



MAGIC

奇術



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MAGIC IS an ever-present influence on the lives of the people of China. All life depends on the mystical energy of *qi*. When you are born, where you live, what you choose to do: all are guided by the occult force of the universe. There are some people who choose to learn about these occult

powers. They learn techniques for understanding the world, for predicting the future, and for exerting control over it.

There is no clear distinction between priests and sorcerers, as in most cases the same person will perform both functions. The extent to which a sorcerer is concerned with religious matters, and a priest is interested in magic is entirely a matter for the individuals concerned. In general, a person who uses magic may be of any religion. There are some magical effects (particularly talismans) which require the user to observe certain religious strictures, and the Buddhist magic is unlikely to be accessible to anyone but a Buddhist, but apart from these restrictions the choice is free.

There are basically two forms of ability use connected with magical powers. The first is the use of abilities related to magical powers and the worlds of spirits, but not requiring Cosmic Breath. The second is the creation of magical effects, in other words, casting spells.

*It's the astrologer that makes the mistakes,
not his charts*

MAGICAL ABILITIES

Certain abilities are directly related to magic and the supernatural world, but do not involve the use of Cosmic Breath to transform the world. In principle, anybody can attempt one of these feats, though without a certain level of expertise the chances of success are slim. The best way for ordinary people to deal with magical phenomena is through the experts:

by consulting fortune tellers and magicians, and by availing themselves of talismans.

CHANTING

As long as a Buddhist priest can keep chanting, evil spirits can be kept at bay. The priest should roll every minute, with an ease of his motivation (in Mercy, Purity *or* Enlightenment), to a maximum of 10. He should add his bonus in CHANTING to the roll. If successful, the chant will affect the spirit. If the degree of success is higher than the spirit's **energy**, the spirit will be repelled by the chant. Otherwise, the spirit will simply be prevented from approaching. Note that chanting is more effective when performed by more priests. One roll is made for the whole group. The ease is that of the lowest motivation in the group, but the bonus to the roll is the CHANTING bonus of all the priests totalled. Players may not reveal their **motivation** scores to each other: there are spells to do that.

Buddhists also use chanting as a method of casting certain spells. This is explained later in this chapter.

DETECTION

Characters with a positive ILLUSION and/or MAGIC bonus may be able to detect the presence of magic. When such a character comes near a source of Cosmic Breath, whether that be an item, a sorcerer 'holding' Cosmic Breath, or even a 'rift' to the Otherworld, the referee may allow him to make a roll. The ease of detecting it is equal to the number of points of Cosmic Breath (maximum 10). If the character touches the receptacle containing the energy (if, for example, it is bound in an item), then 2 is added to the ease of detection. To the basic ease, a character should add his MAGIC and ILLUSION bonuses and any bonuses in PERCEPTION and INTUITION.

Characters with positive OCCULTISM and/or MAGIC bonuses may be able to detect spirits (in other words, beings from the Otherworld which are manifesting energy or physical form in the Mortal World). In the case of spirits, the ease of detecting a spirit is a basic 6 (though some spirits may take precautions to evade detection). To the basic ease, a character should add his MAGIC and OCCULTISM bonuses, and any bonus in EMPATHY.

In both cases, the degree of success of the roll indicates the amount of information gleaned about the Cosmic Breath or spirit. A low result simply alerts the character to its presence. A high degree of success tells the character about the type of spirit or, in the case of Cosmic Breath, its nature and source. If Cosmic Breath is connected with a spell, a very high degree of success will reveal the spell.

DIVINATION

The *Book of Changes* provides an effective means of making predictions about the future, and in the hands of a skilled diviner it can provide detailed knowledge about the best course of action. Studying the heavens also provides important information that can enable a skilful practitioner to predict, and even change, the future. Other methods of divination include that of Zhuge Liang, the brilliant strategist of the Three Kingdoms period, who would frame a question in three characters, and by counting the number of strokes, then following a complex mathematical system, derive a poem providing an answer. The most common method for ordinary people is consulting the *qian* sticks at a temple. More details are provided in the *Beliefs* chapter.

It is important to understand the mechanism by which these methods work. Existence is interconnected. Taoists call this interconnection the Tao. Buddhists might refer to it as Dharma. Although the world we experience is full of complexity and difference, it can be understood at a simpler level by means of the systems of astrology and divination which were developed by the Ancients. The relationship between these systems and the physical reality they reflect is not just one-way: the systems themselves can have an effect on reality.

This has a very important consequence: the future is never fixed. Although there is such a thing as Fate, it is by no means inescapable.

Player character diviners may attempt to use these arts to predict the future. The basic method is to make a roll with an ease of 0, to which should be added the following ability bonuses: DIVINATION, ASTROLOGY, INTUITION and MAGIC.

A successful roll means that the character has obtained a valid result. The player may then predict what will happen in the game, in as much detail as she likes.

It is then up to the referee to steer matters in that direction. It is not necessary for the referee to 'fix' things so that the prediction comes true, but it should be clear that the prediction has had an influence on events.

Warning bells will no doubt already be ringing in most referees' minds, worried about the possibilities this opens up for abuse by power-crazed players. You shouldn't worry, though. The referee already has enormous power: players who attempt to use divination to undermine the referee and spoil the game can be quite easily dealt with. Those who overuse the ability are sure to attract enormous quantities of bad joss, for example.

Instead, you can regard this system as an opportunity to extend the collaborative nature of the game. It provides players with an opportunity to shape events in a manner other than the personal

actions of their characters, and it encourages them to have a firm belief in the supernatural powers of prediction possessed by the talented.

CONSULTATION

To provide more atmosphere, players are encouraged to couch their predictions in appropriate terms. Indeed, some players may prefer, rather than simply announcing the future, to actually perform a divination and use that result!

A character who consults the *Book of Changes* will do so by one of two methods: casting yarrow stalks or tossing coins. A player whose character uses the *Book of Changes* (in other words, who has a DIVINATION bonus) may consult the *I Ching* for an actual reading. Copies of the *I Ching* are cheaply available at most bookshops.

LIMITATIONS

Performing a divination is not a casual undertaking. Even a quick reading of the *Book of Changes* must be done with proper attention to ritual. Players are encouraged to play up the superstitious elements of a reading for as much atmosphere as they can.

Another problem with performing a divination is that it attracts the attention of spirits. A character will acquire a point of bad joss each time he performs a divination. If he attempts to perform more than one divination on the same theme in a single day, he will suffer 3 points of bad joss for the second time, 6 for the third time, 10 for the fourth time and so on.

PHRASING

To make divination work successfully, the player and the referee will have to co-operate. It's in the player's best interests to ensure that her divination isn't too restrictive for the referee. A lot can be achieved with metaphorical



Yang Chun and Yang Xiong consult the I Ching

language and ambiguity. A little vague imagery goes a long way, and adds to the atmosphere too.

If you get confident, you can achieve even more radical things with divination. Gamers who want to explore new avenues might consider allowing a diviner to 'hijack' the role of referee at certain points.

GEOMANCY

The mystical energy of the Universe—the Cosmic Breath—flows through the earth in channels referred to as Dragon Veins. While these flows are imperceptible to the majority of people, they may nevertheless have an important influence on their lives. In particular, they may affect the bad joss of people who live, or whose ancestors are buried, at a point that is poorly placed in relation to the Veins.

The skill of ELEMENTALISM may be used to gain information about the flow of Dragon Veins in a particular area. If used on its own, the information derives from inferences drawn from the terrain. Characters with MAGIC bonuses may also use their psychic ability to sense the flows directly.

The results possible with geomancy are relatively minor compared to the *Dragon Veins* spell, but may at least allow geomancers to diagnose cases in which characters are suffering from large doses of bad joss.

For those who are interested in this subject, books about *feng shui* are available at specialist bookshops.

The earth will cheat

the man who cheats the earth

MAGICAL EFFECTS

Any character who is lucky enough may gain the opportunity to learn spells. However, without any means of channelling Cosmic Breath, the body's innate *qi* must be employed. This quickly leads to fatigue. Thus most magical effects are produced by characters with a MAGIC bonus. Only characters possessing a MAGIC bonus are able to channel Cosmic Breath from sources outside their own bodies.

Spells are rated just like other specific skills, with a bonus. The bonus may be used to modify the chance of casting the spell, and also limits the effects which are possible with that spell.

OBTAINING SPELLS

Spells may be obtained from a master, from supernatural entities, or from old and secret books. It

should be stressed that magic is extremely rare and is closely associated with the world of heroes. Although many people use talismans, fortune telling and other forms of elementary magic in their daily lives, the true sorcerer generates suspicion among ordinary people, and usually dwells far from the city: ideally in a remote mountainous area or forest.

The bonus that a sorcerer has in a spell limits the effects that the sorcerer is capable of. The effects of each spell are listed according to the bonus required to achieve them: a sorcerer may cast an effect with a bonus higher than his bonus in that spell, but he will not be able to gain any bonuses from abilities, and will also suffer a penalty of -2.

In the case of spells which only have low level (+1, +2) effects associated with them, sorcerers may continue to learn these spells. A higher bonus will make the spell easier to cast. It is also possible that a sorcerer may create effects of his own.

FROM A MASTER

Masters are notoriously reluctant to pass on their hard-won knowledge, and like to be sure of their disciples' sincerity and loyalty before they do so. They also don't tend to pass on magic which is too dangerous.



Song Jiang, having unwittingly stumbled through a portal to the Otherworld, is given the three Heavenly Books by the Mystic Queen of the Ninth Heaven

One disadvantage of learning a spell from a master, is that a disciple must cast the spell the way he has been taught. In other words, he may not employ any bonuses in the casting of the spell that were not used by the master. Also, it is impossible to gain a spell at a higher bonus than that possessed by one's master. That can only be done by subsequent solo research.

FROM A SUPERNATURAL ENTITY

Learning spells from supernatural entities is more rapid than learning from a master. The tricky thing is persuading the spirit in question to part with the knowledge. Spirits can also be unreliable, and the more unscrupulous have been known to pass on deliberately 'booby-trapped' spells. Learning a spell from a spirit takes only ten minutes per point of bonus. Because the spirit imparts understanding of the spell, a sorcerer may apply any appropriate bonus to the casting of the spell.

FROM A BOOK

There are certain ancient books which contain the secrets of magic. These books have titles such as *The Book of Heaven* and *The Way of Peace* and usually contain the explanations of as many as twenty spells. Sorcerers possessing such books may learn the spells described therein, though it is a long and painstaking process. Researching a spell counts as self-studying.

Books usually give complete understanding of a spell, but the referee has final say on how much a character can learn from a particular book.

COSMIC BREATH

In order to produce magical effects, sorcerers must manipulate magical energy, or Cosmic Breath as it is usually called. Cosmic Breath—a highly refined form of *qi*—is the power underlying creation. There are several ways in which a sorcerer may obtain Cosmic Breath to perform spells.

The most basic, and the only method available to a character without a MAGIC bonus and a focus, is to use the body's innate Cosmic Breath, which is represented by the **energy** and **body** scores. One point of **energy** expended as fatigue produces one point of Yang Cosmic Breath; one point of **body** expended as flesh wounds produces one point of Yin Cosmic Breath, which may be used in a spell. This does not require a roll, and may be freely combined with another action.

Characters using their own **energy** or **body** to produce Cosmic Breath will quickly tire. Thus sorcerers instead channel Cosmic Breath from sources outside them. There are several different methods, described below. All require the use of a magical focus.

Cosmic Breath is produced or channelled in the central *dantian* ('cinnabar field') near the heart. Characters without a MAGIC bonus must use the

Cosmic Breath immediately, or it will dissipate. Sorcerers (characters with a MAGIC bonus) may 'hold' Cosmic Breath, storing it in the *dantian* until it can be used.

There are two disadvantages to 'holding' Cosmic Breath: the first is that a sorcerer 'holding' Cosmic Breath is rather easy for other sorcerers and supernatural beings to detect. A side effect of this is that any sorcerer who 'holds' Cosmic Breath acquires a point of bad joss, and will suffer additional bad joss of the amount of Cosmic Breath held if they roll *snake-eyes* while, or immediately after, holding Cosmic Breath. The second is that since the Cosmic Breath is consciously held by the sorcerer's *hun* spirits, if he loses consciousness or falls asleep the Cosmic Breath is lost.

THE OTHERWORLD

The spell of *Spirit Sending* enables a sorcerer to penetrate the veil between the Mortal World and the Otherworld. This enables him to channel Yin Cosmic Breath from the Otherworld (or Yang Cosmic Breath if he is *in* the Otherworld) for his own use. Having cast the spell the number of points of Yin Cosmic Breath obtained is half the degree of success plus the sorcerer's MAGIC bonus.

A roll of snake-eyes when channelling Cosmic Breath from the Otherworld means that the sorcerer must make an immediate *bad joss* roll (see the *Games* chapter for details).

DRAGON VEINS

Sorcerers may obtain Yang Cosmic Breath to fuel their magic from sources of *qi* in the world around them. These sources, known as Dragon Veins, criss-cross the land. Geomancy is required to find the Dragon Veins and make use of the *qi* flowing along them.

The spell *Dragon Veins* is used to tap the elemental energy. Having cast the spell the number of points of Yang Cosmic Breath obtained is half the degree of success plus the sorcerer's MAGIC bonus.

A roll of snake-eyes when channelling Cosmic Breath from the Dragon Veins means that the sorcerer must make an immediate *bad joss* roll (see the *Games* chapter for details).

MANIFESTATION OF BUDDHA-NATURE

Buddhists (only) may obtain Cosmic Breath by divine channelling. Whether this is supplied by the deity known as the Buddha, or generated from the worshipper's innate spiritual power is a theological question that doesn't really concern us. The spell of *Peace* is used to channel Cosmic Breath from the Buddha-nature.

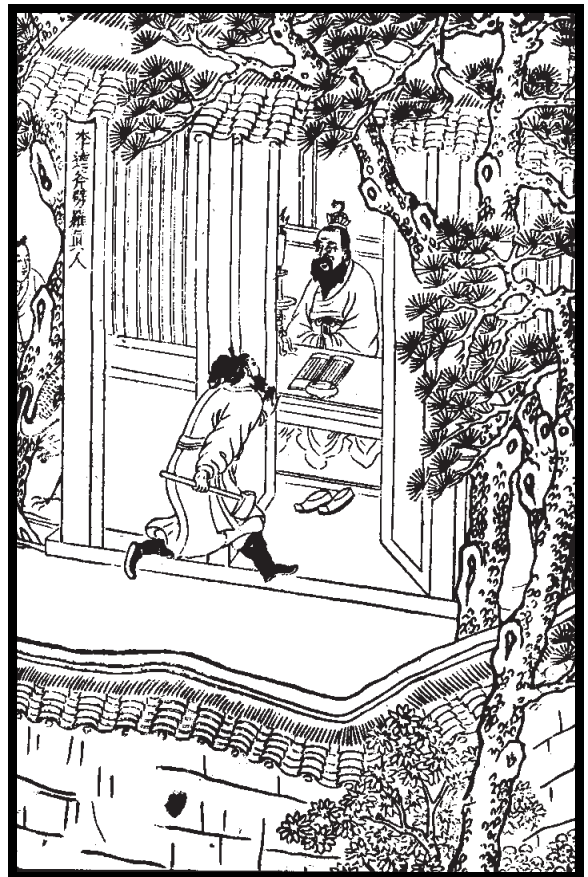
Having succeeded in casting the spell, the priest must spend at least 5 rounds chanting. At the end of this time roll with an ease of the degree of success of

the spell plus half the number of points of **motivation** the character has in Enlightenment, Mercy or Purity. The degree of success is the amount of Cosmic Breath which may be bestowed upon the priest. As long as the roll is not failed, if the priest is not satisfied with the amount obtained he may continue chanting another 5 rounds and roll again, using the new degree of success instead of the old one. He can continue doing this as long as the roll is not failed: if it is, then no Cosmic Breath may be obtained today.

