greater number and breadth of spells.

Covens and Cabals Emerge

The first Faculty were far from intellectually homogeneous. The Academy's original incarnation used its powers of scholarship and divination to seek out magicians of note in far off lands. Having sought out this potential talent, they would court the individual and invite them to their institution with the hopes they would stay. The Academy seeks only those minds most devoted to the craft of magic itself, irrespective of its status as "white" or "black" magic. The Academy embraced a multitude of methods; folk magicians, shamans, ritualists, priests, elementalists, and infernalists. The modern Academy carries on these traditions to a lesser or greater extent. The Academy's goal has always been to preserve and transmit knowledge of the occult to those talented enough to use its powers. Modern inhabitants of the Academy descend from these people and are of a similar mind. They call themselves Wizards; the people of wisdom. They are a diverse lot. The Academy collected a multitude of Schools of Sorcery and uncountable numbers of spells. A great deal of energy was expended on categorizing Spells of various varieties and an equal number of Rituals, both Dire and Common. The techniques of initiation for these ancient styles have since become so jealously guarded as to have been forgotten entirely. They are the prerequisite for admission into the Faculty; you must possess mastery of a style unique to the Academy.

This has led to a widespread stagnation amongst the people of the Alma Mater in this latter age. When the tower left the rational world, it was cut (almost) entirely off from new Schools of Sorcery. They had no new material to obsess over. Wizards have an indeterminate lifespan (it seems the birth records of Wizards tend to disintegrate after the sixth century or so). Therefore, the Faculty have mostly remained the same over the long stretch of time. There are almost never vacancies in the Faculty, and when there are, the positions are snatched up by the most rhetorically ruthless. Because such mercenary up-and-comers do not bring a unique School of Sorcery to the Academy, they are "Probationary" Faculty only; they make oaths upon their life to continuously unearth new facts and data upon their chosen academic specialization. This is a policy oft referred to as "Publish or Perish". Should the Faculty member fail to pioneer new intellectual and occult ground, the magic of their oaths will bring them to a fitting fate. Such a doom isn't necessarily death (magic can be cruel). This illustrates, I think, one of the fundamental things about matters arcane; magic is dangerous. It is irrational, unpredictable, and requires, in almost all instances, a personal sacrifice. The Academy acknowledges that what they delve into could very well warp their minds or condemn their souls. And yet, the desire to know and the teach transcends such concerns. For the Academy, knowledge is itself virtue.

It is in these early years of the Academy's sojourn that the various supernatural and intellectual factions coalesced. The first to form was a coalition between the Academy's infernalists and a number of witch matriarchies. Consequently, the first Sorcerer's House established is that

of Stryxmaga. Membership was permitted only to whole families in order to ensure loyalties. The union of mages protected the rights of Wizards to practice black magic, including human sacrifice and devil worship. Dark and vile spells consequently were heavily in vogue in ancient times. In fact, as a response, ultraconservative Wizards formed Zabaraxadan, a Sorcerer's House of Wizards employing more scholarly approach to magic. Amongst their number were the Old Country's finest minds, some of whom were Founders of the Academy in time immemorial. House Zabaraxadan's influence was great; many Deans have risen from their ranks. The forces of the abstract and the profane made war upon one another (a metaphor, only: the war was of rhetoric and Wizard's duels). The argument between the two houses was intense and it ground on for centuries. Ultimately, the argument was resolved only when Academia rose up collectively and rejected the bilateral approach to the subject of magic. The idea of "black" and "white" magic was antithetical to the Academy's notions of diversity.

As a reaction to the reactionaries, a third Sorcerer's House appeared and its ranks swelled with unaffiliated Wizards whose mind was far more open to what constituted magic. It was formed by Faculty who had embraced a psychedelic approach to magic. Many of the philosophies of Nirvana's Bliss (a lost School of Sorcery) had become quite popular and the name of this movement was called Phraseos after a hero of that style's mythology. House Phraseos was not hereditary; like the Academy, they sought out big minds and promoted diversity amongst their number. They could be said to be mystics more than Wizards perhaps, but their powers were undeniable. The decadence of House Phraseos is well known and their affairs always feature hallucinogens and hookahs. Their magical style uses crystals, stage-magician prestigitations, and Fakir-esque feats of mystical prana. The most recent House, called Kleo, formed as a reaction against the fact that everything had already been written about. There was nothing new to be pioneered. Consequently, the Academy's intellectual discussions looped back in upon themselves and by the magical principle of inversion made the old new again: they forgot it all and set about the task of rediscovering it all over again. Kleo seeks a return to the fundamentals, including nature worship and a renewed focus on the Degrees of the Elements (as opposed to those forgotten Schools who the Faculty hold monopoly over). House Kleo does follow family lines, but they do occasionally adopt a family into their fold. Kleo is unconcerned with notions of "white" and "black" magic, but instead seek simple folk sorceries. Being one of their number confers little prestige, but it does provide a support structure for Wizards who prefer a more simplistic approach to matters arcane.

Even after all these factions formed, only about half of all Wizards belong to one of the Houses. Many Wizards eschewed politico-mystical parties entirely in favor of other loyalties. There are a number of secret societies whose members cross the intellectual and political spectrum. Their origins are not to be found in recorded history, although they have their own mythologies on how they formed. They often claim universal magical principles, such as death or the moon. Some secret societies are far more secular and could generously be described as being elaborate conspiracies. The Scales of Leviathan is famous in this regard, for its aims are known to be none other than complete domination of the Academy Arcane. Paranoia runs deep, for the membership of this dire order remains a secret to even the most potent forms of divination. All the secret societies operate secret passages and illicit circles of teleportation for

the purposes of meeting unseen. They also leave magical graffiti, both visible and invisible, all over the Academy. The most important day for secret societies is called the Great Selection, in which they induct new members. A shadow war of rival enchantments blot out the magical senses of those in the Academy, as each cabal tries to defeat each other on the battlefield of magical potency.

The Eudaemonosphere Foretold

Early in the days of the Academy, prophecy (source unknown) began to speak of a place known as the Eudaemonosphere (Pronounced: You-Day-Mon-O-S'fear). In the old tongue of the age, it meant "Place of Good Essence". It was said that it was a place of great magic and would inevitably draw the Academy Arcane into itself. It is said that the Eudaemonosphere is a place of mystical confluence where worlds, like the Home Country, mingle with one another. According to the predictions, the Academy will come to unite with this place and its magic will be made a part of the Academy. The prophecy had a huge effect on Academy culture of the time and sparked a millennialist movement that has subsequently disappeared. Nothing of this movement remains; the prophecy was thousands upon thousands of years too early. The Eudaemonosphere was a long way from the netherworld void. It is said that the distance is so vast as to defy time itself. However, time is one thing that Wizards have in spades, and the Academy simply waited and forgot all about the great prophecy that had once caused such a stir.

As the Academy neared this "Place of Good Essence", portents began to remind the Wizards of what their great-grandparents had once thought was so noteworthy. A Field Trip was planned. It was decided that when the Eudaemonosphere was close enough, they would enact Greater Workings of obscure Schools of Sorcery to bridge the netherworld-gap between the two worlds. In this way, they would send up-and-coming Wizards to the Eudaemonosphere under Faculty supervision. Because they would be without Academy facilities, they would be furnished with a contingent of Proles to operate in a servile capacity. Although the Academy is distant in ways the human mind cannot comprehend, it will return and unite the two Wizard factions within their lifetimes. It is calculated that the Academy will eventually reside in the Eudaemonosphere in as early as two hundred years, therefore, the Students should have enough time to obtain new Schools of Sorcery and learn the secrets of the Eudaemonosphere. The Faculty, by their required function as teachers at the Academy, cannot spare these 200 years. Students, especially the younger ones, are far less necessary for the workings of the Academy. Therefore, they are the ones who will first explore the Eudaemonosphere.

A Treatise Upon the Nature and Ways of Wizards

An Introduction to Socio-Thaumaturgical Studies

There is a pervasive belief that intelligence is somehow the prime requisite for becoming a Wizard. This is not so, for knowledge is only one source of magic. A Charge may be derived from an abundant number of sources: knowledge, hope, passion, experience, loss. Indeed, there are Wizards that one would probably be tempted to call an invalid. The origins of Wizards are in the tales of old wise men and the term 'Wizard' derives in some way from the word 'wisdom'. This paradox is resolved in the Academy because its people are Wizards in

the truest sense of the word: they seek knowledge for knowledge's sake. They do their magic however they can get it. Of course, not every Wizard practices Sorcery, but every Wizard is comfortable rattling off words of power. Their entire way of life is saturated in the supernatural.

Culturally, the Academy Arcane would appear to be like any mundane scholastic campus. There are teachers, students, faculty, and help staff. However, the teachers are privy to the secrets of the cosmos, the students are hundreds of years old, and the help staff are basically normal. Because Wizards command the unseen forces of the universe from a multitude of dimensions, they aren't terribly concerned with the scarcities that most societies face. They don't deal with food shortages (they can conjure it from the aether) or plagues (they can simply magick it into nonexistence). They are not under siege by monsters (they sometime make their own for fun) nor are they suffering tyrannical overlords (except, perhaps, in Professor Xerxes Wilchester's Linear Algebra class).

