ARCANIA OF LEGEND

BLOOD MAGIC

MONGOOSE PUBLISHING

ARCANIA OF LEGEND
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Contents

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INTRODUCTION

'When I had prayed sufficiently to the dead, I cut the throats of the two sheep and let the blood run into the trench, whereupon the ghosts came trooping up from Erebus – brides, young bachelors, old men worn out with toil, maids who had been crossed in love, and brave men who had been killed in battle, with their armour still smirched with blood; they came from every quarter and flitted round the trench with a strange kind of screaming sound that made me turn pale with fear. When I saw them coming I told the men to be quick and flay the carcasses of the two dead sheep and make burnt offerings of them, and at the same time to repeat prayers to Hades and to Proserpine; but I sat where I was with my sword drawn and would not let the poor feckless ghosts come near the blood till Teiresias should have answered my questions.'

— The Odyssey, Book XI

'It was very usual for them to sacrifice to the idols that they found on the roads, anointing the faces of the idol with blood they drew right there from their ears, piercing them, or from their nostrils or tongue, and even from their private parts, according to what others say, so that anyone who passed by an idol and did not offer him any portion of blood drawn there from his own body was not considered devout or good.'

— Diego de Landa 16th C

'But the potency of this great fetish apparently soon evaporated. Owners of the Borfima found that their riches did not increase as rapidly as they anticipated, they lost cases in the Courts, expectations were not realized with respect to adverse witnesses upon whose hearts and livers and kidneys imprecations had been showered; all this showed that the Borfima had become weak and needed resuscitation with fresh human fat and blood and to obtain this human fat and blood was the primary object of the Human Leopard Society.'

— K. J. Beatty, An Account Of The Trials Of Human Leopards Before The Special Commission Court 1915

Since time immemorial blood has been the basis for many arcane powers. From pious offerings to the gods, to the spilling of gore during ritual summonings, such symbolism is prevalent throughout historical and fantasy settings.

Arcana of Legend: Blood Magic is a tome devoted to the power of blood, vitality and its sacrifice.

The Many Forms of Blood Magic

This tome examines the beliefs and uses of life force in cultural magic, offering rules, spells and supernatural creatures which thrive upon it. It begins with insights concerning what life force is and how it drives supernatural effects. The differences in animal and human blood are investigated, focussing on what rewards are granted for varying levels of sacrifice up to and including youth or even death.

Also included are new concepts of how inherited bloodlines can provide mystical abilities, the consumption of blood endowing strengths and powers, and methods of preserving life (or unlife) by exsanguination.

To illustrate the many ideas presented within several example cultures are used, each one illustrating a different path of magic, specifically motivated by spilling life force rather than expenditure of abstract Magic Points.

The first is historical, the Aztec of Central America who sacrifice to the gods for their Divine miracles. The second originates in the Sword and Sorcery genre, a cult of ascetics called the Stygian Seers of Mount Yamshi that use blood as part of their sorcery. Last are a high fantasy brotherhood of diabolic shaman-warriors which offer blood to the spirits to entice and bind evil demonic entities.

Presented within these pages are game mechanics and campaign ideas which clarify, expand upon, or offer replacements for, the core *Legend* rules. Some of the included rules and spells are extremely powerful – potentially destabilising game balance but are included to enable the emulation of certain Sword and Sorcery or horror genres. However, they remain optional, requiring a Games Master to approve their inclusion in a game, whether as awesome powers in the hands of major protagonists or forbidden knowledge granted to Adventurers.

To grant a more modular approach, each type of magic or advanced magical skill is granted its own chapter to fully explore the effects blood can have upon it. In this way Games Masters can apply *Arcania of Legend: Blood Magic* augmentations to specific types of magic in a campaign, or perhaps limit them to specific churches, guilds or faiths.
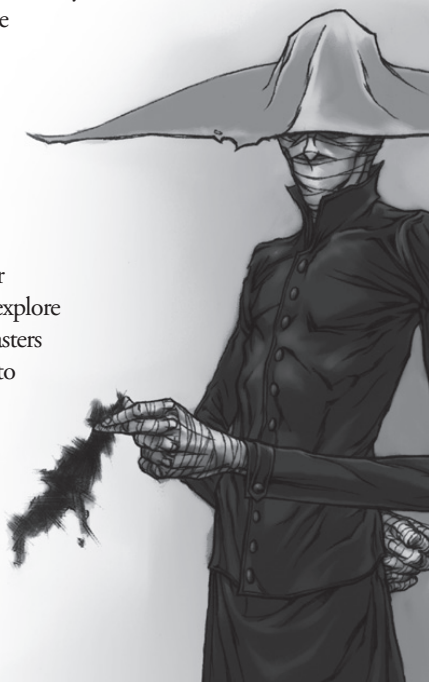
Blood and Sacrifice

Blood has always been indelibly linked to the supernatural. It represents fertility, strength and life itself. The giving up of life force or life energy, whether voluntary or not, is a sacrifice of great potency.

Since the primeval days of Neolithic man, blood has been given to the spirits to feed them, to the gods to propitiate their passions and to beings of the underworld as payment for their services. Throughout human history the symbolic nature of blood has been used to evoke power, even unto the modern day in regions where superstition and ritual still holds sway. These same principles have remained in our psyche, so that blood and magic are ineradicably entwined in the stories which entertain us.

Our earliest myths and legends recount the deliberate spilling of blood to perform necromancy, summoning the spirits of the dead or placating the freshly slain on their way to the underworld. The Odyssey, quoted in the introduction, is one of the first tales illustrating the power of blood, yet it is by no means a baseless yarn. Many early Mediterranean civilisations used the sacrifice of animals to perform magic, placating the gods or distracting horrific ghosts and monsters with fresh blood.

An Egyptian tale recounts that after sending Sekhmet the Lioness, goddess of destruction, to punish mankind for their failure to follow his divine commandments, Ra found he could no longer control her and became worried. He ordered the high priest of Yunu to grind red ochre and mix it with 7,000 jugs of barley beer, forming a concoction with the appearance of blood. These were poured onto the land in the path of her wrath, flooding the fields three palms high with the beer. When Sekhmet saw the great pool of blood, she gorged herself on it and became so drunk she slept for three days. Upon awakening her rage has dissipated and mankind was saved from extinction.

Fertility was a fundamental part of survival, not that of bearing offspring but the more important fruitfulness of the land, on which crops were cultivated and animals raised. Dionysus the ancient Greek deity of fecundity symbolised flesh and blood as bread and wine. An annual worship and sacrifice was held in his name to ensure crop fertility. Although animal sacrifices were commonplace, human blood offerings were reputedly performed. Mesoamerican peoples also gave up personal offerings of blood to nourish their gods and shamans of many cultures performed bloodletting as part of their rituals.

The ultimate sacrifice however is that of human life. In most cases its power was rarely invoked, offerings only being made for special events:

- To dedicate a major building or temple.
- To accompany a dead ruler to the afterlife.
- To avert a natural disaster.
- To ensure a safe journey by changing the winds or calming the sea.
- To win a major victory against enemies.
- To divine the future in times of strife.

Almost all early civilisations performed human sacrifice or at least retained myths about it. The cultures of the Near East, Greeks, Romans, Celts, Chinese, Indians, Pacific Islanders, Vikings, Pre-Columbian Native Americans and Africans all practiced it in one form or another, although blood itself was often a minor aspect of such religio-magical rituals.

'O Dark One, wondrous and exciting in every way, becomes the accomplishment, of those worshippers who living in this world freely make offering to Thee in worship of the greatly satisfying flesh, together with hair and bone, of cats, camels, sheep, buffaloes, goats and men.'

— Hymn to Kali

As time passed most cultures abandoned ritual sacrifice but some religions such as the Thuggee cult of Kali and the Leopard Society of West Africa continued up until the last century. Even today some Tantric cults in remote parts of India, and Muti killings in Sub-Saharan Africa, continue the practice.

The Role of Sacrifice

The primary purpose of sacrifice is to form a relationship between men and gods, establishing a means of contact and interaction. Various implementations of sacrifice were used to induce different results depending on the direction and type of interaction.

Worshippers could sacrifice blood, animals, humans or even another god, in exchange for the favour of the being they propitiated. The scale of the sacrifice equated to the magnitude of the blessing returned, although such beneficent actions often had no observable result. By its very nature, propitiation is the warding away of misfortune or disaster.

Rites of sacrifice were also the focus of festivals, usually held at the church, tribe or city scale, within which further purposes were entwined, such as rites of initiation, purification, oath and social manipulation. These rituals permeated every aspect of life, transferring sworn virtues, possessions and life in order to seek redress of past injustice, retention of the status quo or gaining temporal wealth and power.

The elements of warm running blood, formulated chants and fire became traditions, indelibly linked with rites of sacrifice. Such trappings added a degree of serious intent to such ceremonies but ultimately it was the giving up of part a petitioner's own vitality, or the life of a victim, which showed true commitment. For most the sacrifice of an animal was a serious material expenditure, not undertaken lightly.

Instances of sacrifice in ancient literature are not limited by their purpose or triviality, as can be seen in exchanges of virtues or material belongings; however the traditional premise of ritual sacrifice is always conducted in a ceremonial manner and is essentially religious. Examples of oaths would be to foreswear leaving a battlefield without emerging victorious in exchange for the deity's aid or the promise to remain virginal in return for becoming a member of the faith's priesthood. Sacrificial victims are almost always edible animals – customarily Mediterranean societies used bulls, sheep, goats or even pigs.

Human sacrificial rituals, contrastingly, were less prevalent – usually due to societal disapproval or even fear, so that victims were either voluntary, drawn by lot, or captured enemy warriors. Volunteers usually came from the dregs of society, receiving lodging, food and more importantly *respect* from their community in exchange for giving up their life at a future time. Conversely captured warriors were drawn from the cream of society, most coming from the upper classes in ancient times.

'The Athenians regularly maintained a number of degraded and useless beings at the public expense; and when any calamity, such as plague, drought, or famine, befell the city, they sacrificed two of these outcast scapegoats. One of the victims was sacrificed for the men and the other for the women. The former wore round his neck a string of black, the latter a string of white figs. Sometimes, it seems, the victim slain on behalf of the women was a woman. They were led about the city and then sacrificed, apparently by being stoned to death outside the city.'

— Sir James George Frazer, The Golden Bough

Despite the doom hanging over their heads, most sacrificial victims were treated extraordinarily well, as it would be they themselves who would bear the curses and bad luck of the entire community if acting as a scapegoat, or personally take a message to the deity on behalf of the supplicants. Neither victim would likely perform their duties if abused during the wait before the ritual.

The supernatural beings sacrificed to derive their pleasure from rites and sacrifices in diverse ways, by savouring the aromas which rise from the sacrificial altars, watching the dances of temple staff, listening to hymns sung in their praise and even eating the metaphysical flesh cast upon the fires in their honour.

Following these sacrificial acts and festivities, the remainder of the ritual consists of two aspects representative of the ultimate purpose of the sacrificial feast: speaking to the god or spirit and appeasing its wrath. Essentially, the homage – both artistic and in the form of nourishment – offered to an immortal, draws their attention, or perhaps even their transcendental presence to that location, momentarily permitting communication. Without the rites of sacrifice, no contact would be established between mortals and supernatural entities.

The Nature of Sacrifices

Since this book focuses on the role of blood and death in providing magic, the nature of sacrifices need to be examined a little closer.

Historically, blood is considered a vitally important substance since it is thought to hold the life force of its giver. Donating a little blood passes on part the donor's vitality, whereas draining a victim of all his blood completely separates their *élan vital* from the body.

Bloodletting is the endowment of a victim's blood to show respect for, or invoke, supernatural beings. This normally does not result in the death of the creature but can weaken it. Autosacrifice is the specific drawing of blood from the petitioner themselves. This can be performed in a multitude of different manners, from the simple pricking of a thumb to drawing a serrated stingray tail through your tongue. Such bloodlettings can be marked by rubbing dirt into the wound to create an observable scar, tattooing the healed wound, or even inserting piercings. Not all cultures emphasise these offerings, sometimes hiding the lacerations on less observable parts of the body or reusing the same spot for subsequent drawings.

Animal sacrifices are the next step, dedicating the entire life energy of a creature rather than just taking part of its vitality in the form of replenishing blood. The power or influence of an animal sacrifice is often larger than a simple bloodletting, yet the magnitude of this influence is not strictly based upon the size of the creature sacrificed. Different faiths, churches and guilds traditionally have favoured animals which they consider suitable for the entreated entity. Numbers can make a difference but individuals rarely offer more than matched pairs of beasts. Greater sacrifices are reserved for rituals and celebrations of city wide or national importance.

Human sacrifices are the ultimate offering, the life of a sapient providing the greatest effect. In ancient times the sacrifice of one or two humans was sufficient to divert a calamity or ward misfortune for a year. Yet the type of victim the supernatural entity requires can be quite stringent. A god of war may demand that only warriors captured in battle can be sacrificed to him, whereas a river spirit might require a willing maiden as a yearly 'bride'.

In many cultures the souls of sacrificial victims become loyal servants of the deity or are granted access to a privileged heaven or afterlife reserved for the most holy. Diabolic sacrifices have less savoury endings, souls being consumed for their power by the demonic entities of the underworld.

Sacrificial Methods in *Legend*

In the following three chapters alternative versions of the core *Legend* magic systems are provided. Each one has been reworked so that it utilises the life force provided by blood and sacrifice to power their supernatural effects, rather than Magic Points naturally produced by Characteristic POW. These new methods are, to a certain extent, interchangeable between the different types of magical tradition but care must be taken to ensure game balance is preserved.

The primary danger in reaping Magic Points from alternate sources is that the magical strength of a thaumaturgist is no longer necessarily limited to their Characteristics. In certain situations a character with unlimited access to blood or sacrifices will have the *potential* to become extremely powerful, whereas conversely no access to such sources can render them completely impotent.

A range of sacrificial methods are presented here to save replication through the book. Although they can be flexibly applied to the many magic systems; depending on the setting, some methods are more suited to one type of magic over another.

Sacrificial techniques need not be limited to the overarching categories of high magic. Individual churches and guilds could encompass a range of different methods they know and apply to gather their power. However, it is recommended that few organisations or traditions have more than one or two of the following techniques.

Types of Sacrifice

It should be noted that the amount of Magic Points produced from the following methods are not balanced. An attempt has been made to grant more power from personal sacrifices over those of victims and sapient sacrifices than animal ones. However some these techniques are more suited to particular types of magic, for instance Scarification and Cruciation work well with Divine Magic where an ongoing personal sacrifice is expected, thus reducing the overhead of repeatedly recalculating an Adventurer's attributes.

In some settings powerful magic is available to counteract or even heal the types of wounds generated by the following methods. To avoid in-game abuse, it is recommended that any wound or characteristic loss inflicted by sacrifice for the purpose of generating Magic Points is *unable to be healed by magic*. Such injuries must recover naturally.

Alternate Forms of Sacrifice

Whilst the example sacrificial mechanics are offered as *substitutes* for naturally generated Magic Points, some Games Masters may desire to keep the function of Characteristic POW but add an additional cost to spells in terms of spilt blood.

In this circumstance spells are cast normally as per the *Legend Core Rulebook* but each casting also requires the caster to offer a small amount of blood, either their own or from a sacrifice, equal to 1 Hit Point. This can be taken from any location.

Since the offering is so small, the cost is merely symbolic rather than being a significant curtailment to a thaumaturgist's power, although if placed in a critical situation the blood price can add a dramatic element. Like the previous methods of sacrifice, any wound inflicted to cast a spell or perform a shamanistic ability cannot be healed magically but must recover naturally over time.

Scarification

The most powerful sources of magic come from self sacrifice, the giving up of part of the caster's personal life force. Also known as autosacrifice, this method generates magical energy by the infliction of small lesions by the caster upon *himself*, utilising the modest quantities of blood from wound as part of the ritual. Regular use of this method rapidly causes the development of a network of scars, often deliberately arranged to form ceremonial patterns. Some magicians go as far as rubbing substances or inserting small objects into the wounds in order to demonstrate the significance of these disfigurements.

Each lesion temporarily lowers the caster's Characteristic CON by one and generates 1 Magic Point. If the magician reduces his CON to zero he collapses from weakness. Lost points of CON are recovered after a night's rest.

Mutilation

Mutilation is the act of inflicting persistent injuries upon a sapient sacrifice. Casters specialising in this form of power generation typically use slaves, criminals or despised enemies as their victims – destroying or severing body locations to absorb the life-force. They often end up supporting the cripples they create, only keeping them alive until their use as a sacrificial source has been lost.

Not all mutilators necessarily end up performing amputations. In some cultures a willing victim will offer a limb or two to be broken in return for some other consideration – often a spell cast on their behalf.

Mutilation provides 1 Magic Point for each Serious Wound inflicted and 2 Magic Points for each Major Wound. Such injuries can be automatically inflicted on helpless or willing victims.

Although death is often a by-product of such offerings, it is the mutilation which generates the flow of energy not the slaying. For example a helpless slave could be placed under a large stone slab, crushing every location and leaving him terribly crippled, but not necessarily killing him.

Exsanguination

A more dramatic alternative to the modest bloodletting of scarification, exsanguination usually involves the extraction of copious quantities of blood from a sacrificial victim, rather than that of the caster themselves. Draining blood does not strictly inflict physical damage, rather it weakens a victim incurring greater and greater levels of fatigue until they eventually pass unconscious and become comatose. If allowed to bleed out completely the victim will of course die.

Exsanguinations provide one Magic Point for each level of Fatigue incurred on a sapient creature and half that for an animal. An extended table is provided for those wishing to perform exsanguinations.

Recovery from significant blood loss requires one day of rest for each level of fatigue, so sorcerers rarely use their own blood except in dire circumstances.

Level of Fatigue Incurred by Blood Loss

Winded
Tired
Wearied
Exhausted
Debilitated
Unconscious
Comatose
Dead

For Example Xuthoth the sorcerer decides to perform a bloodletting on a young virgin to cast a particularly complex combined spell. The spell requires 6 Magic Points to cast, thus the sorcerer drains a slave girl to the point where she passes into unconsciousness. It will take a week of bed rest and good food before she completely recovers but if her master requires more of her blood before that time there is a chance he may drain her totally, causing her death by blood loss.

Cruciation

Unless the caster is masochistic, willing to perform extreme self-flagellation and the like, most ritualised torture is performed on others. Magical energy is gathered from the painful suffering of a sapient victim; the more extreme the pain inflicted, the greater the amount of power generated.

Torture provides one Magic Point for each point of temporary Characteristic STR lost. If STR is reduced to zero the victim collapses from being overwhelmed with agony. Since the objective is to create pain rather than injury, lost points of STR recover after a night of rest.

Avulsion

The caster reaps the life-force of creatures by ripping free the soul and either tearing it apart or offering it for its magical energy. Spirits too can be consumed in this way, provided they are under the control of the magician.

Each sacrifice of a sapient creature grants a number of points equal to the POW Characteristic of the victim, or half the POW if an animal, enabling large or complex spells be cast.

In some cases the magician might only consume part of the creature's soul, rather than devouring the whole thing at once.

Decrepitation

One source of Life-Energy which can potentially be harvested is that of youth. Magic generated via aging can be a serious disadvantage for sorcerers in situations where they must power spells themselves.

Sacrificing the youth of a human or some other *sapient* creature grants a number of Magic Points equal to the amount of STR, CON or CHA drained.

Since the loss is due to aging, the Characteristics are *permanently* lowered; weakening the victim as they become increasingly geriatric. If one Characteristic is drained to zero the victim dies of old age, ending up as a shrivelled, wizened corpse.

'To summon the demons of darkness has a price. And each time I call upon them, it consumes part of me'

— Prince Koura, The Golden Voyage of Sinbad

Cannibalism

Perhaps one of the most revolting methods of absorbing power, cannibalism requires the eating of a victim's body, or at least the most potent of his vital organs depending on the beliefs of the culture.

Cannibalism provides one Magic Point for each point of Characteristic CON. This is normally shared between those partaking in the ritualised feast.

The manner in which the Magic Points are distributed can be varied between the vital organs however. For example the Aztecs restricted their feasts of human flesh to those nobles of high status but the most valued part, the right thigh was always given to the warrior who had captured the war victim. Hearts and livers in many cultures were traditionally reputed to grant courage or strength if consumed. In these cases the primary organ could contain half the Magic Points of the sacrifice, with the remainder split evenly across the rest of the consumed body parts.

This technique normally entails the death of the sacrifice but some churches or guilds could embrace the slow consumption of a living being one location at a time! In this

circumstance cannibalism should be treated as being similar to mutilation instead, with each location eaten providing three Magic Points due to the physical destruction and ritualistic potency.

Gruesome Menus

Cannibalism can be a very potent subject when incorporated into a game. Although modern society now finds such activities grossly offensive, it was once commonplace amongst many cultures and thus has a firm place in historical campaigns. In fantasy games cannibalism can produce a visceral response in players which can intensify their depth of feeling towards friends or foes, potentially adding an edge of horror in Sword & Sorcery style games.

A number of firsthand accounts exist from explorers of the last few centuries. These can be used to provide a gratuitous description of a cannibalistic event to liven up the ceremony of an evil church, or to test the moral fibre of an Adventurer when being introduced to an unfamiliar alien culture. Do they consume the flesh and be welcomed into the tribe? Or refuse and unforgivably insult the chieftain within whose territory they are in?

'Some of the prisoners were soon dispatched. Their flesh was cut up into small portions, washed with sea-water, wrapped up in plantain-leaves, and roasted under hot stones. Two or three of them were also baked whole, the same as a pig.

The carcass was rubbed over with the juicy substance of the banana-tree, after which it was thrown for a few minutes on the fire. Then, when it was warm, it was scraped with mussel-shells or knives, and then washed. It was next laid on its back, when the cook cut open the throat and drew forth the windpipe and gullet, passed a skewer behind them, and tied a string tight round the latter, afterwards to be divided.

He then cut a circular portion from the belly, from four to six inches in diameter, and drew forth the entrails, separating the attachments either by force or by the use of bamboo. The diaphragm was then divided, and the gullet, windpipe, contents of the chest, stomach and liver, were all drawn away together, along with his bowels. From these, the liver was separated, to be baked with the carcass; the remainder was washed and cooked over hot embers, to be shared out and eaten in the meantime.

The whole inside of the carcass was next filled with hot stones, each wrapped in bread-fruit leaves, and all the apertures were closed up quickly, with plugs of leaves. The carcass was then laid, with the belly downwards, in a hole in the ground lined with hot stones, a fire having previously been made there for that purpose, but prevented from touching them by small branches of the bread-fruit tree. A few other branches were then laid across the back of the carcass, and plenty of banana-leaves strewn, or rather heaped, over the whole; upon which, again, a mound of earth was raised so that no steam could escape. The liver, as aforementioned, was first placed beside the carcass, and sometimes yams also. By these means, the carcass could very well be cooked in about half an hour...'

— William Mariner & Dr. John Martin, An Account of the Natives of Tonga Islands, Hutchinson, 1827

Restrictions on Sacrifice

Since the amount of Magic Points which can be produced from 3rd party sources can potentially escalate out of control, a number of optional restrictions are provided here to help prevent in-game abuse. These suggestions are by no means mandatory; they are merely tools with which a Games Master can tailor the use of sacrificial based magic in his setting.

Some of the options can make a campaign an interesting experience, either provoking some radical social attitudes or by restricting magic to the rarity it is encountered in the Swords & Sorcery genre.

Temporary Duration

The most obvious method of hindering the use of Magic Points gained by sacrifice is to make their duration temporary. Many fantasy tropes utilise the idea of a sacrifice being performed at the climax of a spell, to give it its energy. Yet this is not always the case. Other stories allow a protagonist to perform a great sacrifice prior to undertaking a day long battle or even quests lasting several days, their gathered power slowly used up over the course of their journey.