The priest will normally be expected to 'pay back' the Buddha later with a good work, a period of fasting or meditation, a ceremony or the like. Failure to do so will result in bad joss. Similarly, if the Buddhist uses the magic in a manner which transgresses Buddhist principles (see *Beliefs*) he will suffer a loss of bad joss.

CHANNELLING FROM OTHERS

Unscrupulous sorcerers may obtain Cosmic Breath from the **energy** and **body** of other living beings. There are a number of ways to do this, but the principle is that the sorcerer must have absolute control over the victim. This may be through the absolute submission of the victim, or through absolute physical control. At its most extreme, physical sacrifice may be used to release a large amount of Cosmic Breath, though many sorcerers feel that the risks involved in this are too great to justify



Li Kui embarks on an ill-advised attempt to kill Gongsun Sheng's Master, the Immortal Luo

the benefits.

Having gained control of the victim the sorcerer merely needs to transfer the Cosmic Breath to his own body. This requires a roll of ease 10 plus the character's MAGIC bonus. The degree of success is the number of points of Cosmic Breath transferred in 5 rounds. Another roll may be made the next 5 rounds and so on. The **energy** is lost to fatigue, the **body** to flesh wounds.

If a roll is failed, the sorcerer acquires a point of bad joss. If a sorcerer sacrifices a person to obtain his Cosmic Breath, the victim will normally become a hungry ghost, and do his best to inflict bad joss on the sorcerer (this is further explained in the *Extras* chapter). Thus sorcerers who perform human sacrifices are advised to take precautions against spirits, and minimise their bad joss.

MAGICAL FOCUSES

In order to channel Cosmic Breath and use it to power magical effects, sorcerers require magical focuses. The focus is exactly that—it 'focuses' energy in such a way that the sorcerer can draw it in to his *dantian* so that it can be used in a spell. Without a focus a sorcerer is limited to using Cosmic Breath derived from his personal stock of **energy** and **body**.

Constructing a focus can be a difficult business.

One possibility is to obtain a relic, a device which is already magical. In this case it should only take a few weeks for a sorcerer to attune himself to the object. Alternatively a new focus can be made. This will require a variety of esoteric ingredients, and will usually also require rituals to be performed on propitious days. Referees wishing to make something of this may like to decide on the necessary ingredient and rituals, and make the construction of a focus the subject of a series of scenarios. It will usually take several months to complete the focus successfully. Player character sorcerers who start the game with the ability to cast spells are assumed to already possess a focus.

TYPES OF FOCUS

The type of focus a sorcerer selects will usually depend on the type of magic he specialises in and his religious preferences. Taoists traditionally employ bottle gourds or peachwood swords, although a steel sword decorated with magical glyphs is an excellent substitute (since it can

be used in a fight). Taoists who specialise in occultism may prefer to use a taijibagua mirror, while geomancers employ a geomancer's bagua compass. Others employ a bamboo staff with nine knots, as 9 is the number of Heaven.

Buddhists generally employ prayer beads or a staff (though a sword is not unknown).

Sorcerers who cast their spells in unusual ways may employ more unusual focuses. For example, a sorcerer who casts his spells using the music of a flute will probably make the flute his focus.

A final option is available to sorcerers with a bonus in TALISMANS. In this case a talisman may be used as a focus. One advantage of doing this is that the sorcerer may, at a pinch, draw a talisman in his own blood on his palm and use that as his focus.

CASTING A SPELL

In order to manifest a spell, it must be supplied with Power and Meaning. Power is provided in the form of a supply of Cosmic Breath.

Meaning is provided in the form of a ritual of some kind. In this case 'ritual' has a very broad meaning, as it will depend on the skill(s) employed by the sorcerer in order to cast the spell. It can include a song, a gesture, an act of meditation, the writing of a talisman, a dance, a chant and so on.

The ritual employed to provide a spell with Meaning takes at least an action to perform: usually much longer.

PROCEDURE

The ease of casting a spell is half the power level of the game (round up). This ease is modified as follows:

- ◇ Subtract the bonus of the effect being cast
- ◇ Add the sorcerer's bonus in the spell. (Do *not* add the sorcerer's MAGIC bonus). Subtract 2 if the sorcerer doesn't have a bonus of equal to or more than the effect being cast.
- ◇ If the sorcerer has a bonus of equal to or more than the effect being cast, add bonuses from the spell's applicable skills. Subtract 2 if the sorcerer has no bonus in a necessary skill.
- ◇ Add or subtract a bonus for time spent casting (see below). Sorcerers continuing spells which they have already cast may increase their chances by



Taoist with bottle gourd focus

continuing to concentrate on the spell—this counts as Casting Time for subsequent rolls.

- ❖ Add a bonus for the elemental affinities of the spell. Sorcerers continuing spells which they have already cast may increase their chances by employing elemental affinities, even if they weren't used when the spell was initially cast.

CASTING TIME

A spell ordinarily takes 5 rounds to cast for each point of effect bonus. Thus a +1 effect takes 5 rounds to cast, while a +5 effect takes 25 rounds.

The chance of casting a spell may be improved by spending more time performing. A bonus is obtained as shown below:

<i>Time Spent Casting</i>	<i>Bonus</i>
over 1 minute	+1
over 5 minutes	+2
over 30 minutes	+3
over 3 hours	+4
dawn till dusk	+5

Note that this time must be uninterrupted. If anything seriously distracts the sorcerer from his spell, all the accumulated bonus is lost, and he must start again. Also, the bonus may only be obtained when casting spells with a bonus effect of less than or equal to the caster's bonus in the spell.

Exploiting the elemental affinities of a spell (see below) will increase the time taken to cast a spell, but this time *does* count towards the performing time listed above.

A sorcerer in a hurry may reduce the amount of time taken to cast his spell. For each round by which the sorcerer shortens the casting time, a modifier of -1 is applied to the roll. For example, a sorcerer casting a +1 effect, who would normally spend 5 rounds casting, could do so in 2 rounds by suffering a -3 modifier. A sorcerer casting a +4 effect, which normally takes 20 rounds, could reduce this to 16 rounds for a mere -4 modifier.

If you reduce the amount of time required to cast a spell, you cannot use elemental affinities to increase your casting chance.

ELEMENTAL AFFINITIES

Casting chance may also be improved by exploiting the elemental affinity of the spell. Traditionally, Chinese sorcerers use altars to prepare magic spells, and it is on these altars that ingredients reflecting elemental affinities can be deployed. Sorcerers may also concoct spell enhancing potions and incense, containing a variety of substances which reflect the elemental affinities of a particular spell.

Consult the elemental affinities chart. To be useful, these affinities must be exploited magically, usually in the form of a ritual. In rare cases, of course, there will be a convenient coincidence, and the appropriate affinity will occur naturally. This also explains why so many sorcerers are keen to use forms of fortune telling in order to predict such things as the weather and the direction of the wind.

If the sorcerer can somehow incorporate 5 characteristics corresponding to the element of the spell into his casting of the spell, he gains a situational

ELEMENTAL AFFINITIES

Element	Wood	Fire	Earth	Metal	Water
<i>Direction</i>	East	South	Centre	West	North
<i>Colour</i>	Blue	Red	Yellow	White	Black
<i>Season</i>	Spring	Summer	Late Summer	Autumn	Winter
<i>Numbers</i>	<i>yin 8, yang 3</i>	<i>yin 2, yang 7</i>	<i>yin 10, yang 5</i>	<i>yin 4, yang 9</i>	<i>yin 6, yang 1</i>
<i>Climate</i>	Windy	Hot	Humid	Dry	Cold
<i>Mountain</i>	Tai	Heng (S)	Song	Hua	Heng (N)
<i>Planet</i>	Jupiter	Mars	Saturn	Venus	Mercury
<i>Spirit-Monarch</i>	Fu Xi	Shen Nong	Huangdi	Shao-hao	Zhuan
<i>Sound</i>	Shouting	Laughing	Singing	Weeping	Groaning
<i>Major Animal</i>	Dragon	Phoenix	Ox	Tiger	Snake/Tortoise
<i>Minor Animal</i>	Chicken	Horse	Cow	Dog	Pig
<i>Viscera</i>	Liver	Heart	Spleen	Lungs	Kidneys
<i>Orifice</i>	Eyes	Ears	Mouth	Nose	Anus/Vulva
<i>Tissues</i>	Ligaments	Arteries	Muscles	Hair & Skin	Bones
<i>Flavour</i>	Sour	Bitter	Sweet	Pungent	Salt
<i>Odour</i>	Rancid	Scorched	Fragrant	Rotten	Putrid
<i>Fruit</i>	Plum	Apricot	Date	Pear	Chestnut
<i>Grain</i>	Wheat	Sticky Rice	Millet	Rice	Pea

bonus of +2. Incorporating 10 characteristics into the ritual gains a bonus of +3, while 15 would gain a bonus of +4.

Calling upon the assistance of elemental affinities requires an additional round for each characteristic.

This system may lead to a more 'static' form of sorcerer than many players may be used to, but at higher power levels the use of elemental affinities won't be as necessary in order to boost the chance of success.

Some spells have no elemental affinity. Buddhist spells cannot be enhanced using elemental affinities. Other spells can only be enhanced using an even balance of the elemental affinities.

BACKFIRES

A sorcerer who rolls a snake-eyes when casting a spell runs the risk of a backfire. He must immediately roll again to cast the spell with a penalty of -2 to the roll. If this roll is successful, the spell goes off as normal. If the roll is failed, then the effect of the spell is reversed upon its caster in some way. It is up to the referee to determine the precise effects of such backfires.

If the second roll is also a snake-eyes, then the spell goes off as desired, but the sorcerer suffers bad joss equal to the number of points of Cosmic Breath used in the spell.

SPELL EFFECTS

This list of spell descriptions is not exhaustive, and it is quite possible that players will try to find uses for spells not covered in these rules. In such circumstances, the referee is advised to be quite strict in applying the rules. A player character sorcerer who persists in stretching the rules in order to gain

Example: Elemental Affinities

Let's take an example of a sorcerer who is attempting to cast a spell associated with the element of Wood. She is lucky enough to be casting the spell in a strong wind, so she gets one as a free starter. She is able to shout the incantation of the spell, which provides another easy affinity. After that, to reach the 5 affinities requires for a +1, she needs to do a little more work. She has a magic altar, albeit rather small, on which sits a statue of Fu Xi. During the casting of the spell she must grasp this, and call on Fu Xi, in order to gain the benefit of his divine assistance. Next to Fu Xi is a pearl, which will also contribute to spell. Finally she has a cup of vinegar, which she must drink (and probably spit straight out. Performing this little ritual will take *at least* 5 rounds in addition to the basic time required to cast the spell, but it will provide a +2 bonus to casting chance.

advancement is extremely likely to acquire an unhealthy dose of bad joss. On the other hand, some effects may seem to be logical in context, and others may be appealing for their imaginativeness. For example, the spell *The Yellow Emperor's Method* is used to heal. By the same token, it *could* conceivably be used to inflict damage. It will not be very efficient at this, compared to a gout of flame. The gout of flame, on the other hand, could be used at a pinch to cauterise a wound! Yin contains yang, yang contains yin.

Some characteristics of spell effects are quite standard. The duration for which a spell lasts is explained in the spell description. The bonus of a spell effect determines its sophistication and complexity. Its scope, or physical area, depends on the amount of Cosmic Breath used to create it. A spell's intensity is determined by the degree of success of the casting roll. The meaning of intensity depends on the nature of the spell.

The way in which a spell manifests may be affected by the skills used to create it. For example, a sorcerer who uses ILLUSION in the creation of a cloud of sand (with the *Master of Earth* spell) may be able to create the impression of shapes moving within the cloud.

SPELL DURATION

Spells are divided into two classes: instantaneous and durational. Instantaneous spells either have an immediate effect, or are permanent. Once the spell is cast, the sorcerer is free to turn his attention to other matters. Durational spells continue for a certain amount of time specified in the spell description.

Durational spells can be extended by making another roll at any time while the spell is still in effect. Sorcerers can improve their chances by continuing to 'perform' the spell, and concentrating on it while it is in effect. This counts as 'casting time'. Elemental affinities may also be employed, even if they weren't used when the spell was first cast.

When a durational spell is extended, its scope can be altered by altering the points of Cosmic Breath used to cast it. Its intensity will also vary according to the roll made.

Note that durational spells can be extended even if the spell would normally render the sorcerer incapable of magic (for example, the *Forge of Shao* +5, which makes the sorcerer insubstantial). However, any skills which cannot be exercised by the sorcerer cannot be used to improve the chance of success of the spell.

RESISTING MAGIC

Characters at whom magic is directed may attempt to resist its effects. The basic ease is 5 minus the degree of success achieved by the sorcerer when casting the spell. To this a character should add his MAGIC bonus, and *one* other bonus which the referee accepts as relevant. A sorcerer who knows the spell being cast

against him may add his bonus in the spell to his MAGIC bonus *in addition to* another appropriate bonus.

Additional bonuses in resisting magic may be obtained using talismans or other means of magical protection (these include elemental affinities with the element that *conquers* the spell's element; see the Five Elements chart on this page).

Characters also suffer penalties if they are outside their element: a spirit manifesting physically, or as energy in the Mortal world suffers a -2 to the roll, as does a Mortal in the Otherworld.

The basic decision to resist magic is made by a person's *po* spirits, which will ordinarily resist magic as a matter of course. The *hun* spirits may consciously overrule the *po*, however, in those cases where a character actually wishes to be affected by magic. This requires conscious volition on the part of the character. In other words, an unconscious character will always try to resist magic—even healing magic!

DISPELLING MAGIC

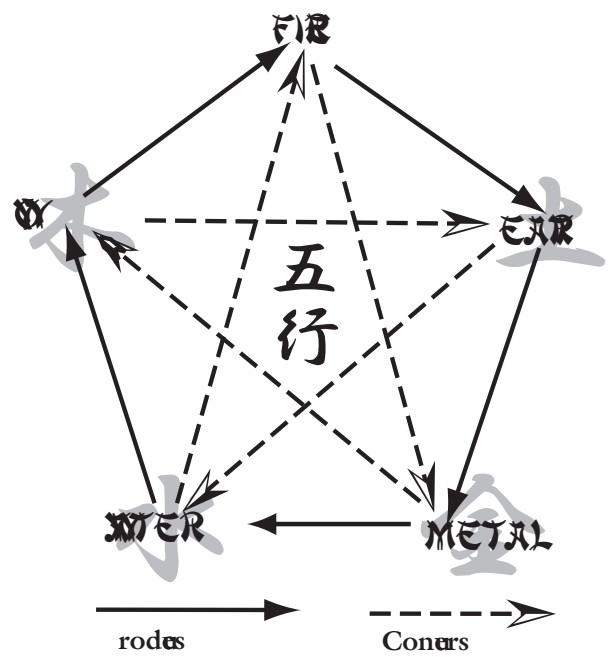
Sorcerers will often want to oppose magics created by other beings. There are some methods of protection against magic (listed among the spells), and there are some spells specifically designed to oppose another's magic: each Element has a *Conquer* spell associated with it which may be used for this purpose.

Most spells have affinities with the Five Elements, and in order to dispel an enemy sorcerer's magic, it is essential to use a spell with the appropriate affinity. The Five Elements are related as shown in the chart on the previous page.

