

I'm not sure what's being done on the magic/ritual part of the sections but I did some work on them on my own, and thought I'd start beating that particular dead horse again.

Here's some of what I thought up while trying to learn how to be a "rules" guy.

SHAMANISM

"He that knows"

A Shaman or Shamanka (female) engages in Rituals to communicate with spirits, both benevolent and malicious, to aid them in diagnosing and treating illnesses, to engage in Rituals that allow them to leave their body and enter the supernatural world via astral projection, to control the weather, engage in divination, interpret dreams, and in extreme circumstances take control of the spirits that surround them, or allow those spirits to use his or her body to accomplish their own goals. Shamans are often thought to be the intermediaries between the physical and spiritual worlds, allowing the voices of the spirits to have a voice. The Shaman shares his own voice with the spirits, and within in many communities it is a deeply revered and respected voice.

Shaman(ka) can be found in a myriad of forms across the globe, entrenched in the traditions of Northern Asia (Mongolia & Siberia), Southern Korea, North America, Central America, South America, and Australia. Each of these regions practices their form of Shamanism in a different manner, but their reliance upon communication with the spirit world helps unite them in the types of the Rituals that they use to aid themselves and their communities. Whether known as Shaman, Witch Doctor, Medicine Man, Machi, or Clever Wo(men), the practitioner of the Rituals of this Tradition have the ear of the spirit world at their lips, and with it vast power.

ARCHETYPE:

SHAMAN

The Shaman, also known as Shamanka, Medicine Man, or Witch Doctor serves as the conduit between the spiritual and natural world. Most are born into their position as Shaman or come to their calling at a very early age. Only a gifted individual can attain the mantle of Shaman. They may serve as healers, advisors, and mediators within their communities. They continue their community's traditions by using the oral traditions of story telling and song, and continuing to practice sacrifices to appease the spirits. Some are known to use the ability to speak with the spirits to divine the future, hunting patterns, and the weather, and use this knowledge to better his community. Some Shaman act as a guide for souls, leading the unborn to their new forms, and others may journey with the departed to the spirit world. While most Shaman are content to serve their communities, some Shaman have seen things in their dealings with the spirits, during dream walks, and while engaged in deep trances that will not allow them to stay within their communities. On occasion a Shaman leaves his community and goes out into the world to continue practicing his Tradition and Rituals. Whether his departure is to aid the world through a troublesome time, or serve the black hearts of those that would see the world come to harm is known only to the Shaman.

MOTIVATIONS

Several motivations are suitable to a Shaman, but some that fit particularly well are Duty: The traditions that your character has been taught, the sense of community, and the rituals and ceremonies have molded your character into the voice of his people. Your character has an important mission to take from his community and share with the world, or he may be desperate to bring knowledge from the outside world back to his community.

You earn Style points when your character follows a tradition or convinces someone else to take part in or respect your traditions.

Faith: Your character is led by the voices of the spirits, and she has no doubt that their words will lead her upon the correct path. The words of the living only serve their own interests, but the voices of the spirits are pure, unpolluted by greed and politics. She is the chosen servant of the spirits, and their faith in her is tied directly to her faith in them.

You earn Style points when you convince others that the spirit voices are correct, or when they acknowledge the wisdom of the spirit voices.

Redemption: The voices of the spirits either no longer whisper their secrets to your character, or he's grown wary of the thoughts they share with him. Either way your character doubts himself, the spirits, and he no longer has the ability to help his community via his Rituals. He yearns to believe once again, to hear the truth, and be able to act upon it for the greater good of his community. With a heavy heart he has engaged upon a journey of self discovery in an effort to learn the truth behind the voices of the spirits.

You earn style points when you are able to discern the truth of the spirits words, and when you convince others to look into their own hearts and question their reasons for doing whatever it is that drives them to act.

SHAMAN ATTRIBUTES:

The Tradition of Shamanistic magic uses Willpower instead of Charisma as its Base Attribute. Shamanka are often Charismatic, and use their Charisma in their dealings as mediator, leader, and teacher, but when attempting Rituals that interact with spirits, the Shamanka calls upon her Willpower.

SKILLS

A Shaman has several skills that can aid him in helping his community. A Shaman character is not bound to take any set of skills, but the following Skills may prove useful to a Shaman character.

Athletics: Allows the Shamanka to partake in the many physical activities that she is called upon to perform in her role as Shamanka such as: Running long distances and exercising to induce a trance.

Diplomacy: The Shaman often acts as a mediator for his community, and often as council for the leaders of the community. In some instances the Shaman is a leader within the community.

