



SYMBOLS TO REPRESENT THE 8 SCHOOLS OF MAGIC

by Pjotr Frank • Version 1.1



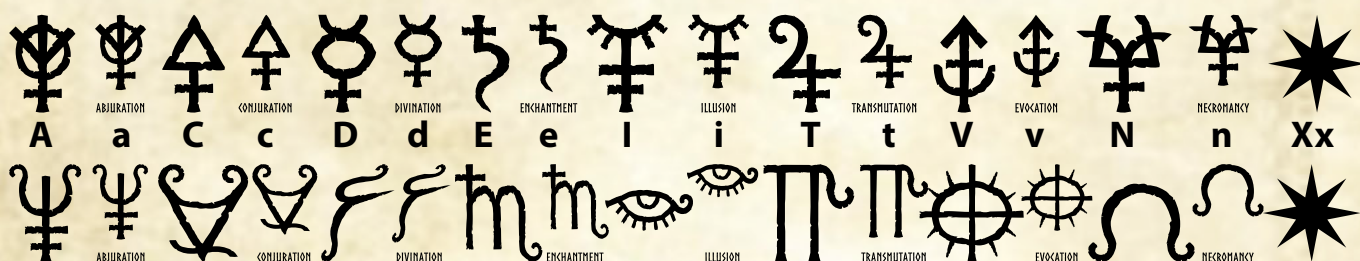
DESIGNED FOR THE DUNGEONS & DRAGONS RPG

Includes Open-Type Font for personal use
and interpretations of symbolism.



SYMBOLS TO REPRESENT THE 8 SCHOOLS OF MAGIC

DnD Magic Schools Bold • Open Type Font • version 1.2



DnD Magic Schools Medium Old Style • Open Type Font • version 1.2



About the author and the project: Pjotr Frank is a veteran roleplayer, HEMA instructor, graphic designer, and an aspiring game designer in Vienna / Austria.

Since I was confronted with the D&D magic system and its classification of spells, when the Dragonlance setting was published, I was kind of unhappy with the 8 schools of magic. But now that tradition has numbed my desire for innovation, and after I got inspired by studying a few ancient alchemical symbols, I nonetheless wanted to give the – still a little arbitrarily feeling – disposition of spell types a roleplaying facelift. Strangely enough, it seems nobody has yet come up with coherent – let alone official – symbols or runes for the basic eight wizard traditions. This is my shot at the long overdue subject. I included musings about possible symbology interpretations.

Feel free to use the icons in your campaigns, and the included Open Type Font for your personal print-outs.

If you want to use the symbols for your own publications, it would be swell, if you mentioned my name. In the unlikely event, that you earn some real cash with that publication, a small monetary sign of your appreciation would be welcome.

Happy gaming!

Constructive feedback, and commissions for graphic creations are always welcome: www.pjotr.design



ABJURATION

ABJURATION SPELLS ARE PROTECTIVE IN NATURE, THOUGH SOME OF THEM HAVE AGGRESSIVE USES. THEY CREATE MAGICAL BARRIERS, NEGATE HARMFUL EFFECTS, HARM TRESPASSERS, OR BANISH CREATURES TO OTHER PLANES OF EXISTENCE.



THE **ARROW** SYMBOLIZES HARMFUL ENERGIES DIRECTED TOWARDS THE SUBJECT. THE **DOWNWARD** HEADING OF THE ARROW SYMBOLIZES DESTRUCTION.



THE **CIRCLE** SYMBOLIZES A FIELD OF PROTECTION AND NEGATION, BARRING HARM FROM REACHING THE SUBJECT.



THE **CROSS** SYMBOLIZES THE WILL OF THE CASTER, AS WELL AS THE SUBJECT OF THE ABJURATION.





CONJURATION

CONJURATION SPELLS INVOLVE THE TRANSPORTATION OF OBJECTS AND CREATURES FROM ONE LOCATION TO ANOTHER. SOME SPELLS SUMMON CREATURES OR OBJECTS TO THE CASTER'S SIDE, WHEREAS OTHERS ALLOW THE CASTER TO TELEPORT TO ANOTHER LOCATION. SOME CONJURATIONS CREATE OBJECTS OR EFFECTS OUT OF NOTHING.