As the chart shows, each element 'produces' another element, while it is in turn 'conquered' by a different element. In order to dispel magic you must employ a spell with an elemental affinity which conquers the affinity of the spell you are attacking. If you instead use a spell with a different affinity, there will be no effect, unless the spell has an affinity which produces the affinity of the magic attacked. In the latter case, the original spell will be reinforced! Half the degree of success of the second spell will be added to its effect.

Not only must the spell used have the correct affinity, you must also be able to provide an explanation for *how* the spell you are attacking is dispelled. If this is achieved, and the spell is cast correctly, then the degree of success of the roll is subtracted from the degree of success of the spell being dispelled. If this means that the degree of success is reduced to 0, then the spell disappears entirely. Otherwise the effect of the spell is reduced according to the reduction in degree of success.

Not all spells have a single simple affinity with an element. Buddhist spells have no elemental affinity, and therefore they are rather difficult to dispel. A



The Five Elements Chart

Example: Casting A Spell

Jin Wenzhao is an accomplished sorcerer, who has fallen in with a band of rebels. One day he finds himself with a small group of his compatriots fleeing from the Flying Devils, an elite armoured cavalry unit. As he has the spell *Master of Earth* he considers raising a cloud of sand, but is afraid that some of soldiers might be able to ride straight through it. The best policy is to pothole the road, bringing the front rank of cavalry down, stopping them in their tracks and providing a chance for escape. The problem is if the cavalry spot the potholes.

His solution is a combination of both. But to perform two spells he will need quite a lot of Cosmic Breath. Urging his compatriots to continue fleeing, he stops. He can see the cavalry charging down the road towards him. He has precious little time to cast his spells.

First he casts a *Spirit Sending* spell. It costs him one point of Cosmic Breath, which his own **energy** supplies. His basic chance is 2 (half the power level of the game, which in this case is 3), from which is subtracted the bonus of the spell effect being used (+1). He has a bonus of +2 in this spell, so he adds that to the chance, along with +5 for his bonuses in OCCULTISM, CALLIGRAPHY and TALISMANS. He hasn't time to exploit the spell's elemental affinities, or spend extra time preparing, so he just takes his chances with a chance of success of 8.

Continued on next page

Example: Casting A Spell, continued

With a 3 and a 4, Jin just makes it, with 2, plus +1 MAGIC bonus = 3 points of Cosmic Breath channelled.

This has all taken 5 rounds. The cavalry are very close, now. He quickly throws up a cloud of sand (a small cloud with a radius of 5 yards is sufficient, so it only costs 1 point of Cosmic Breath): chance is 2, -1 for the spell effect bonus, +3 for his bonus in the spell, plus ELEMENTALISM +2, ILLUSION +3 and MEDITATION +2 for a total of 11, which he easily makes.

As the dust cloud begins to swirl in front of the cavalry, he casts *Master of Earth* again. Two points of his Cosmic Breath go to powering the spell, and his chance of success is 2, -3 for the spell effect bonus, +3 for his bonus in the spell, +7 for the bonuses mentioned above. With a chance of 9, he rolls 5 and 1.

Being able to move 200lb of earth 5 yards is enough to scoop out two large ditches.

As he suspected, the crack troops of the Flying Devils are not to be put off by a mere dust cloud, and they charge into it. The first rank stumbles in the ditches, and the horses crash to the ground. The successive ranks pile into them, and soon the road is a mass of writhing horses and cursing armoured soldiers.

Jin Wenzhao, having bought enough time for a getaway, hurries after his friends, pleased that he has stopped the soldiers without breaking the promise he made his patron, the Feather-Robed Master of Yaoshan, to avoid killing.

sorcerer trying to dispel a Buddhist spell must be able to explain how the spell he is using counteracts the Buddhist spell, and will have the degree of success of his counterspell halved. Other spells have multiple affinities. More details are given in the spell descriptions.

The type of Cosmic Breath used to power a spell also has an effect on the chances of it being dispelled. If a spell fuelled with pure Yin Cosmic Breath (from the character's **body** or from the Otherworld) is used to dispel a spell fuelled with pure Yang Cosmic Breath (from the character's **energy** or from the Dragon Veins), or vice versa, then a bonus of +2 is gained to the degree of success of the dispelling spell.

The river that drowns an elephant

can be stopped at its source with a twig

SPELL DESCRIPTIONS

Here are the majority of spells known to the sorcerers of China. Other spells, for example those of the sorcerers of the barbarians, or the Miao tribes of Fujian, are not included here. Within the spell description, details are given of the effects produced at bonus levels of the spell.

Different effects produced by the same spell may have different characteristics: they may be *instantaneous* or *durational*. The *applicable skills* that are used in the chance of casting the spell may vary. With all spells a bonus in a particular skill is necessary to the casting of the spell—casting the spell without having a bonus in that skill incurs a penalty of -2. In other cases, skill bonuses may be exclusive: for example, it is not possible to combine both CHANTING and SINGING.

Spells are organised according to their elemental affinities, which affect how they interact with other spells, and may have other effects on their casting. Buddhist magic, which has no elemental affinity, spells which have multiple affinities, Curses, and Talismans are listed separately.

SPELL SUMMARY

The spells are listed below according to type, along with the ability which is necessary to cast the spell.



BUDDHIST MAGIC

Blessing	CHANTING
Peace	CHANTING
Retribution	THEOLOGY
Truth	ILLUSION
Warding	CHANTING



WOOD SPELLS

Conquer Earth	ELEMENTALISM
Master of Wood	ELEMENTALISM
The Net of Fu Xi	ILLUSION
Scales of The Dragon	ILLUSION
Wind of The Blessed	MEDITATION

火

FIRE SPELLS

Blood of Shen Nong	ILLUSION
Conquer Metal	ELEMENTALISM
Master of Fire	ELEMENTALISM
Spirit Sending	OCCULTISM
Wings of the Phoenix	MEDITATION

土

EARTH SPELLS

Conquer Water	ELEMENTALISM
Master of Earth	ELEMENTALISM
Spirit Voice	OCCULTISM
Strength of the Yellow Earth	ILLUSION
Yellow Emperor's Method	OCCULTISM

金

METAL SPELLS

Conquer Wood	ELEMENTALISM
Delusion of The Senses	ILLUSION
Master of Metal	ELEMENTALISM
Skin of the Tiger	ILLUSION
Forge of Shao	ELEMENTALISM, ILLUSION, OCCULTISM

水

WATER SPELLS

Conquer Fire	ELEMENTALISM
Eyes of the Snake	OCCULTISM
Master of Water	ELEMENTALISM
Shell of the Tortoise	MEDITATION
Tongue of the Black Dragon	ELEMENTALISM

☯

OTHER

Binding	MEDITATION
Dragon Fire	OCCULTISM
Dragon Veins	ELEMENTALISM
The Five Heavenly Thunderbolts	ELEMENTALISM
Gu Poison	ALCHEMY
Portal to the Otherworld	OCCULTISM
Curses	OCCULTISM, FOLKLORE

☸ **BUDDHIST MAGIC**

Certain spells are specifically Buddhist in nature. In theory, they can be learned by Taoists. However since they are intimately connected with Buddhism (and in some cases are inimical to Taoism!), require the performance of Buddhist *mudras* and are only accessible in carefully guarded Buddhist sutras, in practice they are not learned by anyone other than ordained Buddhists. None of these spells have any elemental affinity. Dispelling them requires an appropriate effect, and the degree of success is halved.

BLESSING

The recipient is shot through with a ray of mercy from Guan Yin. The spell may not be cast on oneself. The skill of CHANTING is necessary to this spell, and the caster must perform the *mudra* of granting wishes.



Bonus +1: Instantaneous.

The recipient gains a bonus of +1 on any roll where Buddhist purity may be of assistance. Thus it could be used to persuade an abbot, but will be of no use in combat. Once given, the blessing will last until used, or for 49 days, whichever is shorter.

Applicable skills: CHANTING, EMPATHY, ILLUSION, MEDITATION, THEOLOGY

Cosmic Breath: 2 per person affected

Bonus +2: Instantaneous

The recipient gains a bonus on any *one* roll to resist evil (which includes curses, any non-Buddhist magic, or spirits) of half the degree of success of the spell roll. Alternatively, the blessing will reduce the acquisition of bad joss by one point. Once given, the blessing will last until used, or for 49 days, whichever is shorter.

Applicable skills: CHANTING, EMPATHY, ILLUSION, MEDITATION, THEOLOGY

Cosmic Breath: 3 per person affected

Bonus +3: Instantaneous

The next occasion on which the recipient acquires bad joss, the bad joss is reduced by half the degree of success of the spell roll. Once given, the blessing will last until used, or for 49 days, whichever is shorter.

Applicable skills: CHANTING, EMPATHY, ILLUSION, MEDITATION, THEOLOGY

Cosmic Breath: 4 per person affected

PEACE

The message of the Buddha brings peace to all beings. The skill of CHANTING is necessary to this spell, and the caster must perform the *mudra* of unshakeable confidence.



Bonus +1: Duration 1 minute

The priest may use this spell to achieve personal peace. For the duration of the spell he will be free from all violent urges, and in tune with his Buddha-nature. As a side effect, this allows a Buddhist to channel Cosmic Breath, as explained in the section on Magical Energy.

Applicable skills: CHANTING, ILLUSION, MEDITATION, THEOLOGY, WIT

Cosmic Breath: 1

Bonus +3: Duration 10 rounds

Any sentient being who can hear a *Chant of Peace* is subject to a strong compulsion to abandon fighting, sit down and pray to the Buddha. Anyone who does not resist will automatically follow the compulsion. Characters who resist may do so. They may use one bonus from WILL, MEDITATION, ILLUSION or WIT. However, their bonus in EMPATHY must be subtracted from their chance of success.

Failure indicates that the character must immediately cease fighting. Success indicates the character may continue to resist, but he will have to make a new roll after 5 rounds. Characters who can block their hearing receive a bonus of one or two to their roll to resist (depending on how thoroughly they block their ears). After the chant ends, characters who failed to resist will continue to pray to Buddha for seven minutes after the chant ends, or until they are shaken by someone else.

Applicable skills: CHANTING, EMPATHY, ILLUSION, MEDITATION, PRESENCE, THEOLOGY

Cosmic Breath: 4

RETRIBUTION

The priest causes a single victim to suffer immediate retribution for the bad karma he has accumulated during his lifetime. The skill of THEOLOGY is necessary to this spell, and the caster must perform the *mudra* of turning the wheel. The spell must be directed at an individual within earshot, and is always chanted. The victim has a chance of resisting the spell. His chance of success is improved if he cannot hear the chant clearly (blocking your ears with your hands or cloth gives a bonus of 1; more radical measures may have a greater effect at the referee's discretion).



Bonus: +1: Instantaneous

Failure to resist causes the victim to immediately make a bad joss roll (explained in the *Games* chapter). The Buddhist may choose whether this is an immediate or delayed roll. The 'victim' will lose bad joss if the roll is successful.

Applicable skills: CHANTING, EMPATHY, ILLUSION, MEDITATION, OCCULTISM, THEOLOGY, WILL

Cosmic Breath: 4

Bonus: +2: Instantaneous

Failure to resist causes the victim to immediately expend his bad joss. The bad joss is converted to damage. **Energy** may be used to absorb this damage but instead of becoming shock, such damage is treated as fatigue. Any excess damage is suffered to the **body**.

The process is extremely painful, but the victim's bad joss is dissipated by the spell.

Applicable skills: CHANTING, EMPATHY, ILLUSION, MEDITATION, OCCULTISM, THEOLOGY, WILL

Cosmic Breath: 5

Bonus +4: Duration 5 rounds

Failure to resist this version of the spell transports the victim's *hun* spirits to the Court of the Underworld. Here, one of Yan Luo's functionaries will read a list of the victim's crimes in the Mortal World, and once completed, punishment for those crimes will commence.

For the duration of the spell, the victim's body will be unconscious, while his *hun* spirits suffer torment. For every round which passes in this world, the victim will suffer an hour of torment in the Underworld.

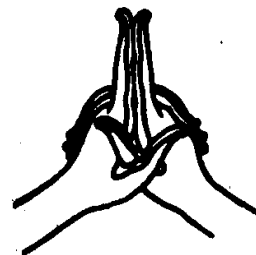
Once the spell is over, the victim will wake up. The effects of this spell are usually rather traumatic. It often effects a conversion to Buddhism, and a far more spiritual view of life. A side-effect of the spell in rules terms, however, will be that the victim loses not only all his bad joss, but all points of **motivation** accumulated to date, apart from points in the motivations of Enlightenment, Mercy, Purity or Justice.

Applicable skills: CHANTING, EMPATHY, ILLUSION, MEDITATION, OCCULTISM, THEOLOGY, WILL

Cosmic Breath: 6

TRUTH

The priest acquires the ability to penetrate the veil of reality, and ascertain true knowledge. The skill of ILLUSION is necessary to this spell, and the caster must perform the *mudra* of supreme enlightenment.



Bonus +1: Instantaneous

Identify a lie, penetrate an illusion. Once an illusion is penetrated, the priest is immune to its effects. To be penetrated, the degree of success of the roll must be equal to or greater than that of the illusion.

Applicable skills: ILLUSION, CHANTING, EMPATHY, INTUITION, MEDITATION, PERCEPTION

Cosmic Breath: 3 to identify a lie. For penetrating an illusion, should be equal to the Cosmic Breath of the illusion.

Bonus +2: Instantaneous

Learn the true identity of any person. Identify a spirit as a spirit. Recognise the level of **motivation** of a person and identify his motivation. Gauge how much bad joss someone has accumulated.

Applicable skills: ILLUSION, CHANTING, EMPATHY, INTUITION, MEDITATION, OCCULTISM, PERCEPTION

Cosmic Breath: 4.

Bonus +3: Instantaneous

Gain perfect knowledge about a person. This gives full information about all his abilities, and even extends to his cycle of reincarnation.

Applicable skills: ILLUSION, CHANTING, EMPATHY, INTUITION, MEDITATION

Cosmic Breath: 5.

WARDING

The priest may obtain protection against a variety of sources of harm. The skill of CHANTING is necessary to this spell, and the caster must perform the *mudra* of fearlessness and granting protection. Wardings may be detected (see the section above) as a translucent dome covering an area extending one yard from those protected.



Bonus +1: Duration 10 rounds

Prevents the approach of Yin **energy**, which includes spirits in the form of energy only, such as hungry ghosts, a sorcerers' travelling *hun*, and spells powered by Yin Cosmic Breath. The degree of success is the number of points of **energy** lost per round by a spirit which attempts to approach the priest, or is subtracted from the degree of success of a spell.

Applicable skills: CHANTING, MEDITATION, OCCULTISM, WILL

Cosmic Breath: 1 per person protected

Bonus +2: Duration 10 rounds

Prevents the approach of spirits and physical projections. The latter include demons and creatures such as stiff corpses, as well as physical projections of sorcerers (created using the *Forge of Shao* spell). The

degree of success is the damage per round inflicted on a spirit or physical projection which attempts to approach.

Applicable skills: CHANTING, ILLUSION, MEDITATION, OCCULTISM, WILL

Cosmic Breath: 2 per person

Bonus +3: Duration 10 rounds

Provides physical protection for the priest and anyone else under his protection. The degree of success is applied as a minus to any attempt to penetrate the warding, and it is also subtracted from any damage inflicted.

Applicable skills: CHANTING, ILLUSION, MEDITATION, WILL

Cosmic Breath: 3 per person protected

Bonus +4: Duration 10 rounds

Insulates the priest and anyone under his protection from all spirits or their physical projections, all magic, and even the physical approach of Taoist sorcerers! The degree of success is the amount of damage per round suffered by any of the above trying to penetrate the warding.