Rites of Birth

When a child is born in the Academy Arcane (a shockingly rare occurrence: who has time for ankle-nippers when there is research to be done?) the extended family performs a hundred forms of occulting the child's future. Of prime significance is whether or not the child is considered Anthaumatic (unable to use Sorcery). Some small percentage of Wizard children are found to be Anthaumatic. They simply do not have the capability, for whatever reason, to initiate into and use the Degrees of the Elements. They can learn Occult Artifice and they can be even be aware of the forces of magic. Yet, they cannot initiate (the prime requisite) into known Schools of Sorcery. The fate of such people are to become Proles instead of Wizards and serve as menial labor for the academics. Regardless of whether or not a child is found to be Anthaumatic, they undergo a rigorous series of enchantments that punishes those who raise a hand to them in violence. The Academy Arcane is dangerous enough without a war to see who can kill the Faculty and take their jobs. However, these enchantments are inactive during certain conditions and a culture of violence has blossomed in its wake: The Wizard's Duel. Even Proles are of course given these same enchantments for reasons of human rights (and whatnot). Still, who would want to murder a Prole (unless they served you cold oatmeal)?

If a child is found to be capable of using magic, they are immediately enrolled in classes for the following Semester. Children are never too young to begin training in secret arts at the Academy. The act of being enrolled confers upon that child the title (and ethnic status) of Wizard. Wizards are given access to certain functions enchanted into the structure of the Academy itself. This allows them to conjure drinking water at fountains and to flush the lavatory. They can light their hearth's fires instantly or snuff out candles by entering a room. They can make plants bring forth sweet fruits or they can create a door where there was only a wall. These effects require an incantation on the part of the user. Each Wizard has their own set of command words although they all conjure the same effects. The words of power would themselves sound like gibberish spoken out of context. Wizard children have their names stricken from the book of those doomed to die before their time. This magic is some property of the Academy itself which it confers upon Wizards. Functionally, this means that Wizards live Methuselah-esque spans of time. This brings us to the subject of...

Rites of Death

If there are any, nobody remembers them. It's true that Proles have their little get-together whenever one of their kind bites the dust. Obviously mortality sits heavier upon them than Wizards. They call their ritual a Wake. Obviously, being Anthaumatic, the ritual is less than useless. Precisely no-one wakes. Wizards so rarely die, though, so there is not much need for them to have any standard way of dealing with it. In fact, if a Wizard dies, the Faculty know powerful spells that can simply bring them back (although, not indefinitely). Nobody seems to remember a funeral for any of the Faculty. Everyone is reasonably confident that the current Deans were not the same Deans in charge of the contemporary colleges. Yet, there is no record, living or printed, which speaks of a time before the current crop of Deans. Surely someone important should have died and been buried somewhere on the campus grounds, but there are no true mausoleums; only occult simulacra of graves, used for ritual purposes in a laboratory setting. The mummy dust used in enchantments is likewise synthetic. Knuckle-bone of murderer, widow's grave-grown hair, and similar reagents are all conjured. Otherwise, the Academy would simply not have enough mortal remains to fuel their studies of necromancy.

The Five Elements

Wizards recognize five elements: Air, Earth, Water, Fire, and the Sublime. While the first four are clearly material, the fifth element, the Sublime, modifies the other four with its presence. Therefore, one might speak of a fire form replete with the Sublime (Empyrean) or a earth form devoid of the Sublime (lead). The elements combine in infinite combination with varying levels of the Sublime and through these interactions, all matter and energy are formed. Sorcerers of all kinds manipulate these fundamental forces, it is believed, to enact their desire upon the world. Each of the Elements is represented, in spirit form, by mythic creatures (Sylphids, Salamanders, etc). Such creatures do exist naturally in places where the element is found in high concentrations, but such conditions do not exist outside of occult laboratory settings in the Academy. To this end, they operate enchanted sanctums in the bowels of the Academy which allow these elemental beings to flourish.

Air

The element of the air is fundamentally ephemeral, but this is one of its most sublime aspects. By this principle, a sorcerer can make themselves as invisible as the wind. Because of this, the color of the Air element is white, like a diffuse cloud, or else entirely transparent. Those fully initiated into the Degrees of Air are very difficult to contain. If they aren't invisible, they are transformed into an irrepressible gust. They control weapons which use the air as their means of delivery, turning arrows and daggers to their will. Masters of air also have powers over the sky itself and can conjure lightning as a weapon. Sylphids are the elemental spritish spirits of air. They are speedy, curious, capricious, and are affected with wanderlust. They prefer the company of people who share these attributes.

The Perfect Material Sublime of Air is called Firmament. It is found naturally in worlds whose sky is a solid thing, like a dome or a sheet of sorts. Firmament is, therefore, "solid sky". It is prized as a substance for art and arms alike because it is both strong and light-weight.

Earth

Earth is a simple element. Its colors are brown and black, unsurprisingly. Its attributes, generally, revolve around resiliency. Sorcerers who possess its secrets are indefatigable. They are stronger, tougher, and better able to provide safety and infrastructure for those around them. The Earth element also represents wholeness, and in this, it aids the healer greatly. It opposes entropy and the ravages of both time and adversary. At its most sublime, the Element of earth provides stability and protection to those nearby. This element protects both the body and the soul, providing morale just as things seem at their worst. It is represented by Gnomes, a sort of earth-fairy. They are a steady, stout, hard-working people of the land. They prefer to live in the rotted trunks of dead trees and entreat with only a very few mortals. Although the Degrees makes reference to Giants, they are too tall to be as close to the earth as Gnomes.

The Perfect Material Sublime of Earth is Purified Jade. It only occurs naturally in worlds which have heavenly palaces or embody alchemical ideals. Mage-Smiths know techniques which can wash jade of its spiritual impurities and imbue it with the essence of the Sublime. The mere presence of Purified Jade is said to provide good luck, and thus, it is the choice of material for objects of destiny and god-houses.

Fire

Fire is transformational. It is a thing that exists mostly as a cultivated substance. It requires specific knowledge to bring it forth and, more importantly, to contain it. It consumes, for its very presence, a sacrificial fuel. By these principles, it is the most magical of the Elements. When treated with respect and familiarity, magic and fire yield great rewards: light, inspiration, and violent power. It cauterizes as well as it sings. The elemental spirits of fire are called Salamanders and, like the element they embody, they must be contained. They are not evil creatures, certainly. In fact, they are incredibly wise, far more so than their other elemental cousins. However, Salamanders only have this cognisance while under lock and key. Given a shred of freedom, they set about destroying everything they can with single-minded purpose, speaking to no one.

The Perfect Material Sublime of Fire is Empyrean (Pronounced: Em-Pie-Ree-En). Empyrean is fire, so densely compact, that it is solid. Normally, Empyrean emits no heat, but it is a simple matter to ignite it. Once given to fire, it ignites, burning without cease for millions of years. It rarely occurs naturally, but when it does, it is usually found in heavenly realms linked to virtuous power. Tinkers and smiths might be compelled to murder to get their hands on Empyrean, for it is an near-infinite source of power and would make very, very fine arms.

Water

Water, like the tide, has many mysterious phases. In one instance water is drunkenness and psychadelia... suddenly, it is wisdom and protection. In another instance, it is deadly poison and drowning ice. In the between-phases, it defaults to the essence of healing, and in this, it is certainly most Sublime. Water, therefore, is the essence of flow and ebb, drawn by the liquidity of the moon. Ondines, the elemental spirit of water, are invisible in the water, but appear like

maidens of purest clear water outside of it. Their nature is unpredictable, but never entirely good nor wicked. Like fairy creatures, they transcend morality.

The Perfect Material Sublime of Water is Ahp (Pronounced: Ah-p). It is a substance associated with water deities, whose abodes are made of Ahp. Mortals will not drown in Ahp, and indeed, living in its presence can imbue mortal beings with strange spiritual wisdom. Ahp is also useful for alchemists, but sadly, its greatest secrets are lost to time.

Sublime

The Sublime is certainly the most difficult Element to perceive at a glance. What, visually, shows that a fire in the hearth has significantly more of the Sublime than a fire burning the house down? Sublime, therefore, can be understood as an Element which exists in context. In this way, you could strain towards oversimplification and simply say that the Sublime means "good". This may indeed be too simple: to one man a sword is the thing which saves his life, while to another, it is the instrument of his murder. In this way, we would also say the sword is full of awful, necessary, terrifying essence to both parties: quite Sublime. It is amoral. It is transcendent. It is absolute, utterly undeniable. This is, perhaps, the Element of both Art and Sorcery. It is certainly the Essence of Life and Death.

The Perfect Material Sublime forms of the other elements are Firmament (Air), Purified Jade (Earth), Empyrean (Fire), and Ahp (Water). These forms are entirely cleansed of their lesser elemental nature and are therefore magical in origin. They are not, in themselves magical, but they cannot be made Sublime without supernatural intervention. Indeed, they cannot generally exist outside of a laboratory setting for long. The metaphysical laws of the Academy, expansive though they are, require sacrifice to maintain them in their material form. It is known, however, that there are other worlds whose realities would allow or even naturally promote the creation of the Sublime Elements. There is no Perfect Material Sublime of the Sublime itself, although it is theorized that such a thing would be the Supreme Being, if indeed it could exist in any world.