Therefore duration can be either abstract or concrete, but should clearly delimit what exactly happens to the magical strength if not used immediately. Some suggestions include:
- The sacrifice must be part of the casting of a single specific spell (see Ritualistic Casting below). Any excess Magic Points superfluous to the casting are lost.
- Sacrificial Magic Points remain available for a maximum of one minute, hour or day per point of the sacrificer's POW. At the end of this time any remaining Magic Points vanish.
- As above, but the Magic Points remain available for a maximum of 1 minute, hour or day per 10% of the sacrificer's appropriate magic skill (Piety, Grimoire, and so on).
- Sacrificial Magic Points dissipate at a rate of one per minute, hour or day.
- Magic Points from a sacrifice do not dissipate over time. They remain available until used.

Accumulation Limits

Allowing a thaumaturgist to accumulate a large amount of Magic Points can pose severe problems, especially if they do not dissipate quickly. Much comes down to the genre the campaign is trying to emulate. A low magic world may only permit a sacrificer to hold onto the Magic Points of a single offering at a time, whereas a more magically prevalent world or particularly evil church might be able to accumulate tens or perhaps hundreds of Magic Points after a sequence of sacrifices.

In effect, an accumulation limit is determining the size of a thaumaturgist's battery. Keeping it small restricts magic use to those with a ready supply of sacrificial material. Raising the capacity permits further autonomy from their source of power.

The best way of restricting accumulated power is to utilise a cap based on the sacrificer's Characteristics or skill, representing the limit of their willpower or ability to keep the gathered magical strength ensnared, available for use. Several alternative options follow:
- Magic Points from a sacrifice are not persistent and must be used immediately or lost.
- Any remaining Magic Points from an offering are lost if the caster performs a new sacrifice.

- The total number of accumulated Magic Points may not exceed the caster's POW. If a sacrifice is made which would surpass this value, any excess points are lost.
- As above, but the total number of accumulated Magic Points may not exceed the one tenth of the sacrificer's appropriate magic skill (Piety, Grimoire, and so on).
- There is no limit to the total number of accumulated Magic Points. Suggested for Non-Player Characters only.

Ritualistic Casting

Ritualistic casting limits the versatility of sacrificial Magic Points by tying them directly to a single spell casting. Since the spell involves a sacrifice as part of its invocation it would be reasonable to require that the casting time be extended to incorporate the Exsanguination, Cruciation, Cannibalism or whatever technique is being used to provide the power.

Requiring rituals to gather power restricts magic to carefully prepared situations; limiting its versatility in exchange for making each spell an extra-special occasion. Depending on the setting, this can require hours or even days to complete, in which case it is advisable only for games where magic users are not Adventurers.

The King of Ur summoned his army to the centre of the city. At the foot of the gleaming white ziggurat warriors gathered in their ranks awaiting the blessings to ensure their victory in the forthcoming battle. At the summit of the towering temple to Nammu, the kilted priests intoned an ululating song which had lasted the entire night, during which time the weakly struggling Sumerian captives had been blessed and anointed ready for their sacrifice. As the full moon rose over the horizon, challenging the risen sun, the human victims were slain, their souls granting the god vitality in exchange for invoking his divine strength to infuse the champions of the army. With the ritual complete, the mighty gates of bronze opened and the army of Ur marched out to meet their besiegers...

How long each ritual requires to complete can vary. Some suggested options are:
- The ritual adds a single Combat Action to the normal casting time.
- The ritual multiplies the casting time of the spell or shamanic skill use by a factor of ten.
- The ritual takes one minute, hour or day per Magic Point generated from the sacrifice or offering.
- The ritual takes one minute, hour or day per sacrifice or offering involved in the casting.

Scarcity of Sacrificial Victims

One of the significant limits to magical power is finding enough supplicants or victims to provide it. This can be potentially difficult in societies in which sacrificing is strictly controlled, whether for religious use only or to prevent unauthorised sorcery.

On the other hand, if the only difficulty is having the cash to procure a few dozen herd animals or slaves in the marketplace, the amount of power available might destabilise a campaign. This becomes increasingly true as adventures slowly accumulate wealth and social standing.

To curb gratuitous sacrifices in a culture where animals or people are freely available for purchase, a Games Master can limit the *suitability* of victims to a specific type. For example, an Egyptian priest of Horus may require falcons to sacrifice in his honour, or if wishing to impress the Sun God, he might offer venomous cobras... but only ones he has captured himself by hand to prove his courage. Of course the best restrictive requirement is that the offering must come from the body or soul of the caster himself (see *Personal Provision of Offerings*).

Pedantic requirements for appropriate victims can itself drive scenarios in order to find such creatures or beings. Use the following guidelines as an inspiration for the types of attribute the sacrificial victim needs to possess.

Sacrificial victim must:
• Be an animal of a specific species.
• Be of a particular colour or pattern.
• Be of perfect form and health.
• Be of the caster's own race.
• Be of a particular sex.
• Be of a specific age.
• Be a virgin or conversely a mother.
• Be a member of a particular family or bloodline.
• Be a member of a particular social rank or caste.
• Be a member of an opposing tradition, church or nationality.
• Be captured by the caster himself.

Combining several of these requirements can quickly restrict availability of suitable victims or drive up their price.

Personal Provision of Offerings
The ultimate restriction to magical power, this limitation restricts all offerings to only those that the caster can himself make. It works well in settings where animal or human sacrifice is morally, or perhaps legally, wrong. Forcing all Magic Points to be provided by the thaumaturgist can significantly reduce their effectiveness unless there are ways to store such energy, such as the creation of magical items (see Enchantments page 67)

If combined with an Accumulation Limit and long duration, it permits a thaumaturgist to slowly build up a stock of personal Magic Points which cannot be recuperated in the short term, but must be husbanded carefully. This is a good option for Adventurers who often venture on quests away from their centre of power.

Social Consequences
Social opinion is probably the most interesting aspect of sacrifice, since it can be the foundation of many ethical challenges in a campaign. Although historically many cultures used sacrifice, even of fellow humans, it was by and large rigidly controlled by

religion or law. Such restrictions are imposed to protect members of society from being spontaneously selected as an offering – a fate most wish to avoid. It also gives significance and meaning to the offering, rather than making it a gratuitous ritualised murder.

Yet not all sacrifices, if sapient beings, need be unwilling. Becoming a voluntary offering could provide an elevation in status, at least until the sacrifice occurred, or raising the rank of his family. Voluntary sacrifice could also offer a chance to enter a better afterlife, transcendence to godhood, or simply a way to expiate sins and suffering.

Conversely, a society may have dire attitudes to any sort of ritual offering, forbidding its practice entirely. Common folk are always alert for gory tales or suspicious happenings, thus a man who kills his slaves in unusually cruel ways might be censured by his more humane neighbours, whereas a temple whose slaves disappear on a frequent basis may be regarded with increasing apprehension. Eventually somebody will provoke an investigation, often leading to further deaths and the ultimate hounding of the thaumaturgists by righteously horrified folk seeking their destruction.

A staple of pulp fantasy are dark cults who not only engage in human sacrifice but often do so openly within the society which hosts them, the ruling body unable or unwilling to prevent the culling of those away from their homes after nightfall. Although hated and feared, few of the local populace dare to rise up against their oppressors because of their power and ability to intimidate the authorities. On the other hand, a culture such as Melniboné or Pang Tang in the Young Kingdoms, explicitly accepts sacrifice to summon demons, using the countless slaves available in their cities to fuel sorcery. Nobody, at least no *Melnibonéan* would consider it bad to perform such deeds.

If cultural restrictions are imposed on thaumaturgists, they often act illegally or immorally to obtain suitable victims for their magic. This can be a challenge for Adventurers who may find it difficult to accept the morality of the culture they find themselves within or bind themselves under the short-sighted constraints of social conformity.

A number of consequences are offered for the purposes of reducing excessive sacrifices but these can be used as scenario seeds in their own right.
- Performing an animal sacrifice is punishable by flogging or some similar fate.
- Performing animal sacrifices is acceptable but human sacrifice is punishable by death.
- Performing sacrifices lowers the caster's social status to a member of a despised caste.
- Performing sacrifices renders the caster to a state of 'uncleanliness' or 'corruption' which must be purified by some exorbitant ritual before they can rejoin polite society.
- Performing sacrifices grants a fearful reputation which causes all to withdraw from the presence of the caster, preventing normal conversation, purchasing of goods and so on.
- Performing sacrifices thereafter forbids the caster from entering (or perhaps leaving) specific locations – a temple, palace or even a city.
- Performing sacrifices places the caster under constant supervision by the local ruler or authorities, so that armed troops conspicuously follow them around.

Blood Miracles

The summit of the steep sided step pyramid was resplendent with brightly painted frescoes and priests in feathered headdresses wearing golden turquoise jewellery. Droning chants and the sweet smells of perfumed incense wafted down from the holy platform, its pinnacle reaching to the heavens – straining to be closer to the gods. Beneath the lofting fragrance was hidden the faint, slightly acrid aroma of charred meat, burnt victims whose caked lifeblood had once ran in rivulets down the top dozen steps.

Thorn-in-Paw escorted by acolytes of Huitzilopochtli, God of Warfare, ceremoniously approached the steps dressed in fine regalia woven specially for the rite; for these brief moments a near deity himself. Though his knees trembled at the forthcoming trial, he hid his fear. He completed a final blessing on a group of assembled children, hearing dimly in the background the shouts of supplicants who wished him to carry their petitions to the ear of the Lord of the Midday Sun, kissing the ground of his path.

As he climbed the precipitous steps, proud Eagle Warriors nodded their heads in his honour – he who had once been a Jaguar Knight of high status, but had been captured in battle. Now Thorn-in-Paw, if he did not shame himself with cowardliness, would become Teomicqui the 'God-dead' granted access to the second highest heaven, nigh unto the Sun... forever rejoicing, since the House of the Sun is a place of joy. But that would only happen if he could reach the summit without loosening his bowels.

The warrior focussed on performing the ritual purifications and acquiescence required before he would be permitted to offer himself to mighty Huitzilopochtli. Finally he arrived at the top. Spreading his arms wide he turned to receive the adulation of the gathered population below. They cheered, ecstatic with joy that their sacrificial spokesperson had proven himself a man and would now be a god. Thorn-in-Paw felt the strange dichotomy of similar exultation, aware that he would not have given up his place even though the hardest part was to come. This was a good death, perhaps the best he could have hoped for. His family back in their conquered city would be honoured for his sacrifice and his bones would be blessed relics, stored within the temple for all eternity.

As he turned to face the blood soaked alter, four priests splendid in their iridescent cloaks and bejewelled masks awaited to hold down his body, whilst the fifth would liberate his spirit with an obsidian knife. Far from gazing at him with blood crazed eyes their expressions, what he could see of them, were compassionate – offering him the strength to carry him through this final test. They laid him gently over the rock, soothing his turbulent thoughts with gentle platitudes as if he were a child afraid of the dark.

High above in the centre of the sky, Huitzilopochtli stood awaiting his soul. Thorn-in-Paw stared into the blazing magnificence more to blind himself to the movements of the fifth priest than piety, and tried to recall the messages he was supposed to carry to the great god. He began to hyperventilate as fear started seeping through the cracks in his self control.

Above him the priests began their invocation. 'Life is because of the gods; with their sacrifice they gave us life.... They produce our sustenance... which nourishes life...'

The blade slashed down, timed to perfection on the warrior's intake of breath so that he would not embarrass himself with a scream. In moments the evisceration was complete; heart removed and held out to the rays of the Midday Lord. The crowd prayed in unison, praising the noble sacrifice as he ascended pure and loved into the embrace of their god...

How Sacrificial Divine Magic Works

Divine Magic has a number of essential characteristics separating it from other types of high magic:

Sacrificial Divine Magic relies on forming a relationship with one or more gods. In exchange for donating a deity a daily allotment of Magic Points, the god grants his worshipper access to miraculous powers.

Devoted worshippers learn two skills: the Piety skill, which reflects the strength and depth of the divine relationship, which is used to both gain and regain spells; and Invoke to cast the spell.

Spells offered reflect the powers the god embodies. Most are inextricably linked with one or more spheres of influence that reflect their creation, their nature, and their authority. Divine Miracles are, to some extent, the channelling of forces via the behaviour of the god – meaning that two different gods associated with the same elemental or natural forces may provide very different Divine Spells.

For the purposes of this book the words spell and miracle are used interchangeably for Divine Magic. Miracle does not, in this case, refer to Divine Intervention.

Piety (POW x 2)

Essentially a Piety is a measure of an Adventurer's commitment to a specific god or faith. It is an advanced skill, normally gained by worshipping a divinity or joining a church. The Piety skill is used to determine the potency of any divine miracles invoked by the Adventurer.

The Adventurer gains Piety as an advanced skill at a starting value equal to twice their POW. Like any other skill it can be developed through the spending of Improvement rolls or improving the Characteristics upon which it is based. Piety can also be increased in other ways, as the Piety Improvement table demonstrates. The higher the Piety skill,

the more dedicated the follower. It is not a measure of how much an Adventurer knows about the church or god; but rather the fundamental strength of their belief.

An Adventurer may be initiated to more than one god or church and thus have several concurrent Piety skills, providing they are not antithetical to each other.

Piety Improvement

Circumstance	Piety Improvement
Undertaking a successful supernatural quest for your god or church.	1D10+1
Undertaking an unsuccessful Supernatural Quest for your god or church.	1D6
Undertaking a successful mundane quest for your god or church.	1D4+1
Undertaking an unsuccessful mundane quest for your god or church.	1D2
Emulating the behaviour of your god in extreme circumstances, to your own detriment.	1 point per instance
Ceasing to worship your god or leaving the church.	Piety skill reduced to 0%

These improvements are in addition to any Improvement rolls an Adventurer wants to use for developing the relationship with his god.

As the Piety increases, so does the propensity to act in the way or ways the god or focus of veneration acts. The higher the Piety, the more like the god, or object of veneration, the character becomes. Thus his character, judgements, deeds and actions reflect those of his god, because the character is essentially becoming more and more like his god. This kind of behaviour requires roleplaying for its effectiveness, and Games Masters should watch for situations where the strength of the Piety will assert itself in an Adventurer's actions. Adventurer's can, as their Piety increases, undergo complete personality changes as a result, although the circumstances where this happens are judgement calls for the Games Master.

Invoke (POW+ CHA)

Invoke represents the knowledge of how to worship and petition miracles from a god or religion. Thus Invoke (War God) exists discretely from Invoke (Moon Goddess). The skill is used in two ways: first as a measure of the knowledge the Adventurer has of the myths, aspects, behaviour and so forth, and of the rituals, ceremonies and practices associated with the associate deity or faith. Secondly it is used as the skill roll for invoking any Divine miracles associated with the cult. So, an Adventurer with Invoke (Storm God) 60% has a 60% chance to cast any of the Divine Spells he has gained from his worship of the Storm God.

Pantheistic Piety and Invoke Skills

In some polytheistic settings, especially historical ones, most people rarely devote all of their worship to one or two favourite gods. Instead they venerate an entire pantheon of deities. To reflect this as a series of individual Piety and Invoke skills, one set for each god, becomes punitively expensive in terms of skill points during Adventurer Creation and ongoing Improvement Roll costs.

To solve the problem an Adventurer can develop Piety (Pantheon) and Invoke (Pantheon) skills instead. This allows them to become a member of all the churches of the gods belonging to that collective religion. For example someone who develops the skill Piety (Hinduism) becomes an automatic worshipper of Shiva, Krishna, Rama, Hanuman, Vishnu, Kali, Ganesha and the rest.

In practical terms, this means that a pantheist can distribute his 'pool' of Sacrificial POW, learning spells from any of the gods in his religion. However, to balance this flexibility a general pantheist is limited to only using divine spells of Initiate level; more potent miracles are limited to those priests who dedicate themselves to a deeper relationship with an individual deity.

There is no reason a worshipper seeking a career as a priest of a specific god cannot also establish Piety (Specific God) and Invoke (Specific God) skills in addition to those of their Pantheon, perhaps at a later date reducing the amount of Sacrificial Power dedicated to the collective religion in order to increase the strength of their more specialised church.

Sacrificial Power

Once an Adventurer has gained the Piety skill and has progressed beyond the cult rank of Lay Member, they are permitted to begin praying for the Divine Magic of that faith or god. However, the relationship between the worshipper and his deity is reciprocal, requiring him to sacrifice something of personal worth to demonstrate his devotion. In the Legend Core Rulebook it was the worshipper's own Characteristic POW which was consecrated, allowing the god to harvest the Magic Points generated from the Dedicated POW.

For Divine Magic powered by the spilling of life force, the term has been renamed Sacrificial Power. The value of this attribute is equal to the number of Magic Points he donates to his god each day. It may fluctuate depending on the number and kind of sacrifices made but should not exceed a maximum value based on his cult rank and Characteristic POW.

Lay Member – None
Initiate ¼ of POW
Acolyte half of POW
Priest 3/4 of POW
High Priest All POW

Alternate Cult Rank Limits

Although Characteristic POW is offered as the default method of limiting the divine strength of worshippers, it need not be the only one. Games Masters are encouraged to look at the alternate methods listed under Accumulation Limits in the previous chapter if they wish to grant Divine Magic users more power in their campaign.

Sacrificial Power may be gained using any of the Types of Sacrifice methods suggested in the preceding chapter. However two issues control this link to the gods. Firstly, all the Magic Points must be donated as a single offering. Secondly the effects of the offering only last for a day and a night (or thereabouts), so the link with the god must be daily renewed at a time sacred to that deity.

For example, an Acolyte of a lunar cult might offer five Magic Points at moonrise to renew his pious link with the Moon God. For the rest of the day his Sacrificial Power remains at a value of five, limiting how many spells he can pray for from his god. If for some reason he only donated three Magic Points the following moonrise, his Sacrificial Power would also be reduced, causing him to lose access to two spells. If the acolyte was somehow prevented from praying to the Moon God at lunar dawn, then he would not have any access to the magic of his deity at all.

Due to the idiosyncrasies of the various sacrificial methods, two example techniques of Magic Point generation suited to Mesoamerican cults presented here; the personal bloodletting of Scarification and sacrifices performed by Avulsion. For other campaign settings different sources could be used.

Personal bloodletting requires the worshipper to bleed themselves each day, as a single ritualised offering. Since quite copious amounts of blood are required, as per the rules for Scarification the devotee gains one Magic Point for each point of Characteristic CON damage they inflict upon themselves – by drawing a stingray spine through their tongue for example.

Sacrifices require a worshipper to make ritual animal or human offerings. Animal sacrifices are usually restricted to beasts favoured by that god, usually something large, ferocious or difficult to catch. *Huitzilopochtli* for example requires eagles as his animal sacrifices. Human sacrifices may or may not be deemed acceptable depending on the church and the culture. As per the Avulsion rules, each sacrifice of a human or some other sapient creature grants a number of points equal to the POW Characteristic of the victim; the sacrifice of an individual animal garners half that.

Since the Magic Points gained from the sacrifice might be short lived, such sacrifices are generally performed at the time when the worshipper must make his daily offering to their deity or pantheon. The number of Magic Points donated becomes the value of his Sacrificial Power for that day.

A worshipper may contribute to his Sacrificial Power 'pool' by using a combination of methods. Due to the difficulty and expense of gathering sacrifices however, it is rare for a worshipper who is not established in the priesthood of their local temple to be able to gain regular access to suitable victims. Nothing stops an informal worshipper from making a special purchase or capturing their own in order to request a particular spell from their deity, with the caveat that the miracle will become unavailable once the sacrifices stop.

Since the followers of warrior gods generally need their CON for Hit Points, they often rely on alternate sacrificial methods to bolster their Sacrificial Power, rather than relying on the more reliable technique of Scarification. Games Masters should be aware that this also means that extended adventures away from a temple or shrine can undermine the divine power of a devotee, forcing them to limit their journey to short jaunts or provide for victims to sacrifice as part of the baggage accompanying them.

Such preparations often reinforce settings where city states maintain their own deity but whose faithful inhabitants find it increasingly difficult to call upon its strength if travelling away from the cult centre.

On the eve of a great battle against his city, Thorn-in-Paw, a Jaguar Knight and worshipper of Mixcoatl the God of the Hunt, desires to gain the blessing of his deity. Since he is an acolyte with a POW of 12 his maximum Sacrificial Power is 6 points. However he does not wish to waste his strength giving his own blood on the brink of imminent battle, so spends his yearly allowance to buy six ocelot cubs, which he sacrifices to Mixcoatl. With his Sacrificial Power briefly glutted he prays for the use of six Divine Magic spells which Mixcoatl readily grants. Despite the potency of the miracles Thorn-in-Paw fatefully falls to the club of a rival Aztec and is captured. Since he makes no daily bloodletting and cannot repeat the animal sacrifice, he does not recover access to the miracles the following day and is taken to the Aztec capital for future sacrifice.

No guidance is provided here for the material costs of animal sacrifices. Such things depend on the ecology and economy of the campaign setting, in addition to the power balance the Games Master wishes to maintain. Cheap animal sacrifices will lead to Adventurers always maintaining their Sacrificial Power to its maximum value, whereas expensive sacrifices will restrict Divine Magic use unless they are willing to lower their Hit Points in exchange.

A worshipper can lose their access to Divine Magic or cause extended duration spells to fail if they allow their bloodletting and sacrifices to lapse. This does not harm their Piety with that god, merely prevents them from using its miracles.

Meanwhile Eyes-of-Fire the High Priest of Huitzilopochtli, God of Battle and the Midday Sun, is a lean old man, physically frail but wields horrifically awesome magic. He may gather a Sacrificial Power of up to his POW of 17. However, since his CON is only 12, he may only maintain up to 11 points by daily bloodletting, a ritual which makes him appear chronically sallow and wasted. The remaining 6 points are bolstered by regular sacrifices

of eagles which are brought from all over the empire as tribute for the temple. Since the high priest can sustain his Sacrificial Power, primarily via his own bloodletting, he daily regains all his invoked miracles making him a very powerful and dangerous man, despite his fragility.

Praying for Divine Spells

Access to Divine Magic spells must be prayed for by the worshipper before they can be called upon.

Each divine miracle requires the battering of a single point of available *Sacrificial Power* in exchange for invoking the god's power. Continued access to this miracle requires the cost to be repaid daily and may necessitate the worshipper to return to a shrine or temple to recover it. If the flow of Sacrificial Power for that miracle ever ceases the deity will withdraw the right to use it until the manna flows again. In the case of *Persistent* spells, this can result in the ongoing magic being broken, the spell dismissed.

The total number of miracles a worshipper can call upon cannot exceed the current daily value of their Sacrificial Power. Devotees of more than one deity may divide this pool between spells from different churches as they see fit.

Preselected or Ad-hoc Miracles?

Whether a worshipper must preselect those precise miracles he may summon from his god depends on both the setting and Games Master. Either option has benefits and detriments which should be considered carefully.

Preselected miracles add a degree of tactical judgement, forcing the worshipper to predict what sorts of miracles he may need to use during the forthcoming adventure. This discourages overwhelming combat load outs and offers the chance for an Adventurer to outthink a non-player character in a magical exchange or challenge. Additionally preselected miracles encourage social interaction with a cult to pray for specific powers, which becomes more important when dealing with pantheists with access to the spells of many gods.

Ad-hoc miracles permit a great deal of flexibility, allowing a worshipper to call for the right spell for the right job which is more fitting for a magic system supposed to represent the god channelling a miracle via his faithful. However, this can backfire if an offensively orientated Adventurer simply uses all of their available miracles to call for spells to obliterate the enemy. Whilst not strictly wrong, Games Masters finding this a problem are encouraged to stagger encounters in several waves to discourage application of such overwhelming force.