Empathy: A Shamanka often listens to her community's admission of taboos that have been broken. While doing so she learns certain signs that aid her in deciding if lies or truth are being spoken. This Skill also helps the Shaman in her role as community mediator.

Focus: Allows the Shaman to increase his concentration, and allows the Shaman to enter a deeper state of meditation that is essential for many of his Rituals.

Medicine: A Shamanka is knowledgeable in the ways of diagnosing, healing, and surgery. She has applied her Skill to Human, Animal, and in some instances the Spirit worlds.

Performance: The Shaman often induces a state of trance to commune with the spirits by drumming, dancing, and singing. Shamans act as the keeper of history and legends, and are also the teachers of such things. Shamans tend to employ Oratory and Singing Performance Skills to transfer this knowledge to their communities.

Survival: Shamanka are often raised in areas that the men and women of the cities could not survive in. Food, water, and other basic necessities are not always readily available. The Shamanka takes part in hunting and gathering, and helps nourish the communities bodies as well as their souls.

TALENTS

A Shamanka must have the Magical Aptitude talent.

Other talents that a Shaman might find useful are:

Captivate: Many find the trance inducing qualities of the Shamanka's feverish dance to be captivating. The slow rhythmic sounds of her chants, or the wild beating upon drums often leads to viewers losing themselves in the trance as well.

Charismatic: A Shaman often acts as a mediator in his community. A Charisma bonus helps him in his daily life, and helps him smooth over issues that may harm his community.

Danger Sense: The Shamanka has the constant whispering of the spirits in her ear. It's not unusual for these spirits to aid a Shaman who has served them well.

Guardian: A Shaman walks with the spirits, and the spirits are not above aiding a favored soul, and the often help him to warn others of imminent danger.

Inspire: A Shamanka is traditionally a figure that others look to for advice and aid. To this end the Shamanka is able to inspire those around her with her words of wisdom, and her deep beliefs that the spirits look out for her and her community.

Iron Will: A Shaman relies upon Willpower as the source of his Rituals. A stronger Willpower will help the Shaman and in turn his community.

Keen Sense: A Shamanka's Keen sense may come from one of her senses, but a Shamanka's Keen Sense can also be attributed to the Spirits that help guide her.

Lifesaver: A Shaman is often a gifted healer, and he can affect marvelous feats of healing due to his close association with the Spirits.

Lucky: The Shamanka's many totems or friendly dealings with the Spirits can have an almost uncanny affect upon their luck. A Shamanka can often avoid the most serious injuries or hazardous paths.

Natural Leader: A Shaman is often the spiritual leader of his community and in some cases acts as the community's formal leader as well. Due to this fact the Shaman can often call upon his community or surrounding communities to aid him in his endeavors.

Psychic Sensitivity: While most Shamanka use their rituals to act as a form of Psychic Sensitivity, some are actually granted this ability at birth or after completing a monumentally difficult task. In a Shamanka's case a Spirit gifts her with this ability.

RESOURCES

Common resources amongst Shaman characters:

Ally: Acting as a community's advisor and spiritual leader can often lead to a small group of allies that help support the Shaman or their cause.

Artifact: Often times a Shamanka may have a token or a symbolic item that helps to focus their meditations and rituals. Gifts from the spirits or powerful members of the community may hold significant powers.

Contacts: During a Shamans time serving the community he will undoubtedly make a contact or two. Shaman often have contact with other Shaman, and they often form a network of like minded individuals that may aid each other by sharing information, Rituals, and on rare occasions they may take part in each others Rituals.

Followers: A Shamanka often helps members of the community by communicating with the spirits on their behalf. This can lead to very loyal friends, patrons, animal companions, and on rare circumstances a spirit may become a follower.

Mentor: Most Shaman are taught their Tradition and Rituals by an older Shaman. This older figure often retires, and allows their student to take their place within the community, but in times of need the Mentor may be able to aid the younger Shaman.

FLAWS

A Shaman can elect to take nearly any Flaw; however, the Shaman Tradition comes with a built in Flaw. Shaman Rituals do not simply form out of thin air like some Tradition's Rituals. A Shaman's Rituals are based upon communicating with Spirits, and a Shaman must often place himself in a trance or a higher state of being to allow this communication. Therefore, a Shaman must choose a manner in which he will enter this state. Some of the most common methods of entering this state are:

Chanting, dancing, drumming, meditation, singing, and the use of certain plants that can cause a euphoric effect.