The Nature of the Supernatural

It would seem, at first glance, that if magic is an aspect of the material, rational world then it could not be said to be supernatural. It would be merely "natural". Wizards, however, understand that their arts are in fact supernatural. Spells do not obey any sort of logic outside of their own defining parameters. These parameters usually draw upon dream logic or some mythology, real or imagined. This is not like the blooming of a flower nor the evolution of the serpent. Magic makes water run backwards, contrary to its laws. It undoes chemical reactions which cannot be undone through scientific means. It reaches beyond the understandable or natural. Indeed, this is the source of its power: it is inscrutably arcane. Therefore, Wizards feel perfectly comfortable speaking about "the supernatural" when referring to something which is obviously magical. Indeed, a great number of Wizards are attuned to the forces of magic. They certainly can attest to the very real but very inscrutable nature of the thing.

Often, the practice of Sorcery is referred to as the "dark arts". Although Wizards have fought

over notions of “white” magic and “black” magic, the truth is, it can be a pretty scary force. Even magics which might be thought of as being good, such as spells of a healing nature, can be used by villains and madmen for their own purposes. It might even be that such powers are in themselves fundamentally good forces but require that you sacrifice to something hideous or amoral. Often, magical styles have cultural or political agendas that run contrary to modernity and even human rights. Enlightened Wizards would probably never carve the heart out of a living subject, but it is as viable a route to power as any. There are Wizards who, if they do not actually use such Rituals, have brought forth the principle within themselves and possess it as an unused means of fueling their arts. “I don’t touch those Rituals, but I have brought forth their Pentadaemon” they say. Academia loves this sort of thing: it smacks of authenticity, which is the one thing Academic culture craves. It is fresh, unique, and dangerous. Danger is a means of ritually generating Charges, in fact. This is certainly an important aspect of magic.

The Academy takes these truths as sacrosanct. It forms the core of their scholastic approach: pain and death are inevitable when delving into forces unknown. It is cynical, certainly, but it is the only way human knowledge can be extended into the realms of the arcane. The eggs of many an aphorism must be broken to make omelets, after all. Certainly, this is the belief of the Deans. For instance, Students can petition to go on Sabbatical, which liberates them from class for a few years. They can even petition to extend the Sabbatical once it is over, however, they must face an Arcaniform of the Dean of Student’s choice in mortal combat. If the Student perishes, it is said, it is merely a sacrifice upon the altar of scholarship. There is also a policy of “Publish or Perish” amongst Probationary Faculty, meaning they are killed if they fail to produce new works of scholarly import. Still, for all of this, no one is dropping like flies. Death is a distant thing, easily forgotten.

Getting Ahead and Getting Punished

Students face little prospect of advancing into the Faculty, so when there is an opening, they vie ferociously. Entry into the Faculty was once based upon unique knowledge of magic and the process was clean. Now, the process is intensely political. Students who are serious players for Faculty positions are like rock stars. They are “high profile”. They don’t just get good grades. They visibly pioneer the study of the unknown and unknowable. Student know, though, that they can never get a teaching position in the College of Sorcerous Arts. Only possessing a unique School of Sorcery qualifies one to serve that capacity.

There are however, middle grounds between Faculty and frosh. Good grades can earn a Student more meal-cards as long as they fill out the required paperwork. Wizards on Sabbatical can get extended leaves based on public service. Many Students hold down jobs around the Academy as research assistants, librarians, and Arcaniform wranglers. There are things that can keep you from getting ahead. Any sort of infraction of the rules of the Academy or their College can get a Wizard labeled as a Churl (an antisocial element). The people of the Academy are scholars, artists, and mystics. Like all true nerds, they eschew and hate violence and those who transgress against this prohibition can expect swift punishment. Traditionally, offenders are transformed into a lowly animal of some sort until such time as they are permitted to return and “act like a Wizard”.

Occult Heuristics and the Academic Calendar

Wizards use a system of measurement standardized by the Academy itself (referred to as Measurements Sorcerous). The common units of length are the Hydra's Tooth, the Kraken's Eye, the Harpy's Wing, and the Wurmspan. Volume is measured in terms of Flagons and Kegs. The Academy measures temperature by degrees, with 36 being the point at which water freezes without occult manipulations. The Academy refers to a quanta of magical energy as being a Charge. The Academy measures time in seconds, minutes, hours, days, weeks, months, years, and semesters. Sixty seconds is a minute, sixty minutes is an hour, twenty-four hours is a day, seven days is a week, four weeks is month, twelve months are a year, and one-hundred and eleven years are a semester.

((Wizards use English measurements. The Metric System is far too mundane. Hydra's Tooth = Inch, Kraken's Eye = Foot, Harpy's Wing = Yard, Wurmspan = Mile, Flagon = Cup, Keg = Gallon))

The Day of Challenge

Every year, students undergo a battery of intense testing, conjuration, and essay-writing over the course of a single day. This day, designated the Day of Challenge by the Faculty, is when Professors spring their most grueling exams. Those who score well in their testing find that their Mastery over the forces of magic have increased, temporarily. Something about the release of energy ties Wizards closer to the essence of their craft. Consequently, the greatest visions always happen in the wake of the Day of Challenge. No one seems to feel particularly sentimental about the day after, even though it is technically "Academic New Year's Day". Generally, Wizards just want to sleep in and forget all about multiple choice mysticism.

The Great Selection

It so happens that it is the custom of the Secret Societies to accept only one new member each per year. The day on which this happens is called the Great Selection and although it is not in any official records, the forces of magic are strong. Anyone channeling Charges from the Academy itself find that their capacity is higher than would ordinarily be the case. Consequently, duelists fight their most anticipated bouts on the day of the Great Selection. It is unclear what rites each of the secret societies perform to determine their initiates, but those who have washed out report knife fights and tests of pain tolerance.

The Recess Occultus

For a whole week in the middle of the year the Academy grinds to a halt. The laboratories are mothballed. The library is locked up. The Arcaniforms are given a week's worth of fodder. Every Wizard returns to their home to perform a series of rites. Each Wizard performs the rites associated with their various loyalties. One ritual ensures scholastic success for a family. Another reinforces the enchantments of cohesion that keep the Academy safe from the rigors of the vacuum. Secret Societies run rampant and write magical graffiti visible only to the attuned.

Ambrosias

Wizards have, at their disposal, a vast means of bending reality to some greater good. Through this method, the Wizards of the Academy have created a means by which food more delicious than anything of the mortal realms can be created from nothing. These prodigies of the sorcerous and culinary realms are called Ambrosias. They are ten times as nourishing; a single dish of Ambrosia can last a Wizard three days. Ambrosias are, at their core, essentially pre-existing dishes imbued with the essence of the Sublime. This transforms them into dishes like the Electric Ambrosia of Lemon-Pie and the Satiating Ambrosia of Lasagna. Wizards

simply cannot live off of Ambrosia, however, because there is simply not enough to go around. They must simply eat regular conjured (university) food. Ambrosia is therefore rationed out to Students by the use of a meal-card. Whenever the Students are served an Ambrosia, their meal-card has a hole punched out of it. The Academy has no economy to speak of (notions of money do not concern Academics) but meal-cards have traditionally been used as a currency in the absence of real coinage. The parallel with money is deeper in fact: Students who perform jobs around the Academy are issued more meal-cards. Appetites, therefore, drive the economy of the Academy despite the black-market nature of the exchange.

Art, Drama, Music, and Fashion

Wizards love dramas and plays and theater of all sorts. The performing arts are a major part of the College of Liberal Arts. The Academy produces a number of first-run dramas every year, almost all of which are quickly forgotten. The Academy has a large stock of costumes and sets for just about any production.

Like all things, however, the Academy truly loves something novel and magical. Over the past hundred years or so, a new medium has dominated. Mage-Smiths discovered techniques which would allow them to paint motion pictures. Such paintings are animated and play through a six-minute (or so) loop. Motion pictures do not interact with the audience, for they are not a thinking enchantment. The experience is entirely visual; motion pictures obviously don't have sound. An entire hallway adorned with motion pictures might tell a longer narrative as the audience slowly paces down the hall. Sometimes exhibitions are set up to depict some epic tale or another. Later, they are locked in storage, likely to be forgotten about or eaten by verminous Arcaniforms.

Wizards listen to a variety of types of music, depending on their backgrounds. Some Wizards avoid music entirely while others make it part of their daily life. Music is a component of many Rituals and, interestingly, they rarely require music of a specific style or timbre. Consequently, many styles of music are played on the full spectrum of instruments available to the human imagination.

Wizards, however, tend to dress across sub-culture lines. Of course, the witches and warlocks wear the traditional "uniform" of the infernalist, black robes and bad attitudes. The Students and Faculty who want to impress the Deans wear the expected Wizard get-up; the wide-brimmed hat, staff, simple robes, and sometimes even a long beard. Long eyebrows are respected as well as a sign of wisdom. However, many Students, despite being hundreds of years old, still wear the uniform of a student. This is self-effacing in a culture that values age and experience much more than the beauty of youth. Consequently, Students who want to look "Zet" dress in the manner of students.