Applicable skills: CHANTING, ILLUSION, MEDITATION, OCCULTISM, WILL

Cosmic Breath: 4 per person protected

木 WOOD SPELLS

The following spells all have an affinity with the element of Wood. They may be used to attack spells of Earth, but will enhance spells of Fire.

CONQUER EARTH

This spell may be used to dispel spells with earth affinity or to cause earth tremors. The skill of ELEMENTALISM is necessary to this spell.

Bonus +1: Instantaneous

Dispel any spell with earth affinity.

Applicable skills: ELEMENTALISM, WILL, DANCING, SINGING, MUSIC, ASTROLOGY

Cosmic Breath: 3

Bonus +2: Instantaneous

Make a fertile area of land infertile, or vice versa.

Applicable skills: ELEMENTALISM, WILL, DANCING, SINGING, MUSIC, ASTROLOGY

Cosmic Breath: 1 per 100 square yards

Bonus +3: Instantaneous

The sorcerer causes an earth tremor at a location within his field of vision. The radius of the affected zone depends on the Cosmic Breath used. Anyone in the zone will be thrown about and must make a roll of ease 9 plus their GRACE, minus the sorcerer's degree of success, in order to retain footing. Anyone

who fails this roll will fall, suffering one die of damage (armour gives no protection, but **energy** may be used as a shock buffer for up to 5 points). The earth tremor will cause damage to items within the zone; a degree of success of 4 or greater will bring down ordinary walls, 6 or greater will bring down fortifications.

Applicable skills: ELEMENTALISM, WILL, DANCING, SINGING, MUSIC, ASTROLOGY

Cosmic Breath: 2 per 5 yards radius

MASTER OF WOOD

Bestows powers concerning growing things and wood itself, enabling wood to be controlled, communication or control of plants, and even transmutation. The skill of ELEMENTALISM is necessary to this spell.

Bonus +1: Duration 10 rounds

Enables the shape of wood to be altered, and its properties to be changed. The wood can be shaped in a particular way, hardened or weakened. Hardened wood will increase the quality of a weapon by one step. Once the spell finishes the wood will quickly revert to its previous form and nature, however any external changes (such as a weakened door which has been smashed down) will remain. The sorcerer must touch the wood to affect it.

Applicable skills: ELEMENTALISM, ART, ILLUSION, PLANT LORE

Cosmic Breath: 1 per 10 pounds of wood

Bonus +2: Instantaneous.

Enables the same effects as the +1 version, except that they become permanent (though they may be reversed by another sorcerer's spell).

Applicable skills: ELEMENTALISM, ART, ILLUSION, PLANT LORE

Cosmic Breath: 1 per 2 pounds of wood

Bonus +3: Duration 10 rounds

Plants may be controlled. They may be ordered to restrain a person, attack him and so on. The degree of success is used as the 'body' and 'energy' scores of the plants. They can attack with a chance of success of 12, and have a shock value of 4.

Applicable skills: ELEMENTALISM, PLANT LORE, SINGING or CHANTING, WILL, PRESENCE

Cosmic Breath: 1 per square yard of plants

Bonus +5: Instantaneous

Transmutation—the permanent transformation of a human into a plant (usually a tree). The sorcerer may do this on himself, or on any other person (who may resist it). When transformed, the person is capable of perceiving his surroundings, but may not speak or act in any way. The spell may be reversed by being dispelled, or when the sorcerer who cast it wills it (this requires another roll at the same value as was

used to cast the spell, but no Cosmic Breath is necessary. One roll may be made per 5 rounds until successful).

Applicable skills: ELEMENTALISM, PLANT LORE, SINGING or CHANTING, OCCULTISM, WILL

Cosmic Breath: 8

THE NET OF FU XI

Provides the sorcerer with a means of trapping fish, animals and even human beings. The skill of ILLUSION is necessary to this spell.

Bonus +1: Instantaneous

The sorcerer scoops his hand into a river or pool, and withdraws it with a number of fish. The number of fish caught is half the degree of success of the spell.

Applicable skills: ILLUSION, FISHING, INTUITION, PERCEPTION, CO-ORDINATION

Cosmic Breath: 2

Bonus +2: Instantaneous

The sorcerer may set a trap for small game. The trap is not visible, and has the property of attracting game to it. The degree of success indicates the ease against which the sorcerer should roll for every five minutes the trap is left unattended (the trap will not catch game if there is a human within 200 yards of it). Once this roll is successful, the trap disperses. The degree of success of the successful roll gives an indication of the size of the game caught by the trap.

Applicable skills: ILLUSION, TRAPPING, INTUITION, ANIMAL LORE, ANIMALS

Cosmic Breath: 4

Bonus +3: Duration 1 minute

This spell produces a net of silvery strands, which the sorcerer may throw at a target. If he hits the target, it is entangled by the net. The net is thrown just like a normal missile weapon. Its details are:

Use 10	Damage none
Dist 10 feet	Evasion ease 0

A target struck by the net does not gain a roll to resist magic, but he may try to break free. The ease of this is 7, minus the degree of success of the sorcerer's roll plus the target's STRENGTH bonus. The net may be used to restrain the target for as long as the sorcerer extends the spell. The target may continue to struggle, rolling once each 10 rounds, but will suffer a point of fatigue for every minute spent struggling.

Applicable skills: ILLUSION, FISHING, PUPPETRY, TRAPPING

Cosmic Breath: (3 + target's size) (min 1)

SCALES OF THE DRAGON

The sorcerer may render himself or another person invisible. The skill of ILLUSION is necessary to this spell.

Bonus +2: Duration 10 rounds

The sorcerer may make a dark place light, or a light place dark. In the latter case, he will see no better than anyone else. The degree of success indicates the intensity of light or darkness produced. This will either produce or reduce a bad light situational modifier.

Applicable skills: ART, DECEPTION, ELEMENTALISM, ILLUSION, WILL

Cosmic Breath: 1 per 5 yard radius

Bonus +3: Duration 10 rounds

The sorcerer and/or companions' appearance is masked by magic. The extent to which they are invisible is determined by the degree of success of the roll. A result of 2-4 indicates that a blurry shape can be perceived, while 5 or greater indicates full invisibility. In both cases they may be detected by physical give-aways such as tracks, smells or sound. Invisible characters cannot be seen except under the noonday sun—if exposed to its light they will become visible. Also, if exposed to Autumn sunlight at any time, or if they tread on rice, 3 is subtracted from the degree of success. If this results in it being less than 2 then the characters become fully visible. Attempts to fight an invisible person are subject to a situational modifier of the degree of success of the sorcerer's roll.

Applicable skills: SNEAKING, ART, DECEPTION, ILLUSION, WILL, (minus PRESENCE)

Cosmic Breath: 3 for the sorcerer, 5 for anyone else.

WIND OF THE BLESSED

Enables the sorcerer to imbue a being with the ability to travel at great speeds or make mighty leaps. The skill of MEDITATION is necessary to this spell.

Bonus +1: Instantaneous

Provides a bonus of twice the degree of success of the spell to the degree of success of a leap. If the leap roll fails, the character is nevertheless flung into the air, and suffers an additional penalty of -2 to landing. The degree of success is also subtracted from the landing roll.

Applicable skills: ILLUSION, CHANTING, WILL, MEDITATION

Cosmic Breath: 3 plus the **size** of the recipient.

Bonus +2: Duration 10 rounds

The recipient gains a bonus of twice the degree of success of the spell to the degree of success of a RUNNING or SWIMMING roll. Even if the roll is failed, a character subjected to this spell will still move involuntarily.

Applicable skills: ILLUSION, CHANTING, WILL, MEDITATION

Cosmic Breath: 2 plus recipient's **size** (min 1)

火 FIRE SPELLS

The following spells all have an affinity with the element of Fire. They may be used to attack spells of Metal, but will enhance spells of Earth.

BLOOD OF SHEN NONG

The sorcerer uses sorcerous power to temporarily enhance the **energy** of a being. The skill of ILLUSION is necessary to this spell.

Bonus +2: Duration 10 minutes

Temporarily increases the **energy** score of the recipient. Note that the sorcerer must make physical contact with the bare skin of the recipient of the spell in order for it to work. The Cosmic Breath of the spell (which must be specified in advance) is simply transferred to the recipient. The process is not always efficient, though. Divide the degree of success by 10 and multiply the Cosmic Breath by the result to find out how much **energy** is gained by the recipient (minimum: 1, maximum: Cosmic Breath used). Any fatigue acquired under the influence of this spell will continue to affect the being once the spell runs out.

Applicable skills: MEDICINE, WILL, CHANTING or CALLIGRAPHY, ILLUSION

Cosmic Breath: As much as desired

Bonus +3: Duration 10 rounds

For the duration of the spell, the recipient acquires the ability to regenerate **energy** lost to shock. All such **energy** lost may be completely replenished in a round. The character can still be stunned, but suffers no fatigue effects until the spell duration is over.

Applicable skills: MEDICINE, WILL, CHANTING or CALLIGRAPHY, ILLUSION

Cosmic Breath: 4 per person



An Immortal in contemplation

CONQUER METAL

This spell may be used to dispel spells with metal affinity or to damage or destroy items of metal. It may also protect against metal weapons. The skill of ELEMENTALISM is necessary to this spell.

Bonus +1: Instantaneous.

Dispel any spell with metal affinity.

Applicable skills: WILL, ELEMENTALISM, DANCING, SINGING, MUSIC, ASTROLOGY

Cosmic Breath: 3

Bonus +2: Duration 10 rounds

Protects against weapons made of metal. The sorcerer must keep a small flame alight in order to maintain the effect of this spell. While the spell is in effect, the degree of success is subtracted from the chance of success of any metal weapon hitting, and half the degree of success is subtracted from any damage inflicted.

Applicable skills: WILL, ELEMENTALISM, SINGING

Cosmic Breath: 1 per person

Bonus +3: Instantaneous

Melts metal. The sorcerer must touch the metal. Note that most metal objects are rendered useless if even a small part of them is melted.

Applicable skills: WILL, ELEMENTALISM, SINGING

Cosmic Breath: 2 per 1lb affected

MASTER OF FIRE

The sorcerer learns various ways of creating and manipulating fire. The skill of ELEMENTALISM is necessary to this spell.

Bonus +1: Instantaneous.

The sorcerer may create a source of fire equivalent in strength to a candle. The source of fire is very difficult to douse; it must be fully immersed in water, or dispelled.

The source must be created in something the sorcerer touches, or may be projected directly from the sorcerer's body. It can't be created at range.

Applicable skills: ELEMENTALISM, ILLUSION, WIT, CALLIGRAPHY or CHANTING

Cosmic Breath: 1

Bonus +2: Duration 10 rounds

Given an ordinary source of fire of whatever size, the sorcerer may create a cloud of smoke. The radius of the cloud depends on the Cosmic Breath used. The sorcerer is immune to the effects of the cloud, but anyone else caught within it will suffer a -4 situational modifier to combat. Anyone remaining in the cloud for more than 30 rounds will start to suffer 1 point of damage for every 3 rounds they remain within it (energy may not be used as a shock buffer).

Applicable skills: ELEMENTALISM, ILLUSION, WIT,

MEDITATION, CALLIGRAPHY or CHANTING

Cosmic Breath: 1 per 5 yard radius

Bonus +3: Instantaneous.

Enhance an existing source of fire to cause a blast of fire which stretches a number of yards equal to the number of points of Cosmic Breath used. The fire will ignite any inflammable objects in its path. If it strikes a living being, it will cause damage equal to one die plus the degree of success of the roll. This spell may be resisted.

Applicable skills: ELEMENTALISM, ILLUSION, WIT, MEDITATION, CALLIGRAPHY or CHANTING

Cosmic Breath: 1 per yard range

Bonus +4: Duration 10 rounds

Create a wall of fire. Anyone coming into contact with the wall suffers fire damage equal to one die plus the degree of success of the sorcerer's roll.

Applicable skills: ELEMENTALISM, ILLUSION, WIT, MEDITATION, CALLIGRAPHY or CHANTING

Cosmic Breath: 1 per yard

SPIRIT SENDING

Covers the projection (or invocation) of energy between the Otherworld and the Mortal World. It can be used to cast spells affecting Otherworldly beings. It also allows for the sorcerer's *hmn* to be projected from his body and travel independently, or Cosmic Breath to be projected from the body. At high levels it can be used to reunite spirit and body. However, it does not enable either communication or physical contact. The skill of OCCULTISM is necessary to this spell.

Bonus +1: Instantaneous

Penetrate the wall between the Mortal World and the Otherworld for an instant. This enables spells which have a physical effect to harm spirits, which, being composed only of energy, would normally be immune. By using this spell to pierce the veil separating the Worlds, a spell may be projected into the Otherworld, or Cosmic Breath drawn from the Otherworld and channelled through the sorcerer's body.

Applicable skills: MAGIC, OCCULTISM, WIT, WILL, CALLIGRAPHY, TALISMANS

Cosmic Breath: 1

Bonus +2: Duration 10 rounds

Open a portal between the Mortal World and Otherworld, allowing the passage of energy (and therefore spirits) between them. The sorcerer should take care that nothing unpleasant comes through the portal.

Applicable skills: OCCULTISM, WIT, WILL, CALLIGRAPHY, ILLUSION, TALISMANS

Cosmic Breath: 3

Bonus +3: Duration 1 minute

Enables the sorcerer to project his *hun* spirits from his body. The *hun* are invisible to the naked eye. They may travel at a maximum speed of 20 miles per hour (that's 10 yards per round) and are constrained by physical objects: they may not pass through walls, doors, etc, though they may slip through any crack or hole that is greater than two inches wide.

While the sorcerer is projecting his *hun* spirits, he may choose to perceive the world from either his *hun* spirits or his *po* spirits (ie his physical body). However there will usually be a difference in the perception of the two types of spirit: the *hun* are relatively dispassionate and rational, and will perceive the physical world in a rather abstract way (and may therefore not recognise the significance of physical objects); the *po* are more emotional and physical, perceiving the world in very concrete, physical terms. This difference may affect the accuracy of the sorcerer's perceptions and cause confusion, if he is unwise enough to shift back and forth between the two points of view.

During the spell, the sorcerer's **energy** score must be divided between the physical body (ie the *po*) and the travelling *hun*. The sorcerer may decide what proportion of **energy** accompanies the *hun*, but it must be more than 1 point.

This spell can be very dangerous—if the spell is somehow interrupted (for example, the spell ends while the *hun* is still separated from the body), then the psychic connection is severed. The *hun* is left wandering bereft, and will be unable to find its way back to the body without assistance. Needless to say, a sorcerer without a *hun* spirit is utterly incapable of sorcery (in fact he's barely capable of speech).

Applicable skills: OCCULTISM, WIT, WILL,

CALLIGRAPHY, REASONING

Cosmic Breath: 2

Bonus +4: Duration 10 rounds

Enables the sorcerer to send his *hun* spirits from his body, as +3 above, but with a stronger psychic connection. The sorcerer may transfer **energy** and/or Cosmic Breath along the psychic link (requiring a roll of ease 10, plus the character's MAGIC bonus, with the degree of success being the number of points which can be transferred per round).

The sorcerer is also able to cast spells. His body must perform the ritual as normal, but the spell may be projected by his travelling *hun*. Obviously this means that any spell involving physical contact (such as *Blood of Shen Nong*) cannot be projected by the *hun*.

Another trick possible with this effect is for the travelling *hun* to enter and animate a sleeping body. The problem here is what happens when the victim awakes. There will inevitably be a conflict between the *hun* of the sorcerer, and that of his victim. It is conducted as a form of combat, in which spiritual

abilities (especially WILL) can be used to improve chances, and damage is inflicted on **energy**. It's usually difficult to have a battle of wills, so the ease will be 4. During such a battle, the sorcerer will find it very difficult to concentrate on doing anything with the victim's body.