THE **ARROW** SYMBOLIZES DIRECTION/TRANSPORTATION OF THE OBJECT/SUBJECT. THE **UPWARD** HEADING OF THE ARROW SYMBOLIZES CREATION.



THE **TRIANGLE** SYMBOLIZES THE TANGIBLE MATTER OF THE CONJURED OBJECT/SUBJECT. ITS **UNBROKEN FORM** STANDS FOR THE LIFE-FORCE OF THE SUBJECT.



THE **CROSS** SYMBOLIZES THE WILL OF THE CASTER, AS WELL AS ORIGIN AND DESTINATION OF THE CONJURATION.



MAGIC SCHOOL SYMBOL OF



DIVINATION

DIVINATION SPELLS REVEAL INFORMATION, WHETHER IN THE FORM OF SECRETS LONG FORGOTTEN, GLIMPSES OF THE FUTURE, THE LOCATIONS OF HIDDEN THINGS, THE TRUTH BEHIND ILLUSIONS, OR VISIONS OF DISTANT PEOPLE OR PLACES. DIVINATIONS ARE ALSO KNOWN AS THE **MANTIK ARTS**, NAMED AFTER THE FABLED DIVINER MANTO.



THE **SEMI-CIRCLE** SYMBOLIZES THE LIFTING OF THE EYELID FROM THE USUALLY CLOSED THIRD EYE, WHILE THE **QUESTION-MARK** SYMBOLIZES UNVEILED SECRETS.



THE **ELLIPSE** [SOMETIMES DRAWN AS A CIRCLE] SYMBOLIZES THE PUPIL-LESS THIRD EYE, A MYSTIC TYPE OF PERCEPTION AND AWARENESS, NOT RELYING ON MUNDANE SENSES.



THE **CROSS** SYMBOLIZES THE WILL OF THE CASTER, AS WELL AS THE SOURCE OF THE DIVINED INFORMATION.





ENCHANTMENT

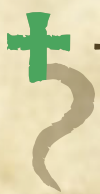
ENCHANTMENT SPELLS AFFECT THE MINDS OF OTHERS, INFLUENCING OR CONTROLLING THEIR BEHAVIOR. SUCH SPELLS CAN MAKE ENEMIES SEE THE CASTER AS A FRIEND, FORCE CREATURES TO TAKE A COURSE OF ACTION, OR EVEN CONTROL ANOTHER CREATURE LIKE A PUPPET.



THE **WHIP** SYMBOLIZES MENTAL DOMINANCE OVER THE SUBJECT. THE **DOWNWARD** HEADING OF THE WHIP SYMBOLIZES DESTRUCTIVE POWERS OF THE MIND.



THE **SNAKE** SYMBOLIZES THE CASTER'S INFLUENCE, SUBTLY WORMING INTO THE SUBJECT'S CONSCIOUSNESS. **RIGHT-WEIGHTED ASYMMETRY** SYMBOLIZES THE PSYCHIC REALM.



THE **CROSS** SYMBOLIZES WILL AND EGO OF THE CASTER, SUPER-IMPOSING AND MANIPULATING THE ENCHANTED CREATURE.





EVOCATION

EVOCATION SPELLS MANIPULATE MAGICAL ENERGY TO PRODUCE A DESIRED EFFECT. SOME CALL UP BLASTS OF FIRE OR LIGHTNING, OTHERS CHANNEL POSITIVE ENERGY TO HEAL WOUNDS. WHILE NEITHER GOOD OR EVIL IN NATURE, EVOCATIONS HAVE A SIMILAR POTENTIAL FOR BENEVOLENCE, AS FOR WREAKING HAVOC ON ITS SUBJECTS.



THE **UPWARD** HEADING **ARROW** SYMBOLIZES CREATION OR CHANNELING OF DIRECTED MAGICAL ENERGY TOWARDS THE SUBJECT OF THE EVOCATION.



THE **CHALICE** SYMBOLIZES A RESERVOIR OF NEUTRAL ENERGY, THE **DOWNWARD SEMI-CIRCLE** ALONG WITH THE **ARROW** ALLOWS THE CASTER TO USE IT FOR GOOD OR ILL.