The Wizard's Duel

The Academy is quite phobic when it comes to violence. However, Wizards carefully compartmentalize their blood-lust into a pass-time descriptively referred to as the Wizard's Duel. In a Wizard's Duel, two Wizards square off with whatever offensive magic they possess. There are three variations of the Wizards Duel, with varying levels of seriousness. Generally, Wizard Duels take place in a Dueling Circle, an artifact which protects onlookers from the magical weaponry employed within. Although Dueling Circles are almost always set into a place (in order to prevent illicit dueling) there is no reason why a Mage-Smith couldn't make a Dueling Circle.

There is an official Duelist's Club in the Academy Arcane, but it is considered a social club for Zabraxadan Students. The real dueling takes place outside of official channels. Such subcultures are incredibly cliquish and although they use some of the main standard methods of Wizard Dueling, they also make up their own ways of doing it. Such "House Rules" matches run the gamut from peewee league to smash-mouth brutality. Enthusiasts of the hobby argue over what traits make a good duelist and it is a matter that may never be settled. Warding? Mastery? Incantation speed? Arcane Might? The argument rages.

Dean's Rules

The Deans' A Cyvilyzing Methode for Duels Betwixt Wyzards (also known simply as the Dean's Rules) is 172 pages, but in its essence, it designates a defined circle area which ritually protects any audience. Only Sorcery and other arcane effects are permitted, but all weapons are to be removed from the area entirely. Combatants hurl offensive spells at one another until someone yields (they know they are bested) or someone is hurt. If a combatant leaves the area of play, they forfeit the match. A healer must be retained or else the match is not permitted to begin. An officiator must be retained with knowledge of the Dean's Rules. An upholder of public morality must be retained in order to ensure the appropriate level of sobriety for such potentially dangerous proceedings. He is also granted the right to escort out any onlooker who speaks any insult or obscenity. Obviously, most duels don't go through these elaborate motions, but at least on the books, the rules of A Cyvilyzing Methode for Duels Betwixt Wyzards are the only legal method of dueling.

Scales of Leviathan Rules

A secret handbook, purporting to have been written by a High Dominatrix of the Scales of Leviathan (presumably a high position), surfaced with rules for how members of their Secret Society should conduct their official death-duel challenges. Scales of Leviathan Rules demand no circle, no boundaries, and essentially no holds barred. Opponents are free to attack each other with weapons or magic. This method of duel demands that the contestants have no time to prepare other than what they have on them at the time. Assuming the dueling manual is authentic, the Scales of Leviathan do not allow a challenge to be denied. Modern Wizards do not practice this custom, nor do they fight to the death as the manual also prescribes. Wizards use Scales of Leviathan Rules for duels of honor or to merely appear "hard-core". As mentioned before, dueling of this type is illegal.

Fool's Duel

In the Fool's Duel, a powerful Arcaniform is unleashed upon the two combatants at the exact moment one of their spells makes contact with their foe, regardless of whether or not it was resisted. This is intended to add chaos to the kind of duel that would otherwise be a simple back-and-forth exchange. Generally, this duel is meant to be a public spectacle to address some public affair or to simply show off. When the Houses Sorcerous have conflicts, they will sometimes settle them in this method. The only problem is that such dueling is illegal. Therefore, it often seems that the Faculty are the only ones who aren't invited.

Student Slang (Talk like a hip Wizard)

How deep are you?

What is your Mastery? Most Wizards would just ask what your Mastery is, but its shorter and hipper this way. If you are hip enough to know what the question means, the appropriate response is "X deep and getting deeper" (where X is your Mastery). Permutations: "Hes too deep for you to challenge to Wizard's Duel." "That spell is only useful if you are really deep."

Jot

A Charge. Most students call them Charges, but Jot is cooler. Example: "How many Jots do you have, Chum?"

Crusty

Old and Wizardly. The Faculty are Crusty and the Deans are the Crustiest of all. Being called Crusty implies being privileged and dottering. The opposite of Crusty is Zet. Example: "That pointy hat makes you look Crusty."

Zet

Youthful and Trendy. Zet means cool, self effacing, and youthful. Crusty is the opposite of Zet. Example: "That tie is pretty Zet."

Chum

Informal friend or greeting. Being Chummy is the height of informality. Calling one of the Faculty this will get you put on Occult Probation. Example: "Greetings chum."

Chuffed

Attuned to magic. Chuffed people are good at Artifice and are hell to deal with in Wizard Duels. Example: "I am Greatly Chuffed."

Academic Vocabulary (Talk like a total nerd)

How many anima do you possess?

What is your Mastery? Those who phrase it this way do so in imitation of the Deans. Although they do not intend to do so, sometimes the Deans and older Faculty refer to Mastery in this older, archaic form of nomenclature. Mainstream scholarship has abandoned this phrasing. Their underlings use it as a form of sycophancy. Examples: "How many anima did you possess before you came to my class?", "My possess ten anima."

Mote

A Charge. Another archaic term adopted by the Faculty in deference to the Deans. Example: "Please note that a Perfect Mote can cast spells of all Schools."

Churl

A problem Student or antisocial. Behind closed doors the Faculty identifies those they consider Churls, rightly or wrongly. In this way, the Faculty works somewhat like a Secret Society by identifying targets to suppress. Example: "Your sloppy mode of dress marks you as a Churl."

Trismagistus

Pronounced "Triss-Mah-Jist-Us". An honorific of respect applied after a name. Only those who have attained a Sublime Degree are permitted to claim the title Trismagistus. This mouthy term means "thrice blessed", ie, has attained three concurrent Degrees of a single Element. It is far too fancy to simply go around calling people Trismagistus. Example: "I have read all the works of Terrestrius Trismagistus."

Bring forth the Pentadaemon of (Spell or Ritual Name)

Pronounced: Pen-Tah-Day-Mon. To bring forth the Pentadaemon is to “learn” a spell, ie, gain the ability to cast a specific spell. It can also be applied to new rituals as well, although this meaning is used rarely. The term Pentadaemon refers to a thing’s natural essence (its balance of the five elements). Example: “A have only recently brought forth the Pentadaemon of the Major Degree of Air.”

Opened the Chamber of the (School of Sorcery)

Initiated into a specific School of Sorcery. It refers to the notion of opening a chamber in one’s mind. The idea is that initiating into a School of Sorcery is not adding anything. Rather, it is an awakening and an opening of the doors of perception that were already present. Once a Wizard has opened the chamber of a specific School of Sorcery, the next step is to bring forth two of its twenty-four Pentadaemon (a spell and a ritual). Example: “I was only 300 years old when I opened the chamber of the Straega Curses.”

Adjective Placement

This isn’t a phrase, but rather, a kind of phrasing. Older Wizards often place adjectives after the nouns they modify in order to sound fully stilted. It is not ‘an Academy of the Arcane’ or ‘an Arcane Academy’. It is the Academy Arcane, you see. Examples: “I cannot abide by students lazy.” “My House Sorcerous is easily the equal of your own.” “Garcon, I wish a bagel cream-cheese’d.”

Houses Sorcerous

Although membership in the Houses Sorcerous are determined by birth, they were originally formed in family coalitions. There is intermarriage between and within Houses frequently. And although they are powerful, only about half of all Wizards belong to a House Sorcerous. This number may go down in the coming years, however, as there are murmurings of a possible new House Sorcerous. It is no secret that Technomancy has come into vogue recently in the College of Arts Material. However, they wish to bring the discipline under the auspices of the College of Arts Sorcerous to gain access to higher levels of funding and increased Academic prestige. They have one key hurdle to overcome: Technomancy is a branch of engineering, although its techniques are distinctly Occult (Artifice plays heavily). The Professors of College of Sorcery and Dean Wotalfir do not believe that Technomancy is based sufficiently upon the practice of actual Sorcery itself to fall under their curriculum. It is entirely possible that in a decade Technomancers might band together and use the existing House Sorcerous legal designation to bring change from within.

Zabaraxadan (Maxim: “Signifiers signified.” Symbol: A feather quill dripping ink)

Zabaraxadan was formed as a coalition of users of “white” magic, ie, of a fundamentally rational and good nature. Or rather, this is the ideal they aspired to achieve with their workings. Because of the clannish nature of Zabaraxadan’s constituent families, they confide very little in those not of their blood. Consequently, they expanded the nature of their family to create family loyalties where there were none before. This created great breakthroughs in mathematics and

metaphysics, all in the name of “white magic”: Zabraxadan. The House became somewhat like a police force for the Academy, hunting dangerous Arcaniforms and insane infernalists. Supernatural forces are rarely rational and often downright hostile, and it is the duty of House Zabraxadan, by their stated philosophy, to manage this chaos and act ethically. In this way, it was formed in the spirit of wisdom. Many of its founding members had been itinerant Wizards or nebbishy Math-Mages.

The magical style of Zabraxadan, above all else, revolves around the notion of the Symbol. In their practice of the Degrees of the Elements, they employ texts and calculations primarily. They keep scrolls with them, many of which contain the incantations of the Academy and the Minor Degrees. In its most primitive form, if they have nothing else, Zabraxadan write magical treatise upon cave walls in order to meditate on its wisdom to activate their Degrees. Zabraxadan is associated with the colors purple and green, the most expensive colors in which to dye a robe.