Applicable skills: OCCULTISM, WIT, WILL,

CALLIGRAPHY, REASONING

Cosmic Breath: 3

Bonus +5: Instantaneous

Reunite Spirit and Body. This spell will return a dead character's spirits to his body. It may also be used to reunite the *hun* and body of a person if they have become detached by other means (such as an accident while projecting the sorcerer's *hun*).

This spell cannot call back a dead person's *hun* if they have ascended to heaven, or if they are undergoing punishment in Yen Lo's Underworld or have been reincarnated. Most spirits will be unreachable 49 days after death for one or other of these reasons.

It is possible to restore only the *po* spirits to a body, but this will create a stiff corpse, which must be carefully controlled to prevent its natural tendency to go berserk and attack indiscriminately.

Applicable skills: OCCULTISM, WIT, WILL, EMPATHY,

CALLIGRAPHY, REASONING, ILLUSION

Cosmic Breath: 10

WINGS OF THE PHOENIX

Provides the ability to conquer gravity. The skill of MEDITATION is necessary to this spell.

Bonus +1: Duration 10 rounds

Enables levitation. The sorcerer may rise in the air at a rate of 3 feet per round.

Applicable skills: GRACE, CHANTING, ELEMENTALISM, MEDITATION

Cosmic Breath: 2

Bonus +3: Duration 10 rounds

Enables the sorcerer, or the target of the spell, to fly. The speed of this spell is measured in feet per round travelled vertically, or yards per round travelled horizontally. For combinations of both, use the feet per yard speed: there's no need to calculate vectors!

Applicable skills: GRACE, CHANTING, LEAPING, ELEMENTALISM, MEDITATION

Cosmic Breath: minimum 2 (which provides a speed of 1). Each point of Cosmic Breath on top of this doubles the basic speed.

土 EARTH SPELLS

The following spells all have an affinity with the element of Earth. They may be used to attack spells of Water, but will enhance spells of Metal.

CONQUER WATER

This spell may be used to dispel spells with water affinity or to destroy water. The skill of ELEMENTALISM is necessary to this spell.

Bonus +1: Instantaneous.

Dispel any spell with water affinity.

Applicable skills: WILL, ELEMENTALISM, DANCING, SINGING, MUSIC, ASTROLOGY

Cosmic Breath: 3

Bonus +2: Instantaneous.

Stops any rain (natural or sorcerous). The sorcerer must scatter soil around to cast this spell.

Applicable skills: WILL, ELEMENTALISM, DANCING, SINGING, MUSIC, ASTROLOGY

Cosmic Breath: 4

Bonus +3: Instantaneous

Dries up a body of water. The sorcerer must throw a handful of soil into the water have the effect. May be used on a body of water of any size, but if the amount of water removed is less than is present, the water level will simply be lowered.

Applicable skills: WILL, ELEMENTALISM, DANCING, SINGING, MUSIC, ASTROLOGY

Cosmic Breath: 1/1000 cubic yards of water

MASTER OF EARTH

The sorcerer learns various techniques of controlling and manipulating earth. The skill of ELEMENTALISM is necessary to this spell.

Bonus +1: Duration 10 rounds

The sorcerer causes a cloud of sand to rise from the ground and swirl in the air for the duration of the spell. The radius of the cloud depends on the Cosmic Breath used. The sorcerer is immune to the effects of the cloud, but anyone else caught within it will suffer a -3 situational modifier to combat. Anyone



remaining in the cloud for more than twenty rounds will start to suffer 1 point of damage for every round they remain within it (**energy** may not be used as a shock buffer).

Applicable skills: ELEMENTALISM, ILLUSION, DILIGENCE, MEDITATION, SINGING or CHANTING

Cosmic Breath: 1 per 5 yard radius

Bonus +3: Instantaneous

The sorcerer can cause earth to move as he directs. The degree of success indicates the number of yards moved by the earth.

Applicable skills: ELEMENTALISM, ILLUSION, DILIGENCE, MEDITATION, SINGING or CHANTING

Cosmic Breath: 1 per 100lb of earth

Bonus +4: Duration 10 rounds

The sorcerer (and one or more companions) may travel through the earth in a manner akin to peristalsis. The earth opens before him and closes behind. The degree of success of the roll indicates the number of yards covered in one round.

Applicable skills: ELEMENTALISM, ILLUSION, DILIGENCE, MEDITATION, SINGING or CHANTING, SWIMMING

Cosmic Breath: 2 for the sorcerer, plus 3 per companion

SPIRIT VOICE

Enables the sorcerer to communicate with the Otherworld, and those spirits connected with it. Since no portal for energy is opened, the sorcerer may not use spells against the spirit with whom he is communicating. The skill of OCCULTISM is necessary to this spell.

Bonus +1: Duration 1 minute

The sorcerer may communicate with any spirits in the immediate area, or with whom he has established a psychic link. This includes both spirits entirely in the Otherworld, and those projecting energy into the Mortal World. The spell effect manifests as a form of possession. The sorcerer's thoughts are communicated directly to the spirit, and the spirit will then reply through the sorcerer's mouth, or by guiding the sorcerer's hand to write the answer. This effect may be used to inflict curses on victims, as explained in the section on Curses, below.

Applicable skills: OCCULTISM, SINGING, PERCEPTION, WIT, EMPATHY

Cosmic Breath: 1

Bonus +2: Instantaneous

The sorcerer may establish a psychic link with any spirit whose name he knows, as long as the spirit still exists outside of Heaven. Once such a psychic link is established, the sorcerer may then cast another spell to enable communication with that spirit.

Applicable skills: OCCULTISM, SINGING, PERCEPTION, WIT, EMPATHY, INTUITION

Cosmic Breath: 3

Bonus +3: Duration 1 minute

The sorcerer may establish a psychic link with the inner spirit voices of a living human whose name he knows, and listen to what they are saying. He can listen to either the *hun* or *po* at any one time, but may switch between them as he wishes. In a sense this is a form of mind reading, but it is by no means foolproof, as the voices of the *hun* and the *po* are not always easily comprehensible. The *hun* and the *po* will normally resist this spell, though as they do so unconsciously, the referee should make the roll. The degree of success of this spell indicates how strong the psychic link is, and therefore to an extent how clear the spirit voices are. The sorcerer may also use this spell to ‘talk’ to someone, but because peoples’ minds are so busy, the sorcerer’s voice will often remain unnoticed. If the target is expecting it and concentrating hard, it should be clear, though.

Applicable skills: OCCULTISM, SINGING, PERCEPTION, INTUITION, WIT, EMPATHY

Cosmic Breath: 4

Bonus +4: Duration 1 minute

The sorcerer may directly address a divine entity, or the heavenly assembly as a whole. The spell by no means guarantees that the divinities in question will be interested in what he has to say, but at least it ensures their undivided attention for the spell duration. Sorcerers may like to note that gods are rarely less greedy than humans, though Buddhist deities’ greed tends to be expressed more in terms of a desire to spread Enlightenment throughout existence. If you want a deity to assist you, either petition one who is likely to be passionately interested in the object of the petition, or be prepared to offer the deity something it values.

Applicable skills: OCCULTISM, THEOLOGY, SINGING, CHANTING, WIT, MEDITATION

Cosmic Breath: 5

STRENGTH OF THE YELLOW EARTH

The sorcerer uses sorcerous power to temporarily increase the strength of a being. However, the recipient must remain in contact with the earth in order to gain the benefit of this spell. The skill of ILLUSION is necessary to this spell.

Bonus +1: Instantaneous

The recipient of the spell gains a bonus to his STRENGTH for one action only.

Applicable skills: ILLUSION, SINGING or CALLIGRAPHY, WILL, MEDITATION

Cosmic Breath: 3 per point of STRENGTH

Bonus +2: Duration 10 rounds

The recipient of the spell gains a bonus to their STRENGTH for the duration of the spell.

Applicable skills: ILLUSION, SINGING or CALLIGRAPHY, WILL, MEDITATION

Cosmic Breath: 4 per point of STRENGTH

YELLOW EMPEROR’S METHOD

Covers healing magic, including disease, fire damage and injury. The skill of OCCULTISM is necessary to this spell.

Bonus +1: Instantaneous

The degree of success of this roll is subtracted from the number of **body** points suffered by the diseased person. The same number minus 2 (minimum 0) is subtracted from the number of **energy** points lost to fatigue.

Applicable skills: MEDICINE, OCCULTISM, ILLUSION, PLANT LORE, CALLIGRAPHY

Cosmic Breath: 2

Bonus +2: Instantaneous

The degree of success of the roll may be added to a first aid roll, or recovery roll of a character who has sustained body damage.

Applicable skills: MEDICINE, OCCULTISM, ILLUSION, PLANT LORE, CALLIGRAPHY

Cosmic Breath: 4

Bonus +3: Instantaneous

The degree of success of the roll is the amount of *healing* provided to an injured or diseased character. This may be used to heal different kinds of wounds or disease damage (see the *Action* and *Combat* chapters for details).

Applicable skills: MEDICINE, OCCULTISM, ILLUSION, CALLIGRAPHY

Cosmic Breath: 6

金 METAL SPELLS

The following spells all have an affinity with the element of Metal. They may be used to attack spells of Wood, but will enhance spells of Water.

CONQUER WOOD

This spell may be used to dispel spells with wood affinity or to damage or destroy items of wood. It may also protect against wooden weapons. The skill of ELEMENTALISM is necessary to this spell.

Bonus +1: Instantaneous.

Dispel any spell with wood affinity.

Applicable skills: WILL, ELEMENTALISM, DANCING, SINGING, MUSIC, ASTROLOGY

Cosmic Breath: 3

Bonus +2: Duration 10 rounds

Protects against weapons made of wood. The sorcerer must hold a small knife in each hand in order to maintain the effect of this spell. The degree of success is subtracted from the chance of success of any wooden weapon hitting, and half the degree of success is subtracted from any damage inflicted.

Applicable skills: WILL, ELEMENTALISM, DANCING, SINGING, MUSIC, ASTROLOGY

Cosmic Breath: 2

Bonus +3: Instantaneous

Breaks a single wooden object, or kills vegetation. The sorcerer must touch the wood.

Applicable skills: WILL, ELEMENTALISM, DANCING, SINGING, MUSIC, ASTROLOGY

Cosmic Breath: 1 per 5lb wood or vegetation.

DELUSION OF THE SENSES

Various means of causing targets to be misled by their senses. The skill of ILLUSION is necessary to this spell.

Bonus +1: Instantaneous

The sorcerer creates a distraction affecting the target or targets for one round. Multiple targets must be closely grouped together to be affected. Half the degree of success of the spell is applied as a situational modifier to their actions in the round. It is up to the player of the sorcerer to describe the distraction.

Applicable skills: ILLUSION, SINGING or CHANTING, MUSIC, WIT, ART

Cosmic Breath: 1 per target

Bonus +2: Duration 10 rounds

The sorcerer may produce duplicates of himself. The accuracy of the duplicates depends on the degree of success of the sorcerer's roll. The duplicates will mimic the sorcerer's actions exactly. If struck, however, a duplicate will disappear in a flash.

Applicable skills: ILLUSION, SINGING or CHANTING, MUSIC, WIT, ART

Cosmic Breath: 3 per duplicate

Bonus +3: Duration 10 rounds

The sorcerer may produce apparitions of fearsome creatures such as huge snakes, insects or vermin. Before casting the spell, he must prepare paper cuts of the apparitions he wishes to create. When the spell is cast, the caster specifies a point within his field of vision from which the apparitions will emerge, spreading out to the maximum radius at a rate of 2 yards per round. The apparitions will attack anyone caught within the area of effect, inflicting damage of half the degree of success for every round the victim remains in the area of effect.

Applicable skills: ILLUSION, SINGING or CHANTING, MUSIC, WIT, ART, PAINTING

Cosmic Breath: 1 per 2 yard radius

Bonus +5: Duration 5 minutes

The sorcerer can create an illusory world around a single group of targets. Within the world the sorcerer controls reality. Effectively this world is like a miniature Otherworld, into which the victims' senses are projected. Thus it does actually exist in some ways. While they are in the illusory world, the victims' real bodies will be unable to take conscious action, though since it is only their *hun* souls which are affected, they are still capable of breathing, unconscious reactions and so on.

One condition of the illusory world is that the sorcerer must exist within it himself. He may disguise his appearance, but experience shows that sorcerers are rarely able to disguise themselves absolutely (it's an ego problem). Whatever form he appears to have in the illusory world, the sorcerer actually maintains his own abilities and characteristics, as do the victims.

The referee is at liberty to run this spell as he wishes. In theory, it might even be possible for a player character sorcerer who casts it on other player characters to take over the role of referee!

Applicable skills: ILLUSION, SINGING or CHANTING, MUSIC, WIT, ART, PAINTING, DECEPTION

Cosmic Breath: 6

MASTER OF METAL

The sorcerer learns various techniques of controlling and manipulating metal. The skill of ELEMENTALISM is necessary to this spell.

Bonus +1: Duration 10 rounds

Enables the shape of metal to be altered. The metal can be shaped in a particular way. Once the spell finishes the metal will quickly revert to its previous form, however any changes which result from the altered form will remain. The sorcerer must touch the metal to affect it.

Applicable skills: ELEMENTALISM, ART, ILLUSION, MUSIC

Cosmic Breath: 1 per 2lb of metal

Bonus +2: Duration 10 rounds

Enables the characteristics of metal to be altered. It may be made harder or softer, and even changed into liquid form (this requires a degree of success of 4 or over). Affecting the hardness and softness of metal weapons will have an effect on their quality: for every point of degree of success, the quality may be altered one step. The sorcerer must touch the metal to affect it. When the spell finishes, the metal will revert to its previous characteristics, but any changes to its shape which resulted from the spell will remain.

Applicable skills: ELEMENTALISM, ART, ILLUSION, MUSIC, CALLIGRAPHY

Cosmic Breath: 1 per 2lb of metal

Bonus +3: Instantaneous

The same as the +1 and +2 variants, except that in this case the change is permanent (though it may be dispelled by another sorcerer).

Applicable skills: ELEMENTALISM, ART, ILLUSION, MUSIC, CALLIGRAPHY

Cosmic Breath: 2 per 1lb of metal

Bonus +4: Duration 10 rounds

Enables the sorcerer to magnetically polarise his body, so that ferrous metals may be attracted or repelled. He is able to exert quite fine control over the magnetism, and may change its characteristics instantly. However, the magnetic field created is not directional, and so will act equally in all directions (including those in which the sorcerer is not able to see). If used to repel ferrous weapons as a form of protection, an attacker will suffer a situational modifier of the degree of success of the spell to their chance to hit. If they loosen their grip on their weapon for any reason it will fly out of their hand.

The degree of success of the spell indicates the maximum power of the magnetic field. As a rule of thumb, it indicates the maximum weight in pounds of a metal object which will be made to move by this spell. Items of lower weight than this will move at greater speed the lighter they are.

Applicable skills: ELEMENTALISM, ILLUSION, MUSIC, LEARNING

Cosmic Breath: 4

SKIN OF THE TIGER

Enables the sorcerer to change his appearance and even his shape. The skill of ILLUSION is necessary to this spell.

Bonus +2: Duration 1 minute

The sorcerer may alter his appearance and/or that of a companion. He will remain roughly the same size, and human, but will acquire the appearance and clothing of another person. If the sorcerer attempts to impersonate a specific person, the degree of success of the spell is used as a negative modifier to others' chances of spotting that it is a deception. In this case, the chance of seeing through depends on how well a person knows the person being impersonated. If he is a close member of the person's immediate family, the chance of seeing through the deception has an ease of 10. For friends the chance drops to between 6-9. For mere acquaintances, the chance will usually be less than 6. Bonuses in EMPATHY, PERCEPTION and INTUITION may be used.