High Priest Eyes-of-Fire normally maintains the right to call upon 17 divine miracles, ready to be unleashed on enemies of his cult. However, due to chronic overhunting, the supply of eagles to the Pyramid of Huitzilopochtli has dried up. This means that until he can make animal sacrifices again, his Sacrificial Power is reduced to 11, the level he can maintain due to the copious amounts of his own blood he offers each noon via ritualised scarification. However, since his Sacrificial Power has dropped he is now faced with losing access to a few castings of Sunspear or allowing the Consecration several temples to fail. Grudgingly Eyes-of-Fire ceases to pray for the excessive amounts of offensive miracles he is normally able to request.

Multiple incidences of the same Divine Spell can be granted to a worshipper. For instance, Eyes-of-Fire could pray for five uses of the Sunspear spell, which would cost him five points of his Sacrificial Power.

Casting Divine Magic

Divine miracles do not directly cost any Magic Points when cast, as the caster is channelling the power of their god and is not fuelling the spell through his own, personal, magical reserves.

As a measure of the faith of the worshipper, when a Divine miracle is cast it possesses an inherent Magnitude of one tenth of the caster's Piety skill. Worshippers of the most zealous faith are able to channel so much of their god's power that their spells are exceptionally hard to block or dismiss.

To cast the spell the Adventurer must successfully roll against his Invoke skill. Note the result of the roll.

Critical Success: The miracle is cast successfully but was invoked in such a pleasing way that the deity will permit it to be used again. It is not placed beyond use.

Success: The miracle is cast successfully. The god considers the compact complete and that specific miracle is beyond use.

Failure: The worshipper makes a mistake invoking the miracle and the deity fails to hear their request. However the Adventurer can attempt to invoke it again later.

Fumble: The worshipper fouls up the invocation so badly, that not only does the miracle fail but the deity considers their bargain sundered, and will no longer grant that specific miracle until efforts are made to pacify the god.

Once a miracle has been used it is temporarily removed from use and cannot be channelled again, not until the worshipper has successfully regained the god's ongoing trust in their relationship.

A worshipper can dismiss any Divine Magic spell(s) he has invoked as a single Combat Action.

Casting Time

Unless specifically noted, all Divine Magic only takes a single Combat Action to cast.

Regaining Divine Magic

Depending on their rank within the church or guild, a miracle can be regained upon a successful Piety test, demonstrating that the Adventurer has shown the proper respect to their god and is thus able to channel that deity's power once more through the Divine miracle; providing their Sacrificial Power is able to support it.

- Lay Members – No access to Divine spells.
- Initiates – May test to regain a Divine spell the day after it was used, during their daily devotion of sacrificial power but must be present at a shrine or temple to pray for the spell. It requires a successful Piety test to recover; failure requires that they try again the following day.
- Acolytes – May test to regain a Divine spell the day after it was used, during their daily devotion of sacrificial power; however, only if the test fails must they return to a shrine or temple and recover the spell there.
- Priests – May test to regain a Divine spell an hour after it was used; however, if the test fails they must return to a shrine or temple and recover the spell there.
- High Priests – May test to regain Divine spells an hour after they have been used; failing the roll simply incurs a delay of another hour before they can try again, whereas a fumble means the spell must be recovered at a temple.

Acquiring Divine Magic

Gaining *initial* access to Divine Magic spells not simply a case of joining a church and sacrificing to the venerated god. Each miracle within the church portfolio has an associated myth which must be learned, along with the rituals and propitiations vital to correctly invoke it. Many divine spells are restricted to those of higher church rank, the power of the miracle too dangerous to let loose in the hands of less devoted worshippers.

How each spell is learned depends on the setting. In a high-mythic universe it may necessitate a major quest in order to learn its secrets, whereas in fantasy Mesoamerica the process may entail being closeted with priests for several days, imbibing mind expanding narcotics and performing ritual self-scarification. Whatever the process used, it always costs the worshipper a number of Improvement Rolls to represent the time taken to prepare for the test and be indoctrinated with the new knowledge.

In cultures where sacrifice is commonplace, an additional investment may be required of animal or human victims, depending on the god and church. Such requirements are in lieu of money, granting an opportunity to send Adventurers to locate and capture suitable victims.

Once the existence of a miracle and the method to correctly invoke it has been learned, the worshipper may henceforth request it from their deity as part of sacrificing for Divine Magic.

Minimum Church Rank of Spell	Minimum Temple Requirement	Cost	Prayer Time	Number of Sacrifices, Scars or Tattoos
Initiate	Shrine	1 Improvement Roll	1 day	1
Acolyte	Minor Temple	2 Improvement Rolls	2 days	2
Priest or High Priest	Major Temple	3 Improvement Rolls	3 days	3

The Minimum Church Rank denotes the rank the Adventurer must be within the church to be granted access to that spell. The most powerful Divine Magic is withheld for those who have proven their faith and prowess.

The Minimum Temple Requirement represents the fact that the Adventurer must be at a sufficiently holy site in order to for the god in question to grant the spell to the Adventurer. Such temples will also have experienced Acolytes or Priests that can aid the Adventurer in their religious supplications. Once learned, the Adventurer may need to return to a temple of similar status in order to regain the spell.

The Cost of the spell is how many Improvement Rolls it takes to learn a new Divine spell. Once taught, the miracle is freely accessible to worshipper who devotes points of Sacrificial Power to that deity.

Prayer Time is how long it takes to undergo the trials involved with learning the fundamentals of the new miracle.

Number of Sacrifices, Scars or Tattoos is precisely as stated. All divine spells have commiserate costs in terms of disfigurement or sacrifice to prove themselves worthy of the church knowledge. Personal disfigurements such as tattoos or scarification can be used by others familiar with the church to identify what powers the devotee has mastered.

Depending on the setting, churches may charge a monetary cost for learning Divine Magic, although they sometimes set tests for worshippers to prove themselves worthy of being granted such spells. Unless the god itself takes a personal hand in matters, permission to learn these more secret powers must be sought from the high priests of the church, which could involve suitable gifts to convince more reticent, or greedy, members of the priesthood.

Miracle Descriptions

Every Divine Magic spell is defined by a series of traits describing the spell and how it is used in the game. A description then follows describing the spell's precise effects. By default, the Magnitude of any Divine spell is equal to one tenth of the caster's Pact. Unless specifically stated in its description, Divine Spells take 1 Combat Action to invoke. The other traits used by Divine Magic spells are detailed here.

Area (X): The spell affects all targets within a radius specified in metres.

Duration (X): The spell's effects stay in place for the number of minutes indicated.

Instant: The spell's effects take place instantly. The spell then disappears.

Persistent: The spell is designed to last for an extended time. If no specific period is specified in the text its effects are eternal, provided the caster continues to daily donate Sacrificial Power to the Deity for that miracle. Once cast, the miracle cannot be recovered or released for as long as the spell is maintained.

Ranged: Ranged spells may be cast upon targets up to a maximum distance of the character's POW x 10 in metres.

Rank: The minimum church rank the spell is available to. Churches of gods which specialise or control a particular rune, may offer certain spells to lower ranking church members.

Resist (Evade/Persistence/Resilience): The spell's effects do not take effect automatically. The target may make an Opposed Evade, Persistence or Resilience test (as specified by the spell) in order to avoid the effect of the spell entirely. Note that Resist (Evade) spells require the target to be able to use a Combat Action in order to dodge.

Touch: Touch spells require the Adventurer to actually touch his target for the spell to take effect. The spellcaster must remain in physical contact with the target for the entire casting.

Accursed Aura
Area Special, Persistent, Rank Acolyte

Using the blood of unsanctified sacrifices scattered over an area, this miracle disrupts the flow of magic which enters the zone, dissipating its power. The caster can affect an area with a radius equal to ten times the Magnitude of the spell in metres.

Within this region all magic, even that of the caster, is suppressed by the Magnitude of the miracle. Any encroaching spell whose Magnitude is reduced to zero is rendered inactive until the target of its effect leaves the area. Casting spells within the region with equal or less Magnitude automatically fail.

Grasping-Coyote has journeyed to the long forbidden temple crypts of Tezcatlipoca, searching for the tomb of a high priest rumoured to have been interred with a staff possessing the power to cause death from afar. Although not a devout worshipper of the gods, Grasping-Coyote is an accomplished thief with much Common Magic at his command and an enchanted feathered cloak which provides Protection 6. Casting Detect Undead he enters the catacombs. Fatefully the tomb is warded by a Magnitude 6 Accursed Aura, rendering all his spells inactive. Thus he is taken by complete surprise when the skeletal guardians attack, easily ripping him apart without the aid of his cloak's magic.

Anaemia
Instant, Ranged, Rank Initiate, Resist (Resilience)

This miracle causes blood within a creature to be thinned, weakening them significantly. If not resisted, the spell will reduce the target's Fatigue level as per Exsanguination on page 10. The victim suffers the loss of one level per two points of the miracle's

Magnitude. At the conclusion of the miracle the victim's fatigue level recovers to its previous value, assuming the spell was not fatal.

Bless Sacrifice
Duration 15, Rank Initiate, Touch

Used to ensure the sacrifice reaches a deserving afterlife, this miracle guarantees the victim enters paradise or at least a very high level of heaven, depending on the religion. Whilst this helps encourage some people to offer themselves as willing victims, the primary purpose of the miracle is to prevent angry, possibly coerced victims (be they animals or sapient beings) returning from death as vengeful spirits.

Bloodbath
Duration 15, Rank Acolyte, Resist (Persistence), Touch

The victim of this spell is overcome with a suicidal bloodlust, causing him to try and spill as much blood as possible, bolstered by tremendous stamina and combat ability. Unfortunately the recipient of the miracle cannot discern friend from foe and will butcher everything in their path. Unwilling targets receive a chance to resist.

For the spell's duration the target gains the following benefits:
- His Close Combat skills are increased by half again.
- His Damage Modifier increased by two steps.
- He heals 1 Hit Point in every location for each round unless the location suffers a Major Wound.
- He automatically succeeds any opposed or unopposed Resilience or Fatigue test... although a Major wound will still incapacitate him.

However, in return the subject may not Parry, Evade or cast any magic while under the influence of the miracle.

At the conclusion of the miracle the recipient immediately drops unconscious. If he survives, on awakening the recipient has no memory of his divinely inspired rage, although he might wonder at the blood splatters and any wounds he may be suffering from. Bloodbath may not be combined with any Combat Skill improving magic.

Blood Beast
Duration 15, Rank Acolyte, Touch

This spell creates a magical creature from the blood of sacrifices, which duplicates the appearance and skills of an animal that is sacred to his church or faith. Since the creature is made from liquid blood, it has no natural Armour Points but is immune to non-magical damage as weapons pass straight through its body. Conversely the blood beast can solidify parts of itself at will, enabling it to attack. The beast remains under the control of the caster at all times.

It requires the blood of approximately 13 similarly sized sacrifices to form a single blood beast. The Characteristic scores of the creature are average values for an animal of that type but gain a bonus to each physical Characteristic of +1 per point of Magnitude. On receiving a Major Wound the entire beast collapses into the pool of blood from which it was formed.

Blood Beasts are terrible foes against those who have little magic at their disposal. They are tireless and can flow through the tiniest crack or hole to reach people who bar themselves into what they consider secure hiding places.

Blood Brother
Duration 15, Rank Initiate, Touch

This miracle requires two or more individuals to receive the spell during the same group casting, either using it upon themselves or receiving the miracle from another. When coordinated all the recipients are bound together as blood brothers, sharing their life force.

If one participant is killed, the surviving blood brothers share his remaining vitality, each one gaining 1 Hit Point to every location. This not only raises the maximum HP of a location but also heals a single point of damage in the process too.

This can potentially decrease a wound level from Major to Serious allowing a blood brother to resume combat, albeit possibly missing a limb, or negate the effects of a Serious Wound completely.

These bonus Hit Points stack. Thus the last survivor of a band of six warriors bound together as blood brothers will have five extra Hit Points on each location, making him a serious threat. The maximum number of brothers who can be bound together in the same ritual cannot exceed the Magnitude of the most powerful Blood Brother miracle used in the group casting.

Blood Covenant
Duration 15, Rank Acolyte, Touch

Similar to the Blood Brother miracle, this miracle requires two or more participants to each receive the Blood Covenant spell in a coordinated casting. The spell allows all the participants to share their experiences, pooling their knowledge together.

Whilst the spell continues all the participants may draw upon the *highest* appropriate skill value available in their group. Thus a band of temple guards joined under a Blood Covenant miracle would fight using the Combat skill of their captain who has the highest value. When a member of the covenant dies, his knowledge is removed from the group.

The maximum number of members that can be bound together in the same covenant cannot exceed the Magnitude of the most powerful incidence of this miracle used in the coordinated casting.

Bloody Minded
Duration 15, Rank Initiate, Ranged, Resist (Persistence)

Used by worshippers facing overwhelming odds or terrifying challenges, this miracle protects the recipient by rendering them immune to any natural mental or emotional manipulation. Magical attacks which generate the same effect, such as fear, fanaticism, domination and the like, must exceed the Magnitude of the miracle to stand a chance of affecting the target.

The downside of the spell is that the recipient becomes fixated on the personal opinions and objectives he held prior to its invocation; often placing him at risk, being unable to take advantage of a change in the circumstances.

Thorn-in-Paw and his associate Jaguar Knights are pursuing some enemies back to their mountain city when they reach a rope bridge strung high above a raging river. The swinging footbridge is only wide enough for a single man to traverse, making it a perfect place to hold up invaders. However, the enemy city lies just beyond and Thorn-in-Paw is determined to rush over the bridge, then cut everyone down before the defenders can cut the vines. Seeing a congregation of the surviving enemy priests gathered at the far end, Thorn-in-Paw invokes the Jaguar Knight's miracles of True Club and Bloody Minded, then runs across the narrow death trap. Providentially for the warrior, the Magnitude of his Bloody Minded miracle is more potent than the Fear and Madness spells the low ranking Initiates throw at him. Unfortunately for both the priests and Thorn-in-Paw, he ignores their offers of an unconditional surrender, butchering them all to the last and thus missing the chance to seize the city with no further loss of life.

Boil Blood

Instant, Ranged, Rank Acolyte, Resist (Resilience)

This dreadful spell induces the blood of a single target to begin boiling within their body, literally causing them to cook from the inside or even blow limbs off! If the target fails to resist, his blood will superheat, inflicting 2D6 damage per Hit Location (roll separately for each location). Armour points are not effective against this damage and any location which suffers a Major Wound and fails its Resilience test is blown apart.

Coagulate

Area Special, Duration 15, Rank Initiate

Through this spell the caster prevents people from suffering the effects of severe bleeding. Anyone within a radius equal to the Magnitude of the spell in metres is immune to the Bleed combat manoeuvre and no Exsanguinations or Scarification can be performed.

Haemoptysis

Persistent, Ranged, Rank Initiate, Resist (Resilience)

A slow and painful way to die, Haemoptysis is generally used as a curse or punishment rather a combat orientated spell. The spell lasts a number of hours equal to the Magnitude of the miracle. If the target of the spell fails to resist they begin to develop a cough, which quickly deteriorates into wracking spasms where they cough up blood. At the end of each hour, the victim must make an unopposed Resilience roll and depending on the success level, suffer the following:

- If the roll is a critical success, the victim takes no damage that hour.
- If the roll is successful, the victim sustains 1D3 points of damage to the Chest that hour.
- If the roll fails, the victim sustains 1D6 points of damage to the Chest that hour.
- If the roll is fumbled, the victim dies from rupturing their lungs.

This spell is often enchanted into powders or salves which are placed on temple finery, so as to discourage theft. Those who realise what they have contracted either seek out a cult offering a cure for the magical disease or return to the temple with the stolen object, begging for forgiveness and premature cessation of the curse.

Heart Seizure

Instant, Ranged, Rank Priest/High Priest, Resist (Resilience)

Another dire spell known to the darkest gods, targets who fail to resist this miracle suffer a fatal heart attack and die instantly. If the resistance roll succeeds, the target still suffers a number of Hit Points damage equal to 1D6 + Magnitude of the spell directly to the location where their heart is contained, normally the chest for humanoids. Creatures without hearts are immune to this miracle.

Induce Vampirism
Persistent, Ranged, Rank Initiate, Resist (Persistence)

Rather than turn the target into some form of undead creature, failing to resist this spell actually induces a victim to develop an overpowering thirst for fresh blood.

This curse lasts for one day per Magnitude of the miracle, during which time the victim cannot stomach food or drink of any kind save for blood. Attempting to force down their usual fare causes them to retch and vomit. Each day the target must completely drain the blood from a creature (or combination of creatures) of equivalent size or loose 1D6 points of Characteristic STR and CON from hunger and thirst.

Whilst regarded as an evil curse by many faiths, it is sometimes applied as a method of punishment or execution. Other uses are to spread horror amongst enemy armies or cities under siege.

Preserve Blood
Persistent, Rank Priest/High Priest

To overcome the difficulties of garnering Sacrificial Power away from the church centres of temples and cities, Preserve Blood enables blood gathered via Sacrificial Methods (see page 8) to be preserved.

The spell allows a number of Magic Points equal to its Magnitude to be stored in the blood generated as part of the sacrifice to remain potent whilst the miracle in maintained. The spell requires the blood to be carried around in a single vessel, such as a large jar.

Propitiate
Area Special, Persistent, Rank Priest/High Priest

Cast over a wide area, Propitiate affects a number of square kilometres equal to the Magnitude of the miracle. It guarantees protection against the effects of natural disasters such as bad weather or earthquakes and magically induced ones of equal or lesser Magnitude. The miracle continues until the priest terminates it.

'They have a most horrid and abominable custom which truly ought to be punished and which until now we have seen in no other part, and this is that, whenever they wish to ask something of the idols, in order that their plea may find more acceptance, they take many girls and boys and even adults, and in the presence of these idols they open their chests while they are still alive and take out their hearts and entrails and burn them before the idols, offering the smoke as sacrifice. Some of us have seen this, and they say it is the most terrible and frightful thing they have ever witnessed.'

— Hernán Cortés

Purify Blood
Instant, Rank Acolyte, Touch

The worshipper can purify the blood of the recipient, removing the effects of any mundane disease or poison afflicting the target; and magical ones whose potency is less than the Piety% of the caster.

Although the miracle is of great value against the ravages of sickness or the bite of venomous creatures, it is often used by members of the priesthood themselves to purge alcohol or narcotics from their own system.

Rain of Blood
Area Special, Duration 15, Rank Acolyte

This Spell grants the caster the ability to bring a rain of blood from a clear sky. For the duration of the spell blood falls in an area whose diameter equals the Magnitude of the spell in kilometres. The blood cannot cause severe flooding but will poison fields and kill crops unless the spell is countered by a Bless Crops miracle of equal or higher Magnitude. People caught in the downpour will suffer great fear or superstition and unstable societies are likely to believe the rain portends a great disaster or a sign that it is time for an uprising.

River of Blood
Area Special, Duration 15, Rank Acolyte, Resist (Resilience)

This spell turns a stretch of river into flowing blood for a short period of time. Fish and other aquatic creatures which fail to resist the spell begin to suffer the effects of drowning. Amphibians able to escape the viscous fluid are unaffected and herbivores will flee river bank areas. Boats traversing the flow are slowed by one metre per two points of Magnitude. All in all, fear is widespread. If maintained for an extended period this spell will kill all life in the river except for pestilent swarms of blood sucking insects. The miracle affects a stretch of river equal in length to the Magnitude of the spell in kilometres and one tenth that value in breadth.

Sense Blood
Duration 15, Rank Initiate

The caster senses blood, fresh or old, using a combination of divinely augmented smell, taste and even hearing the beat of living hearts. It also permits the caster to identify the species from which the blood originated but not specific individuals.

Sense Blood detects all sources of blood within a radius equal to its Magnitude, even those still contained within a body. It prevents the user from being ambushed, providing the attack is not missile oriented from outside the reach of the miracle. Additionally it makes tracking a wounded creature an automatic success, until the hunted victim crosses a large body of water or its injury is properly treated.

Substitute Victim
Duration 15, Rank Initiate, Ranged, Resist (Persistence), Touch

This spell dedicates a sacrificial victim, making them the recipient of any spell directed at the caster or his equipment. The miracle has a *casting* range of touch but the effect of any magic thrown upon the caster has its effects translated onto the victim instead, providing they remain within range. It does not have any effect on spells that are already affecting the caster. The ability to divert spells depends on the relative Magnitude of both itself and the incoming spell – see the Transfer Results table for more details. The resistance roll for translated spell effects is made by the victim and not the caster.

Transfer Results

Incoming Spell's Magnitude is. . .	Effect
Equal to or weaker than the miracle's	Incoming spell effects transferred and Substitute Victim remains.
1 or more points stronger than the miracle's	Substitute Victim eliminated and incoming spell takes effect on the caster.

If this spell is used upon an unwilling target, they are entitled to resist the Sacrificial Victim. The target need not be a sapient being. Animals of at least equal SIZ to the caster may be used instead. If the victim dies the spell immediately ceases.

Transfer Injury
Duration 15, Rank Initiate, Ranged, Resist (Resilience), Touch

Similar to the Substitute Victim spell, this miracle dedicates a sacrificial victim, making them the recipient of any wound the caster receives. The miracle has a *casting* range of touch but injuries are transferred, providing the victim remains within range. It does not have any effect on existing wounds already afflicting the caster.

The size of wounds which can be redirected is limited by the Magnitude of the miracle. For instance a caster with a Piety of 64% can transfer *wounds* of up to seven Hit Points of damage. Injuries larger than this are not affected by the spell.

If used upon an unwilling target, they are entitled to resist the spell. The target need not be a sapient being. Animals of at least equal SIZ to the caster may be used instead. If the victim dies the miracle immediately ceases.

Vampiric Touch
Instant, Rank Acolyte, Resist (Resilience), Touch

This powerful spell heals the worshipper by draining the vitality of the target. If not resisted, the victim loses a number of Hit Points from each location to heal any damage currently suffered by the concurrent locations of the caster.

The maximum number of Hit Points which may be transferred (per location) is equal to the Magnitude of the miracle. However, the victim cannot lose any more points than would take his own equivalent location down to a Major Wound.

Sender-to-Oblivion, a high ranking priest of Mictlantecuhtli, is attacked by assassins sent by his rival for the position of High Lord of the Temple. The waylaid priest manages to cut down his first assailant with his jade knife, but the second leaps forwards and impales Sender-to-Oblivion in the gut, inflicting 6 Hit Points damage – a serious wound – forcing the devoted Death God worshipper make an opposed test of his Resilience which he succeeds. As the remaining assassin removes his weapon, Sender-to-Oblivion reaches out to touch his foe's hand and casts Vampiric Touch. Instantly the injury in the priest's stomach seals up, whilst an identical one opens in the abdomen of the assailant, who fails to resist his own Serious Wound. The assassin collapses screaming and is quickly incapacitated, ready to be interrogated in order to discover who send the man and why...

Vampiric Touch will even heal maimed or reattach severed locations if cast within an hour of receiving the Major Wound. Beyond this period a Regrow Limb spell is required.

Ward Damage
Duration 15, Rank Initiate, Touch

This spell requires the target to strip down to their skin, as the miracle automatically fails if invoked on someone wearing anything more than undergarments. The caster then incises small cuts over the body, daubing the trickles of fresh blood in patterns, swirls and sigils over the recipient as part of casting the spell.

In return for suffering a single Hit Point of damage to every location, these bloody wards protect the recipient from physical harm; granting them a number of Armour Points equal to *one plus* the miracle's Magnitude versus natural damage such as from weapons, heat and cold. They provide no defence against magic.

Ward Damage cannot be stacked with any other magic or item that provides Armour Points such as Protection, Shield, Damage Resistance and the like. Neither can it be combined with any other Ward spell.

Ward Magic
Duration 15, Rank Initiate, Touch

The second of the Ward spells; this miracle provides a powerful defence against hostile magic. Like Ward Damage it requires the recipient to strip down to their undergarments then be incised with small cuts over the body, daubing the blood produced into ritualistic runes and symbols over their entire body as part of casting the spell.