Stryxmaga (Maxim: “All evils repaid in kind.”, Symbol: A skull contained in a circle)

In the early days of the Academy, beyond immediate memory, casters of so-called “black magic” were suppressed and their theories discounted. In protest, a number of witch matriarchies, who had always been aligned by family units, joined with a number of other notable infernalists with the stated goal of ending the stigma of their arts. Their crusade was mostly a success but backlash against their success reverberates to the present. Stryxmaga are said to be ruthless and one can certainly not argue their pedigree. Indeed, Academic legends speak of a time when the House forced a handful of demons to grant them twelve wishes to be named later. No one remembers what was wished for, but given their track reputation, it was probably even darker sources of power. Stryxmaga now has many successful tenured Faculty members, many of whom have reputations as being “man-eaters”.

When using the Degrees, members of House Stryxmaga use crystals and crystal balls primarily, although a few read occult chants or brew magical draughts in iron pots. The crystals, it is said, project their thoughts and vision to their Dark Master Beyond, although the nature of such beings (if they exist at all) is outside the realm of current scholarship. Because of their love of darkness and sub-liminal things, Stryxmaga is associated with the colors black and silver.

Kleo (Maxim: “The tree, the owl, the wind.”, Symbol: A staff tipped with a flame)

(Pronounced: Sometimes Klee-O and sometimes Klay-O or even Ku-Ray-O; no standard)

Kleo is the most recently formed House Sorcerous and is criticized as being “post-Academic” because Kleo reveres a simpler way of life and magic. They congregate in families not for matters of loyalty or power but simply because it is traditional. Kleo wield pastoral magic and view the Degrees of the Elements as manifestations of nature rather than an exacting science or mystical art form. They use wands made of natural material which they construct themselves. Although many do cut their hair, the Kleo consider unkempt beards and long hair to be the normal human and Wizard mode. Kleo Wizards eschew duels and if they are Faculty, they do not give grades because they “don’t believe in them.” Kleo are not pacifists, though, nor are they simpletons. It just so happens that there isn’t a lot of call for thrown bolts of lightning or

rays of liquid fire.

Kleo uses the wand and staff as their chosen implements of working the Degrees of the Elements. This is their attempt at getting back to the fundamentals of the style instead of playing at its edges. By explicitly not challenging the presumptions of the style, the Kleo are seen as radical. Because they are the stereotypical Wizard of legend, it is almost a form irony. Because they are sincere, it has an authenticity of its own. As suitable for Wizards so drab and humble, Kleo is represented by the colors brown and gray.

Phraseos (Maxim: "Illusion is the first of all pleasures.", Symbol: A white turban and a single white glove)

(Pronounced: Fray-See-Yoz)

History, it seems, is not altered by individuals, but rather, imbues individuals with a means of changing itself. When the ancient Wizard Ankulpi was attended at his deathbed by his favored Students, he initiated those who were gathered into a School of Sorcery called Nirvana's Bliss. Previously unknown to the Academy, it sparked a new cultural awakening to psychadelia and surrealism. Many Wizards adopted psychadelic personae and dressed like mystics and magi. Those who had attended the Wizard Ankulpi in his final hours (calling themselves Yogi) joined their families in the manner of other Houses Sorcerous and created House Phraseos. Their gatherings are generally considered hip. The hookah and incense is ubiquitous at such affairs. They had once been absolutely radical at the time of their formation because they rejected notions of white and black magic and instead saw the nature of the supernatural as one of beauty and nightmare. The past thousands of years have not been kind to their image or the salience of their message. They are largely seen as decadent now and their scholarship is not often considered "of the first rate". Indeed, critics of Phraseos see them as being nothing more than hype and illusion.

Because they are associated with ephemeral and vaporous things, they are associated with the colors white and blue. Phraseos are at their core performers and illusionists. Therefore, they practice the Degrees of the Elements by performing prestidigitations and sleights of hand. Although beautiful, such performances are quickly forgotten and fail to inspire beyond the mere moment. Any such passions are given as a sacrifice to the magic itself. ((Inspired Performances and the required period of "wizard-like" behavior for the Degrees of the Elements are not compatible with one another.))

Secret Societies

Although members of Houses Sorcerous can be members of Secret Societies, it is rarely so. Secret Societies go out of their way to brainwash their members and they do not suffer half loyalties. A majority of the membership are unaligned Wizards and House apostates as result. It should be noted, however, that hard data regarding membership in these organizations is virtually unattainable. All Secret Societies meet in secret at pre-arranged times. They perform rites unique to their membership whose effects are unknown. The Academy Grounds are a favored place to meet since it has very little traffic aside from feral Arcaniforms.

The Cult of Lead

Nobody knows who the members of the Cult of Lead are, but it is known that the Dean of the Material Arts, Terrestrius, is a member. Because of this many people simply regard the Cult of Lead to be an extension of the Dean's political will. This is an oversimplification. The Cult of Lead see themselves as paragons of Academic culture. The Cult of Lead secretly maintains the runes of indestructibility on the bricks of the Academy. Some unknown Secret Society defaces them, perhaps as a ritual act, or perhaps as a challenge. The Cult themselves may perhaps be defacing them to draw attention or deliver a coded missive. Members of the Cult of Lead caught applying runes of permanence are drummed out of the Society entirely.

The Scales of Leviathan

The notion of Secret Societies may have come about for a variety of reasons, but certainly one of them was nepotism. The criminal Secret Society called the Scales of Leviathan exist solely for the purpose of advancing the careers of its members at the expense of everyone else. The group takes its name from a beast of mythology, an aquatic predator with interlocking scales that resembled wrought shields in size and durability. According to the myth, this made the Leviathan invulnerable to anyone not wielding omnipotent force. This is the ideal of the Scales of Leviathan: each member serves a shield to protect the body which nourishes the whole. "Us versus Them". So hostile is their approach that their membership is the most dire secret. Even suggesting that someone is a member, wrong or not, has the potential to draw their ire (or so it is said). Crossing them, of course, is a most dire matter.

The Hounds of the Occult

Although the maxim is "No sacrifice too great for knowledge", there are things the Deans just don't want the Students to know. Or so the Hounds of the Occult claim. Their stated goal is to liberate this secret forbidden knowledge and to propagate it amongst all Wizards. They believe the Faculty is fully capable of initiating Students in their so-called "Lost Schools" of Sorcery. The Hounds of the Occult also say that the rituals used to judge someone Anthaumatic are a sham and that Proles are really just Wizards who have been taught to reject their gifts. The Hounds dare not meet outside of their own secret schedule, for fear that the Faculty will get wind of it. Hounds have reputations as being paranoid or at least overly curious. They frequently stumble upon things they were not meant to by random chance in their hunts for something inconsequential.

The Colleges

College of Liberal Arts (Literature, Art, Performance, History, Economics)

The Humanities, as the name suggests, affirms our humanity. Some Wizards consider themselves "beyond human" or "transhumanist". However, a majority of Wizards would identify themselves as human (ethnically Wizard, however). The College of Liberal Arts does not pioneer occult studies directly, but it does provide culture, meaning, and context for the Academy. However, the Liberal Arts are considered lowest of the Colleges and it is because it often has problems pioneering new material. Therefore, the College creates vast stores of artistic, literary, and historical readings. Very few real contributions have been made to art or cultural criticism for a very long time. Careers in the Faculty are based on making

new and potent arguments which support the prevailing attitude of the College and its Dean. Traditionally, there are vogues in which certain points of view dominate. Currently, a Prole-centric reading of history and art is highly in vogue. Notions contrary to such readings are decried as being "Wizard-centric". Incidentally, only the College of Liberal Arts holds such notions; the Material and Sorcerous Colleges are not prone to such intellectual fads. It is simply that the College of Liberal Arts must justify itself in the face of the other Colleges who produce true experimental data. Otherwise, how could the Department of Sociology keep up with the Department of Chymistry? Just how many readings can one "discover" of plays that are a thousand and seven years old?

Classes offered include the following (but not limited to):

The Early Plays of Halgarbar the Wretch

History of the Old Country (year 5000 - Present)

Occult Art History I

Deconstructionist Readings of the Degrees of Earth Incantations

Introduction to Chanting

Performances of the Long and Spontaneous Variety

Prole Studies

Intellectual Traditions and Transmission-of-Knowledge Problems

Theoretical Occult Economics (Divination Omitted)

Incantation Mnemonic Devices

Ross Toth (Dean of the College of Liberal Arts)

Dean Toth specializes in Abstraction, an obscure subject to be sure. Her studies of the Degrees of the Elements lead to the development of a Greater Working which conjures, in material form, platonic forms that could not be produced by mundane means. This can be used to make perpetual motion machines and the like. Dean Toth is a semi-celestial being, although she did not always happen to be so. Miniature twinkling stars flit around her wherever she goes. They provide illumination when she reclines in her office. She belongs to and indeed, was instrumental in the founding of, House Phraseos. Consequently, she is parodied as being airy-fairy and prone to listen to sounds no-one else hears. In her early years before becoming Dean, she called herself Ras Thoth and commanded a legion of aetherial warriors. She has since calmed down considerably.