Applicable skills: ILLUSION, WIT, ART, DISGUISE, WILL, EMPATHY

Cosmic Breath: 2 for the sorcerer, 3 for anyone else.

Bonus +3: Duration 1 minute

The sorcerer may actually change his form to that of another creature. Usually the specific creature or creature(s) to which a sorcerer may transform himself are limited, depending on how he acquires the spell. Typical examples would include a dog, a crane, a tiger and so on. Since the sorcerer physically becomes the creature, he loses any abilities which are dependent on possessing human form. This will have a serious effect on his chances of casting spells while transformed. However he gains the abilities of the creature into which he is transformed.

Applicable skills: ILLUSION, WIT, ART, ANIMALS, ANIMAL LORE, WILL

Cosmic Breath: 2 for the sorcerer, 3 for anyone else.

Bonus +4: Instantaneous

A victim may be permanently transformed into animal form. The sorcerer must make eye contact with his victim in order to transfer the spell. If the victim fails to resist its effects, he will become whatever animal the sorcerer names. To reverse the spell, the same spell may be used, with the sorcerer uttering the name of the victim. Alternatively the spell may be dispelled in the normal way, with a spell of fire affinity.

Applicable skills: ILLUSION, WIT, ART, ANIMALS, ANIMAL LORE, WILL

Cosmic Breath: 8

Bonus +5: Instantaneous

The sorcerer may transform another person's appearance, subject to the same limitations as the +1 variant. In this case, however, the change is permanent unless dispelled by another spell. Although the person's appearance is completely altered, of the person's abilities only PRESENCE may be affected. The



Sages studying the Tao

sorcerer may choose to alter this bonus by one point.
Applicable skills: ILLUSION, WIT, ART, DISGUISE, WILL,
 EMPATHY
Cosmic Breath: 10

FORGE OF SHAO

The Forge of Shao is the creator of physical form. The sorcerer learns to create substance from energy, and then to transform substance into energy and back again. The skills of ELEMENTALISM, ILLUSION *and* OCCULTISM are all necessary to this spell.

Bonus +3: Duration 1 hour

The sorcerer may create a physical body. This artificial body can be made to resemble the sorcerer, but if he wishes it to resemble someone else, he will have to use a *Skin of the Tiger* spell. The body will obey the sorcerer's commands fairly well (as it follows his *intention*, it is not prone to literal interpretations), but is incapable of acting on its own initiative in any way. However, the sorcerer may inhabit the body with his *hun* spirits, using the *Spirit Sending* spell, in which case the artificial body acquires almost all the mental and spiritual abilities of the sorcerer (it will not gain his bonuses in INTUITION, WIT, WILL, PRESENCE or MAGIC unless the +4 *Spirit Sending* is used, in which case these bonuses are 'shared').

The **body** and **energy** scores of the form depends on how much Cosmic Breath is used. The degree of success indicates the number of points of specific physical skills possessed by the form (it always has a bonus of 0 in basic skills). In order to provide the body with a specific skill, however, somebody with that skill must touch the form.

Applicable skills: OCCULTISM, ILLUSION,
 ELEMENTALISM, MEDITATION, REASONING
Cosmic Breath: 1 per point of **energy** and **body**

Bonus +5: Duration 10 rounds

Enables the sorcerer to transform his body into energy, and then back again into physical substance. This enables him to become insubstantial and invisible, and he may therefore pass through any physical barrier with ease. While in the form of energy, however, he is unable to use any physical skills, and may not speak or cast spells (though he may extend this spell). He may move at a maximum speed of 20 miles per hour/10 yards per round). If, for some reason, the spell ends before the sorcerer translates himself from energy back into physical form, or if the sorcerer has insufficient Cosmic Breath to retranslate himself, then he will remain in the form of energy, unless something is done to restore him to his former state. Sorcerers must be quite careful with this spell.

Applicable skills: OCCULTISM, ILLUSION,
 ELEMENTALISM, MEDITATION, REASONING
Cosmic Breath: 6 (plus **size**) to transform into energy.
 6 (plus **size**) to return to physical form.

水 WATER SPELLS

The following spells all have an affinity with the element of Water. They may be used to attack spells of Fire, but will enhance spells of Wood.

CONQUER FIRE

This spell may be used to dispel spells with fire affinity or to put out fires. The skill of ELEMENTALISM is necessary to this spell.

Bonus +1: Instantaneous.

Dispel any spell with fire affinity.

Applicable skills: WILL, ELEMENTALISM, DANCING,
 SINGING, MUSIC, ASTROLOGY
Cosmic Breath: 3

Bonus +2: Instantaneous.

Put out a fire. The fire will not be instantaneously quenched, but will die down over a period of a several rounds, giving out quite a lot of smoke as it does so.

Applicable skills: WILL, ELEMENTALISM, DANCING,
 SINGING, MUSIC, ASTROLOGY
Cosmic Breath: 1 per 5 cubic yards of fire

Bonus +3: Duration 10 rounds

Protects against fire. The sorcerer must keep a small cup brimful of water to maintain this spell. As long as the spell lasts full immunity to normal fire is gained.

Applicable skills: WILL, ELEMENTALISM, DANCING,
 SINGING, MUSIC, ASTROLOGY
Cosmic Breath: 2 per person

EYES OF THE SNAKE

The snake is the master of hypnotism, and this spell is used to gain control of other beings. The skill of OCCULTISM is necessary to this spell.

Bonus +2: Instantaneous

This spell is used to utter a single command. The victim must hear the command and be able to understand it. In cases where there may be some ambiguity, the referee should assess how easy the command is to understand ('Kill Zhuang Yu' would rate a 10, for example) and make the victim roll (in addition to normal resistance), adding any bonuses for REASONING, CHINESE or the like. Controlled victims will obey the command until they complete it, until they pass out of sight of the sorcerer (which may be maintained with a *Spirit Sending* +3 or +4), or until a number of minutes equal to the degree of success of the spell pass, whichever comes first.

Applicable skills: WILL, OCCULTISM, CHANTING or
 SINGING, PRESENCE, INTIMIDATION
Cosmic Breath: 5

Bonus +3: Duration 10 rounds

This enables the sorcerer to obtain control over an animal. It doesn't allow communication, but the sorcerer's wishes are transmitted to the animal magically. This means that sophisticated control is impossible: the animals are simply not capable of understanding such things. The control exists only as long as the sorcerer is 'in contact' with the animal. This contact may be by eyesight, or via a *Spirit Sending*.

Applicable skills: WILL, OCCULTISM, CHANTING or SINGING, MUSIC, ANIMALS, ANIMAL LORE

Cosmic Breath: 5

Bonus +4: Duration 10 rounds

The sorcerer may control normal human beings. If they fail to resist, they will obey his wishes. He may communicate these wishes by speaking, or by means of the *Spirit Voice* spell, for control at a distance. The victim may roll again to resist the spell at any time the sorcerer orders them to do something which they would ordinarily strongly dislike doing. He may implant commands affecting the person's behaviour after the spell finishes, but in such cases the victim gets to make another resistance roll when the command comes into effect. Success at the resistance roll means the victim becomes fully aware of the fact that they have been controlled.

Applicable skills: WILL, OCCULTISM, CHANTING or SINGING, MUSIC, PRESENCE, DECEPTION, WIT

Cosmic Breath: 5



Gongsun Sheng prepares to summon the wind and rain

Bonus +5: Duration 10 rounds

The sorcerer may control heroes and supernatural beings as in the above effect.

Available skills: WILL, OCCULTISM, CHANTING or SINGING, MUSIC, PRESENCE, DECEPTION, WIT

Cosmic Breath: 5

MASTER OF WATER

The sorcerer learns various ways of commanding and manipulating water. The skill of ELEMENTALISM is necessary to this spell.

Bonus +1: Duration 10 rounds

The sorcerer causes a cloud of fog or mist to rise slowly from the ground and hang in the air for the duration of the spell. The radius of the cloud depends on the Cosmic Breath used. The sorcerer is immune to the effects of the cloud, but anyone else caught within it will suffer a -2 situational modifier to combat.

Applicable skills: ELEMENTALISM, ILLUSION, DANCING, MEDITATION, CHANTING

Cosmic Breath: 1 per 10 yard radius

Bonus +2: Duration 10 rounds

The sorcerer raises a storm, causing wind to blow and rain to fall. It will affect an area of radius 200 yards, centred on a point within the field of vision of the sorcerer. The degree of success indicates the strength of the storm. See details on weather in the *China* chapter for more about this.

Applicable skills: ELEMENTALISM, ILLUSION, DANCING, MEDITATION, CHANTING

Cosmic Breath: 4

Bonus +3: Instantaneous

The sorcerer may issue a single command to a body of water. This means he may, for example, order a river to change course, focus a waterfall into a single blast, cause a wave to strike a ship and so on. The spell is instantaneous because the command is issued once.

The permanence or otherwise of the effect depends on the nature of the command: a river which has had its course changed will usually revert to its former route.

Applicable skills: ELEMENTALISM, ILLUSION, DANCING, MEDITATION, CHANTING

Cosmic Breath: 7

Bonus +4: Duration 10 rounds

The sorcerer may exert continuous control over a body of water. Thus he may, for example, walk on water, by ordering it to support his weight. He may also breathe water. The spell does not allow the water to do unreasonable things: it can't assume human shape and walk on land, for example. It can, however, exert force, and such effects as waves will be very easy. It is up to the referee to determine how powerful a

given body of water will be, taking into account the degree of success of the spell.
Applicable skills: ELEMENTALISM, ILLUSION, DANCING, MEDITATION, CHANTING
Cosmic Breath: 4

SHELL OF THE TORTOISE

The sorcerer uses his power to harden a being's body or increase its resistance to damage. The skill of MEDITATION is necessary to this spell.

Bonus +1: Duration 10 rounds
 For the duration of the spell, the recipient gains a bonus of the degree of success of the spell to his **body** score. Note that the sorcerer must make physical contact with the bare skin of the recipient of the spell in order for it to work. Any injury acquired under the influence of this spell will continue to affect the recipient once the spell runs out, but its nature (flesh wound, bad wound, and so on) will be unchanged.
Applicable skills: ILLUSION, WILL, MEDITATION, MUSIC, CALLIGRAPHY
Cosmic Breath: 3

Bonus +3: Duration 10 rounds
 Provides a more specific form of protection, hardening the recipient's skin to make it very resistant to blows. This means they effectively gain the benefit of armour of value equal to half the degree of success of the casting roll. No **energy** is required, however.
Applicable skills: ILLUSION, WILL, MEDITATION, MUSIC, CALLIGRAPHY
Cosmic Breath: 4

TONGUE OF THE BLACK DRAGON

The control and use of thunder and lightning. The skill of ELEMENTALISM is necessary to this spell.

Bonus +2: Instantaneous
 When the weather is cloudy, the sorcerer may cause a bolt of lightning to descend. Although he may specify a target, this is not an accurate spell, and the referee should roll randomly to choose from all the potential targets within 20 yards of that specified by the sorcerer. The target struck by lightning will suffer one die of damage plus the degree of success of the spell. Anyone within three feet of the target will also suffer damage equal to the roll of the die. **Energy** may be used as a shock buffer to absorb up to two points.
Body lost to a lightning blast counts as a bad wound.
 Targets who are indoors cannot be struck by lightning. Proximity to a tree, or a large metal object or other potential lightning conductor provides protection: roll a die and subtract the result from the damage.
Applicable skills: ELEMENTALISM, ILLUSION, DANCING, ASTROLOGY
Cosmic Breath: 6

Bonus +3: Instantaneous
 The sorcerer may generate a bolt of lightning from within his own body and aim it at a target of his choice. This is done in the same way as using a normal missile (see the *Combat* chapter). The roll for casting the spell replaces the 'readying' roll. A successful cast creates a nimbus of electrical energy which plays about the sorcerer's hands. The bolt may be flung on the round immediately after the spell is cast, or held at a cost of 1 point of Cosmic Breath per round. The attack roll to fling the bolt may be combined with an aiming roll, however, if the sorcerer wishes. The bolt's characteristics are:

	Use 10	Damage see below
Shock 2	Dist see below	Evasion ease -1

The damage of the bolt is equal to the degree of success of the casting roll plus the degree of success of the attack roll. The unit of distance used for the spell depends on the amount of Cosmic Breath used by the sorcerer.
Applicable skills: ELEMENTALISM, ILLUSION, DANCING, ASTROLOGY
Cosmic Breath: 2 per yard of distance.

 **OTHER SPELLS**

The following spells have no fixed affinity or more than one.

BINDING

This spell is used to restrain spirits, or to store Cosmic Breath in an object in such a way that it won't dissipate, and can later be retrieved for use. The sorcerer must specify the affinity of the spell when it is cast: this will affect both the means of improving the casting chance and the necessary spell to be used to dispel the *Binding*. The skill of MEDITATION is necessary to this spell.

Bonus +2: Duration 1 hour
 A spirit is 'bound' to an object for the duration of the spell. The spirit may not move away from the object. It may 'call' those in the vicinity using *Spirit Voice*, if it is able to, but effects requiring **energy** may only be applied to anything or person in physical contact with the object. In order to successfully bind the spirit, the sorcerer must use Cosmic Breath equal to or exceeding the **energy** of the spirit (particularly cunning spirits have been known to pretend to be bound). Destroying an object with a spirit bound in it frees the spirit.
Applicable skills: MEDITATION, OCCULTISM, MAGIC, CALLIGRAPHY, ASTROLOGY
Cosmic Breath: As much as desired.

Bonus +3: Instantaneous

The sorcerer makes an object a receptacle for Cosmic Breath. When he does so, he must specify a Word of Binding, which must be a single, one-syllable word. This word is used to retrieve the Cosmic Breath from the object. However, the process is not foolproof, and sometimes the Word of Binding may be pronounced incorrectly. Thus, to retrieve the Cosmic Breath bound into an object, a person must roll with an ease equal to twice the degree of success of the *Binding* roll. One attempt may be made per round until successful, but if at any point a snake-eyes is rolled, the Cosmic Breath dissipates from the item and is lost. The same happens if the object is destroyed.

Storing Cosmic Breath in an item works like buying a skill: storing one point requires the sorcerer to expend one point. Two points stored cost 3, three points cost 6 and so on.

Applicable skills: MEDITATION, OCCULTISM, MAGIC, CALLIGRAPHY, ASTROLOGY

Cosmic Breath: As much as desired.

Bonus +4: Instantaneous

A spirit is 'bound' to an object permanently. The effects are as in the +2 effect above. The main difference is that the amount of Cosmic Breath required is far greater. As with the +3 effect, spirit **energy** which can be bound is 'bought' like an attribute: 1 point of Cosmic Breath for the first point, 2 for the second and so on. The spirit can be released by dispelling the Binding or by destroying the object. For this reason, sorcerers tend to bind spirits to fairly durable objects, such as jewels and swords.

Simply binding a spirit does not obtain the complicity of the spirit. Persuasion must be used to get the spirit to act, and the sorcerer may therefore bargain based on releasing the spirit from the object.

Applicable skills: MEDITATION, OCCULTISM, MAGIC, CALLIGRAPHY, ASTROLOGY

Cosmic Breath: As much as desired.

DRAGON FIRE

Dragon Fire is different to ordinary fire: it flares up when in contact with something wet, and will ignite water. At the same time it douses ordinary fire. This spell works by drawing a sleeping dragon's fire from the Otherworld. Sorcerers should be careful how they use it, as a Dragon annoyed is a formidable opponent! The skill of OCCULTISM is necessary to this spell. The sorcerer may choose the elemental affinity of the fire, which will determine its colour.