In return for suffering a single Hit Point of damage to every location, these bloody wards protect the recipient from physical harm; granting them barrier against hostile magic with a Magnitude less than or equal to *one plus* the miracle's Magnitude. In this circumstance

hostile implies a spell which has the Resist trait. The wards still allow beneficial magic through, such as healing spells or useful augmentation spells from other casters.

Ward Magic cannot be stacked with any other spell that provides magic protection, such as Absorption, Reflection, Shield or Common Magic and Sorcery spells which perform the same action. Neither can it be combined with any other Ward spell.

Ward Spirit
Duration 15, Rank Initiate, Touch

Similar to the other Ward spells, this miracle is a powerful way of preventing the malign influences of spirits upon his person.

In exchange for being incised with small cuts over the body which inflict a single Hit Point of damage to every location, then having sigils drawn upon their skin using the dribbles of fresh blood, these patterns drive away spirits both in the material world and upon the spirit plane.

Ward Spirit provides complete protection from any contact with a spirit or its manifestations up to a number of interactions equal to twice the Magnitude of the Miracle.

BLOOD SORCERY

It had taken the mighty warrior several days to negotiate the savage filled foothills. Deep within the jagged peaks was rumoured to be a remote fortress high on the un-scalable flanks of Mount Yamshi, an isolated monastery where the Stygian Seers practiced their dark sorceries.

Despite the dire warnings of the impoverished hillmen, Kharim had pushed on. He was not the pampered product of civilised man, nor some superstitious primitive, but an iron willed fighter who easily ignored the fearful tales of poisonous clouds that sucked the life of those who ventured to near the accursed place, or black robed shadows riding flying rugs across the night sky.

The climb of Mount Yamshi proved to be merely difficult, not impossible. No obvious path seemed to lead up to the towering summit, but the indomitable warrior barely considered the implications. He had been raised in mountainous lands and knew of the actions of earthquakes and ice, which crumbled away steps over years. If a trail existed Kharim lacked the time to search for it, desiring to rescue the dancing girl before her kidnappers performed whatever foul rites they planned.

With a last grunt of relief, the warrior pulled himself over the crenulated wall which topped the final three hundred feet of almost sheer cliff. He lay sprawled between two gargoyles, carved in likeness of some diabolic creature Kharim had never dreamed of, even in his worst nightmares. Resting a moment to recover his strength he crept into the labyrinthine monastery, following the chanting he'd heard wafting down the mountainside.

The passages were sinister and shadowy, sporadically lit by small oil filled lamps of grotesque appearance, each one placed into some random niche in the cyclopean masonry of the walls. Small bowls of blood lay before each light, sitting amid dark brown stains where countless offerings had over spilled to run down the dark stone.

Using his razor sharp hearing Kharim negotiated corridor and stair, following the ominous chanting whose ancient unfathomable tongue boded ill deeds. Eventually he found himself on a balcony overlooking a modest hall. In the centre was the dancing girl he'd pursued, lying bound to a green jade alter carved with nauseating images of some tentacled horror. Before the barely clothed victim stood an ascetic looking man robed in midnight black trimmed with silver. Ranged around him were other similarly garbed acolytes, wizened men all, sitting cross-legged in a circle and chanting the evil dirge.

Kharim watched aghast as the leader of the ritual intoned, gesturing towards the prone body. Where he pointed thin lines appeared on the milky white skin of the girl, turning into trickles, then rivulets of crimson and she began to writhe and scream.

With a roar Kharim threw himself over the stone railing, landing on his feet with pantherish grace, sword drawn. The sorcerer turned his head, eyebrow rising in sardonic expectation. With a talon-like fingernail he opened a wound across his palm and whipped his hand towards the charging swordsman, scattering droplets of blood across Khann's body. To the warrior's horror his limbs began to stiffen, forcing him to slow and collapse to his knees.

'Think you to take us by surprise, fool? Have men so quickly forgotten the strength of the Stygian Seers, that you come armed against us? I think I shall take your heart, interloper!'

Reaching out with his withered hand the sorcerer barked a single foul word. The blood flowing from the bound girl desiccated in the blink of an eye, then scattered before the unholy wind which momentarily blew through the chamber, causing the dim flames of the oil lamps to gutter. Kharim gurgled in agony as his ribs began to snap and the flesh of his chest tore open. Something dark shot across the chamber, to land wetly in the Seer's grasp, still pulsating. The sorcery of the stygian master was potent indeed...

Sorcery is the archetypal magic of pulp fantasy, using blood and sacrifice to power its arcane strength. Such imagery can be found throughout the Sword & Sorcery genre novels of Robert E. Howard, Clark Ashton Smith, Lin Carter, Fritz Leiber, Michael Moorcock and many others.

The following Sorcery rules intertwine the uses of blood or life-force to generate its effects. Whilst liberating a sorcerer from the limitations of Magic Points, these new mechanics can make well prepared sorcerers extraordinarily powerful. Thus these rules are aimed more for protagonists than Adventurers but can be used for Adventurers providing the Games Master can limit the sorcerer's access to living sacrifices.

How Sacrificial Sorcery Works

Sorcery is differentiated from other types of high magic by the mechanisms it utilises to manipulate the spell effects. Its fundamental aspects are:

- Sacrificial Sorcery uses two skills: the Grimoire skill, which portrays both the caster's knowledge of a particular school of magic and the intensity of his spell effects; and Manipulation which modifies the application of sorcery by permitting the caster to change the range, duration, targets, magnitude and combination of his spell or spells.
- This form of Sorcery is not cast using personal Magic Points. The energy to power the sorcery comes from spilling of blood or slaying of sacrificial victims as described in Chapter 2. Multiple options are presented for the reaping of life-force, which have implications on how frequently and easy casting sorcery becomes.
- For the purposes of Sorcery the word Intensity is used to denote the scale of its effect.

Grimoire (INT x2)

The Grimoire skill reflects the sorcerer's knowledge and portfolio of spells learned from a *specific* book, school or ancient master. It is this skill which a sorcerer rolls against to see if they cast a spell correctly. The skill also limits the effect of the spell; it's *Intensity* which is one tenth of the caster's Grimoire skill.

A sorcerer can study more than one source of spells and thus possess many Grimoire skills.

Despite the name of the skill, this sorcerous knowledge need not be contained within the pages of a tome. It can equally be a living aural tradition passed on by rote, held within a place of dreaming, or limited to the crystallised memory of a single, petrified teacher of its secrets.

Therefore sorcerers are forced to learn spells directly from the source of their education. The complex equations, symbols, incantations and arcane gestures consume a great deal of mental capacity. No sorcerer can ever memorise more spells, from one or multiple sources, than he has INT, with each spell occupying one point of the INT Characteristic. A sorcerer with INT 16 could thus keep in his mind up to 16 spells. Casting a spell does not erase it from his mind; but to change which spells he has memorised a sorcerer must spend 1D6 hours expelling an old spell from memory and memorising a new one from the source of his grimoire.

For Example, Xuthoth is a sorcerer of the highly secretive Stygian Seers. As a member of the church he has Grimoire (Stygian Seers) 60% and Grimoire (Dire Codex of Zombos) 45%. His INT is 15. The Master of the Stygian Seers knows more than a dozen dark necromancies which he teaches only to those whose demonstrate proper servitude, whilst the Codex of Zombos has only six. Xuthoth can therefore memorise any combination of spells learned from either source as long as the total number of spells does not exceed 15. To successfully cast those spells taught by the Master of the Stygian Seers he needs to roll 60% or less; and 45% or less to cast those from the Dire Codex of Zombos.

If the same spell is found in one or more grimoires a sorcerer knows, he always casts it at the highest rated Grimoire percentage.

Manipulation (INT+POW)

On their own, Sorcery spells can be quite limited in their scope and intensity. However a sorcerer's true power lies in his ability to extend the fundamental aspects of all spells, enhancing their reach. By default, sorcery spells cast without any manipulation have a Magnitude of 1, a Range of touch, a Duration equal to the caster's POW in minutes and focus upon a single target. However, the Manipulation skill allows a sorcerer to modify the spell's Magnitude, Range, Duration, Targets, and even Combine several spells into a single casting.

Manipulation is a single skill which can be applied to all known sorcery spells; a separate Manipulation skill per Grimoire is not necessary.

The Manipulation skill is never rolled against when casting a spell. Instead, each 10% or fraction thereof of the Manipulation skill allows 1 point of Manipulation to be assigned to a single sorcery spell component. Sorcerers therefore need to specify at the moment of casting how the points of their Manipulation skill will be used. *For example, Xuthoth with Manipulation 50% could place 3 points into manipulating Duration and 2 into manipulating Range; or 5 into a single component.*

Manipulation of the following components is possible:

- Magnitude: Used to penetrate magical defences or resist magical attacks.
- Range: Used to increase the distance a spell can be cast over.
- Duration: Used to extend the period of time the spell's effects last.
- Targets: Used to increase the number of targets affected by the spell.
- Combine: Used to fuse together several spells into a single casting.

The Sorcery Manipulation Table shows what effect each point of Manipulation has on the different spell components. It takes no Manipulation to cast a Sorcery spell in its basic format (as indicated by the 'None' row).

Sorcery Manipulation Table

Points of Manipulation	Magnitude	Range	Duration (minutes)	Targets	Combine
None	1	Touch	POW	1	None
1	2	1m x POW	2xPOW	2	2 Spells
2	3	5m x POW	3xPOW	3	3 Spells
3	4	10m x POW	4xPOW	4	4 Spells
4	5	50m x POW	5xPOW	5	5 Spells
5	6	100m x POW	6xPOW	6	6 Spells
6	7	500m x POW	7xPOW	7	7 Spells
7	8	1km x POW	8xPOW	8	8 Spells
8	9	5km x POW	9xPOW	9	9 Spells
9	10	10km x POW	10xPOW	10	10 Spells
10	11	15km xPOW	11 x POW	11	11 Spells
Each point…	+1 Magnitude	+5km x POW	+1 x POW	+1	+1 Spells

Magnitude

Sorcery spells have a default Magnitude of 1 at no additional Magic Point cost. It costs one Magic Point to augment the Magnitude of a Sorcery spell, regardless of its final intensity.

Manipulating this component allows the sorcerer to increase the Magnitude of a spell. For sorcery spells Magnitude is only used to see if it will overcome magical defences or resist magical attacks. It does *not* modify the Intensity of the spell which is controlled by the Grimoire skill.

Range

Sorcery spells have a default Range of touch, at no additional Magic Point cost. It costs one Magic Point to augment the Range of a sorcery spell, regardless of its final distance.

Manipulating this component allows the sorcerer to increase the Range of a Sorcery spell. Unlike other manipulations the range value does not progress linearly, enabling sorcerers to cast spells over great distances. However since most spells require the target to be under direct observation, a sorcerer often needs other forms of perception or magical aid to cast Sorcery reaching beyond their immediate senses.

Spells cast at a Range of Touch require the sorcerer to make a successful Unarmed attack on a resisting target. To avoid touch spells a recipient must use Evade to dodge the attack, since defending with a Combat Skill will still transfer the magical effect through the parrying weapon or shield.

If Range is augmented beyond touch then the caster automatically strikes his intended target, unless the target is able to dive out of direct observation or flee beyond reach *before* the spell is completed.

Duration
Sorcery spells have a default Duration equal to the POW of the caster in minutes, at no additional Magic Point cost. It costs one Magic Point to augment the Duration of a Sorcery spell, regardless of its final time span.

Manipulating this component allows the sorcerer to increase the Duration of a Sorcery spell. The maximum Duration to which the spell can be increased to is noted in the Sorcery Manipulation table.

Targets
Sorcery spells have a default Target of one person or item, at no additional Magic Point cost. It costs one Magic Point to augment the Targets of a Sorcery spell, regardless of the final number of recipients.

Manipulating this component allows the sorcerer to increase the number of targets of a sorcery spell. The maximum number of targets the spell can affect is noted in the Sorcery Manipulation table. If the spell is cast successfully, the *effect* of the spell is applied multiple times, once for each target included; the spell's Intensity is never divided between them.

Combine
Manipulating this component allows the sorcerer to combine the effects of multiple Sorcery spells in a single casting, so they will affect the target simultaneously. This is the most powerful aspect of Sorcery, as it allows a skilful sorcerer to use his Magic Points judiciously and achieve multiple effects within a short space of time.
- A spell may not be combined with itself – only different spells may be combined.
- If the combined spells come from different grimoires, then the lowest Grimoire skill is used as the base casting chance.
- The spells must all have the same target or targets. A sorcerer cannot combine a Palsy targeting an enemy and a Spell Resistance targeting himself, for instance.

- Any other manipulation effects applied in a combined spellcasting apply to each and every one of the spells involved. Only one Magic Point need be spent per manipulation effect, regardless of the number of spells involved.
- Each additional spell added to a combined spellcasting costs one extra Magic Point *and* reduces the casting chance by 10%.

Life Energy

For sacrificial Sorcery, the Magic Points needed to cast spells are no longer generated by Characteristic POW but instead are harvested from the spilling of blood or draining of life-force. A number of different methods are available to produce these Magic Points, listed under Types of Sacrifice on page 9.

Some of the techniques vary in their efficiency and the amount of Magic Points generated can vary dramatically. How long the Magic Points persist afterwards is also a serious consideration, thus Games Masters should read through the presented options and only select one or two which are fitting and balanced for their campaign. Nothing prevents different cults or schools of sorcery from teaching dissimilar techniques to gather Magic Points. Whilst one sect may favour Decrepitation another may rely on Cruciation instead. This combined with the guidelines on sacrificial restrictions, allows each sorcerous tradition to adopt a unique feel, both mechanistically and morally.

For example, the Stygian Seers are an ancient guild of wizards specialising in black magic. They gather their power by Exsanguination, the spilling of blood – preferably that of others – but can use their own in extremis. The Magic Points gathered must be used immediately to cast a spell; else they dissipate (Temporary Duration). This necessity to spill blood requires that a victim be cut as part of the invocation, adding a single Combat Action to the casting time (Ritualistic Casting). Due to their unceasing need for fresh blood, the guild has become the object of fear and hatred from the scattered settlements within several days travel of their mountaintop fortress, making gathering of new victims troublesome (Social Consequences).

Casting Sorcery

A sorcerer must be able to freely move his hands, be able to intonate the formulae and remain aware of the target of the magic, if any, in order to complete the casting. Whenever a spell is cast, there is always a sight and sound that nearby creatures can detect, be it a flash of light, a crack of thunder or a shimmering in the air. The exact effects are up to the Games Master and player to decide but attempting to invoke a spell subtly permits nearby observers an opposed roll of their Perception versus the casting roll spot the incantation.

Casting a Sorcery spell requires a successful skill test of the Sorcery (Grimoire) skill to which that spell belongs. Note the result of the roll.

Sorcery Game Balance

A number of potential issues with Sorcery arise from generating Magic Points via sacrificial methods.

Firstly there is the problem of healing magic. With almost any injury being capable of being healed via supernatural methods, some of the techniques can be abused, turning them into methods of perpetual energy production. To prevent this type of exploitation, any wounds or loss inflicted via sacrifice are unable to be treated magically. Thus the very act of converting a victim's life-force into Magic Points, curses them so that they can only recover naturally.

Secondly is the potential situation in which wealthy Adventurers purchase multiple animal or human victims as a Magic Point source. This can unbalance a game if not kept under strict control, providing a sorcerer with near unlimited magical energy. The problem however is easily solved by application of the concepts described under Restrictions on Sacrifice on page 14. Examples include increasing the casting time of spells requiring blood or sacrifice so that they are limited to big rituals, akin to those in the Sword & Sorcery genre; or by introducing severe social consequences for performing such deeds. Openly draining slave of his blood to cast a spell might cause a significant outcry, whereas a spate of vanishing beggars which all mysteriously disappear might raise some awkward questions from the authorities.

Of course if access to suitable victims is difficult or social strictures too oppressive, the converse situation might occur; that of sorcery being reduced to a secretive profession. In such a case spells may need to be woven into magical items (see Enchantments on page 67) so that the necessary *preparatory methods* of spell casting can be hidden from disapproving eyes, but the item itself can be used with impunity.

Critical Success: The spell succeeds and costs no Magic Points to cast, irrespective of the amount of manipulation applied to it. Any sacrificial Magic Points accumulated for the casting can be retained to cast a further spell, providing it is initiated before those points dissipate.

Success: The spell is cast successfully.

Failure: The spell does not take effect, and costs the caster a single Magic Point.

Fumble: The spell fails and the sorcerer loses the full Magic Point cost of the spell.

A sorcerer can dismiss any Sorcery spell(s) he has invoked as a single Combat Action. Ceasing to focus attention on a Concentration spell is immediate and not a Combat Action.

Magic Points

Sorcery spells cost 1 Magic Point plus as many Magic Points as the number of Manipulation effects applied to it.

Xuthoth, for example, casting a sorcery spell upon himself with no manipulation uses only a single Magic Point. If he applied three Manipulations it would cost 4 Magic Points (one for the basic spell, plus one point per Manipulation).

Sacrificial Sorcery assumes that these Magic Points are gained via some form of physical bloodletting, torture, sacrifice, aging and so on. See Life Energy on page 45.

Casting Time

Unless affected by the requirement for Ritualistic Casting (see page 15), Sorcery spells take as many Combat Actions to cast as the number of manipulations used to cast them, with a minimum casting time of 1. No other Combat Action may be taken while casting a spell, although the Adventurer may still walk up to his Movement rate while spellcasting.

A spell's effect takes effect at the end of its last casting Combat Action.

Physical and magical attacks on a sorcerer as he casts automatically ruin the spell if he suffers a Major Wound, is immobilised, or is prevented from observing the target. Lesser distractions require successful Persistence tests to maintain concentration on the spell.

Acquiring Sorcery

An Adventurer can learn Sorcery from a multitude of different sources. He may pick up a dusty tome and begin reading its dark secrets. He might search out an organised school, dark cult or ancient hermit that teaches the art of sorcery. He could even discover an ancient artefact and master its secret powers. Each of these sources holds sorcerous knowledge from which he may learn how to cast its magic.

The Grimoire skill represents the magical understanding garnered from a specific book, church, item or master. Possession of the Grimoire skill however, does not guarantee knowledge of the entire body of magic held by the source. Each individual spell must be learned separately at great effort and cost. Often the more potent or dangerous magics are withheld from, or incomprehensible to, those who have yet to prove their dedication or ability.

How a sorcerer learns the knowledge sequestered by his teacher can vary dramatically. A school of sorcery may contain its spell knowledge in the minds of its masters for instance, whereas an ancient codex of sorcery will obviously hold the same information within its pages. Whatever the source, the spell caster must retire into seclusion with the organisation or item in order to study a new spell from it.

In *Legend* there are no specific limitations on the number of spells a school or book might contain. It all depends on the genre and setting you wish to emulate. Whilst a Cosmic Horror game set in Ancient Rome might have but a single spell recorded on a parchment scroll or chiselled into the stone walls of a subterranean necropolis, a high mythic fantasy setting might have a grandiose tome with dozens of spells contained within.

As a general guideline, a Grimoire skill ought to give a sorcerer potential access to about seven spells – some more, others less. This value permits a cult or tome some flexibility whilst restricting its overall power. As ever, Games Masters are free to set this value as they wish in their games.

It requires one week of studying and two Improvement Rolls to learn a specific spell available from the source, after which the sorcerer will then be able to cast that spell using the Grimoire skill to which it belongs.

Restricting Spell Acquisition

The manner and method of acquiring spells is a nebulous area which depends greatly on the Games Master and his campaign setting. Few formalised rules are provided in order to allow the learning of sorcery to be very flexible; however this can cause problems for those who require more stringent guidelines to prevent Adventurers from runaway power accumulation.

Whilst the requirement of Improvement Rolls to master new spells works as a regulator on sorcery development, it lacks a mechanistic method of restricting certain spells from sorcerer Adventurers. The following suggestions provide examples of how to govern their access to more potent, destabilising spells.

Schools, churches or guilds of sorcery by their nature are organisations which restrict progression within their membership. Access to specific spells can be constrained to those who achieve the correct rank.

When Xuthoth was raised to the rank of Apprentice he was permitted to learn the innocuous magics known to the Stygian Seers, such as Mystic Vision and Fly (Carpet). Once he progressed to the level of Adept, proving his skill and loyalty to the church, he was granted the dark spell of Exsanguinate. However this knowledge has merely wetted his thirst for power and he dreams of being raised to Adept and being taught by the Master of the order the dread spell of Extract Heart.

Limiting spell learning from books or artefacts is a more difficult proposition. In this case spell access can be limited by the value of the sorcerer's Grimoire skill. If his skill is insufficiently high, he simply cannot *comprehend* the magical theory or formulae behind its incantation. As his skill progresses however, he will reach a point of epiphany and be able to learn the spell.

In some cases new spells will be withheld until the sorcerer proves his worthiness by performing a quest or task which suits the current teacher(s) or the creator(s) of the item. Although within schools and cults this can rely on social interaction, promoting roleplaying, with artefacts a Games Master needs to flex his imagination a bit more.

A tome of magic for example may possess a guardian spirit which guides and teaches readers, preventing certain pages to be turned until it considers the student ready for the information. On the other hand, the same magical tome might instead require the fresh blood of dangerous supernatural creatures to be spread upon its pages to permit the ink to become visible, with a clue to the next type of creature required at the end of each chapter.

Spell Descriptions

Every Sorcery spell is defined by several traits defining the spell and how it is used in the game. A description then follows describing the spell's precise effects. The traits used by sorcery spells are detailed here.

By default all sorcery spells are binary in effect rather than progressive: they either work or they do not. They also continue to operate for the duration established by the casting. There are no instant, one shot spells, although their effects may ceased at will by the caster. Once a spell has been given a specific target, it cannot then be changed without casting the spell anew.

The strength or scope of the magical effect – its Intensity – is equal to one tenth of the caster's Grimoire skill from which that spell comes.

Autonomous: The spell's effects will remain until its duration ends, without need for concentration.

Skill Limitations to Spells Known

In high fantasy campaigns magical texts and schools of sorcery can be quite prevalent. This can lead to an over incidence of available spells, especially if mages in the setting are prone to recording their own sorcerous knowledge into spell books.

Although sorcerers are restricted to memorising a number of spells up to their INT, they may in fact potentially have access to dozens more. Thus as a further limiter to prevent excessive diversification, Games Masters could confine the total number of spells a sorcerer can learn to one tenth of his *highest* Grimoire skill.

Using this method the sorcerer would have to consider carefully which magic he chooses to incorporate into his mental portfolio, granting each individual caster a unique set of spells.

Concentration: The spell's active effects continue so long as the Adventurer concentrates on it. Once focus is dropped, the spell's effect ceases or remains static until concentration can be resumed. A sorcerer may move or perform non-complex actions without penalty. More stressful situations, such as walking a narrow ledge, engaging in combat, suffering serious injury, or casting another spell immediately require a Persistence roll to maintain focus. By default a sorcerer may only concentrate on a single Concentration spell at any one time, unless two or more are woven together as part of the Combine manipulation.

Resist (Evade/Persistence/Resilience): An offensively cast spell does not take effect automatically. The target may make an Opposed Test of their Evade, Persistence or Resilience skill (as specified by the spell) against the casting roll of the sorcerer, to avoid the effect of the spell entirely. To resist using the Evade skill, the Adventurer must expend a Combat Action.

Note that many of these spells are remarkably powerful and should be considered carefully before inclusion in a campaign.

Abjure Life
Autonomous, Resist (Resilience)

One of the more diabolical and potent of the many Abjure spells, this sorcery has several detrimental side effects. Abjure Life permits the target to forgo every biological process a living creature needs to survive, namely air, food, water, warmth, rest and no longer suffers the effects of Serious Wounds, disease, poison, fatigue or aging. On the down side the recipient is infertile, no longer heals and is incapable of generating Magic Points naturally.