College of Material Arts (Science, Engineering, Fitness, and Mathematics)

The College of the Material Arts is a place of ingenuity. It was constructed to be the perfect laboratory for the geniuses of the Academy to toil unfettered by ignorance or material concerns. Consequently, the entire complex is heavily enchanted. Within the labs themselves, clean black lacquered surfaces wait for a Wizard to activate it with five Charges. Once active, the Wizard can conjure out of the surface of the table itself whatever substance he should need for his crafts. Should he need the eye of a virgin newt, he could summon forth an eye of a chaste newt of the freshest variety. If he needed a gear of a certain variety, he need only reach for it. In this way, the Artist, the Engineer, and the Scientist-Sorcerer can perform their everyday miracles without the fetters of scarcity. It also houses the gymnasium, infirmary, and dueling circles. The Faculty of the College of the Material Arts are highly rationalist and utterly lack

sentimentalities. They are very rarely mystics; the College's philosophy is one of technocracy, where the Scientist is both Priest and King.

Classes offered include the following (but not limited to):

Dtang's Anatomy
Organic Chymistry I
Alchemy of the Minor Degree
Perpetual Motion Mechanics
Forging Weapons of Destiny (A Lab)
Linear Algebra
Swordplay in the Enlightened Method
Synthesis of Occult Materials

Terrestris (Dean of the College of Material Arts)

When Henry Appleswight-Famscratten rediscovered the lost secrets of the Philosopher's Stone he changed his name to the less cumbersome "Terrestris". His contributions to the metaphysical and material body of knowledge are immense. His specialty is, of course, the Arts of Alchemy which is also the name of his three-part series of tomes. Volume one is the mundane craft of alchemical substances and volume two is a treatise of the philosophy of the Alchemist. His autobiography was added in later editions to form a trilogy since it was, perhaps unsurprisingly, also named "Arts of Alchemy". Terrestris belongs to the Cult of Lead, a secret society who maintain or graffiti the Academy's indestructible bricks.

College of Sorcerous Arts (Schools of Sorcery, Occult Studies, and Arcane Sciences)

The College of Sorcerous Arts (aka, the College of Sorcery) is the gem of the Academy. There are no known organizations in the universe so totally devoted to the pursuit of magical knowledge. Every teacher in the College knows a unique and idiosyncratic School of Sorcery. Consequently, a lot of very strange things happen in the College of Sorcerous Arts. Their specialty is the unexplainable weirdness extant in the world. This College has the distinction of being the best funded, most prestigious, and stodgiest bunch of conservative Wizards in the Academy. The degree programs offered in this College are brutal in their comprehensiveness. Students enrolled in these programs face 18 hour days of study and 40 credit hour semesters. Those who cannot hack this grueling pace are politely referred to the College of Liberal Arts whose standards are necessarily less hostile to life. Although the College of Sorcerous Arts is not prone to flights of scholastic fancy, they are afflicted with the opposite problem: it has become an echo-chamber, endlessly reverberating the same point of view for thousands of years. There has been no infusion of new blood for quite some time and although they produce volumes of experimental data, there are no great breakthroughs. No surprises. No "Eureka!" moments.

Classes offered include the following (but not limited to):

Anatomy of the Human Spirit
Alchemy of the Sublime Degree
Basic Mage-Smithing
Greater Workings of Earth
Advanced Technomancy (Master's Class)
Warding Against Ectoplasmic Intruders

Invocations and Rudimentary Folk Workings
God-Beings of Places Foreign
The Degrees of Water I
The Mote: Metaphysical Quanta

Wotalfir the Wizened (Dean of the College of Sorcerous Arts)

Wotalfir made his first contribution to the Academy by obtaining a School of Sorcery relating to runes. He later introduced a Sorcery of herbalism and folk healing called the Remedies of the High. Indeed, in his tenure in the Deans, he gained initiation into dozens of Schools of Sorcery and he now knows hundreds of spells. His artifacts adorn the necks of those who achieve the highly coveted Deans List. Each power instills the student with a host of effects which all but guarantee they will remain on the Deans List until such time as they are permitted into the Faculty. Wotalfir has, throughout history, disappeared for some time. To date, he has always returns, but a bit older. He forgets much before his sojourns. However, his mastery is peerless. By the old tongue's reckoning, he could be said to possess, natively, thirty anima.

Department of Student Affairs

The Department of Student Affairs oversees the housing, feeding, and medical care of the entire Academy. Its all quite boring really. They don't see a great deal of action in this sleepy department because the Academy is pretty much just magical. A majority of Proles work for this department and their mundane presence is generally considered a symptom of how dreadfully dull this department can be. Student Affairs issues meal cards, which are traded amongst Students as a black market form of currency in the absence of any real private property.

Dean Fakiraja

Fakiraja made his mark in dueling circles originally, focusing on raw power given to him through his occult techniques. He focused on charge generation and artifact enhancements which frequently proved the deciding factor. His fame catapulted him into the highest levels of Academia. His body of research has been regarding Rituals and Places of Power. Fakiraja was never a first rate scholar, but he is a ruthless politician and a top shelf showman. There is a very small, but very vocal minority of Students who belong to a Prole Rights movement. This movement targets Dean Fakiraja specifically for its ire, and is consequently banned, even as a Secret Society.

The Dean's Council

The Chairmanship of the Dean's Council rotates every semester (111 months) and is awarded to its next holder by special divination. The type of divination used for this purpose rotates through five cycles and then restarts. The types used in order, are: extispicy (the reading of animal or human entrails), gastromancy (the inspection of a crystal ball's reflection), rhabdomancy (the casting of sticks and bones), tasseomancy (the reading of tea leaves) and the drawing of straws. Each type of divination seems biased in the favor of one of the Deans. This creates a distinct and regular pattern that rotates the five Deans into the Chairmanship and then back as the Dean of a particular College. When a Dean abdicates the Chairmanship, they become Dean of their successor's College. This displacement has ensured that all five

of the Deans have held all five positions multiple times. However, the pattern does not always hold and the divinations can sometimes unexpectedly award the position to someone out of pattern. On a number of occasions, the divinations have awarded the position to its current holder, granting them another semester as the Chairman. The Chairman is incredibly powerful, acting as the executive of the entire Academy Arcane. They can only be over-ruled if they are the lone dissenter amid the rest of the Dean's Council.

Calberwoft Waxingwill (Chairman of the Dean's Council)

Known even to her husband as Dean Waxingwill, the Chairman of the Dean's Council is held by a stalwart daughter of House Zabaraxadan. She is the arch-conservative arch-Wizard, slapping down Student initiatives and requests for Sabbatical. She owns a grand menagerie of creatures of foreign and magical origin. Her pride and joy is a collection of divinities trapped within magical fetish objects. Aside from this she has all manner of mythic creature at her disposal.

The Faculty

The Faculty have it good. They don't have their food rationed with meal cards. They get estates with stables for their wierdo exotic Arcaniforms. Best of all, the Faculty can Students what to do. Even Propationary Faculty members have it better than Students. They simply have to summon up some research, which they will likely pawn onto one of the Students they are Mentoring. Professors take on Students to Mentor usually as a means of exploiting their labor for their research. However, Students permit their exploitation even to the detriment of their classwork simply for the honor of being associated with such great minds. Wizards who do not have the tradition of a House Sorcerous or a Secret Society often seek out a Mentor specifically as a means of gaining connections amongst the Faculty and influential

Professor Abraxas

Abraxas Rex, Historian of the Academy. His theories of history posit the existence of a Supreme Being, ie, the Perfect Material Sublime of the Sublime. Many would argue against his methods, but his works cite deep personal vision quests only he is privy to. In his theories, the Perfect Material Sublime of the Sublime transcends time and can therefore communicate from both the beginning and end of all things. This would, of course, have a profound effect on any study of history.

Professor Artemis

Phillippa Artemis, Revisionist Historian of the Occultian Circle. She approaches history from a Wizard-centric view, arguing that civilizations are the product of their sorcery, not the other way around. This argument is frequently used to discredit deistic and infernalist magics, although Phillippa Artemis distances herself from extremists who take this argument to the point of bigotry.

Professor Allosaurus

Foremost scholar upon the subject of the Shapings of the Body-Reptilian. Professor (no first name) Allosaurus may have once been human, but is now a sort of dinosaur-human hybrid. She (She?) teaches in the prestigious College of Sorcery. She may be contractually allowed to eat Students, but its unclear if this is true. She is known to hibernate during some semesters.

Professor Wilchester

Xerxes Wilchester, Head of the math department. A real hardass, as they say. Numbers are in fact his religion. He finds art and culture despicable, imperfect. He is of course a practitioner of Twelve Theorums (with Proofs) and claims to have glimpsed the value of pi to its infinite value. Consequently, he suffers no human, or rather, Wizardly frailties. He expects his Students to calculate impossible figures in their head. Wilchester has been the death sentence of many a promising mathematician's career.

Professor Childress

Professor Ingrid Childress doesn't believe in grades or tests. She teaches aesthetics of poetry, but she likes to think of herself as teaching life. As a scion of the House Sorcerous Kleo, Childress teaches class in the Academy gardens in the grass. She mentors scores of Students who would otherwise be saddled with Mentors who expected rigorous scholarship and long hours of research. Childress "Mentors" so many Students that they don't all know each other.

Professor Bellows

Oberon Bellows, master of all mechanical research. Mechanical engineering in the Academy blends science, art, and sorcery; Professor Bellows has a background in all these areas. He is a visionary, a man who practices the Slumbers and the Dream Seas, a school of Sorcery replete with dream inspiration. His aesthetic could be said to evoke elements of iron steam-works, which of course as as functional as beautiful.