Bonus +2: Duration 10 rounds

The sorcerer can produce a tiny source of flickering Dragon Fire before his eyes. This will enable him to see any spirits or Cosmic Breath in the immediate vicinity, and gauge how powerful they are. It will also allow him to see clearly even in darkness.

Applicable skills: OCCULTISM, FOLKLORE, INTUITION, MEDITATION, ART

Cosmic Breath: 2

Bonus +4: Instantaneous

A gout of dragon flame spews from the sorcerer's mouth. The damage caused by this will affect *anything*: even items normally unaffected by fire. Damage done is double the degree of success of the spell.

Applicable skills: OCCULTISM, FOLKLORE, MEDITATION, ART

Cosmic Breath: 2 per yard range

DRAGON VEINS

This spell enables the sorcerer to become attuned to the flow of energy in the area. The skill of ELEMENTALISM is necessary to this spell. The spell is elementally neutral and cannot be enhanced by using elemental affinities.

Bonus +1: Instantaneous

The geomancer can perceive the flows of energy in the surrounding area, and, to a limited extent, channel them through his body. This enables a fairly accurate geomantic reading of the surroundings to be taken, which will establish the predominant flows, and enable the sorcerer to identify where Dragon Veins are the cause of bad joss afflicting someone. The effect whereby Cosmic Breath is channelled is explained further under Magical Energy, above.

Applicable skills: ELEMENTALISM, MEDITATION, ASTROLOGY, MAGIC

Cosmic Breath: 1

Bonus +2: Duration 10 rounds

The geomancer may use his sensitivity to the Dragon Veins to ward off Yang influences. This includes magic which is powered by Yang Cosmic Breath. In the case of the latter, if the degree of success is twice that of the effect, the geomancer can actually redirect the spell, turning it back on its caster or any other target.

Applicable skills: ELEMENTALISM, MEDITATION, ASTROLOGY, MAGIC

Cosmic Breath: 2

Bonus +3: Instantaneous

The geomancer may actually alter the direction of the Dragon Veins. A huge alteration is not possible, but even a slight change is usually enough to alleviate bad joss affecting someone because of the Dragon Veins. An alternative use for this spell is to alter a Dragon Vein so that it *causes* someone bad joss.

Applicable skills: ELEMENTALISM, MEDITATION, ASTROLOGY, MAGIC

Cosmic Breath: 3-7 according to extent.

THE FIVE HEAVENLY THUNDERBOLTS

This spell may be used to cancel other spells, or as an offensive weapon in its own right. It has an affinity with *all* of the five elements, therefore to gain a bonus, a sorcerer must combine five characteristics: one from each element. These must be of the same type. The skill of ELEMENTALISM is necessary to this spell.

Bonus +3: Instantaneous

The spell produces five streamers of light from the sorcerer's focus (or hand), corresponding to the five colours of the elements. They may be used to cancel any other spell effect, of any (or no) elemental affinity. Alternatively they may be used offensively, detonating upon impact. The sorcerer may only specify one target, and the thunderbolts will aim for this target. Roll a die for each bolt: on a 1 or a 2 the bolt has struck its target. On a 3, 4, 5 or 6 the bolt has gone astray, detonating a number of feet from the target equal to the number rolled (the referee may have to decide whether this means the thunderbolt has detonated within three feet of anyone else). Anyone struck by a detonating thunderbolt suffers damage equal to the degree of success of the spell roll. Armour provides no protection.

Applicable skills: ELEMENTALISM, ASTROLOGY, ILLUSION, MEDITATION, CHANTING or SINGING,



Gongsun Sheng dispels Gao Lian's sorcery with the Five Heavenly Thunderbolts

MUSIC, WILL

Cosmic Breath: 1 per 10 yards of range. Additional Cosmic Breath must also be supplied in order to dispel magic.

GU POISON

This spell enables a character to create a fearsome poison. Rather than using plant based venoms, *gu* is derived from the magical enhancement of poisons derived from vermin. The skill ALCHEMY is necessary to this spell, and the necessity of breeding vermin in order to prepare the spell means that it always requires at least five days' preparation before the spell can be cast.

Bonus +1: Instantaneous

The preparation for this skill involves assembling particularly horrible representatives of the five noxious creatures, and pitting them against each other. The survivor, having been stung by the others, will have concentrated their venom into the form of *gu*. The sorcerer must then cast this spell to extract and refine the venom. The degree of success of the spell is the virulence of the poison obtained. The rapidity of *gu* poison is 16 minutes. This may be reduced, but this means lowering the virulence: each point of virulence sacrificed halves the rapidity.

The *gu* poison produced must be ingested orally. As you would expect from such a noxious substance, it has a rather powerful taste.

Applicable skills: OCCULTISM, FOLKLORE, MEDITATION, ALCHEMY

Cosmic Breath: 3

Bonus +3: Duration 10 minutes

Prepares *gu* poison similarly to the +1 effect. However, in this case, rather than extracting the poison from the vermin, the remaining vermin itself may be controlled using the spell. It may be controlled by the sorcerer, but being unintelligent is not going to be able to obey any but the most literal commands. The rapidity of this kind of *gu* poison may not be reduced.

Applicable skills: OCCULTISM, FOLKLORE, MEDITATION, ALCHEMY

Cosmic Breath: 6

Bonus +4: Instantaneous

This most potent form of *gu* is the most powerful. It is produced in more or less the same way as that of the +1 effect, with the virulence being determined in the same way. However, the poison may be produced in such a way that it has very specific effects. For example, *gu* may be produced which is undetectable in food. Or it may put someone into a coma rather than killing them. Or it may kill them with symptoms exactly resembling those of a disease.

Still further refinements are possible. Poisons can be produced which have rapidities measured in weeks,

months or even years. Or they can lie dormant in the body, waiting only for some apparently innocent catalyst.

Not for nothing is *gu* poison a criminal offence warranting the severest penalty.

Applicable skills: OCCULTISM, FOLKLORE, MEDITATION, ALCHEMY

Cosmic Breath: 9

PORTAL TO THE OTHERWORLD

This spell creates a rip in the fabric of existence, making possible physical contact with the Otherworld. This spell has no affinity and requires a combination of the five elements to dispel it. The skill of OCCULTISM is necessary to this spell.

Bonus +2: Instantaneous

This spell creates a momentary rift between the Worlds. It can therefore be used by the sorcerer to place some object out of reach, or even to make a person enter the Otherworld. The sorcerer must touch whatever it is he wishes to send to the Otherworld.

Applicable skills: OCCULTISM, ASTROLOGY, INTUITION, THEOLOGY, WILL, FOLK LORE, DANCING, CHANTING, CALLIGRAPHY

Cosmic Breath: 4 + size of object (min 1)

Bonus +4: Duration 10 rounds

The sorcerer can maintain the rift between the worlds for much longer, and therefore create a portal through which people can pass. The portal is created near the sorcerer but is immobile and invisible once created. The sorcerer may maintain it, but to do so he must remain near it, or use a *Supervisory Servant* to maintain its effect. A problem with this spell is that returning is by no means a simple process. As mentioned elsewhere, the topography of the Otherworld is extremely complex. Creating a portal a mere few yards from the correct spot may lead to a difference of thousands of miles in the point to which the portal leads.

Applicable skills: OCCULTISM, ASTROLOGY, INTUITION, THEOLOGY, WILL, FOLK LORE, DANCING, CHANTING, CALLIGRAPHY

Cosmic Breath: 8

CURSES

Curses are cast by dealing with spirits. This means that the sorcerer must use the *Spirit Voice* spell to communicate with the appropriate spirit. If the sorcerer is not present at a place where the spirit dwells, he will have to use the +2 version of the *Spirit Voice* to establish a psychic link. Once established, the sorcerer may negotiate the conditions for inflicting a curse. The power of a curse varies according to the spirit in question, and the conditions also vary.

An inevitable consequence of inflicting a curse is that the spirit must be empowered to act in the Mortal World. Thus in almost all cases, the sorcerer will be required to allow the spirit the use of some of his **energy** (depriving him of its use). This is risky, as the spirit must be persuaded to relinquish the **energy** at some stage.

The skill of OCCULTISM is necessary to inflict a curse. The sorcerer must also know the appropriate spirit. This requires a minimum of +1 FOLKLORE.

Curses may be resisted (usually unconsciously). The basic ease is 4, to which bonuses in MAGIC, ILLUSION, ELEMENTALISM, OCCULTISM and FOLKLORE should be added. Additional bonuses may be obtained by using talismans, charms, or obtaining blessings from priests.

The effect of a curse is to inflict bad joss on the victim. The power of the curse is the number of points of bad joss inflicted per week. For every point of power, the sorcerer will have to provide the spirit with the use of one point of his **energy**. He may not use this **energy** until he lifts the curse, and persuades the spirit to relinquish it.

Curses last until lifted, or until the death of the cursing sorcerer. Curses may be lifted by the sorcerer who inflicted them, or by dealing with the spirit inflicting them. They may also be released by the blessing of a divinity, which may be obtained in several ways (such as going on a pilgrimage to a Holy Mountain). The referee may use this latter possibility as a source of adventure ideas.

Note that sorcerers who attempt to use spirits in this way generally require bargaining tools, which may be in the form of spells of coercion (*Eyes of the Snake*, *Binding*, for example) or Talismans (*Spirit Ward*), or rewards. Offering something the spirit might be inclined to take, and capable of taking, anyway, is hardly persuasive.

*Never kill an ox, or throw away
paper that has writing on it*

TALISMANS

There are two types of talisman. The first is a *spirit contract*. Most of these were created by Zhang Daoling, the first Celestial Master, centuries ago. These talismans call on a supernatural being or beings to aid the person using it. Since they rely on persuasion, with perhaps a little coercion, their effectiveness depends on whether the spirit honours the contract. Being a contract, the writer of the

talisman may have to provide something for the spirit in order for the talisman to be effective. Spirit contract talismans may be reproduced by any means—even printing, and are quite widely available, as some varieties are included in the Farmer’s Almanac, a book which also lists auspicious and inauspicious days, correct planting dates, and more general advice. In order for a talisman to be used it must be copied out in accordance with the astrological signs, and part of its power derives from the person who writes it.

The second kind of talisman draws its Power and Meaning from the sorcerer who writes it. This kind of talisman employs *Cloud Script*, a special magical form of calligraphy using ideographs unreadable by all but those knowledgeable in the Talismanic arts.

Both kinds of talisman are capable of being *used* by people with no knowledge of the magical arts, but they cannot be *written* by the uninitiated.

SPRIT CONTRACTS

The vast majority of Spirit Contracts are contained in the Taoist *Daocang*, which lists the contracts made by Zhang Daoling, the first Celestial Master. In order to be effective, the talismans must be copied, either by the person using the talisman, or on their behalf (for example, by a Taoist priest). In most cases a ritual must also be observed. The big advantage of spirit contract talismans is that the spirit supplies both Meaning and Power.

The selection of talismans listed here are given a bonus, just like a spell bonus. This affects their chance of working successfully. This is only a selection, of course (mostly based on real talismans). The referee may allow players to suggest other talismans designed along the lines of those presented here.

With a talisman, the roll to see if it works successfully is not made until the power of the talisman is actually tested. The chance of a talisman working is calculated as follows. The basic ease is the power level of the game, modified as follows:

- ◇ Subtract the bonus of the talisman
- ◇ Add the TALISMANS bonus of the person who wrote the talisman. If this is less than the talisman’s bonus, subtract 2.
- ◇ If the writer of the talisman has a bonus equal to or higher than the talisman’s bonus, add their bonuses in MAGIC, CALLIGRAPHY, Taoist THEOLOGY and ASTROLOGY (negative bonuses are *always* applied).
- ◇ Subtract 1 for each complete week which has passed since the talisman was written.
- ◇ Subtract 1 for every 5 points of bad joss possessed by the person who benefits from the talisman.

The above roll must be made every time the power of the talisman is tested. Unless otherwise noted, talismans may continue to be used until the roll is failed. As soon as the roll is failed, the talisman has lost its power and is useless.

COUNTER EVIL TALISMAN

Protects against bad joss. Bonus +1

When bad joss is suffered, if it does not exceed half the degree of success of the talisman, then the amount suffered is reduced by one point. If the bad joss does exceed half the degree of success of the talisman, then the power of the talisman is broken.

Ritual: the talisman is placed on the recipient’s family altar, and incense must be offered to it. If the talisman is removed from the family altar then its protection is lost.

ENTER MOUNTAIN AMULET

Protects travellers in mountain regions. Bonus +1

While in mountainous territory, this talisman provides the wearer with the equivalent of a bonus to WILDERNESS LORE of the degree of success of the roll.

Ritual: an oblong plaque or paper strip, on which enlarged characters are written, must be worn prominently on the body.



Enter Mountain

GHOST CHARM

Protect against ghosts. Bonus +1

Effective against human ghosts in non-corporeal form (including hungry ghosts, but not stiff corpses). Half the degree of success of the talisman is subtracted from any offensive action the ghost takes towards the person protected.

Ritual: for personal protection the talisman should be worn prominently on the body. Alternatively it may be affixed to the door of a room to provide protection for the room’s occupants.

JADE ROOT AND LOTUS FLOWER

Heightens sexual potency. Bonus +1

The user of this talisman may add half the degree of success to a PILLOW ARTS roll.

Ritual: the user of this talisman must spend an hour seated naked facing North, chanting. The talisman is then folded 8 times and inserted under the tongue. It must be kept there in order to maintain its effect.

LAO TAN AMULET

Protects against tigers. Bonus +1

The wearer will not be attacked by a tiger as long

as he is wearing this amulet. The amulet does not bestow any ability to control the beasts, however.

Ritual: A 2" square amulet, carved from jujube pith, and worn on the chest.

LING BAO TALISMAN

Protects against poison. Bonus +1

Provides a bonus of half the degree of success to resist the effects of poison.

Ritual: after burning incense for the spirits, the talisman should be folded up and swallowed.

LUCID SIGHT CHARM

Improves vision. Bonus +1

Provides +1 NIGHT VISION and PERCEPTION for a number of hours equal to the degree of success of the roll.

Ritual: the charm is burned, and the ashes smeared on the eyelids.

PEACEFUL COMMUNION CHARM

Protects against wrangling. Bonus +1

Half the degree of success of the talisman may be used to defend against argument, intimidation or other forms of spoken aggression. These may include the skills of INTIMIDATION, COMMERCE, DECEPTION and RHETORIC. The talisman doesn't help attack, it simply protects.

Ritual: formal bows should be made in four directions, and then the talisman ripped cleanly down the middle. Each half is then crumpled up and one inserted into each ear.

BLACK WARRIOR'S DIAGRAM

Provides protection against fire. Bonus +2

The degree of success of the roll should be subtracted from any fire damage suffered. This protection applies to magical fire as much as natural fire, but provides no protection against Dragon fire.

Ritual: The talisman is burned and the ashes swallowed by the person who requires protection.

THE FIVE MASTERS

There is one protective talisman for each of the five directions. Each is also associated with an element. The five are Master of the East, Master of the South, Master of the Centre, Master of the West and Master of the North. Bonus +2

Each talisman protects from Curses launched from the direction over which the spirit has control (up and down in the case of the Master of the Centre), and from Elemental sorcery with an affinity which is



Master of the West

conquered by the affinity of the talisman (see the diagram on page 91). Thus, East conquers Earth, South conquers Metal, Centre conquers Water, West conquers Wood and North conquers Fire.

The degree of success of the talisman is added to the roll to resist a curse or spell.

Ritual: Each talisman must either be hung in a particular location, or burnt, wine and homage offered to the Master, and the ashes smeared on the body.