Whilst under the effect of the magic, the recipient fails to detect as a living creature but registers as undead instead. If used offensively the target may attempt to resist. The sorcerer can affect a living target of up to three points of SIZ for every point of Intensity.

Elderly sorcerers who fear death often turn to this spell and cast it as a permanent Enchantment, turning themselves into a lich or mummy. Extended durations grant the recipient a cadaverous appearance, becoming increasingly skeletal if maintained for decades as the body gradually desiccates. Due to this gradual petrifaction, if the enchantment is ever dismissed from a long term recipient, they must make an unopposed Resilience check at a penalty of −5% per decade the spell was maintained; else die from the shock of returning to life in a withered body.

Clone
Autonomous

This spell allows a sorcerer to take a blood or tissue sample and from it grow an identical clone of the original creature. The clone grows at a number of Characteristic points equal to the spell's Intensity each week. Due to the length of time required to grow the identical twin, every clone is treated as an Enchantment (see page 67).

The final clone has the memories and skills of the original up to the point the blood or tissue sample was extracted. On being told of their duplicate or meeting them directly, the clone must succeed in an unopposed Persistence check or become murderously egocentric and attempt to kill off the original. Games Masters may apply bonuses or penalties according to the personality and sapience of the creature.

Unscrupulous sorcerers may keep the clone from ever awakening with full consciousness, retaining it under some form of magical sleep or stasis which only ends with their death. Using the spell in this manner grants a degree of semi-immortality, albeit with the loss of those memories leading to their predecessor's demise.

Dominate Bloodline
Concentration, Resist (Persistence)

As per the Dominate spell in the *Legend Core Rulebook* the sorcerer may attempt to command targets of a specific bloodline. This can be anything from members of the caster's own family to those of royal blood, or Adventurers possessing a particular trait manifest in their blood. The sorcerer can only affect targets a maximum INT of three times the spell's Intensity.

The monastery of Mount Yamshi is assaulted by an army of self-righteous knights seeking the destruction of the Stygian Seers. A few of the valiant warriors survive to reach the inner sanctum where the ancient Xuthoth, still alive after artificially extending his life for several centuries, awaits them. Recognising the family coat of arms upon the commander's shield the sorcerer casts Dominate Bloodline. The pious crusader fails to resist the spell, his will crushed by the iron authority of his hitherto unsuspected great, great grandfather. Chuckling evilly Xuthoth uses his progeny to slay the remaining knights and considers ways to use this opportunity to destroy the sanctimonious faith who dared attack the black cult.

Dominate Undead
Concentration, Resist (Persistence)

As for Dominate Bloodline but affects sapient undead – those possessing their own intellect, whether it be the one they died with or that of a spirit bound to a corpse. Non-independent animated cadavers are immune to the spell.

Draw Blood
Autonomous, Resist (Special)

Allows a sorcerer to draw spilled ichor to a single target where it either fills a vessel or forms a pool. The spell gathers all the blood within 10 times its Intensity in metres from the target, keeping the plasma fluid until the magic expires. Under its influence the spilled blood crawls along the ground or up walls at a rate of one metre per round.

Although the spell is primarily used for the gathering of sacrificial ichor for rituals and the like, it can be potentially dangerous. A sorcerer could direct the blood into

the lungs of a living target for instance. In such cases the target, if unaware or unable to keep ahead of the moving blood, must resist the casting roll using either Evade or Resilience as appropriate, else begin to drown.

Other uses of this spell are mundane by comparison. It can be used to clean the floors in an abattoir or gladiatorial pit. Another cunning application is to extinguish light sources out of reach of the caster. Placed over a small town by a cabal of sorcerers combining their strength, it could be used to feed an entombed vampire.

Enslave (Specific Targets)
Concentration, Resist (Persistence)

A terrifying version of the Dominate spell in the *Legend Core Rulebook* the sorcerer may attempt to command targets of a specific race, species, sex or some other limiting factor. The number of individuals influenced by the spell however is defined by the spell's Intensity. This value can be multiplied by the value of the Targets manipulation if used during the casting. The sorcerer can only affect targets a maximum INT of three times the spell's Intensity. Only those that fail to resist the spell are enslaved.

Enslave Intensity Table

Intensity	Number of Individuals
1	1
2	5
3	10
4	50
5	100
6	500
7	1,000
8	5,000
9	10,000
10	50,000

Several saving graces prevent the caster of this spell from becoming near godlike. First is that a command must be given to either a single individual or the *entire* affected populace. Second is the fact that the sorcerer is completely unaware of what his victims are thinking or doing. On the downside nothing stops the caster from giving a series of commands which must be obeyed contiguously. Suicidal orders or contradictory ones permit the victim another chance to break free from the spell.

The spell only requires Concentration when issuing commands. At other times it is considered Autonomous although the any previously issued prerogatives remain active.

Xuthoth discovers in the crypts of an forgotten ruin the fabled Crown of Serpents. Inscribed on the inner surface is the diabolical spell of Enslave Serpent Folk. After much study and theoretical practice, the sorcerer travels to the far south into the steaming jungles of Vasulia, the ancient home of the now degenerate reptilians. Placing the crown upon his head Xuthoth casts the spell with a

range of 150km, demanding that all the folk assemble at his location. It takes three days before the last of the resentfully subjugated slaves arrives to bow at Xuthoth's feet. He then demands the gathered army of 10,000 serpent folk march north to attack the fat merchants of Khoss. With such loyal troops, albeit enforced, and a near infinite supply of sacrificial victims from which he can draw blood, the sorcerer begins to dream of conquering the entire continent...

Exsanguinate
Concentration, Resist (Resilience)

The spell inflicts horrific injures by rupturing the blood vessels of target's body causing them to either blacken with contusions and bleed from orifices, or experience surgical cuts across their body. If the target fails to resist, every Combat Action the sorcerer can inflict a random location with an amount of damage according to the spell Intensity.

Exsanguinate Damage Table

Intensity	Damage Inflicted
1–2	1D2+1
3–4	1D4+1
5–6	1D6+1
7–8	1D8+1
9–10	1D10+1
11–12	2D6+1
13–14	1D8+1D6+1
15–16	2D8+1
17–18	1D10+1D8+1
19–20	2D10+1

Armour provides no protection but magical defences (such as Countermagic Shield or Spell Resistance) reduce rolled damage by the Magnitude they normally block.

Extract Heart
Concentration, Resist (Resilience)

One of the deadliest magics known to Sorcery, Extract Heart rips the still pumping organ from the victim's chest. The sorcerer can cast the spell on a target with a maximum CON of three times the spell's Intensity. If the target fails to resist, each Combat Action they suffer damage equal to half the Intensity of the spell directly to the chest (ignoring armour). Once the chest is reduced to a Major Wound, the victim's heart tears through his ribs and garb, flying across the intervening distance to land in the sorcerer's hand.

Haemophilia

Autonomous, Resist (Resilience)

The sorcerer causes a victim's blood to cease clotting and his veins to remain open. A target who fails to resist becomes vulnerable to persistent bleeding if they are wounded by a cutting or piercing weapon. This effect is equivalent to the Bleed Combat Manoeuvre and can only be stopped by successful First Aid or a healing spell capable of curing at least one Hit Point of damage.

Haemophilia can be cast on a target with a maximum CON of three times the spell's Intensity.

Hide Life

Autonomous

When this spell is cast, the caster loses one Hit Point from every location, that are magically stored in a targeted object called a soul jar. If the caster is killed before the spell expires, his body discorporates and reforms next to the object in which the life-force is stored, restoring the sorcerer to life no matter how completely their body was destroyed.

It takes the body one minute per point of damage it suffered to fully reform reform. If the caster further than the range of the spell away from the object which holds his life, they start to suffer damage in reverse. Dying beyond the reach of the spell is permanent.

The Intensity of the spell denotes the Armour Points of the soul jar, and twice this value as its Hit Points. If a soul jar is destroyed the spell terminates immediately. Such vessels can be anything from paintings to gems, or a still beating heart. Cunning casters use innocuous items easily overlooked, such as a bird's egg. Ancient liches and archmages can create soul jars which are near invulnerable to harm, forcing their foes to come up with innovative methods for keeping them from returning.

Sense Life

Concentration

A variation of the Sense spell in the *Legend Core Rulebook*, this version can detect the presence of living creatures within range. Like its associated variants, Sense Life is hindered by significant layers of solid material. The spell can penetrate a combined thickness of up to 1m of wood/earth/rock/water, or one centimetre of metal per Intensity. Similarly it is blocked by magical wards of equal or higher Intensity/Magnitude – Countermagic, Spell Resistance or Shield for example.

Sense Undeath

Concentration

As for Sense Life but detects the existence of undead beings or energy within range.

Store Manna
Autonomous

Store Manna is used to create a metaphysical storage vessel for Magic Points gathered from sacrificed life energy. It is cast as part of making a bloodletting or sacrifice, and for the duration of the spell, any Magic Points in surplus of casting the Store Manna itself are held ready for the sorcerer's use.

For example Xuthoth performs a ritual avulsion, killing seven black goats, whilst casting Store Manna. The sacrifice reaps 7 Magic Points, of which 1 Magic Point is used to fuel the un-manipulated spell and the remaining 6 Magic Points are stored until the spell expires. Xuthoth then has a less than twenty minutes to use those Magic Points to locate some annoying interlopers and deal with them.

Once the Store Manna expires, either coming to the end of its duration or from being dispelled, any remaining Magic Points are lost. The maximum number of Magic Points the caster can store is equal to the spell's Intensity.

Only a single casting of Store Manna can be maintained at any time. Casting a second before the first has expired causes the first to terminate, losing any Magic Points remaining within it. If used to create a permanent Enchantment, each new sacrifice flushes the previous Magic Points away, rather than topping up the contents.

This spell is often vital to sorcerers who become undead and are no longer able to tap their own life-force.

Switch Body
Autonomous, Resist (Persistence)

Using this spell a sorcerer can transfer his consciousness into another body. Unless the target is willing, those who fail to resist become host to the caster's mind and their own psyche finds itself in the sorcerer's body. Normally the sorcerer takes provisions to ensure his own body cannot suffer harm from the temporary occupant; for instance by leaving it under the supervision of servants or magically locking themselves into bare chambers.

The caster can affect victims with a maximum POW of three times the spell's Intensity. Both the caster and the target retain their skills and Characteristic INT, POW and CHA. All that is gained from the exchange is possession of the new body with its associated STR, CON, SIZ and DEX, plus the attributes based on these Characteristics. Note that this could be an animal or any sapient being, although unfamiliar physiologies reduce all physical skills to half value.

Since the exchange reverts once the spell expires, it is normally used as a method of subversion or even covert espionage if the sorcerer casts it on a sleeping target, who may remain blissfully unaware of the switch. If the sorcerer's body is killed before the spell

concludes they themselves die when they return to it. The caster can always terminate the spell early if it looks like the target's body is about to be slain. Technically the spell could be used to *briefly* escape the death of their own body in order to wreak revenge or find help.

Casting Switch Body as an Enchantment (see page 67) can allow a sorcerer to, in effect, permanently inhabit the body of a target and assume its social status and any other benefits if he can carry off exchange.

Thicken Blood
Autonomous, Resist (Resilience)

Thicken Blood slows down the reactions and speed of a victim with a maximum CON of three times the spell's Intensity. Targets who fail to resist have their number of Combat Actions per round reduced by one. In addition the Initiative of the target is reduced by the Intensity of the spell to a minimum of 1.

Torment
Concentration, Resist (Resilience)

The caster can inflict dreadful amounts of pain on a victim on a target with a maximum SIZ of three times the spell's Intensity. If the target fails to resist the spell, no actual damage is caused but the agony hinders the victim. When the target attempts any skill test, the dice roll must also be equal or less than their Resilience; else they fail due to the incessant torment.

Kharim (Resilience 67%, Hack and Slash Combat 103%, Evade 60%) tracks down the diabolical church of Sethi. Assaulting their subterranean fortress, he scythes his way past several guardians, then enters the main sanctum. Awaiting his arrival, the leader of the serpent mages arrogantly casts Torment on the vengeful barbarian. Kharim fails the opposed test and staggers under the crushing pain. Faced with certain doom unless he can kill the sorcerer, Kharim stumbles forwards and attempts to cut down his foe. He rolls an 85, which although normally a success with his Combat Style, exceeds the value of his Resilience. Thus he is overcome with a sickening wave of agony and the attack fails, leaving the warrior in serious trouble. As the serpent mage begins a new spell, the warrior realises he is outmatched and instead tries to dive into a side tunnel in order to escape. This time he rolls a 23 against his Evade skill. Since the roll also succeeds against his Resilience, he manages to grit his teeth, briefly overcome the pain and tumble into the passageway. Fortunately this takes him outside the range of the Torment spell and once free of its effects, Kharim escapes to plan a different path of vengeance.

Transfer Wound
Concentration, Resist (Resilience)

For the duration of the spell, the caster can transfer physical damage from the target to himself or vice versa. If used offensively the target may attempt to resist the spell.

Each Combat Action the sorcerer concentrates he may move a single wound of no more Hit Points than the spell's Intensity. Damage can only be shifted between identical locations, which may cause the spell to fail if used on beings of alien physiology.

If multiple targets are incorporated, then damage transferred from the sorcerer is divided equally between each recipient. In this circumstance the spell is rarely, if ever, utilised in the other direction since it is typically fatal to the caster.

Transmute Blood
Concentration, Resist (Resilience)

 Another fearsome spell of deadly potency, this spell transmogrifies a target's blood into some other substance, one deadly to the host. The caster can affect a target with a maximum SIZ of three times the spell's Intensity. If the victim fails to resist, at the beginning of each round they suffer a number of Hit Points damage equal to half the spell's Intensity to each location.

They type of substance makes little mechanical difference but can provide a great deal of descriptive atmosphere as to how the victim dies. Each variant of the spell is unique to its originating church, guild, school or master. Examples include but are not limited to Transmute Blood to Maggots, Poison, Fire, Acid or even Gemstones!

Xuthoth looked at the still smouldering remains of his great, great grandson. Such a disappointment, despite offering every chance to betray his former kingdom the youth had remained piously loyal, to the point of attacking his own ancestor. The sorcerer regretted the loss, but looked appreciatively at the fantastically complex branching network of fine metal filaments, still dimly glowing red in the darkness. Transmute Blood to Molten Iron was such an aesthetic spell...

Trap Soul
Autonomous, Resist (Persistence)

Trap Soul affects targets with a maximum POW of three times the spell's Intensity. If the target fails to resist and dies before the spell terminates, their soul is snagged by the sorcerer who may then imprison it into an area or item. Until the spell ends the soul is unable to enter any spiritual plane, realm or their destined afterlife (depending on the setting). They are also cut off from all remote magical contact save for spells designed to communicate with spirits or the dead, whose Magnitude exceeds that of the Trap Soul spell.

Enchantments using this spell are a very effective way of creating sorcerous traps or incorporeal undead. A favourite trick is to imprison the soul in the place of death or even their own mortal remains, where it endures as a haunting or other lingering malaise.

Natchak the thief bypassed the last of the dusty spike filled pits and entered the cobweb filled inner tomb. Before him lay the legendary Skull of Nurgul, its eye sockets filled by huge rubies and teeth replaced by square cut diamonds which gleamed in the light of his guttering torch. Checking for any other nefarious traps he drew near to the altar, reaching forth to grasp the priceless skull. As he touched its bone numbingly cold surface the dreadful artefact raised up into the air, its jaws chattering together with evil malice. A flash of hellish light momentarily illuminated the chamber, then with a dreadful scream the charred and lifeless body of the thief dropped upon the floor, whilst his soul was drawn into the gems of the skull; joining in eternal torment with those others who had proceeded him...

Vomit Blood
Autonomous, Resist (Resilience)

The target of this horrific spell who fails to resist the magic begins to vomit profuse quantities of blood. For the duration of the spell they are preventing them from being able to perform any action save helplessly retching. Although the amount of blood is frightening it does not in fact come from the victim and so presents no other harm.

A sorcerer may cast Vomit Blood on a target with a maximum SIZ of three times the spell's Intensity.

Weep Blood
Autonomous, Resist (Resilience)

The sorcerer causes a target to start bleeding into his eyes or similar vision based organs, blinding him for the duration of the spell if he fails to successfully resist. The caster can affect creatures with a maximum SIZ of three times the spell's Intensity.

The copious amounts of blood running from a victim's eyes can be disconcerting to onlookers unaffected by the magic.

New Magical Skills

Whilst any thaumaturgist, be they sorcerer, priest or other practitioner can be a potent force due to their spell casting abilities, a number of other magical techniques are available to those utilising blood magic, allowing for the creation of far greater phenomena. Powerful and potentially hazardous, knowledge of these skills is often restricted, even forbidden, as they can prove highly dangerous in inexperienced hands.

These techniques can be used by any type of caster. Technically nothing prevents a scholar from learning how to summon demons or priests forming concerts to invoke greater miracles, only that the church they belong to teaches the skill to its members.

Considering the effect these techniques can have on a game, Games Masters are at liberty to reserve access to this knowledge. Only a few churches have access to more than one of these skills, let alone all of them. If Adventurers are to be permitted such exotic powers, then a further decision should be made to either allow learning these following skills during Adventurer Creation or reserve it as an in game reward; possibly after several quests to locate a church or master who is willing to pass on such knowledge.

Like most magical powers in *Legend*, a degree of common sense should be applied by the Games Master to prevent the campaign from becoming unbalanced. If a party of magic using Adventurers start summoning huge demons or concert casting death spells against their enemies, then have those foes *learn* from these attacks and set up adequate defences and use cunning tactics to circumvent the strategy. Most societies are aware of the power which can be wielded and plan contingencies when facing it.

Similarly the Games Master should not use the battlefield scale of these methods against Adventurers without careful consideration of the consequences. Such efforts are inherently risky and no sane magic user will attempt these techniques on a small group of individuals without a serious reason.

The three magical disciplines are Concert Casting, Enchanting and Summoning.

Concert Casting

In many campaign settings although a lone magic user of high skill is capable of invoking some amazing effects, there are finite limits to their power. No single sorcerer can level a city, no isolated priest awaken a mountain to life. Such limits on personal power have saved nations and entire races from utter annihilation.

Global Disasters

Concert cast spells offer a terrible temptation to crush entire armies or even kingdoms with a single magical effort. This is often reflected in the fantasy genre, such as the Sighing Desert in the Young Kingdoms which was created during the Quarzhasaat War when a spell was miscast. Or the Forest of Troos.

Many odd and inexplicable effects could be the result of a catastrophic spell concert failure; twisted terrain, unusual atmospheric climates, strange and tortured ecologies. These should be encouraged in game worlds where the Concert skill is permitted, the legends of their creation acting as a warning against its frivolous use.

However, where one caster is restricted, multiple casters working in concert can combine their efforts to overcome these boundaries. Called rituals, gestalts and even metaconcerts, the technique provides a way of controlling the perilous levels of power created, weaving individually cast spells into a larger coherent effect.

Concerts provide the potential for incredible power at the risk of great danger. Stories of terrible failures have led many societies to ban them or heavily prescribe their use and some thaumaturgists would rather rely on their own powers than risk combining with others. Technically there is no upper limit to the number of participants within a concert. Yet, if things go wrong the bigger the concert the worse the fallout becomes. Taking an increased time to cast spells during the metaconcert can help improve its chance of success but has no effect in controlling the results of a calamitous failure.

The saving graces of this dangerous ability is that everyone within the casting group must be gathered together in the same location, know the particular spell or miracle being cast and be of like mind. It is the latter requirement which is perhaps the most important. Lack of conviction or outright dissension within a gestalt can cause it to fail, sometimes with devastating effects on the participants. The chances of unified commitment shrinks as the size of any group rises, especially if the concert cast spell is against the ethics of its members.

Metaconcerts need not be just used for war. They are often dedicated to building, binding, warding or enchanting at a very large scale. The priesthood of a temple may concert cast certain miracles for festivals for example, granting blessings across an entire city, whilst a guild of sorcerers could utilise it for cyclopean construction projects, raising roads, bridges and aqueducts across nations.

Concert (INT + CHA)

The Concert skill allows a group of two or more casters to pool their magical skills together in order to create a spell of greatly augmented effect. To form a concert every contributor must know the Concert skill and one member must be designated the coordinator of the gestalt.

The time taken to build the concert is equal to one minute per participant. Once the gestalt is fully formed, then depending on the type of high magic, it may then invoke spells or spirit combat as needed using the normal times for those activities. Thus a sorcery spell cast by metaconcert takes the same length of time as a solo sorcerer requires.

Whilst joined in concert however, the attention of each member is fully engaged in maintaining its metaphysical structure. Thus participants cannot move and even perception rolls may be subject to situational penalties as desired by the Games Master. This vulnerability is a serious weakness, especially on a battlefield and most metaconcerts are usually well guarded against assault or interruption.

In situations where a member leaves an active gestalt, whether voluntarily breaking free or being violently incapacitated, the leader must make a Concert Skill Test which is opposed by the ejected member's concert skill. The higher their skill, the more vital their roll was in the structure of the gestalt. If more than one member is removed at the same time, use the highest Concert skill of the sundered members.

If the leader makes the Skill Test but loses the contest then the concert is dissolved without causing any harm to its members. If the concert leader fails the test but loses the contest then roll twice on the relevant Mishap table, keeping the lowest roll. Removing the concert leader immediately dissolves the gestalt, forcing a roll on the Mishap table opposite.

There are many events which can eject a concert member; trying to cast a spell without enough Magic Points to draw on is one or being asked to invoke a miracle that they do not have access to is another. Losing concentration for any reason such as being wounded, tempted by a demon or stepping out of the prepared area will also lead to the member being removed but such situations should normally be permitted a Persistence save.

A metaconcert can only use high magic known to *all* of its members. Thus the participants must all have a Piety skill to the same god, know the same Grimoire or be brothers to the same spirit tradition, since they cannot otherwise cast the perform the same specific miracle or spell. This synchronisation is a fundamental part of cult training. Two wizards who both knew the same spell but from different Grimoires could not coordinate themselves due to different philosophical approaches.

Every magic the concert performs costs the members either Magic Points or prepared miracles. Running out of either causes that participant to be unable to further contribute to the metaconcert, removing them from the gestalt.

Although metaconcerts operate by combining the magical skills of their members, the overall success or failure of the concert depends on the ability of its coordinator. Each magical effort, be it a spell or initiating a spirit combat, requires the leader of the gestalt to roll against their *un-augmented* Concert skill. If used to cast a spell with the Resist Trait, it is this dice roll which targets must roll against to avoid the magic.

Critical: As for a success, and in addition a miracle is not placed beyond use, spells consume no Magic Points and the first attack of any spiritual conflict is unopposed.

Success: The concert manages to retain its cohesion, the magic is cast or spiritual conflict begins.

Failure: The concert collapses and nothing is achieved.

Fumble: The concert collapses and something very bad happens. Roll on the appropriate Mishaps table.

Once the concert ceases, any spells cast by the gestalt expire. Likewise, any entities under the domination of a metaconcert are released from control once the concert ends, unless bound in some way.

The following tables give examples of what can happen if a concert is dissolved in an uncontrolled manner. Add the number of participants in the concert to any roll on these tables.

Spell Mishaps Table

1D100 + Number of Concert Members	Sorcery Mishap
01–15	The concert members each suffer 1D8 damage to all locations.
16–29	The concert members lose all of their remaining Magic Points or Miracles.
30–42	The concert members collapse into an untreatable coma lasting 1D8 hours.
43–64	The concert members cannot perform any magic for 1D8 days
65-75	The concert members are reduced to a drooling, gibbering idiots for 1D8 weeks.
76–85	The concert members gain a permanent insanity.
86–94	The magic being performed affects everyone within range, whether friend or foe.
95–102	The effect or magnitude of the magic becomes multiplied by the number of concert members.
103–109	The magic being performed becomes permanent, forever removing the MPs or miracle from the concert members.
110–115	Something irreversibly horrific occurs to the concert members, for example they all physically meld into a single chaotic body, they immolate in flames and die in agony, they transform into undead, and so on.
116–120	Utter annihilation of everything for a radius in kilometres equal to the number of concert members.
121+	Roll Twice and take the higher result.