The Lost Schools

The Deans and some notable Faculty members are initiated into Schools of Sorcery other than the Degrees of the Elements. In fact, this was once a hard requirement for teaching at the Academy, but now it is merely the prerequisite for professorship in the College of Sorcerous Arts. This has had the unintended consequence of making the College of Sorcerous Arts the stodgiest of the lot. There has not been an infusion of new talent in thousands of years. The reason is simple: no one is able to be initiated into these Schools of Sorcery. Their secrets were too closely guarded. Many of the Faculty hid, forgot, or forcefully erased their own memories of the necessary techniques. And although the Faculty have a monopoly on these magical Schools, they are still scrutinized extensively. Some members of the Faculty have learned the craft of the Mage-Smith, and such individuals can craft jewels which hold a single spell and ritual its creator knows, including esoteric lost Schools. Such items are quite rare of course and generally only lent out with a Faculty member's permission. Therefore, if someone comes down with a nasty hex, its source should be obvious.

Nirvana's Bliss

This style is said to be from a sky world where winged men harvested clouds of narcotic gas. It is, unsurprisingly, air-oriented but has a surprising range of effect. It sends forth cutting blasts. It makes a person as insubstantial as the clouds themselves. In its home world, it was not perceived as sorcery but rather as a state of being which approached god-like euphoria. Its rituals involved perfume, meditation, sparring, and reciting pleasure mantras. This School is often said to be the inspiration that drove House Phraseos to form.

Remedies of the High

Taken from a pious world, this folksy magic combines traditional herbalism with flashy magician's tricks. The style is intended for itinerant wise men and women who themselves were probably considered "Wizards" in their own right. This style has become much obsessed over by House Kleo, who find its utilitarian divinations and nature-cult rituals endearing.

The Straega Curses

In a world of perpetual autumn, in gaily painted vardas, Straega huddle together in covens to cast hexes on those who they deem fit. This style originates from a culture dominated by witches. It contains a number of hexes, divinations, and even some body transformations. The rituals of this style involve strangling animals, calling upon witch goddesses, boiling herbs, and cultivating a witch's mark.

Shapings of the Body-Reptilian

This school originates in a world of reptile beings who used the style to adapt and alter their bodies in a number of ways. By this method they regenerate lost limbs or blend into their surroundings through camouflage. Most of the techniques of this style are visceral shape-changing, but it can also alter the "lizard" part of the mind. The price one pays for these abilities are the rituals, which require lizard and dinosaur-like behavior (basking in the sun, stalking mammals, or eating one's young).

Twelve Theorems (with Proofs)

A style combining advanced theoretical mathematical calculation with a rather large dose of wishful thinking. When done correctly, the results are undeniably magic. These sacred formula were once jealous secrets kept by scholars of the Old Country. It is believed that a Greater Working of this style may be responsible for the Academy's departure from the Old Country, but no such spell has ever been discovered. House Zabraxadan takes its name from a word of power in this School whose syllables represent the variables in a complex binomial equation.

The Ontologies of Power

This style has a reputation for being dangerous and is not recommended for the weak of will. This deceptively simple style rejects occult trappings entirely. In fact, it eschews traditional ritual of any sort; its rites are transhumanist, involving meditation, thought experiments, and autistic behavior. There is something altogether wrong about this School, but it can kill with words as easy as it solves logic problems. It is rumored that the Ontologies have arisen in more than one culture.

The Aesthetic Ineffable

Originally practiced by the now-extinct Cabal of Supreme Creativity, the Aesthetic Ineffable allows an artist to make manifest their works in material reality. By granting themselves supernatural powers in their fiction, performance, or composition, the Wizard can change the material world. This School was, for a long time, found solely among professors of the College of Liberal Arts. It was their preferred method of satisfying the requirement for having mastered a rare School of Sorcery.

Slumbers and the Dream-Seas

By navigating a dream world made of strange scenarios set upon a series of islands, a Wizard can return from the land of dreams with occult power. By pilfering from the Land-of-Sleep, one can take on heroic aspects or put enemies in a nightmare unique to their target's own fears. Sometimes the dreaming world intrudes upon the waking world, but for many, such a price is a small one. Rituals of this style are referred to as "Slumbers" and their Spells are called "Dream-Seas". In this way, the Spells draw their power from a specific brand of dream-logic associated with each region.

Tales of the Knight and Thief

This style is all that remains of an epic narrative based upon the interactions between a Knight and a Thief. Each character has four Spells which allow the caster to draw upon their nature. Another four represent tales in which they come into direct conflict. The Thief is persecuted, and ultimately executed, by the Knight for his crimes. The Knight is also a victim, for he realizes that the Thief was what defined him, and thus, is tormented by his absence. In taking on the role of one of the characters or by telling the tale, Wizards become part of the narrative.

Arcaniforms

Arcaniforms are artificial life-forms created by magical ritual. There are two means by which Arcaniform come into being. The Lesser Arcaniform can be made by a Mage-Smith and there is brisk trade in them. These Arcaniform take a wide variety of forms, but all of them are immediately recognizable as being magical in origin. By using a Greater Working of the Degrees, called the Assembling of the Beast, a Wizard can combine the five elements to create a Greater Arcaniform (a monster, essentially). In the combining of the elemental patterns of multiple animals, Arcaniforms can take on the most ferocious traits of each of its constituent animals. On top of that, Arcaniforms also universally have a unique power. The caster can choose the constituent animals for an Arcaniform but it is quite tricky to promote one power over another. Therefore, Arcaniform construction is a crapshoot. Wizards like to make sport of fighting Arcaniforms. The Deans keep a vast array of them to challenge Students wishing to extend their Sabbatical. There are even Feral Arcaniforms, roaming the Academy Grounds.

Dodogriffs (Greater Arcaniform)

Fire-breathing is a trait well desired in Arcaniform fighting circles. Dodogriffs have the heads and forelegs of a dodo with the hind parts of a lion. They are actually very gentle creatures. They hate fighting. But, fight they must, for the will of their creators compel it.

Owlcats (Greater Arcaniform)

Owlcats are the ultimate familiar. Combining the mystery of cats with the wisdom of the owl, they have three times as much nocturnal mojo as would otherwise be the case. Owlcats meditate so you don't have to, and consequently generate Charges for its master to draw upon.

Warlock's Skull (Greater Arcaniform)

This particular item is the Crustiest of all object to own. Every Faculty member, invariably, has a skull on their shelf with glowing red eyes. This is the genuine article. "Why is it in the bookcase?" you might ask. "Shouldn't he have books there?" you might rightfully quip. "I mean, hes a Wizard after all. Those guys are well read." Another astute observation. Indeed, the Warlock's Skull is itself very much like a grimoire. It acts very much like a study partner, aiding in investigations and research.

Pentaclops (Greater Arcaniform)

This Five-Eyed beast magically reveals anyone skulking about invisibly. Ghostly immaterial snoopers are likewise drawn into the material world by the Pentaclop's gaze. The Pentaclops is no sissy himself. They'll run down anyone trying to conceal themselves through magical or mundane means, that is, unless their creator tells them otherwise.

Chickenduck Frogs (Lesser Arcaniform)

These small, handheld Arcaniforms are constructed for maximum cuteness. By obsessing over them, Wizards find inspiration in their adorableness. All Chickenduck Frogs have essentially the same construction, but each is painted differently. A subculture of Chickenduck Frog trading has emerged so that collectors can obsess over their various patterns for millenia.

Candy Fairies (Lesser Arcaniform)

The ingredient list for Candy Fairies are pretty simple: sugar, fairy. Real fairies are humanely drowned in a supersaturated sugar solution. Essentially, the fairy fossilizes in sugar crystal. A few days later, provided the magic holds, the fairy emerges as a Candy Fairy, an Arcaniform. Candy Fairies whisper helpful information while perched on their master's shoulder. They get nervous in the presence of unseesn dangers. If things look bad, a Wizard can use their Candy Fairy for one last use: if you eat them, you run faster than whatever chases you.

Scribe Apes (Lesser Arcaniform)

This Arcaniform looks very much like an ape with a scholar's cap of some kind. It dictates the notes of a meeting or delivers a message, after which it promptly ceases to exist. Scribe Apes cannot be bribed and do not reveal anything they've heard, unlike messenger birds who are gossipy and fickle.

Proles

Proles are defined as being Anthaumatic (Pronounced: An-Thow-Mah-Tik), the quality of being unable to initiate into Schools of Sorcery. It is unclear why this happens. It is theorized that they simply lack whatever mechanism which allows a person to "open the chamber" of a specific School of Sorcery. The Academy claims it is not prejudiced against Proles. Indeed, they do not them provide them with Wizard-like lifespans because they cannot participate in the sole focus of the society. Such individuals, if allowed to occupy, eternally, the very limited space, it would hamper research and prevent more deserving Wizards from coming into the world. In fact, the Academy works hard to find tasks to Proles busy and ensure they lead productive lives.

Prole is short for proletariat, or working class. They are mundane people living in a world of bewildering magic and wonder. Although they don't get to participate in the discussion central to the world itself, they have their own customs. They like to gather and sing and dance on occasion. They drink whiskey and pipe out an accordion tune. Most Proles aren't resentful but almost of all them don't really understand what it is their Wizard employers do exactly. They recognize that they dabble in the manipulation of unseen forces, that much is clear, but what it means is beyond most Proles. To them, it seems intensely dangerous. It seems that Proles are always the ones called upon to clean up the mess of the various occult experiments. The worst accidents inevitably cannot be fixed by magic because of the nature of the experiments and Proles are called upon exclusively to deal with them.