THE **CROSS** SYMBOLIZES THE WILL OF THE CASTER, TO USE THE HARNESSSED ENERGY FOR EITHER HARM OR BENEFIT.



MAGIC SCHOOL SYMBOL OF



ILLUSION

ILLUSION SPELLS DECEIVE THE SENSES OR MINDS OF OTHERS. THEY CAUSE PEOPLE TO SEE THINGS THAT ARE NOT THERE, TO MISS THINGS THAT ARE THERE, TO HEAR PHANTOM NOISES, OR TO REMEMBER THINGS THAT NEVER HAPPENED. SOME ILLUSIONS CREATE PHANTOM IMAGES THAT ANY CREATURE CAN SEE, BUT THE MOST INSIDIOUS ILLUSIONS PLANT AN IMAGE DIRECTLY IN THE MIND OF A CREATURE.



THE **CLOSED EYELID** SYMBOLIZES THE SENSORY NUMBING, THAT KEEPS THE SUBJECT OF THE ILLUSION TO PERCEIVE REALITY AS IT TRULY IS.



THE **HORIZONTAL LINE** SYMBOLIZES THE BARRIER, THAT SEPARATES THE SUBJECT FROM THE TRUTH, AND THE CANVAS FOR PHANTASMAL FABRICATIONS.



THE **CROSS** SYMBOLIZES THE WILL OF THE CASTER, DECEIVING AND MANIPULATING THE SUBJECT'S SENSES.



MAGIC SCHOOL SYMBOL OF



NEKROMANCY

NEKROMANCY SPELLS MANIPULATE THE ENERGIES OF LIFE AND DEATH. SUCH SPELLS CAN GRANT AN EXTRA RESERVE OF LIFE FORCE, DRAIN THE LIFE ENERGY FROM ANOTHER CREATURE, CREATE THE UNDEAD, OR EVEN BRING THE DEAD BACK TO LIFE. WHILE THE TERM NEKROMANCY [NAMED AFTER THE DIVINER MANTO] WAS ORIGINALLY COINED FOR CONVERSING WITH THE DECEASED, IT IS COMMONLY USED TO DESCRIBE THE EVIL PRACTICE OF RAISING THE UNDEAD.



THE **DOWNWARD** HEADING **ARROW** SYMBOLIZES THE VILE FORCES FROM BEYOND THE VEIL OF DEATH, THAT FILL THE **EMPTY EYES** OF THE UNDEAD WITH FALSE LIFE.



THE **BROKEN-UP TRIANGLE** SYMBOLIZES THE RUINED AND PERVERTED LIFE-FORCE OF THE SUBJECT. IT CAN BE INTERPRETED AS AN OPENED TOMB.



THE **CROSS** SYMBOLIZES THE WILL OF THE CASTER, TO MESS WITH THE COSMIC LAWS OF LIFE AND DEATH.





TRANSMUTATION

TRANSMUTATION SPELLS CHANGE THE PROPERTIES OF A CREATURE, OBJECT, OR ENVIRONMENT. THEY MIGHT TURN AN ENEMY INTO A HARMLESS CREATURE, BOLSTER THE STRENGTH OF AN ALLY, MAKE AN OBJECT MOVE AT THE CASTER'S COMMAND, OR ENHANCE A CREATURE'S INNATE HEALING ABILITIES TO RAPIDLY RECOVER FROM INJURY.

THE **ASCENDING SPIRAL** SYMBOLIZES THE THE CHANGE TO THE SUBSTANTIAL PROPERTIES OF THE SUBJECT TO THE TRANSMUTATION.

THE BROKEN **HORIZONTAL LINE** SYMBOLIZES THE SUBJECT'S STATE BEFORE AND AFTER THE CHANGE. **LEFT-WEIGHTED ASYMMETRY** SYMBOLIZES THE SOMATIC REALM.

THE **CROSS** SYMBOLIZES THE WILL OF THE CASTER, ORCHESTRATING PHYSICAL CHANGES TO THE SUBJECT.

