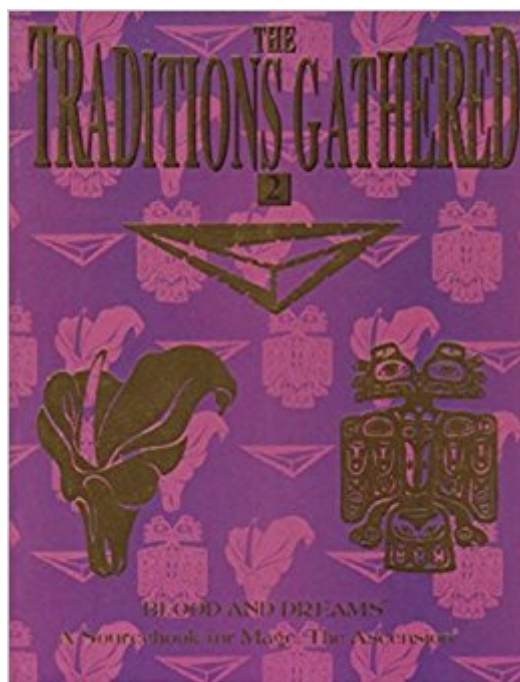


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# The Traditions Gathered 2: Blood And Dreams (Mage: The Ascension)



## Synopsis

Book by Chupp, Sam, Dark, Lucien, Rea, Nicky

## Book Information

Series: Mage: the Ascension (Book 2)

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## Customer Reviews

Book by Chupp, Sam, Dark, Lucien, Rea, Nicky

good quality

When I opened this book, I expected great things from the Verbena section, nothing spectacular from the Dreamspeaker book, and I didn't even intend on reading the Cult of Ecstasy chapter. When I closed it again, my expectations had been completely inverted: the Verbena section was next to worthless, the Dreamspeaker book was very good, and the Ecstatics had surpassed my wildest imaginings about them. I'd give the Verbena Tradbook a 2.5 or \*maybe\* a 3; it was just a bland story about a group of Verbena apprentices with some superficial historical data tossed in. It really didn't give much information about the Tradition useful in either portraying them in a chronicle or in playing a Verbena, and instead got very bogged-down in the story it was centered around. The Dreamspeakers, on the other hand, gave a very good feel for the spirit-centered Tradition, touching on 'speakers from various native cultures across the planet, and intertwined some very good fiction about a single native american Dreamspeaker undergoing his Awakening and exploring a little bit of

the Middle Umbra with the person who'd become his mentor. But the Cult of Ecstasy book was the best; design and art-wise it was beautiful, and once again Phil Brucato proved himself my favorite White Wolf author. The Ecstatic section was, once again, told from the POV of a newly Awakening mage, but rather than trying to tackle all the information he wanted to go over in the context of the story, which inevitably comes off as contrived, Phil threw in plenty of side-bars about things like the Ecstatics' three main vices (sex, drugs, and rock'n'roll, natch) and they uses as foci, the various divisions and camps within the order (I loved the two camps he based on Discordianism, being an Erisian myself), and an explanation of the Cultists' trademark 'spaced out' look. Mr. Brucato took a Tradition that I saw as goofy and gave it depth, reasonability, and a life of its own. Over all, a pretty good book, but unless you're going to play/run a Dreamspeaker or a Cultist, it's not too necessary.

Another one in the Traditions Gathered books which also contains 3 of the original Tradition books. This time, White Wolf delivers Verbena, Dreamspeakers and Cult of Ecstasy in one single package. Verbena is, after AK Brotherhood, the worst Tradition book ever written. I love the Verbena concept, but the only thing you get in this book is a few information about modern day witches and such, and absolutely nothing about pagan beliefs. The stereotypes section is, well, too "stereotypical", too. Dreamspeakers is very well written, merging shamanism from different cultures without being disrespectful. This one's probably my favorite in this bundle. Cult of Ecstasy gives you what the cultists really think about global and personal ascension, separating them from the classical "just a bunch of losers" image most people have. The cultists are one of the most responsible Traditions (ironic, huh?), and the great Phil Brucato is here to prove it. All in all you get 2 good books and 1 bad one in this bundle. As this bundle costs the same as 2 classic Tradition books, it's a good buy cause you're buying the last 2, and get the bad one for free.

This book comprises three earlier books, the Verbena, Dreamspeaker, and Cult of Ecstasy Tradition books. The section on the Cultists of Ecstasy was possibly the best, giving desperately needed insights into the most stereotyped tradition. Has some great hints at Ecstatic factions, too. The Dreamspeaker section is satisfactory, and it stresses a very authentic core thread for this diverse tradition: vision. The Verbena section, from the second oldest of the Tradition books, is also good; if all the White Wolf game books' superfluous stories were as good as the Verbena's, I wouldn't complain about them! And the Verbena section's embedded story does genuinely help illuminate the "flavor" of the tradition.

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