Proles have single quarters, even if married. If Proles have a child, it is tested to see if it is Anthaumatic, and if so, the parents raise the child. Otherwise, the child is raised as a Wizard by one of the Houses Sorcerous. Proles can marry Students but such unions inevitably end in heartbreak for the Student for obvious reasons. Proles cannot attend classes and are bound to service at least six days a week. They get room and three magically conjured meals a day. Proles observe the death of their own by performing a Wake, where all the Proles gather and get stinking drunk in the name of the departed. While Wizards, as a generality, do not look down on Proles, there are some Wizards, particularly the Stryxmaga and Zabaraxadan mages, who are more than a little snooty to Proles.

For all of that, Proles have a certain appeal to the Wizard culture at large. It is considered very hip to have a wand made by a Prole wand-smith, for their impermanent nature makes the romanticism of their craft that much more dramatic. There is a such thing as a “Prole Rights” movement in Academia, even though it has failed to gain traction in the hundreds of years since it first arrived. Although Proles cannot initiate into any known School of Sorcery there are other mystical techniques that they can pursue and perfect. Although Occult studies do not aid in a Prole’s Mastery over magic (they have none) it does allow them to interface with artifacts of power through the craft of Artifice. Likewise, Proles can undergo rigorous training of spirit to attune themselves to the forces of magic such that they can project bolts of force. Proles can even be seers of a sort through their attunement. However, they cannot even learn the Degrees of the Elements, the style Wizards consider most “elemental” (basic). Anthaumatic is to be utterly without sorcery.

Places in the Academy Arcane

The Library

The Library has the distinction of being the structure that houses the most space relative to the amount of room it takes up in the Academy’s physical structure. This is because it is simply gotten bigger and bigger as more and more books are added to it. Many of the books are so old, they have simply never been recopied and are consequently rotting, lost to all time. New volumes are put in their place. The Academy’s Library has numerous special collections, including cursed tomes, books intended for giants, and at least one Cockatrice with a dead-language dictionary tattooed upon its chicken-hide.

The Gymnasium

The Gymnasium doubles as a Wizard Dueling Circle (the largest of its kind). Although there are athletic Wizards, the Gymnasium doesn’t see as much action as you’d expect for a population the size of the Academy. The truth is, Wizards are just too busy researching and re-researching to work out. Someone get these guys a salubrious regimine!

Floors 13 and 77

Officially, there is no 13th floor of the Academy Arcane, however, this fact does not stop it from appearing with annoying frequency. At some point in the Academy’s construction, something horrible happened. It may have been a murder or the summoning of a malevolent supernatural

force. However, whatever happened collapsed the 13th floor, crushing everyone in it. Scores perished. However, sometimes, when you travel up the stairs from the 12th to the 14th floor, you'll end up in the ghostly remains of the 13th. Not everyone escapes their brushes with the 13th floor. The ghosts of the claimed are still there.

Something went terribly wrong on the 77th floor as well but not in as quite a dire way. An experiment briefly connected the 77th floor to another place entirely whose laws of reality were entirely different. The result was simply chaos. These manifestations still hound the 77th floor, which has since been converted into Student Housing (predominantly those who have been labeled "Churls"). Alien smells creep through the air there. Sometimes, the entire floor will disappear entirely. On cold nights, sometimes the bricks crack open and give birth to swarms of scarabs. Disturbing, to say the least.

The Hot House

A great glowing sphere of aurichalcum creates an artificial sun for the various plants of the Hot House. Every plant contained within is either magical in origin or is of some occult significance to herbalism or ritualism. Some number of plants are ambulatory and a small minority of these are carnivorous. Some of the plants sing and talk, but this may be because they are possessed by sacrificial victims of House Stryxmaga. Although nothing can be proven, it is fairly well established that the witches of Stryxmaga bury the bodies of those they sacrifice in the Hot House. You can sometimes see the faces of ghosts in the orchids or hear the wail of a dead friend from out of a pitcher plant.

An Out of Play Discussion of the Academy Arcane

Scales of Leviathan

One of the Secret Societies, the Scales of Leviathan, is not really for player membership (at least initially). It is simply far, far too easy to begin play with a secret society backing one's every move. However, this does not mean characters cannot join the Scales of Leviathan through play. An interesting character goal... they of course accept only one member per year.

"Holidays"

The Academy doesn't have holidays exactly and it certainly doesn't have seasons. They have Academic rituals, like the Day of Challenge and the Great Selection. These observances are not, however, connected to any kind of season or schedule other than that of the Academy itself. This means that the dates upon which the observances fall in game is entirely up to you, the player-base. There is an out-of-character forum specifically for players of the Academy Arcane on the Fractured LARP's forum. Please use this resource to confabulate with your fellow player and determine just if, when, and how your characters will perform these observances.

The Five Things Every Wizard Knows

Every Wizard in the Academy Arcane knows...

...the Schools of Sorcery they are initiated into (if any).

Wizards obsess over magic. They practice their incantations in their spare time. They know the names of the spells in their School even if they don't know the Spell yet. They damn sure know their Ritual names (they are often intoned as part of a Feat of Learning).

...their Major.

Every Wizard is also a Student. They are required to declare a Major and swear fealty to one of the Colleges (College of Liberal Arts, College of Material Arts, College of Sorcerous Arts). Students have a mentor and a number of them hold down odd jobs in the Academy itself.

...their Words of Power.

The Academy Arcane is furnished with magical infrastructure, able to conjure water into a warm bath or summon forth a bushel of dragonfruit. These amenities require magical words of power, unique to each Wizard. Wizards have a lexicon of nonsense words associated with everyday tasks. These do nothing in the Fractured, of course; they are just fun.

...the location of their spell-book and ritual implements.

Just as a cowboy knows where his gun is and a samurai knows where his katana is, the Wizard is in full control of the tools of their art. Wizards are creatures of learning, so many memorize their spells. Wizards are also creatures of forgetfulness, so spell-books are never far away. There are a lot of Cantrips in those Minor Degrees!

...their House Sorcerous (if any), Secret Society (if any), or Mentor (if any).

Wizards require, as part of their education, infrastructure to provide them with the knowledge they need to get ahead. The Houses Sorcerous are a naked expression of a family's desire to see their children succeed. Secret Societies look after the well-being of their members. To those without advocate, a member of the Faculty is appointed as a Mentor.

The Five Things Every Prole Knows

Every Prole from the Academy Arcane knows...

...that the ways of magic (or maybe just the Degrees...) is beyond them.

Proles are Anthaumatic, meaning they cannot initiate into the Degrees of the Elements. Many assume this simply means that they cannot learn magic, but this is untested. Proles can learn the Occult Skill and can possess the Attuned and Wilful Traits just like anybody, though.

...that their fate is mundane toil.

Wizards zip about on magic carpets or flying eyeballs or somesuch nonsense, but Proles know that those thrills are not permitted to their kind. They must content themselves with less magical pursuits, like canasta or pea breeding.

...that the Eudaemonosphere is likely to be as dangerous as it is mystical.

Proles arrive in game as part of a contingent of Proles sent to the Eudaemonosphere to protect and serve the Academic Field Trip taking place there. Wizards think its great fun traversing the cosmos, but Proles are not so enthusiastic. The nature of magic is danger, right?

...the worst magical accident they ever witnessed.

Proles, even in a world saturated by magic, are often off-put by it. This is because the Academy is about experimentation and experiments fail, often spectacularly. Usually, the clean-up afterwards falls to Proles because more magic would probably add to the damage. Consequently, Proles are somewhat critical of the Academy's reliance on the supernatural.

...that just because a person doesn't know sorcery, they aren't lesser for it.

Wizards seem to think they know more because they can do a few Cantrips. Proles know their self-worth lies not in spellcasting flimflamery, but in a good honest days work. If that's not enough for some types, then sorrier is their lot.

Influences

Harry Potter Series (Literature)

I'd be lying if I said it was not an influence. Still, the Wizard Academy is an old trope. I've just added my say on the subject.

The Hobbit (Movie)

The Rank and Bass production, not the glitzy computer-gen-fest. Gandalf is the quintessential Wizard in all ways. With singing!

Excalibur (Movie)

One of many takes on the Arthurian Legends. In this one, everything magical glows with a green sheen, as if the audience is Attuned. Merlin is, of course, the quintessential Wizard. Anal Nathraak!

Exalted: The Dragonblooded (Role-Playing Game)

One of the most satisfying campaigns I've ever run was centered around young Dragonblooded PCs attending a sorcery academy (the Heptagram). There are a number of similarities, like the obsession with the elements and the mysteriousness of the Faculty, between the Heptagram and the Academy Arcane. I tried to capture a number of elements that I created for that campaign in the Academy. I even had players roll for their grades! You will (mostly) be spared this element in Fractured.

Wizards (Movie)

Two immortal Wizards vie in a post apocalyptic wasteland. While the movie makes you think that the central conflict is magic versus technology, the reality is that it is good versus evil, ultimately. Pretty much all Ralph Bakshi movies have something to inform players of the Academy Arcane, I think. I think he may actually be a Wizard.