ADDENDUM:

THE <CLASSIK> SYMBOLS

AFTER PUBLISHING THESE COHERENT SET OF SYMBOLS, IT WAS BROUGHT TO MY ATTENTION, THAT THERE ARE ALREADY SYMBOLS FOR THE MAGIC TRADITIONS, THAT DATE BACK TO 2ND EDITION. I HAVE TO APOLOGIZE, THAT MY RESEARCH WAS NOT THOROUGH, BEFORE I STARTED THIS PROJECT. NONETHELESS I WILL STAND BY MY DESIGN CHOICES, BUT ADD A SECOND TYPE-FACE WITH THE OLD-STYLE SYMBOLS TO THE DOWNLOAD. I WAS SURPRISED, HOW SIMILAR MY SYMBOLS WERE TO THE ORIGINALS IN SOME CASES, WHILE OTHERS COULD NOT BE MORE DIFFERENT. FROM A TYPOGRAPHIC POINT OF VIEW, MY SET OF SYMBOLS IS MORE HOMOGENEOUS. THE OLD SET IST MUCH MORE “JUMPY” WHEN THE CHARACTERS - WHICH RANGE FROM EXTREME LANDSCAPE TO EXTREME PORTRAIT FORMAT - ARE USED TOGETHER. TRADITIONALSIT OR AESTHETE — WHATEVER SET OF SYMBOLS YOU PREFER, YOU ARE COVERED BY THIS DOWNLOAD.

I COULD NOT RESIST TO WORK OUT A <COMPARISON>

OF THE TWO SETS OF SYMBOLS. YOU CAN FIND MY CREATIONS TO THE LEFT,
AND THE REPRODUCTION OF THE ORIGINAL SYMBOLS TO THE RIGHT.



ABJURATION

THE **ABJURATION** SYMBOL SEEMS TO BE INSPIRED BY THE NORSE RUNE ALGIZ — WHICH STANDS FOR SHELTER AND PROTECTION — IN BOTH DESIGNS. WHILE I ADDED A PROTECTIVE CIRCLE, THE ORIGINAL HAS AN UPSIDE-DOWN NECROMANCY SIGN ON TOP OF THE SYMBOL. THIS MAKES LITTLE SENSE, BECAUSE ILLUSION WAS THE OPPOSED SCHOOL IN THE OLD CANON OF MAGIC TRADITIONS.



ABJURATION



<CONJURATION>

THE **<CONJURATION>** SYMBOLS WERE INDEPENDENTLY DESIGNED WITH A DOMINANT TRIANGLE. IN MY VERSION IT WAS A SYNTHESIS OF AN ARROW (TRANSPORTATION) AND A MOUNTAIN (SOLIDIFIKATION), WHILE THE ORIGINAL SIGN DEPIKTS A STYLIZED DEMON-HEAD. MY DESIGN WAS ALSO INSPIRED BY THE ALCHEMICAL SIGN FOR PHOSPHOR, RESPECTIVELY THE UPSIDE-DOWN SIGN FOR RUST.



<CONJURATION>

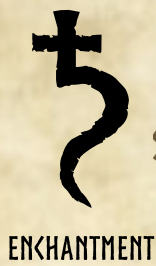


DIVINATION

THE TWO **DIVINATION** SYMBOLS ARE QUITE DIVERGING. WHILE MY DESIGN WAS INSPIRED BY THE ALCHEMICAL SIGN FOR MERCURY AND THE IDEA OF AN OPENING EYE, THE ORIGINAL SIGN FOR DIVINATION ELUDES MY INTERPRETATIONS, BUT IT REMINDS OF CALIGRAPHY STROKES, RESPECTIVELY A MIRRORED SEGMENT OF THE LETTER “R”. ITS EXTREME PORTRAIT FORMAT AND ITALIC ORIENTATION IS REMARKABLE.