FIVE-COLOUR TALISMAN

Protects against disease. Bonus +2

This talisman guards against illness. The degree of success of the talisman is subtracted from a roll to catch a disease. If used on someone who already has a disease, it subtracts half the degree of success from the number of **body** points suffered per week. It has no effect on **energy** lost to

fatigue.

Ritual: the talisman is inscribed on paper or silk of various colours, burned, then the ashes eaten by the person requiring protection.

GAIN OFFICE TALISMAN

Provides assistance in the use of influence to obtain employment. Bonus +2

Half the degree of success of the talisman roll may be used as a bonus in a single influence attempt.

Ritual: once written, the talisman must be carefully rolled and held in the left (*yang*) hand throughout the influence attempt. If it is released at any point, or comes into contact with the right (*yin*) hand, the bonus is lost.

REPEL BANDITS

Protects against bandits. Bonus +2

Any bandits who attempt to attack or steal from the user of this talisman will feel an uncomfortable prickling sensation. If they proceed in spite of the warning, they will acquire bad joss equal to the degree of success of the talisman.

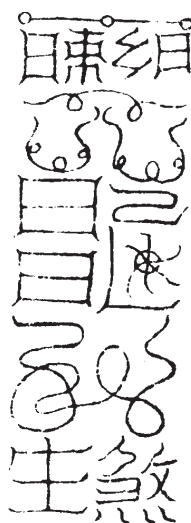
It is up to the referee to deal with the reactions of non-player bandits, but as a rule they tend to be a pretty superstitious lot.

Ritual: the talisman must be consecrated at the temple of the City God in the home town of the user, to whom incense must be offered. It should then be affixed to the user's goods or possessions.

SHAMAN'S GIFT

Provides good luck. Bonus +2

This talisman may only be invoked once. It provides a bonus to a single roll of half the



Repel Bandits

degree of success.

Ritual: the talisman is worn affixed to the belt. In order to be invoked, the wearer must touch it, and call on the spirit for aid.

YELLOW BOOK TALISMAN

Enables Earth Spirits to be contacted. Bonus +2

The user of the Talisman may contact and converse with any spirit related to Earth. This includes demons and the inhabitants of Yen Luo's Underworld, but it excludes Immortals and deities dwelling in Heaven or one of the Paradises. The degree of success is the number of minutes of contact which are possible. Note that the power of the talisman is such that the spirits contacted may not refuse, and must answer.

Ritual: the talisman is a magic board, on which the user must place their hands while calling the name of the spirit.

BONE SETTER

Assists surgery. Bonus +3

Half the degree of success of the talisman roll may be added to the body recovery roll of a character suffering from bad or serious wounds.

Ritual: the talisman must be written while continuously chanting the Yellow Emperor's healing charm. It is then applied directly to the injury, and tied in place with two red strings. It must be kept in place for a whole week to be effective; if it is dislodged no benefit is gained.

INVIGORATOR

Provides additional **energy**. Bonus +3

As it is worn, the talisman provides a bonus to **energy** of half the degree of success of the roll. If the talisman is damaged or removed, however, the bonus is immediately lost.

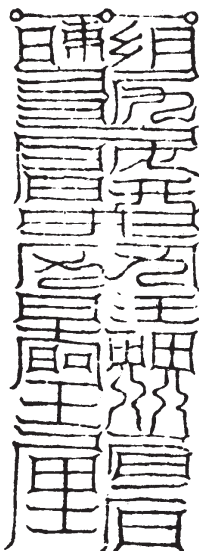
Ritual: The *Invigorator* is written on black paper in red ink. After bowing three times, the user must affix it firmly to his chest.

JADE EMPEROR'S PLEDGE

Protects the bearer from Buddhist magic. Bonus +3

The degree of success of the talisman is used to resist any Buddhist magic. It will also provide a bonus of +1 to resist *any* magic cast by a Buddhist.

Ritual: the talisman is unusual in that it is inscribed on the forehead, using five different colours of ink. Unfortunately, the user may make use of no other talismans while bearing the *Jade Emperor's Pledge*, as this would cause the Jade Emperor to lose face.



Obliterator of Disease

RED SPIRIT TALISMAN

The Red Spirit protects against wounds. Bonus +3

This will render the user's skin resistant to wounds. Half the degree of success is the number of wounds which the talisman will protect against. When the user suffers wounds, cross them off the talisman's stock of wounds, not the user's. Note that the talisman protects against wounds only: it has no effect on shock damage. When the Red Spirit's stock of wounds is exhausted, the user will start to suffer damage as normal.

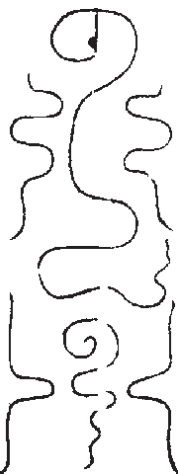
Ritual: the talisman must be written in red cinnabar on vertical strips of yellow paper. The user must introduce himself to the Red Spirit by name, bow three times to the West, then affix the talisman to his body.

OBLITERATOR OF DISEASE

Heals disease. Bonus +4

Half the degree of success of the talisman is subtracted from the duration of a disease being suffered. If the result is 0 or less then the disease is immediately cured.

Ritual: the patient (or his representative) must approach an image of the Yellow Emperor, burn an offering of incense and bow formally four times. Then the writer of the talisman must recite a water incantation, a cinnabar incantation, an ink incantation, a brush incantation, a paper incantation, a writing incantation and an incantation for summoning the spirit connected to the disease. The talisman should then be written and placed on the altar. Three drops of water are sprinkled on it, and then the writer must spray a mouthful of water over the talisman. He should then click his teeth three times, bow formally, take the talisman, wrap it in white paper and give it to the patient. The patient may then use the talisman at any time, burning it before his family altar to send its message to the spirits.



Purifier of the Body

PURIFIER OF THE BODY

Rids the body of poison. Bonus +4

The degree of success of the talisman is subtracted from the virulence of any poison already at work in the body.

Ritual: This talisman should be burned and this incantation uttered: 'The Spirit of Uncleaness is already dissipated, exhausted in the three places to be guarded. The turbid torrent has been cleansed by the Golden Tower and the Illuminated Royal Apartments. Go high above to contact the Primordial Lord, the Twenty-four True Ones, all in the form of Divine Spirits, to ascend mysteriously from the darkness. Without delay, as the True Order commands.'

SPIRIT WARD

Provides protection against spirits. Bonus +4

Spirits coming into contact with the *Spirit Ward* will suffer a loss of **energy** equal to the degree of success of the roll, each time they touch it. They will also be unable to approach the talisman directly closer than two yards (though they can come on it from the side).

The talisman may also be affixed to the head of a stiff corpse, in which case the corpse becomes subject to the will of the person who wrote the talisman.

Ritual: written on yellow paper with red ink, and including a picture of Zhong Kui the devil catcher. After writing the talisman, the sorcerer must bow to each of the four directions and to heaven. This is usually worn by a person or pasted to a door. It may be affixed to an unconscious person to protect them.

TRAVEL MAGIC TALISMAN

This is the talisman used by Dai Zong. Bonus +4

While using the travel magic talisman, a character may cover 200 miles a day. They gain a bonus of twice the talisman's degree of success to RUNNING and the degree of success to LEAPING. In combat, however, it causes a penalty of -3 to all manoeuvre rolls.

Ritual: the user must write the talisman, chant a short incantation, then affix the talisman to the user's legs (this may be done for somebody else). The user must eat no meat while using the travel magic.

WEAPON-AVERTER

Makes it more difficult for the user to be hit by weapons.

Bonus +4

Half the degree of success of the talisman is applied as an additional negative modifier to the attack roll of anyone who attacks the person named on the talisman. However a new roll must be made every time the power of the talisman is tested. Once the roll is failed, the power of the talisman is gone.

Ritual: This talisman is written on a 6" by 3" wooden plaque made of peachwood, using five colours. It is then placed on the gate or door of the user's house.

DIAGRAM OF THE MOUNTAIN OF THE BLUE CITY

Provides entry to the Otherworld. Bonus +5

This talisman does not create a Portal to the Otherworld. Rather, it enables its user to locate a naturally occurring gateway. The best known gateway, leading directly to Yen Luo's Underworld, is known to exist somewhere in the West, perhaps not far from Chengdu. There are others to be found, especially in the mountains. Some of these are permanent, though most are temporary. The degree of success of the talisman provides the referee with a guide to how

close and easy to find a gateway is. Most gateways are very well hidden, being behind waterfalls, in deep caverns, or thick forests.

Ritual: the talisman must be activated with an offering of incense, and rice wine should then be spilt on the ground to satisfy the Earth Spirits. The person holding the talisman will then start to hear voices, coming from a certain direction. The voices will become louder the nearer the talisman gets to the gateway.

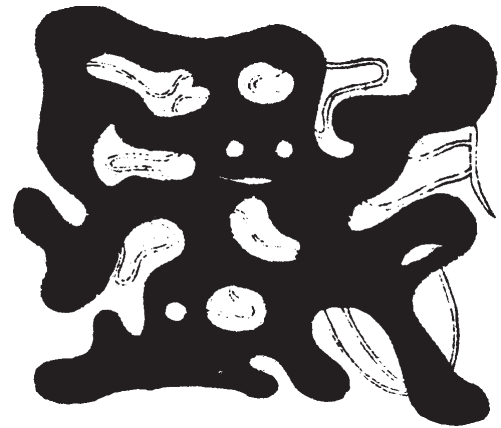


Diagram of the Mountain of the Blue City

PURIFIER OF THE MIND

Rids the body of bad joss. Bonus +5

Half the degree of success of the talisman is subtracted from the character's accumulated total of bad joss. This talisman may only be used once every 49 days.

Ritual: This talisman should be burned and the following incantation uttered: 'Spirit of the Divine Ruler of the Red Palace, Energy of burnt offerings, follow the light and fly to purify. Come to the cottage-wall of the Taoist so that weariness has no place in his mind. Under the peaceful morning sky the sweet dew sets quickly to form red jasper. Follow without delay the commands of the True Order.'

RESTRAINER

Freezes a person in place. Bonus +5

The victim of this talisman is held in place by unseen spirits. The effect lasts 5 rounds for each point of degree of success. The victim may attempt to resist the effect as if it were a normal spell. Note that there is no physical restraint placed on the victim, so they can be moved by others. Rather, the spirits prevent the victim's *qi* from flowing, so that they remain in the position they were in when first affected.

Ritual: the talisman must be clearly shown to the victim while the spirits are invoked. The victim doesn't need to be literate to suffer from its effects.

CLOUD SCRIPT

These talismans provide an opportunity for sorcerers to store their spells in a form which can be retrieved and used by them or another person at a later date. Sorcerers may only write talismans for spell effects which they know, and which have a bonus of lower than the sorcerer's TALISMANS bonus.

Producing such a talisman will normally require the casting of several spells in order to ensure that the talisman is provided with both power and meaning.

A Cloud Script talisman is written as follows.

POWER COMPONENT

The sorcerer should first specify how much Cosmic Breath the talisman requires to work, and how the talisman will gain it. There are four possibilities: it may be Yin (from a Spirit), Yang (from the Dragon Veins), Bound or supplied by the user of the talisman. All but the latter require the sorcerer to store a spell in the Talisman.

Yin Cosmic Breath is derived from a spirit inhabiting the Otherworld. The sorcerer should cast the spell of *Spirit Sending*, making a note of the degree of success, which will be used when the talisman is activated. He will also know the name of the spirit which supplies the Cosmic Breath. This spirit must be entreated in order to activate the talisman.

Yang Cosmic Breath is derived from the Dragon Veins. The sorcerer should cast the spell of *Dragon Veins* and make a note of the degree of success, which will be used when the talisman is activated. He must also specify a method by which the talisman is activated: for example affixing it to the forehead, burning it and eating the ashes etc.

Bound Cosmic Breath is stored in the talisman. The sorcerer must cast a spell of *Binding*.

MEANING COMPONENT

Once the Power component has been specified, the sorcerer should then cast the spell which he wants to be produced when the talisman is activated. The spell is cast as normal, except that while bonuses from physical skills may not be added, bonuses in ASTROLOGY, TALISMANS and CALLIGRAPHY should always be used. Note down the degree of success of the roll.

At this point the sorcerer may add additional meaning, such as a spirit stored in the Talisman by means of a *Binding* spell, to make the talisman self-activating.

ACTIVATING A TALISMAN

Talismans which have a spirit bound in them with a *Binding* spell may be activated automatically by the spirit. Such talismans may only employ Bound Cosmic Breath.



Cloud Script characters

Other talismans must be activated by the person using them, according to a ritual specified by the writer of the talisman. To a certain extent, the ritual will depend on the method employed to supply Cosmic Breath to the spell effect of the talisman.

Yin and Yang talismans are activated as described above, with an invocation of the spirit involved or the specified ritual. The basic ease of activating the talisman is 4, to which should be added the degree of success of the Meaning Component, the degree of success of the Power Component, and from which should be subtracted the number of points of Cosmic Breath: to cast the spell. A successful roll means that the spell has been cast with the specified amount of Cosmic Breath.

Talismans with Cosmic Breath bound within, and those which derive their power from the user, have an ease of activation of 5, plus the degree of success of the Meaning Component roll. A successful roll indicates that the spell has been cast. In the case of talismans which derive their power from the user, the Cosmic Breath is derived directly from the user's **energy** score (the points are lost to fatigue). Characters who find themselves being drained of **energy** in this way may make a roll to prevent the process: the ease is 4 plus bonuses in MAGIC, WILL and MEDITATION. Half the degree of success is subtracted from the **energy** supplied to the talisman's spell (note that this will reduce the effect of the spell, and may prevent it working altogether).

*Even a broken drum
can save the moon*

MAGICAL TREASURE

The first Taoist Celestial Master Zhang Daoling left his seal, his sword, a mystic book and a collection of talismans. Other heroes and Immortals have possessed similar caches of treasure.

Most of these items are produced in the Otherworld, and possess supernatural powers. Some, it is true, are produced by mortal sorcerers, who manage to permanently attune an object in such a way that it acquires magical powers. Such skills are rare, though, and were mainly possessed by the Ancients.

Referees have a free rein to introduce magical items of any kind into the game, and can easily base their effects on those of spells or talismans. In very high-power games, they can even exceed such effects, as they are the products of beings of transcendent powers (Deities, Taoist Immortals and Buddhist Lohans).

Examples include flying swords which can be manipulated by their wielders at a distance, armour which provides the bearer with supernatural speed and protection, and bottle gourds containing a number of trapped spirits which can be induced to perform spells on request. Then there are Dragon Bones of five colours (Blue being the most useful) which can assist with healing, magic peaches and fungi that bestow longevity upon the person who consumes them, and magical pillows that transport the sleeping spirit to some high realm of the Otherworld.

This sort of magical item rarely appears in the Water Margin story. In that, the Heavenly Books of Strategy given to Song Jiang by the Mystic Queen of the West are one of the few magical items. And, although useful, in the end they are inadequate to the task of defeating the sorcerer Gao Lian, and Gongsun Sheng has to do the job himself.

These are, for the most part, one-off items. They resemble characters more than they resemble the mass-produced magical artefacts of certain other role-playing games. I've provided guidelines for creating characters in this game, but in the end you decide on the characters which populate your China. The same should be true of the magical items.

One type of item that does appear in the Water Margin is the talisman. Dai Zong, for example, knows the secret of the Travel Magic Talisman, and as a result is able to travel at prodigious speed. Cloud Script talismans can take various forms, and therefore resemble 'magic items'. Binding spirits in items may

also render them capable of magical effects.

That's why there is no list of magic items in this edition of *Outlaws of the Water Margin*.