To calculate the effect of the gestalt, sum up the Concert skill of every participant. In addition, the individual magical skills should be separately totalled as described below.

Type of Magic	Augmented Skills
Divine Magic	Invoke *and* Piety
Sorcery	Grimoire *and* Manipulation

The combined value of the group's two magical skills is capped by the sum of their Concert skill. It is the metaconcert leader decides how much of each skill is utilised when the gestalt is formed, these values remaining static for the remainder of the concert.

Divine Magic: The magic may be cast as a single miracle at the assigned Piety value; or split between a number of targets, each fragment possessing an equal share of the Piety value. Since Divine Magic is backed by the inconceivable strength of a deity, any concert cast miracle imposes a Resistance roll penalty of one tenth of its Invoke value.

The range of any Divine Magic is based upon the combined POW of all the concert members.

An Aztec civil war breaks out. Facing an assault on one of their ziggurat temples, eleven priests of Huitzilopochtli form a ritual concert to defend the sacred spot. After spending time to form the gestalt, they are ready to repulse the interlopers, a group of undead Jaguar Knights glistening with protective sorceries. Between them the priests have a combined Invoke of 800% and Piety of 775%. However, their combined Concert skill is only 600%. The priest in charge, Eyes-of-Fire, decides to use the entire 600% limit as the concert's Piety, casting Beast Form at Magnitude 60 to transform one of the temple guards into a colossal, monstrous eagle. To further bias matters, the following round he decides to follow up with six Sunspear spells at Magnitude 10, but since no points were placed in Invoke the victims of the deadly spells may resist without any additional penalty.

Once cast, every participant loses one instance of that spell. To ensure that all the members of the concert have the same prepared miracles, such rituals are planned in advance to give everyone a chance to pray for the correct magic.

Sorcery: The sorcery spell can be modified by either producing a greater Intensity, applying more levels of manipulation, or a combination of both. All manipulation effects are based upon the concert leader's personal POW Characteristic.

The sorceress noble lady, Countess Zocha, leads her cabal of five other necromantic cult members in a magical attack upon a Temple of Mystra. Transporting several wagons full of petrified bones to a ridge overlooking the hated place of worship, they form a metaconcert; resulting in the gestalt gaining an overall Grimoire skill of 340% and Manipulation of 250%. This exceeds the combined Concert skill of the necromancers which is only 480%. So Lady Zocha decides to use only 230% of the Grimoire skill and all of the accumulated Manipulation, casting a very large Animate Fossil spell (69 SIZ of bones) with 5 points of Manipulation in Range (1.9 km), 7 points in Duration (over two hours), 10 points in Magnitude to resist dispelling, and 3 points into Targets allowing the four complete dinosaur skeletons to be raised, ready to instil terror on the pacifistic church!

A concert cast sorcery spell, costs every participant the same amount of Magic Points it would normally require if cast singly.

Enchantments

In many fantasy worlds, the creation of items blessed with supernatural power has always been a vital commodity. Known as *enchantments,* such articles enable the storing, transportation or extension of magic. This technique allows for example, a sorcerer to create an unending protective ward around his tower.

Enchantments however are not necessarily an easy means to stockpile power. Every article requires an ongoing investment of life-force, metaphysically separated from its donor, to operate the magic continuously or be hoarded until some point in the future. Both approaches weaken whoever invested the life-force whilst their vitality remains tied up in the enchantment.

Normally in worlds where magical power can be drawn without spilling blood or life, only thaumaturgists themselves can create and empower such items. Whilst this prevents excessive manufacture of enchantments, some magic items survive the demise of their creator and as such many wondrous devices have survived the centuries. Occasionally when facing death, a sorcerer of great ability will pour their magic into an item to be used by their successors. These are often mighty artefacts, yet many of these potent tools are sought out by enemies of that church or guild for theft or destruction.

The use of sacrifice on the other hand renders this self-limiting elegance invalid. In settings where life is cheap and morality sadly lacking, production lines of magical item manufacture can be created, assuming enough sacrificial victims can be found to invest them with power. The only limit is the creator's own imagination.

Although enchanting seems like a worthwhile ability to learn, Games Masters should be aware of the opportunities for serious abuse. It is recommended that the use of sacrificial victims to power created items be restricted to major enemies in a campaign, removing the Enchant skill entirely from the reach of Adventurers.

If however the Games Master wishes to grant his players the opportunity to manufacture their own items, then it is probably best to limit them to using their own life-force to power their creations, else the temptation once they grasp the concept may prove too strong for their Adventurers to resist.

Running campaigns where the Enchant skill is unknown, need *not* prevent Adventurers for finding or being gifted with magical items. Games Masters are encouraged to include the odd enchantment in their games, whether as eternal sorcerous traps, famous treasures to be discovered or heirlooms passed down to those proven as worthy.
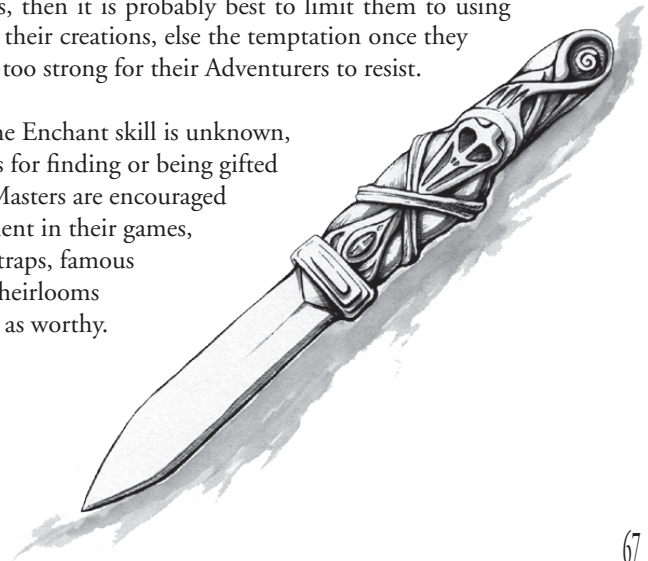
Enchant (POW x 2)

Enchant is an advanced skill requiring two Improvement Rolls to learn if a n Adventurer can locate somebody to teach them the skill. However the specific rules for its use depend on the type of High Magic it is applied to.

Note that these rules are specifically tweaked for the use of magical energy produced from sacrificial techniques, as the associated examples will demonstrate.

Sorcery Enchantments

The Enchant skill allows the creation of magical objects with either a temporary or continuous duration. There are three main types of objects that can be created:
- Objects that enhance themselves (e.g. a sword enchanted with Damage Enhancement).
- Objects that confer a benefit (or 'curse') on the wearer (e.g. a ring with Enhance DEX).
- Objects that allow the user to impose a spell on a target (e.g. an arrow with Palsy).

Temporarily enchanted items normally take the form of potions, powders or ammunition; which trigger when the item is broken, dispersed or digested – but only work a limited number of times. They are created by the sorcerer binding a spell into the article and placing it on an indefinite hold until the item is activated. Any sacrificial damage incurred to generate the Magic Points used to power the spell does not heal or regenerate until the enchantment is completely used; or the sorcerer decides to allow the 'held' spell to lapse, at which point the article loses its magic and the spell fades.

Xuthoth decides to manufacture a small glass sphere, within which is trapped a Thicken Blood spell. As it is designed to trigger upon shattering, he creates a Temporary Enchantment and emplaces the spell, augmenting it by assigning his Manipulation points to Magnitude, Range and Targets. The sphere will allow him to release the spell far faster than he could cast it in a combat situation. However, since he must generate the Magic Points for the spell by Exsanguination, the victim he uses as his source of blood suffers four levels of fatigue. Until the glass sphere is broken (or Xuthoth decides to allow the enchantment to lapse) the slave girl in question remains Exhausted, unable to recover any fatigue either naturally or magically.

Permanent enchanted items are usually crafted from more substantial materials such as stone, wood or metal. Instead of containing a one-shot spell, they operate continuously. They are powered by the same investment of Magic Points but the life-force must be hived from the sorcerer himself. The sacrificial damage lingers, permanent and un-healable but in return the enchanted item remains eternally functional (anti-magic spells merely suppress the effect temporarily) and cannot be unwoven unless handed back to the sorcerer who created it or the item is physically broken.

Breaking a permanent enchantment scatters the invested life-force into the ether, causing its creator to suffer a psychic shock as the bond between the disparate parts of his vitality is briefly riven. However lost Characteristic points, fatigue and even youth, slowly return at the rate of one point or level per week. On the other hand, if the creator is slain, then any enchantments his life-force empowers continue to function without problem.

Seeking additional protection against the incessant disturbances of fortuitous heroes in his search for eternal youth, Prince Koura concludes he needs some new robes capable of stopping an unexpected sword blow or treacherous spell. Finding some exquisite black silk looted long ago from a travelling caravan, he orders his faithful slave Achmed to sew him the garment. Once finished he performs the sacrificial rite necessary to enchant the robe. Koura weaves the enchantment, combining both Damage Resistance and Spell Resistance, along with giving the enchantment a very high Magnitude to defend against magical dispelling.

As a Permanent Enchantment the robe costs the prince three Magic Points. Unable to use the lifespan of others to create the wondrous item, he sacrifices several years of his own life, costing him one point each of Characteristic STR, CON and CHA. Such aging is permanent, causing him to weaken and develop wrinkles around his eyes. The sorcerer however, considers the exchange well worth while as the robes provide near immunity the various dangers he continues to experience on his increasingly urgent quest.

Alternate Sacrificial Restrictions for Enchantments

To help prevent runaway manufacture of enchantments a number of suggestions are available. These options are intended for temporary enchantments but if applicable can also be applied to permanent enchantments too.

- The sacrificial victim must remain alive, else the enchantment fades.
- In addition to the sacrificial costs, each enchantment created reduces a specific Characteristic by one point.
- In addition to the sacrificial costs, the sorcerer permanently loses a number of points from his Grimoire Skill equal to the spell cost of the enchantment.
- As above but loses points from the Enchant skill instead.
- The enchantment costs the sorcerer a number of Improvement Rolls equal to its spell cost.

Psychic Shock

The destruction of a permanent enchantment has detrimental effect on the sorcerer who empowered it. Linked by their metaphysical bond, the pain and shock of the sundering can induce strange consequences. These are risks which any enchanter must risk in order to invest their power into an object.

Whenever a permanent enchantment is broken, roll on the following table. Although this seems to lessen the desirability of manufacturing magical items, it should be noted that many good reasons exist as to why an artefact is created in the first place. However, the main reason this table has been created is so that Adventurers can enjoy inflicting psychic shocks on their foes.

Roll once for the effect and a second time for the duration.

1D10	Shock Effect	1D100	Shock Duration
1	Blind	01–20	A number of Combat Actions equal to the MP invested
2	Catatonic	21–35	A number of Rounds equal to the MP invested
3	Confused (lose 1 CA per round)	36–50	A number of Minutes equal to the MP invested
4	Deaf	51–60	A number of Hours equal to the MP invested
5	Delusional	61–70	A number of Days equal to the MP invested
6	Dumb	71–80	A number of Weeks equal to the MP invested
7	Enfeebled (no ability to cast spells)	81–85	A number of Months equal to the MP invested
8	Incapable (all skills at -20%)	86–90	A number of Years equal to the MP invested
9	Insane	91–95	A number of Decades equal to the MP invested
10	Numb (no sense of touch)	96–00	Permanent

Prince Koura placed a small drop of his blood and another year of his precious life into the clay body of the homunculus. After it animated it flew off across the sea directed by his mental commands. Wearied by the ritual he sat in his chair, watching through his winged servant's eyes. Hours later, when the tiny creature was impaled by the thrown dagger of some scurvy Dhow captain, Koura cried out in agony as his invested life-force dissipated into the aether. The shock sent tremors through his body, rendering him incapable of activity for many minutes until he had fully recovered...

Creating the Enchantment

To create an enchantment, a sorcerer first selects the spell(s) he wishes to cast into the object and decides which, if any, Manipulations will be added. Spells woven into an enchantment cannot be cast at a skill level greater than the value of the Enchant skill. For example, a sorcerer whose Grimoire skill is 78% and Enchant skill is 34%, cannot cast any spells from that Grimoire into an enchantment beyond the 34% cap. Thus if he attempts to create a magical ring which increases STR, he could only bind an effect of +8 STR into the enchantment, not his maximum possible effect of +16 if casting the spell normally. The amount of Manipulation is also limited by the Enchant skill. So the same sorcerer with 34% Enchant and 61% Manipulation can add a maximum of four points of Manipulation.

The time required to emplace an enchantment is the same as it would take to cast the spell in Combat Actions but is measured in hours. The cost to create the enchantment is equal to whatever the cost would normally be to cast the spell.

Once the parameters of the spell(s) are decided, the sorcerer must successfully roll against their Enchant skill. A critical success reduces the amount of Magic Points invested by a single point (to a minimum of one). A failure has no detrimental effect save that the enchantment failed but a fumble causes the sorcerer to not only fail but also lose all the Magic Points involved.

The Combine Manipulation can be used to create complex enchanted objects, however if any of the combined spells have the concentration trait then the combined spell as a whole gains the Concentration trait. If any of the combined spells have the Resistance Trait then whole spell gains that Resistance Trait. This may mean that a spell can be resisted in more than one way, in which case the target makes one roll for each resistance and the spell must overcome *all* of the target's appropriate Resistance rolls at once. Generally sorcerers attempt to avoid combining spells with different resistance traits for this very reason.

When creating a temporary enchantment, the sorcerer can use Magic Points from any source he has access to. So if he has access to a *power crystal* or additional Magic Points (e.g. due to a Tap Spell) then those Magic Points can be used. If creating a permanent enchantment, the sorcerer must use Magic Points generated from his own sacrificed life-force.

Temporary enchantments have a number of uses equal to the Targets Manipulation used at the time of creation. An un-manipulated enchantment would have one use but one with four targets could be used four times. The sorcerer needs to provide one dose of enchanted material or equivalent for each Target. For example, a Treat Wounds enchantment with four targets would require four doses of potion or pills. A Smother enchantment with four targets would require four items of ammunition. When the spell (or spell fragment) is triggered, it usually continues to affect the target(s) until its Duration expires.

To use a temporary enchantment, the wielder performs an appropriate activating sequence; swallowing healing pills, firing an enchanted arrow and so on. Triggering the enchanted item is automatically successful. However if an enchanted spell requires concentration, then the *wielder* of the enchantment must provide it. Therefore an enchantment with the concentration trait needs to remain in contact with the wielder. Common sense should be applied for items such as Wrack enchanted ammunition, which ought only inflict a single Combat Action's worth of magical damage, before guttering out.

Where a magical effect has the Resist trait, it is the value of the creator's Enchant or Grimoire skill (whichever is lower) at the time of its manufacture which is used as the opposed casting roll. If the target manages to resist, the spell is still consumed.

Permanent enchantments are used in the same way as temporary enchantments except that they are not consumed by being used. However permanent enchantments with the autonomous trait are *always on*. In most cases, such as a ring of Enhance (Dex) or a mask of Abjure (Air) this is not a problem but some more dangerous items such as a Hood of Smothering will attempt to cast its spell on anyone who touches it, making handling such objects very risky.

Permanent enchantments with the Concentration trait are quiescent until being actively wielded and concentrated upon. This works for most items but for offensive objects there is always at risk of such objects being accidentally activated by stray thoughts or magic, in which case it may discharge unexpectedly. For this reason, some sorcerers generally avoid creating permanent enchantments designed to inflict harm.

Concert Cast Enchantments

The Concert skill can be used by groups of thaumaturgists to create very large scale enchantments. Those involved in the ritual can also total their Enchant skill to raise the capping limit. In such a case, every participant must invest an equal share of the underlying cost, whether that is Magic Points, miracles or spirit slots – the minimum investment always being one.

If a group creates a permanent enchantment, it may un-weave the artefact at a later date. However, all the *surviving* members of the original concert must be present to perform the task, otherwise it fails.

Summoning

Summoning allows casters to bring forth creatures native to other planes of existence. Generally known as demons, meddling with these powers is highly dangerous, not only due to the energies required opening portals to other dimensions but also due to the alien attitudes and desires of the beings so contacted. Cautionary tales tell of demonologists destroyed by misshapen monsters or portals which warp out of control.

Few summoners can singlehandedly call a demon into the world and those that manifest tend to be minor creatures of limited utility. To draw a being of significant power normally requires combining the strengths of several summoners. Such potent creatures tend to be dangerous servants however, difficult to control and potentially treacherous.

Priests and sorcerers are all capable of learning and utilising this skill. The specific rules for summoning are as follows.

Summon (INT + CHA)

Summon is a ritual skill that combines the techniques of manifesting and controlling extra-dimensional beings, generally known as demons. It may be utilised in several ways, either to summon a random creature, or call forth a specific entity which the summoner has previously researched or encountered.

The ritual requires a considerable amount of preparation, one hour per Magic Point invested into the summoning. Truly huge summonings can necessitate days to carefully inscribe arcane sigils containing the summoned entities and build up the power to open the portal. If the summoning involves more than one participant, then they must all combine their efforts. If created successfully the wards prevent a summoned entity from directly affecting its summoners via physical or magical means.

In emergencies a summoning can be rushed, taking only a minute per Magic Point, but this forfeits any sort of protective wards to contain the manifestation; relying on the ritual leader to successfully convince the demonic entity to aid them. If this fails the demon is free to act as it will, so such summonings are usually acts of desperation.

Similar to concert cast spells, participants in a ritual summoning pool their Summon skills, under the leadership of a single coordinator. The maximum number of Magic Points which can be invested in the summoning is one tenth of the group's combined Summon skills.

Mepath-Ka, an ancient wizard from the primordial era of Atlantis, convenes a summoning ritual to exact retribution for the death of a favoured servant. Aided by his six foremost adepts, they combine their Summon skills, gaining a total of 365%. Technically the ritual may have up to 37MP placed into the summoning. However, the wizard decides to call forth something a little more modest and chooses to summon an entity he has summoned before. This being 'only' requires a ritual of 28MP to summon, requiring the cabal to spend over a day to carefully clean and ward the summoning area, then sit in ritual meditation to form the portal.

Once preparations have been completed the ritual leader must roll against their *unaugmented* Summon skill. The result of the roll determines the effect of the summoning.

Critical: The demon arrives in a magnanimous or subservient mood, willingly following the ritual leader's commands without question.

Success: The demon arrives but requires convincing to perform a service. The ritual leader must win an opposed roll of their Influence against the demon's Persistence, otherwise the creature returns to its home plane (or if no wards exist, act in accordance to its Emotional Attitude).

Failure: The demon arrives and finds a flaw in the containment wards. Depending on its Emotional Attitude it will attempt to take advantage of, subvert or slay its summoners, who have no control over it.

Fumble: The portal fails to form correctly and the wards fail catastrophically. Roll on the Summoning Mishaps table.

Summoning Mishaps

1D100	Mishap
01–20	The portal explodes, inflicting the summoners with 1D8 damage to all locations.
21–35	The portal collapses draining the summoners of all of their Magic Points or Miracles.
36–50	The portal warps dragging the consciousness of the summoners into the ethereal realms, placing them in an untreatable coma lasting 1D8 hours.
51–60	Before the portal crumples, the summoners glimpse some ghastly cyclopean horror, reducing them to drooling, gibbering idiots for 1D8 days.
61–70	The portal forms, but summons a random demonic entity or entities of equivalent MP value and extremely hostile nature.
71–80	The portal inverts, throwing the summoners into an alternate plane for the intended duration, their reception depends on the Emotional Attitude of the being they tried to summon.
81–85	The portal warps out of control, multiplying the number of demons summoned by the number of participants in the ritual.
86–90	Different portals equal in number to the summoners open, each spewing random demons which immediately begin to battle, overrunning the local area.
91–95	The portal rips open a permanent gateway between the two planes, allowing demonic hordes free access to Nuera, until it can be shut. The portal has a Magnitude equal to the total Magic Point cost originally invested in it.
96–00	The summoners attract the attention of a long imprisoned minor deity, which permanently transfers itself and its followers through the rift and begins a war of extinction against the inhabitants of Nuera.

Once summoned, a demon remains for a minimum of an hour. The duration can be extended if further Magic Points are diverted into keeping the demonic manifestation stable. This requires the participants remain locked in their ritual and feed an extra Magic Point per hour via their metaphysical link to the creature. If the ritual is disrupted at this point the creature will return to its home plane after 3D10 minutes.

No matter the form or intelligence of the demonic entity, the ritual leader can converse with it empathically or telepathically. This communication is local however and the summoners lose any direct contact once it leaves their presence.

The Magic Points used in the summoning ritual are assumed to be gathered by those sacrificial methods described under Types of Sacrifice on page 9. Since most summonings require the combined efforts of a group of thaumaturgists, it is generally true to say that the associated sacrifice will require multiple victims.

Such large scale rituals can prove to be difficult in terms of providing enough sacrificial victims, especially if the entity concerned has a specific requirement.

After preparing the summoning area, Mepath-Ka begins seeking the three red-headed virgins whose souls were required to feed the infernal beast. Locating young virgins of true provenance proves more difficult than initially expected and only two of auburn locks were found and unbeknownst to the sorcerer his less than trustworthy acolytes substituted a brunette with dyed hair as the last.

Not suspecting such deception the sorcerer initiates a night of stressful effort. Eventually the demon arrives and sensing the crude trick, breaks free of its confinement and lays waste to Mepath-Ka's home. Unfortunately for his treacherous acolytes, they lack the same self preservation instinct of the aged wizard and are trapped in the summoning chamber when the escaping ancient one locks and bars the door behind him...

Designing the Demonic Creature

The final form and powers of the demon can either be handled in a free-form manner, the leader of the summoning ritual making the relevant choices, or the Games Master can pre-prepare a number of specific demons, each one a specific individual known to that church or guild.

Magic Points invested in the ritual are used to pay for the Characteristics, improved skills, protections, mystical abilities and other random features.

Use the following design steps to create an otherworld entity:
• Spend Magic Points to purchase its Characteristics.
• Roll twice on the Demonic Physique table to determine its form and calculate locational Hit Points.
• Roll 1D3 times on the Natural Weapons table and calculate the damage, size and reach of each armament.
• Roll on the Natural Protection table to determine the appearance and armour value of its outer layer.

- Spend Magic Points to improve its skills.
- Spend Magic Points to assign additional protections.
- Spend Magic Points to grant it mystical abilities.
- Spend any remaining Magic Points to purchase Random Features.
- Roll on the Emotional Attitude table.

Purchase Characteristics

Magic Points must be invested to pay for the creature's Characteristics. Since demonic entities arriving in the world must possess all seven Characteristics this places a lower limit of 7 Magic Points for any summoning. Such tiny beings are often called Homunculi if vaguely humanoid in shape.

Demon Characteristic Costs

MP Cost	Characteristic Value
1	1D6
2	1D6+6
3	1D6+12
4	1D6+18
5	1D6+24
Each +1	Add an extra +6

A summoned demon has any Common Skill suitable to its form and original plane. These are calculated as per normal but have a base value of 50+Pertinant Characteristics. For example a demon with STR 16 and DEX 15 would have a default Unarmed skill of 81%.

Determine Physical Appearance

Once the Characteristics of the summoned creature have been selected, the summoner should determine its shape. These should be randomly generated unless the summoning has called forth a known species.

The first step is to roll twice on the Physique table to give the creature's form. Choose which of the rolls represents the underlying basic structure, the other giving alternate body parts or surface appearance. For example rolling Arachnine and Feline could create a furry eight legged body form with a cat head instead of a spider, a chitinous cat shape with compound eyes, or anything in between which can be imagined.