DIVINATION



ENCHANTMENT

THE **ENCHANTMENT** SYMBOLS LOOK SIMILAR, WHEN IT COMES TO THE CROSS ON THE TOP LEFT CORNER. BUT WHILE MY DESIGN WAS INSPIRED BY THE ALCHEMICAL SIGN FOR LEAD, THE ORIGINAL “M”-SHAPED ONE REMINDS OF THE ALCHEMICAL SIGN FOR SEPARATION, OR THE SCORPIO ZODIAC SIGN. FROM A DRAWING PERSPECTIVE, BOTH SYMBOLS CONSIST OF JUST TWO CROSSING LINES. AN ODD COINCIDENCE.



ENCHANTMENT



EVOCATION

THE **EVOCATION** SYMBOL I DESIGNED WAS INSPIRED BY THE ALCHEMICAL SIGN FOR CREATION, OR THE SAGITTARIUS ZODIAC SIGN, WHILE THE ORIGINAL SYMBOL SEEMS TO DEPICT AN EXPLOSION, DIVIDED IN FOUR QUARTERS. MAYBE IT IS A SIMPLIFIED VERSION OF THE CHAOS-SIGN, ORIGINATING FROM MICHAEL MOORCOCK'S ETERNAL CHAMPION STORIES, BUT I DON'T SEE WHY EVOCATIONS SHOULD BE CHAOTIC IN NATURE.



EVOCATION



ILLUSION

THE **ILLUSION** SYMBOL SHOWS SIMILAR THOUGHT BY BOTH DESIGNERS, BUT WHILE THE ORIGINAL SEEMS TO BE INSPIRED BY THE EGYPTIAN EYE-OF-HORUS HIEROGLYPH, I OPTED FOR A CLOSED EYE, TO SYMBOLIZE THE NUMBING OF THE SENSES, RATHER THAN AN OPEN ONE. FUNNY THOUGH, THAT BOTH OF US INCLUDED QUITE PROMINENT EYE-LASHES IN THE PICTOGRAM. THE ORIGINAL'S LANDSCAPE FORMAT IS REMARKABLE.



ILLUSION

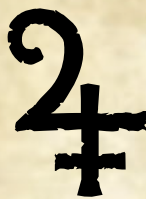


NECROMANCY

THE **NECROMANCY** SYMBOLS ARE BOTH KIND OF COOL. THE ORIGINAL SYMBOLIZES A TUNNEL OR A BROKEN UP OROBORUS SNAKE, WHILE I OPTED FOR A STYLIZED SKULL. THE OLDER ONE IS MUCH EASIER TO DRAW AND LOOKS NEAT, PAINTED ON A FOREHEAD, OR ENGRAVED IN A SKULL, AS ONE CAN SEE IN THE 3.5 PLAYER'S HANDBOOK BACKGROUND ILLUSTRATION OF THE CHAPTER ON MAGIC.

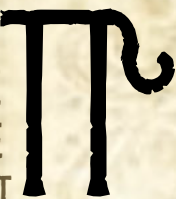


NECROMANCY



TRANSMUTATION

THE **TRANSMUTATION** SYMBOLS ARE BOTH INSPIRED BY ANCIENT HISTORIC SYMBOLS. WHILE I WENT FOR THE ALCHEMICAL SYMBOL FOR TIN, THE ORIGINAL ONE LOOKS STRIKINGLY LIKE THE GREEK LETTER “PI”. I HONESTLY HAVE NO IDEA, IF THE RATIO OF CIRCUMFERENCE AND DIAMETER OF A CIRCLE IS AN IMPORTANT COMPONENT OF TRANSMUTATION / ALTERNATION MAGIC.



TRANSMUTATION

A FEW FINAL THOUGHTS ON OPPOSING MAGIC SCHOOLS

WHILE OPPOSED MAGIC SCHOOLS SEEMS OF LITTLE CONSEQUENCE IN 5TH EDITION, I WOULD LIKE TO END THIS LITTLE ESSAY BY SORTING THEM IN A WAY, THAT MAKES MORE SENSE TO ME:



NEW:

NECROMANCY • CONJURACTION
EVOCATION • ABJURATION
ENCHANTMENT • TRANSMUTATION
ILLUSION • DIVINATION

ORIGINAL:

NECROMANCY • ILLUSION
EVOCATION • ENCHANTMENT
DIVINATION • CONJURACTION
TRANSMUTATION • ABJURATION