Demon Physique Type

1D100	Species	Description	Hit Location Chart
01–04	Arachnine	Spider	Arachnid
05–08	Avian	Bird	Avian
09–12	Canine	Dog	Quadruped
13–16	Caprine	Goat	Quadruped
17–20	Cancrine	Crab	Decapod
21–24	Crocodilian	Crocodile	Quadruped – Tailed
25–28	Equine	Horse	Quadruped
29–32	Feline	Cat	Quadruped – Tailed
33–36	Glirine	Rodent	Quadruped – Tailed
37–38	Hirudinal	Leech	Gastropod
39–40	Humaniform	Human	Biped
41–44	Insectile	Insect	Hexapod
45–48	Lupine	Wolf	Quadruped
49–52	Noctillionine	Bat	Avian
53–56	Octopine	Octopus	Cephalopod
57–60	Ophidian	Snake	Serpent
61–64	Piscine	Fish	Piscine
65–68	Porcine	Boar	Quadruped
69–72	Ranine	Frog	Quadruped – Jumping
73–76	Saurian	Lizard	Quadruped – Tailed
77–80	Scorpioid	Scorpion	Arachnid – Tailed
81–84	Simian	Ape	Biped
85–88	Taurine	Bull	Quadruped
89–92	Ursine	Bear	Quadruped
93–96	Vermian	Worm	Gastropod
97–00	Vespine	Wasp	Hexapod – Winged

Hexapod - Winged

1D20	Hit Location
1	Right Rear Leg
2	Left Rear Leg
3	Right Middle Leg
4	Left Middle Leg
5–7	Abdomen
8–9	Thorax
10–11	Right Wing
12–13	Left Wing
14	Right Front Leg
15	Left Front Leg
16–20	Head

Cephalopod

Octopus 1D20	Squid 1D20	Hit Location
	1–4	Tentacle 1
	5–8	Tentacle 2
1–2	9	Arm 1
3–4	10	Arm 2
5–6	11	Arm 3
7–8	12	Arm 4
9–10	13	Arm 5
11–12	14	Arm 6
13–14	15	Arm 7
15–16	16	Arm 8
17	17	Head
18–20	18–20	Mantle

Decapod

1D20	Hit Location
1	Right Fourth Leg
2	Left Fourth Leg
3	Right Third Leg
4	Left Third Leg
5	Right Second Leg
6	Left Second Leg
7	Right First Leg
8	Left First Leg
9–10	Abdomen
11–16	Cephalothorax
17–18	Right Claw
19–20	Left Claw

Arachnid

1D20	Hit Location
1	Right Fourth Leg
2	Left Fourth Leg
3	Right Third Leg
4	Left Third Leg
5–10	Abdomen
11	Right Second Leg
12	Left Second Leg
13	Right First Leg
14	Left First Leg
15–20	Cephalothorax

Arachnid - Tailed

1D20	Hit Location
1–4	Tail
5	Right Fourth Leg
6	Left Fourth Leg
7	Right Third Leg
8	Left Third Leg
9–12	Abdomen
13	Right Second Leg
14	Left Second Leg
15	Right Claw
16	Left Claw
17–20	Cephalothorax

Quadruped - Centauran

1D20	Hit Location
1–2	Right Hind Leg
3–4	Left Hind Leg
5–6	Hindquarters
7–8	Forequarters
9–10	Right Front Leg
11–12	Left Front Leg
13–14	Chest
15–16	Right Arm
17–18	Left Arm
19–20	Head

Biped – Tailed

1D20	Hit Location
1–2	Right Leg
3–4	Left Leg
5–6	Tail
7–9	Abdomen
10–12	Chest
13–15	Right Arm
16–18	Left Arm
19–20	Head

Hexapod

1D20	Hit Location
1	Right Rear Leg
2	Left Rear Leg
3	Right Middle Leg
4	Left Middle Leg
5–9	Abdomen
10–13	Thorax
14	Right Front Leg
15	Left Front Leg
16–20	Head

Quadruped - Tailed

1D20	Hit Location
1–3	Tail
4–5	Right Hind Leg
6–7	Left Hind Leg
8–10	Hindquarters
11–14	Forequarters
15–16	Right Front Leg
17–18	Left Front Leg
19–20	Head

Quadruped

1D20	Hit Location
1–3	Right Hind Leg
4–6	Left Hind Leg
7–9	Hindquarters
10–12	Forequarters
13–15	Right Front Leg
16–18	Left Front Leg
19–20	Head

Avian

1D20	Hit Location
1–3	Right Claw
4–6	Left Claw
7–9	Body
10–12	Breast
13–15	Right Wing
16–18	Left Wing
19–20	Head

Biped

1D20	Hit Location
1–3	Right Leg
4–6	Left Leg
7–9	Abdomen
10–12	Chest
13–15	Right Arm
16–18	Left Arm
19–20	Head

Piscine

1D20	Hit Location
1–3	Tail
4–8	Hindbody
9–13	Forebody
14	Right Fin
15	Left Fin
16–20	Head

Quadruped - Jumping

1D20	Hit Location
1–5	Right Hind Leg
6–10	Left Hind Leg
11–13	Hindquarters
14–16	Forequarters
17	Right Front Leg
18	Left Front Leg
19–20	Head

Serpent

1D20	Hit Location
1–9	Tail
10–18	Body
19–20	Head

Gastropod

1D20	Hit Location
1–20	Body

Determine Natural Weaponry

The natural weapons of the creature can be either rolled for randomly, or a particular type of weaponry selected if it fits one of the physique types. The damage dice, size and reach of the weaponry depends on the SIZ of the creature and the type of attack.

Natural Weapon Type

1D10	Armament	Description
1	Beaked	The head possesses a beak.
2	Clawed	Claws at the ends of arms and legs.
3	Hoofed	Hooves or trotters at the ends of its legs.
4	Horned	Horns placed upon its head or back.
5	None	Uses weapons, has 1D3 different types; roll randomly on weapon list.
6	Pincer	Pincers or segmented claws at the ends of its arms, or perhaps at the end of a tail. A successful un-parried attack with a pincer results in an automatic grapple.
7	Sting	Stingers are located on either the tail or arms.
8	Tentacle	Can sprout from any location or be the substitute for limbs. A successful un-parried attack allows a tentacle to automatically grapple that location and Inflict Pain each combat action thereafter.
9	Tongue	No damage, grapple attack only. If it successfully hits then the sticky tongue Immobilises the opponent and they can be automatically bitten or swallowed the following Combat Action.
10	Toothed	A tooth filled maw, usually located in the head but could also be placed directly in the abdomen or at the ends of limbs.

The natural weapons of the creature are usually a function of its basic size. Some beings however may have unusually big or small examples depending on its physiology and proportions. Games Masters should treat the following tables as average values. If a summoned creature has more than one natural weapon, the Size or Reach of one may be increased at the expense of reducing the value of another.

Natural Weapon Damage

Creature SIZ	Bash/Crush/Claw Damage	Bite/Stab Damage
1–10	1D3	1D4
11–20	1D4	1D6
21–30	1D6	1D8
31–40	1D8	1D10

Natural Weapon Size and Reach

Creature SIZ	Size	Bite Reach	Horn Reach	Limb Reach	Tongue/Tail Reach
1–10	S	T	T	S	M
11–20	M	T	S	M	M
21–30	L	S	M	M	L
31–40	H	M	M	L	L

Determine Natural Protection

The protective outer layer of the creature should be resolved, using the same guidelines as natural weaponry above. Larger creatures have a default value due to the gradual thickening of their outer layer. Note that although the type of skin can appear formidable, the actual protective value may be superficial, unless additional physical protection was defined as part of the summoning and paid for in Magic Points.

Natural Protection Type

1D10	Protection	Description
1	Chitinous	Insect-like chitin, which gives the creature an exoskeleton.
2	Crystalline	Plates of crystal, stony or sandy crust.
3	Feathered	Feathers and down, usually brightly coloured and iridescent.
4	Furry	Short fur to thick hairy pelts, often with beautiful patterns.
5	Hide	Thick leathery skin.
6	Metallic	Metal protection, such as thin flexible skin, scales or heavy plates.
7	None	Has no natural protection but can wear armour of the right shape.
8	Scaly	Reptilian scales, sometimes brightly coloured.
9	Shelled	Crustacean carapace, reptilian plastron or mollusc shell.
10	Spiny	Opponents in melee suffer half their own rolled damage if they successfully land an attack with a weapon of equal or shorter Reach. To calculate their length, treat spines as Horns in the previous table.

Base Natural Protection

Creature SIZ	Base AP
1–10	None
11–20	1 AP
21–30	2 AP
31–40	3 AP

Improve Skills

Expertise can be purchased for the demonic being, making it a sage or savant of its race. Each Magic Point spent can either purchase an Advanced Skill at base value (using the creature's own Characteristics), or increase the value of an existing skill by 10%. Although some Common Skills may start off with a higher default value, no skill can be raised above the ritual leader's own un-augmented Summon skill using this method.

Advanced Magical skills cannot be purchased in this way.

Add Protections

Additional defences can be purchased for the creature, demonstrating its overall toughness and the nature of its home plane. These may be physical or magical but tend to be very specific so as to not generate universally invulnerable demonic beings. Remember that larger creatures have a default level of natural armour, as described in the Base Natural Protection table earlier.

Magic Points can be spent on the following:

- Magical Resistance: 1 Magic Point per Magnitude of magical protection, so that investing 3 MP would grant a 3 Magnitude resistance. Incoming spells must exceed this magnitude to affect the creature. Although highly resistant demons can be summoned, they are extremely dangerous if the summoners fail to control the creature.
- Environmental Immunity: one Magic Point to provide complete immunity to one form of environmental damage; heat, cold, electricity, poison and so on. Purchasing a second immunity costs two Magic Points, a third three Magic Points and so on.
- Additional Armour Points: Adding one extra Armour Point all over costs a single Magic Point. Each point beyond the first is incrementally more expensive. Thus adding 2 AP would cost 3MPs in total, three additional AP would cost 6 MPs and so on.

Additional Armour Points

Extra AP	Total MP cost
1	1
2	3
3	6
4	10
5	15
6	21
7	28
8	36
9	45

Grant Mystical Abilities

Demonic entities may possess mystical abilities. These are inherent magical powers which have a default skill value of 50+INT+CHA. The base values can be increased with Improve Skills as previous. Mystical Abilities are treated as having a default Magnitude of POW divided by three (rounded up). Any use of such an ability requires the creature to expend one of its own Magic Points.

One Magic Point to duplicate the effect of a specific Sorcery spell. In the latter case the creature lacks any form of additional Manipulation (beyond its default Magnitude) but calculates its effect as if the ability skill was the Grimoire value. A succubus type demon may have the ability to Dominate (Human) for example.

Purchase Random Features

If the summoner is haphazardly drawing a creature from an alternate plane, they may utilise the Random Feature table to create some unusual abilities. Each roll costs one Magic Point.

Random Feature Table

D100	Ability	Effect
01–02	Absorbing	All spells it comes into contact with are immediately neutralised.
03–04	Acidic	Possesses a flesh dissolving acidic ichor which sprays whenever the skin is penetrated, causing damage to the attacker; roll 1D4 to determine the strength of the acid, 1=1D2, 2=1D4, 3=1D6 and 4=1D8 damage per wound.
05–06	Alluring	Produces pheromones which attract and seduce victims, who must succeed in an unopposed Persistence test to avoid approaching defencelessly.
07–08	Asymmetric	One half of the creature is larger, longer or taller than the other, double the Hit Points of locations in the larger side and halve the Hit Points of locations in the smaller.
09–10	Boneless	Can squeeze through any gap and survive any fall.
11–12	Brainless	Sense organs are distributed over the entire body and sentience is located elsewhere from the head, roll a random location and place the 'brain' there.
13–14	Burning	Glows with burning heat, injuring anyone within melee range; roll a d4, 1=1d2, 2=1D4, 3=1D6 and 4=1D8 damage per round.
15–16	Chameleon	Cannot be perceived using vision, but may be heard, smelled and so on.
17–18	Climbing	Has a spider or lizard like ability to scale surfaces.
19–20	Contagious	Inflicts a virulent disease with a delay of 1D8 hours and potency of CONx5%, which causes a penalty of 1D8 points to; roll 1D6, 1=STR, 2=CON, 3=DEX, 4=INT, 5=POW or 6=CHA.
21–22	Corroding	Weapons take 1D8 damage each time they strike the creature, ignoring their Armour Points.
23–24	Dampener	All magical effects in the vicinity are suppressed by 1D8 Magnitude. Spells reduced to zero Magnitude are dispelled unless part of a permanent enchantment.
25–26	Deathly	Can drain the life force of nearby plants and creatures. Those in the immediate area must succeed in an unopposed Resilience test each round to avoid suffering one point of damage to every location, ignoring armour.
27–28	Disturbing	Creature is covered with unsettling forms, such as baby arms, or multiple eyes or mouths; viewers must succeed in an unopposed Persistence test or be helpless with horror.
29–30	Domineering	Manipulates those around it with mental commands, which cannot be resisted unless the target is successful in an unopposed Persistence test.
31–32	Draining	Temporarily weakens the magical power of an opponent, draining 1D8 MP each successful hit.
33–34	Droning	Produces a buzzing noise that sedates listeners, who must succeed in an unopposed Persistence test to avoid falling asleep for 1D8 minutes.

D100	Ability	Effect
35–36	Entangle	Restricts the movements of those within melee range, who must succeed in an unopposed Brawn test to avoid being rendered physically helpless each round.
37–38	Frightening	Creature appears terrifyingly dangerous; viewers must succeed in an unopposed Persistence test or flee the creature.
39–40	Icy	Radiates freezing coldness, injuring anyone within melee range; roll 1D4, 1=1D2, 2=1D4, 3=1D6 and 4=1D8 damage per round
41–42	Intangible	Can move through solid objects at will. Whilst intangible it cannot be harmed physically, but neither can it attack.
43–44	Leaper	Has powerfully sprung limbs, multiplying its jump range by 1D4+1 times.
45–46	Levitating	Has the capability to move over any solid or liquid surface without sinking or leaving tracks.
47–48	Mimic	Changes into the shape of a creature it successfully touches, maintaining its own Characteristics but assuming the locations and the duplicate countenance of the being contacted.
49–50	Mournful	Appearance is so sad or pathetic, that observers must succeed in an unopposed Persistence test to be able to begin attacking it.
51–52	Mutated	Roll a random location, which no longer exists.
53–54	Nerveless	Cannot feel pain and does not suffer the ill-effects of Serious Wounds.
55–56	Obfuscating	Produces a cloud of mist, spores or darkness that blinds observers, who must succeed in an unopposed Perception test every Combat Action to observe the creature.
57–58	Oversized	One location is swollen to a very large size or length, doubling its Hit Points.
59–60	Paralysing	Able to render victims incapable of movement; those touched must succeed in an unopposed Resilience test to avoid paralysis which lasts 1D8 minutes.
61–62	Perceptive	Possesses an odd primary sense; roll a d6, 1=Echolocation (sonar), 2=Thermoception (heat), 3=Cerebralception (sapient consciousness), 4=Nociception (pain), 5=Ethoception (souls), 6=Thaumaception (magic).
63–64	Poisonous	One unarmed attack inflicts a venomous poison with a delay of 1D8 Combat Actions and a potency of CONx5%, which inflicts a Poison Condition selected from the table on p79 of the *Legend Core Rulebook*.
65–66	Polymorph	Changes form every round, maintaining its own Characteristics, but assuming the locations of the new shape and carrying over any damage already suffered (various forms should be prepared in advance by the Games Master).

D100	Ability	Effect
67–68	Projector	Any damage inflicted on the creature is felt by everybody nearby, who suffer the psychological but not physiological effects as if they had been wounded too.
69–70	Quick	Movement rate is multiplied by 1D4+1 times.
71–72	Reflecting	All magic cast on the creature is reflected back upon the caster.
73–74	Regenerating	Recovers 1 Hit Point per round to every location, except for Major Wounds.
75–76	Roaring	Produces a thunderous sound which deafens listeners, who must succeed in an unopposed Resilience test to avoid becoming temporally stunned for 1D3 Combat Actions.
77–78	Scintillating	A shifting polychromatic appearance that confuses onlookers, who must succeed in an unopposed Persistence test to avoid becoming mesmerised.
79–80	Shadowy	Can control the ambient light in its immediate surroundings.
81–82	Shocking	Charges itself with electricity, inflicting a shock on those that hit it or are struck by it; roll 1D4, 1=1D2, 2=1D4, 3=1D6 and 4=1D8 damage per blow.
83–84	Silent	Cannot be heard and even its attacks are inaudible.
85–86	Slimy	Cannot be grappled in close combat and leaves a sticky trail wherever it travels.
87–88	Stench	Gives off nauseating odours that sicken inhalers, who must succeed in an unopposed Resilience test to avoid dropping prone and vomiting.
89–90	Sticky	Secretes a strong glue or mucus which causes items to adhere to its skin, requiring a successful unopposed Brawn test and a Combat Action to remove.
91–92	Teleporter	Can freely change its location once per round at no cost in Combat Actions.
93–94	Transmuter	Changes the substance of touched organics into another material; living victims must succeed in an unopposed Resilience test to avoid the struck location being changed into crystal, dust, plants, wine, bronze and so forth.
95–96	Vampiric	Hit Point damage inflicted on an opponent is transferred to itself, healing any wounds currently suffered.
97–98	Warded	Invulnerable to one specific type of material; steel, wood, stone, flesh and so on.
99–100	Weakening	Temporarily weakens the strength of an opponent by 1D8 STR each successful (un-parried) hit.

Determine Emotional Attitude

The demon's attitude is important: it determines how it reacts to the summoner and what kind of services it will perform if successfully influences by the summoner. The attitude is usually rolled randomly using the following table:

Demon Attitude Table

1D10	Attitude	Game Effects
1	Amorous	The demon develops a physical attraction for anyone who tries to engage with it. It may become protective, jealous or seductive depending on how the encounter develops.
2	Argumentative	The demon delights in contradictions and argument. It does not become physically aggressive but may be verbally abusive. It certainly sticks to its own point of view, rejecting out of hand all except the most reasoned cases put to it.
3	Arrogant	The demon treats those who interact with it as worthless scum, unfit to occupy the same physical space as itself. If the Adventurer might be useful in some capacity, then demon might deign to engage but is otherwise contemptuous of such an inferior, mortal being.
4	Dismissive	Unless beaten in an opposed Influence or Insight test, the demon dismisses anyone who tries to engage with it. Not a team player.
5	Domineering	The demon seeks to use Influence or threats of retribution to browbeat anyone it meets into some form of service.
6	Hostile	The demon is hostile to all mortals. If possible it attacks immediately.
7	Intrigued	The demon expresses a huge degree of interest in the Adventurer's motives. It spends 1D3 hours engaged in deep and detailed questions. At the end of this period, roll again on this table to determine the demon's final reaction.
8	Neutral	The demon has no strong opinions one way or another. It simply goes about its business.
9	Vengeful	The demon will attempt to extract some form of revenge for being summoned, such as finding a loophole in any negotiation or informing its victims exactly who summoned it.
10	Welcoming	The demon is open, friendly and willing to engage in conversation. Friendship may result.

In most cases a demonic entity requires some form of payment or service for its aid. This can range from the traditional fresh meat to virgin sacrifices, or more bizarre requests such as being granted a copy of a particular book, an exchange of philosophical knowledge, or even being permitted to return to its pane of existence with physical trophies of its kills. Such exchanges normally occur before the creature performs its end of the bargain.

Final Notes

The metaphysics of summoning can be very complex. Games Masters are free to decide whether the physical nature of a demon is their actual body, drawn across the infinite planes, or if the magical strength of the summoning provides a temporary manifestation within which the demon inhabits.

This decision has consequences. Demons who are fully present are at risk of a true death if exposed to assault and thus may display some caution, or at least cunning, when sent to perform an act of violence. It also means that most of these creatures are one-off castaway encounters, since a summoning most likely transports a random member of their species.

Demons that inhabit a temporary manifestation are more inclined towards risky gambits having no fear of actually dying if the temporary body is destroyed. In fact, demons forced to perform deeds against their will may enthusiastically attempt suicidal acts, hoping to destroy their manifestation and free themselves from further slavery. An interesting side effect of such summoning is that the same demon may repeatedly summoned, allowing it to develop as a major Non-Player Character. Such demons can possess their own personality, developing a relationship with their summoners or the cult if the same creature has served for centuries.

Powerful demons can be extremely dangerous to groups of Adventurers. Games Masters are encouraged to only use the largest of these creatures as non-confrontational protagonists, battlefield scenery or the reason d'être for a scenario – offering other methods for their defeat rather than direct violence. If the game calls for a demonic conflict, it is generally better for the foes to summon multiple lesser beings, rather than one huge beast.

Bloody Campaigns

The majority of this book has been concerned with the provision of new and alternate magic rules, linking the supernatural with the spilling of blood, draining of life or infliction of pain. Although these sources of power may to our eyes seem gross, if not outright horrific, the historical references which have been included will hopefully show that the concepts of blood and sacrifice are fundamental to our ancestors belief in, and use of, magic.

This final chapter explores how *Blood Magic* can be introduced into a campaign, with considerably more depth than the usual stereotypical two-dimensional approach of it merely being 'evil'.

Including *Blood Magic* in a Campaign

Hopefully after reading this book some small seeds of inspiration will be planted, encouraging the inclusion of one or more of the options provided in the preceding chapters. Using blood and sacrifice adds a great deal of descriptive depth to magic, granting scenarios a vibrant richness that some campaigns lack. This new sense of profundity also extends to the realm of cultural depth which emphasises what is acceptable behaviour when considering magical traditions.

The alternate systems in *Arcania of Legend: Blood Magic* have been specifically designed to encourage magic use in many genres, mostly fantasy, but is particularly suited to the pseudo-historical and Sword & Sorcery settings.

Game Balance

On first sight, many of the rules included in this tome may appear incomplete or open to abuse from players. This is intentional. The magic systems and blood powers have been designed for maximum flexibility so that they can be tweaked to sympathetically fit any style of campaign. Whilst this might require some additional work on the part of the Games Master, it allows freedom to make the rules work precisely the way they need.

Flexibility also allows Game Masters to create opponents which are purposely *not* balanced with Adventurers or the rules in the *Legend Core Rulebook* – often a requirement when designing challenging enemies or the big bad adversary who is the ultimate challenge of the entire campaign.

In established games, retroactively working-in these new systems can present significant difficulties as they may undermine the perceived power of Adventurers. Introducing them as magic systems only available to Non-Player Character cults or nations can bypass many issues, whist simultaneously giving sacrificial magic a darker, more secretive tone.

The best option is to create a new campaign centred upon the use of sacrificial magic so that the game begins with these new rules firmly woven into the culture and background of the setting. Magic using Adventurers can then start on a level playing field with a better understanding.

A campaign need not incorporate *all* of the systems and powers included in this book. They are perfectly capable of working independently of one another and can be mixed and matched as desired. Many settings could have a single magic system, such as a Palaeolithic game where only Totemism is used.

Similarly not every Adventurer need have access to magic. Keeping knowledge of thaumaturgy more restrictive grants it more of an aura of mystique or perhaps dread according to how it is used in that culture.

Sword & Sorcery Campaigns

Perhaps the most popular genre for sacrificial types of magic is that of Sword & Sorcery. Made infamous by antagonists such as ancient sorcerers risen from the dead and despicable high priests seizing political power, the magic in these dark settings is extremely hard to master and take elaborate, long casting rituals to invoke correctly. These invariably require blood or sacrifice to power the magic being performed.

In Sword & Sorcery campaigns, magic and especially that provided in *Arcania of Legend: Blood Magic* can be kept as Games Master knowledge only, never released to players at all; the Adventurers themselves tending towards characters based upon warrior, thief or noble archetypes. This can cause Adventurers to treat thaumaturgy with rightful respect, little understanding how the extremely potent effects are generated and perhaps fearing becoming the sacrifice of a ritual themselves.

To reflect the genre, the following options are suggested:

- Thaumaturgists do not generate their own Magic Points but must raise them via some form of sacrifice.
- Spell costs are doubled or tripled, and casting times are multiplied by a factor of ten.
- All churches and guilds know the skill of Concert Casting.

Not only does this make casting spells much more difficult but it also allows for the inclusion of very powerful manipulations of magic by well practiced cabals, permitting a sect of sorcerers for example to strike down a king with a horrific affliction, during his coronation from half way across the continent. Adventurers are prevented from returning the favour by lacking the resources or numbers to duplicate such effects.

If lacking a spellcaster of their own, Adventurers can be protected against the malicious attention of thaumaturgists with the provision of protective talismans, blessings from a friendly cult or a boost to their Evade, Persistence and Resilience skills during Adventurer Creation.

Sword & Sorcery games are also perfect settings for the Summoning rules in the chapter starting on page 73. Using these, otherworld entities including demons, astral beings and even alien gods can potentially be drawn into the world at the bidding of a lone summoner or mad cult. Many scenarios could be set around the rampages of a demonic creature repeatedly summoned to plague an opposing cult or city.

Better still, performing a summoning and binding the demon in, or to, a permanent enchantment could create a persistent entity for Adventurers to interact with. The form of the enchantment denotes how it would affect the campaign world. Binding a powerful demon into a weapon might create a potent artefact capable of overturning nations. Whereas enchanting it to an area, an ancient tomb or primordial temple for instance, would transform it into a deadly guardian. Such creatures if prevented from returning to their own dimension may well become insane or vengeful over centuries of enforced servitude. Of course the secrets of how they were bound could be lost in time, preventing Adventurers from replicating these antique wonders.

Bound demons might even become minor gods in their own right, with churches that propitiate them – presumably to prevent being preyed upon rather than bestowing any Divine Magic. Depending on the sentience and willingness of the worshipped entity, cults might benefit in other ways; maybe by arousing the demon to attack enemies or being taught forbidden, exotic knowledge. An inspirational tale for this type of game would be *The Tower of the Elephant* by R. E. Howard.

Pseudo Historical Campaigns

Pseudo historical campaigns are those in which the magic practiced by real world cultures actually works and has significant effects, so that the Aztec empire as illustrated opposite really can summon fire from the sky or cause eclipses. In effect the superstition of the time is replaced with true metaphysical manifestations.

A game based on past cultures can be extraordinarily good fun, especially in cases where more modern societies are interacting with primitive cultures and rational thought is challenged by supernatural events. Adventurers who faithfully report such observances could be considered liars by their peers, or even committed to a sanatorium for treatment!

Ancient periods can be just as fun, adventuring in nations where multiple pantheist religions rub shoulders. *Arcania of Legend: Blood Magic* adds to the verisimilitude of these periods due to the fundamental fact that almost all historical magic *was* based upon performing sacrifices of one type or another.

In historical settings the following options are suggested:

- Thaumaturgists do not generate their own Magic Points but must raise them via some form of sacrifice.
- The Magnitude, Intensity and Manipulation points of all forms of magic and spirits are halved to reflect the general weakness and less flashy nature of historical magic.
- Special skills such as Concert and Enchant are rare.

A number of diverse campaigns can be based upon conquering the religion of a neighbouring city, locating and eradicating an evil minor church, or even corrupting oneself to follow a pagan faith in order to take advantage of the mystical power it offers.

Some example settings could include...

A piratical campaign set in the Caribbean of the 17th Century, where buccaneers rub shoulders with Vodun practitioners. Magic in such a game would need the excessive drinking of rum and gratuitous spilling of blood to attract the attention of island gods and spirits which haunt the region. Bargaining with these entities can bend winds, stop musket balls or even raise the dead as zombies. Neophyte sailors or colonists who venture from civilised Europe will find local traditions barbaric but African slaves sent east to the plantations will have a deeper understanding of the magical world. Anyone with a savage reputation will soon attract the patronage of supernatural denizens. Whether they actually want such attention is another matter altogether...

Conquistadors invading the Aztec empire where the Christians face a crisis of faith, the gratuitous evil sacrifices providing undeniably objective results whereas the preaching of the padres offers no observable power. When greed and rivalries between the invaders begin to heat up, the temptation of native magic may prove too great to resist. Meanwhile the conquistadors struggle to defeat divine miracles with gunpowder weapons making the whole enterprise a far more risky proposition. In fact the Adventurers could be Aztecs who not only defeat the Spanish but then sail over the ocean to invade Europe in return!

Competing Mesopotamian cities between the Tigris and the Euphrates struggle to reign supreme over the land. War is raged seasonally between the leading city-states, which when conquered have their urban divinity removed, transported to the temple of the divinity which rules over the victorious city. To provide additional strength to the battling gods, each church or guild engages in ever greater sacrifices to call forth miracles. For a particularly epic campaign the deities could be actually real, otherworld entities or competing (im)mortal sorcerers, living within their temples and sustained by the sacrifices they receive.

British colonial explorers venture deep into darkest Africa, India or the remote islands of the Pacific only to discover primitive peoples practicing horrific sacrifices. Ethically obliged to 'educate' the savages, steps are taken to eradicate the immoral religions, prompting an insurgent war between followers and the civilised colonials. As the stakes rise, simple raids are replaced by attacks from spirits, summoned demons, or magical curses. An extra twist could come if the British successfully quash the original faith

only to let loose an ancient evil which the sacrificial practices were keeping bound, thus forcing the colonials to re-evaluate their own beliefs and perhaps permit the heathen traditions to continue.

High Fantasy Campaigns

In a high fantasy setting magic systems (both sacrificial and not) can be mixed and matched to achieve a particular flavour for a game world. Ascetic monks could practice mental powers, generating mystical effects by the strength of their own mind, whilst the local temple priests butcher oxen to call forth the blessings of the gods. Indeed in these types of setting sacrificial magic could be made into the 'dark side' offering great power in exchange for death and suffering, whereas the 'light side' requires exploitation and mastery of only the self.

Care has to be taken when blending systems which generate their Magic Points from different sources. The independence offered to a character by generating their own magical energy needs to be balanced against the potentially unlimited strength offered by sacrifice; providing the church or society supports that technique. A tribe of orcs might not bat an eye if their shaman demands the weakest member of a warband as an offering to summon a spirit, but might baulk if his demands start to exceed the replenishment rate of the tribe. If however that tribe manages to capture an entire village, its shaman might easily gain a hundred prospective victims to boost his power.

Not all game worlds need to be polarised in such a fashion. Some could still be run only using sacrificial magic. The source of the Magic Points must be carefully considered with reference to cultural attitude. Sacrificing criminals and enemy warriors may be acceptable to one civilisation, yet be an anathema to one which only makes animal offerings.

The most important aspect of a high fantasy campaign is that magic is ubiquitous and powerful. This does not mean to say that everyone can cast magic themselves but rather both specialist thaumaturgists and the magical enchantments they manufacture are commonplace.

For the High Fantasy genre the following options are suggested:

- Thaumaturgists may either generate their own Magic Points *or* reap them from some form of sacrifice.
- All churches, guilds or magical practitioners know the skill of Enchant and temporary magical items such as potions or one-shot stored spells are reasonably easy to commission.
- Most people are alert to the use of magic, possessing contingencies if they or their family and friends come under some form of magical assault. Cities, fortifications and temples are usually protected by Concert cast spells of epic Magnitudes and Intensities.

If the game world limits thaumaturgy to only utilising sacrificial sources for Magic Points, most magic will be stored as temporary enchantments in preparation for its

use. Otherwise casting magic on the fly will become difficult without on-the-spot bloodletting and travelling with an entourage of sacrificial offerings in tow. Of course this could provide an excellent challenge for a spellcasting Adventurer, forcing them to invest their magic in preparations, leaving them only their wits and knowledge with which to use once their enchantments are used up.

Cultural Attitudes

Most of this book revolves around sacrificial methods, such as exsanguinations, animal and human offerings, headhunting, ritual mutilation, cannibalism and so on. Although staples of pulp fantasy, they were (and still are) actually performed for religious and magical purposes, once upon a time on a horrendous scale. Truth is often stranger than fiction as they say. So incorporating these techniques into a campaign can not only make a setting fascinating but also give a new perspective on how cultures work.

For instance, although modern day readers may consider the above methods immoral, in reality they were considered normal and acceptable by peoples of the time. *Not* performing a sacrifice might be regarded as an explicitly dangerous thing to do, especially when summoning spirits, beings of the otherworld or requesting a favour from the gods. Such impiety may even be deemed a criminal act, begging supernatural retribution which would most likely affect the entire community or cult and not just the foolish thaumaturgist.

Whilst 'civilised' people are undoubtedly more squeamish today, the sacrifice of an animal was an everyday occurrence even in the early days of monotheistic religions – when such beasts were regarded simply as a source of food and home butchery was commonplace. Many eastern religions still perform animal sacrifices as part of proper worship.

Auto-sacrifice, the giving of one's own blood and painful suffering as an offering, is slightly more palatable to modern sensibilities but many people would suffer creditability issues if asked to draw a barbed stingray tail though their own tongue, or even their own genitals to show proper devotion. Nonetheless this sort of sacrifice was regularly performed by many cultures.

Human sacrifice is a somewhat more nebulous area of morality but even in ancient Greece, the cradle of civilisation, human sacrifice, whilst not regular, was an inherent part of city life; featuring not only in their myths but also in historical reports. In their favour was the fact that these sacrifices were either voluntary or at least participatory at the family level, if not by the individual themselves.

Another pillar of modern civilisation, Republican Rome, had its fair share of human sacrifices too. The voluntary suicide of a legion commander to turn the tide of battle was the more positive side of things. On the reverse face of the coin were sacrifices made to stabilise and protect the foundations of temples or city walls, or the capital punishment of those accused of impiety who were offered to the gods they offended, most notably in the case of the Vestal Virgins. Blood offerings were also made to the spirits of deceased family patriarchs, by warriors fighting in their honour. This was a

tradition inherited from their neighbours and at first rarely involved death, only the spilled blood of honourable wounds but eventually it grew into gladiatorial games perverted out of all proportion from its original intention.

Likewise during these times the Celts, Germans and Scandinavians were all performing various types of human sacrifice including being impaled or hung from oak trees, burned en-mass with livestock in wicker men, or poisoned, stabbed and garrotted before cast into a bog. Inventive methods for gaining the attention from the gods; and surprisingly in the latter case some victims appear to have been volunteers of high status.

Even more examples exist from round the world. Mesoamerican cultures that performed innumerable human sacrifices from children to emperors, yet still favoured and found volunteers to be ritually killed over the thousands of butchered war captives. Pacific island cultures are another mixture of human offerings made from within the tribe and those of captives taken from outside.

However prevalent, it is obvious that human sacrifice was considered acceptable, often honourable or desirable, by the majority of the world's cultures in past times. Even the practice of magical cannibalism and headhunting has continued until the middle of the last century, supported by superstition which cannot quite be eradicated by governments and education.

This should be taken into consideration when incorporating sacrificial magic into a campaign. What is 'good' is something which benefits the church or community. Things which are 'bad' are actions which bring harm. Thus social acceptability depends on the point of view of who is affected by these offerings.

A simplistic example would be the sacrifice of a tribal enemy to a local deity. Sacrificing the warrior is good on several levels. Firstly it reduces the strength of the opposing tribe. Secondly it gives *mana* to the god, nourishing him and keeping his power strong. Thirdly it pays the deity proper respect. If the warrior was *not* sacrificed it would be bad because the prisoner would require guarding and feeding, the deity would weaken from lack of *mana* and he would withdraw his divine blessings for being forgotten.

The ethical nature of sacrifice becomes more muddied when the sacrificial victim comes from within the community itself. Is it moral to offer up a prepubescent child as an offering to request divine aid to help the entire family, tribe or nation? Is it right if the parents truly believe the soul of the child will reach the highest halls of heaven? What if the child believes it too and wants to volunteer so that its family will be rewarded in this life as well as the afterlife? Does it make any difference that the child is doomed to death by starvation and is likely to be exposed or killed anyway to save the rest of its family?

Similar questions are raised with geriatricide, when the aged are given up for sacrifice when they can no longer contribute to support the family or tribe. Is it right to kill a probably unwilling person after they have worked hard to sustain the community all their lives, or does the harshness of the local environment make such actions excusable? On the other hand, is the purchasing of several dozen slaves for the singular purpose

of exsanguinating them to protect a city an immoral act? What if they are psychotic criminals of the worst kind and are barely considered to be above animals?

Whether or not we think so, the fact remains that societies did in fact see these sorts of offerings as acceptable. These are not wicked deeds but merely necessities or perhaps even acts of kindness. Thus Game Masters should not simply categorise all sacrificial magic as being depraved evil but seek to define the truth of its nature by how it interacts with society.

A Church's Purpose

Another interesting aspect of sacrificial magic concerns how its practitioners exert their influence on society. Campaign settings in which thaumaturgy is a restricted art will lend more authority to individuals who practice magic, or the churches that support them.

In principle the sacrificial magic presented in this book can be widespread throughout a culture, particularly those of a more primitive nature. So nothing prevents a game world being designed where everyone in a particular nomadic tribe can learn and perform Animism. As cultures become larger and more civilised however, thaumaturgists gradually transform into specialist positions of knowledge. This elitism, combined with the supernatural powers at their command often grants a priest, sorcerer or shaman an exalted standing with great political influence.

Many fantasy stories revolve around theocracies or mageocracies where thaumaturgists wield absolute power, often from behind an ostensibly secular puppet government. Other more pulp orientated tales concern magically powerful individuals or small churches or guilds seeking to overthrow rulers to seize control of a nation. These political orchestrations can be readily included into a homespun game world.

Not all thaumaturgists seek temporal power via ruling over the masses. Some groups dedicate themselves to more spiritual pursuits or mastery over a particular aspect of magic. A church which works to support or protect its community is likely to be sustained by the people it aids. This can be very beneficial to those using sacrificial magic since it is the community which will provide most of the offerings, whether they be animals, captives, or (in)voluntary members of society. Without a steady supply of live offerings it is unlikely the church or guild could exert significant magical power.
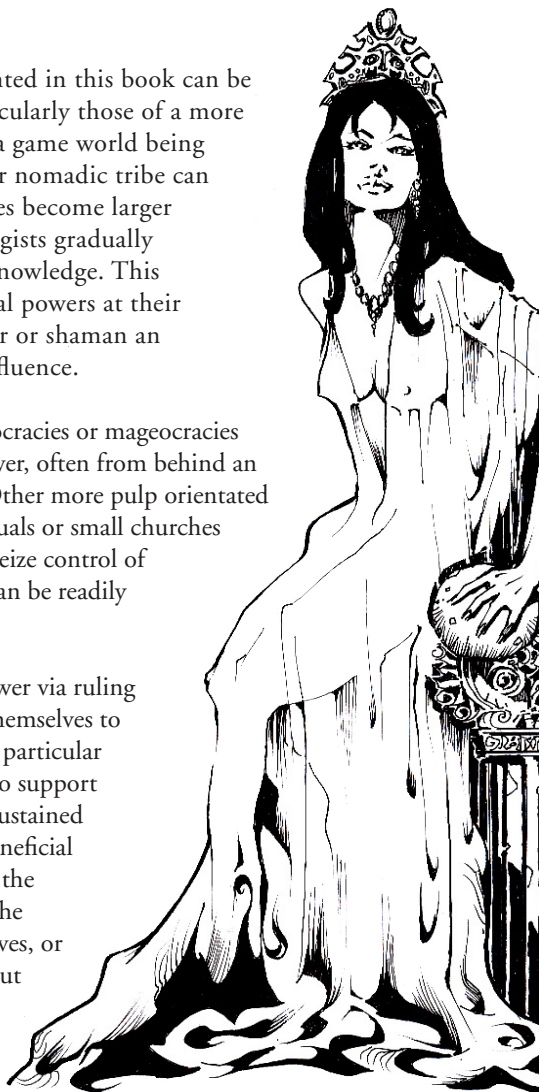
A church which operates illegitimately, working to undermine society, will face serious difficulties gathering suitable sacrifices for its spellcasters. Such groups or individual practitioners are likely to have been expelled for unsavoury acts not deemed acceptable to that culture, for example a congregation of cannibals or necromancer based in a thriving metropolis. Conversely the church may have opposing political, metaphysical or religious views to the current ruler of that region, and thusly been forced underground to protect its members. Sacrificial victims are likely to have been stolen, tricked or kidnapped from the perhaps oblivious local community before ending up on an alter; the power from each offering used surgically to obtain the greatest advantage.

Power Limits

The biggest task facing Games Masters using the sacrificial variants of Divine Magic and Sorcery is what combinations of sacrificial methods and restrictions to apply to each form of thaumaturgy, or individual churches if willing to place the effort into giving each tradition its own unique feel.

The undertaking is made trickier because of the sheer number of different options available. For follower groups or types of Advanced Magic which remain within the control of the Games Master it is not so big a problem since they themselves are unlikely to abuse the mechanics to breaking point. Sacrificial magic in the hands of players however needs more careful attention.

A case in point is an Adventurer who is a member of a church or guild which practices exsanguination who may try to twist the rules in order to accumulate as many Magic Points as possible, for example purchasing herds of livestock to provide a ready supply of animal offerings.

Simple solutions to this are specified in the chapter beginning on page 4, such as placing a limit on the total number of Magic Points which can be accumulated at any time or that only certain rare types of animal can be sacrificed for power (see page 14 for details). However other less mechanical methods can also be utilised. If animals are too commonplace, whether from being located in a pastoral society or possessing enough wealth to buy multiple victims, the number of Magic Points gained from livestock could be reduced to a single Magic Point per beast; or animals smaller than a bull provide no magical energy at all unless entire flocks are slaughtered. Transporting all these creatures if undertaking a quest away from their settlement or tribe could be quite a problem too, as would be a disease which struck down the captive animals.

Ultimately the Games Master can make life very hard for a sacrificial based thaumaturgist by simply restricting their source of ritual offerings. The art in this is to allow Adventurers enough power in order to be effective making each spell count but not so much that they solve every problem with superfluous amounts of magic. Although this may appear at first to be an insurmountable problem, in reality it is no different than pacing any other *Legend* scenario to allow Magic Points to recover between encounters.

One option hitherto not discussed thus far is combining the ability to naturally generate personal Magic Points as per the *Legend Core Rulebook* with opportunities to regenerate

or boost the total further with Magic Points reaped from sacrificing. This allows the best elements of both methods to be used in parallel with each other but with the potential result that magic becomes an overwhelming influence on the game world, where spells and spirits are used continuously, especially at the top church echelons.

In conclusion, it is up to the Games Master to decide how prevalent magic use is in his game. Using sacrificial sources of Magic Points places an excellent tool in his hands to govern how often spellcasting will occur; be it once or twice a scenario at one extreme, to daily invocations at the other. Whatever the final decision the magic available to Adventurers should in general, roughly match that of their foes least player resentment result.

Inspirational Sources

Due to its historical prevalence Blood and Sacrifice are a major element of many pulp, fantasy and horror stories. Although mostly portrayed as acts of horrific evil, rather than deeds of noble or willing self sacrifice, the concept has become a trope of the genre in countless Fantasy books.

Classic examples are Sword & Sorcery literature, such as many of the tales written by Robert Howard, Lin Carter, L. Sprague De Camp, Fritz Lieber, August Derleth, Andrew Offut and Michael Moorcock for example.

'Thus the sons of Kosala offer sacrifice to Yajur. Barbarian, you look upon a strangler of Yota-pong. I was chosen by the priests of Yajur in my infancy, and throughout childhood, boyhood, and youth I was trained in the art of slaying with the naked hands — for only thus are the sacrifices enacted. Yajur loves blood, and we waste not a drop from the victim's veins.'

— R. E. Howard, Shadows in Zamboula

Mythos tales from authors including HP Lovecraft and Clark Ashton Smith frequently include themes of sacrifice, be they blood or souls. The Call of Cthulhu, Dreams in the Witch House, The Tomb-Spawn, and An Offering to the Moon provide examples of where sacrifice is a fundamental part of worshipping ancient beings.

'In the temple of the city of Morm, which lies between the desert and the sea, are two images of the god Amanon, a bronze image facing an iron image, across the fires and blood-stains of the alter-stone. When the gory sunset of the day of sacrifice is over and the writhing fires of the sacrifice are dead, and the moon smiles with a cold and marble smile on the blackened altar — then Amanon speaks to Amanon, with a voice of iron, and a voice of bronze…'

— Clark Ashton Smith, The Image of Bronze and the Image of Iron

The Pirate genre is also rich with blood sacrifice, with Voodoo and Vodun both being prevalent in magically rich fantasy pirate literature. Tim Power's book On Stranger Tides is chock full of blood and rum based magic.

'Suddenly he held up the bird, gleaming in the last rays, and shouted something aloud, sharp and guttural and cruel. Somehow I understood what he was about to do; I half rose, a shout on my lips. But Mall yanked me down, even as the old man flung his arms wide and ripped the hapless bird apart, wing from body. A low groan of revulsion arose from the sailors. But even as the blood spattered onto the deck, I saw the sails ahead jolt as if some vast hand had slapped at them, and flap empty and useless in the breeze.'

— Michael Scott Rohan, Chase the Morning

For those interested in historical reports of more extreme types of ritual sacrifice, recorded as actual eye witness accounts or investigations by colonial powers, readers are recommended to look up some of the references quoted elsewhere in this tome. Particular areas of interest are:

- The persecutions against the Kali cult in 18th Century India.
- The activities of the Human Leopard Society of West Africa.
- The reports of the first Conquistadors to arrive in Central America, most notably the ethnology study of Diego de Landa.
- The Shuar Headhunters of Peru and Ecuador.
- The cannibalism of peoples such as the Batak people of Sumatra, Maori of New Zealand and inhabitants of Easter Island.

Last but by no means least, the following brief list contains entertaining movies and TV series which may inspire ideas of how to incorporate sacrifice, both animal and human, into a game.

Apocalypse Now – The water buffalo sacrifice at the end is real.
Apocalypto – Gratuitous yet historically realistic human sacrifice scenes atop the pyramid.
Children of the Corn – Children perform cult rituals by sacrificing all the adults.
City of the Dead – Another horror classic about a witch coven which performs satanic sacrifices to continue their immortality.
Clash of the Titans – The offering of Andromeda to the titan.
King Kong – Yet another offering of a maiden to a colossal monster.
Medea – An Italian movie telling the tale of the powerful sorceress, illustrating the use of human sacrifice to help crops grow.
The Beastmaster – Lots of sacrifices including a memorable offering of a girl, save by being snatched up by an eagle.
The Golden Voyage of Sinbad – Many sacrifices throughout this excellent movie including the sorcerer's own blood and youth. A Favourite!
The Lair of the White Worm – Evil snake women, profane pagan rituals, human sacrifice; what more do you want?
The Mummy – The modern version where Imhotep attempts to sacrifice the heroine in order to reincarnate his long dead love.
The Wicker Man – Perhaps the definitive human sacrifice move, its most frightening aspect is the illustration of the community's need and belief in sacrifices.

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The first in a new Open Content series for the *Legend* RPG, *Arcania of Legend* books will introduce different forms of magic into your games, allowing you to pick and choose which is right for characters and worlds alike. It starts with *Blood Magic…*

This tome examines the beliefs and uses of life force in cultural magic, offering rules, spells and supernatural creatures which thrive upon it. It begins with insights concerning what life force is and how it drives supernatural effects. The differences in animal and human blood are investigated, focussing on what rewards are granted for varying levels of sacrifice up to and including youth or even death. Also included are new concepts of how inherited bloodlines can provide mystical abilities, the consumption of blood endowing strengths and powers, and methods of preserving life (or unlife) by exsanguination.