

Swashbuckling
ADVENTURES™

Cathay™
Jewel of the East





Cathay

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NANCY: "DIFFICULTY AT THE BEGINNING WORKS SUPREME SUCCESS.
... IT FURTHERS ONE TO REMAIN PERSEVERING. IT FURTHERS ONE TO
APPOINT HELPERS" — CHUN, I CHING.

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ROB : TO THE LADY OF THE COURT, FOR HELPING ME GAIN A
FOOTHOLD WITH ROYALTY.

DOWN THE BLUE MOUNTAIN IN THE EVENING,
MOONLIGHT WAS MY HOMEWARD ESCORT.
LAY IN LEVELS OF DEEP SHADOW...

— LI BAI

To use this companion, a Dungeon Master also needs the *Player's Handbook*™ and the *DUNGEON MASTER'S Guide*™.

A player needs only the *Player's Handbook*™.

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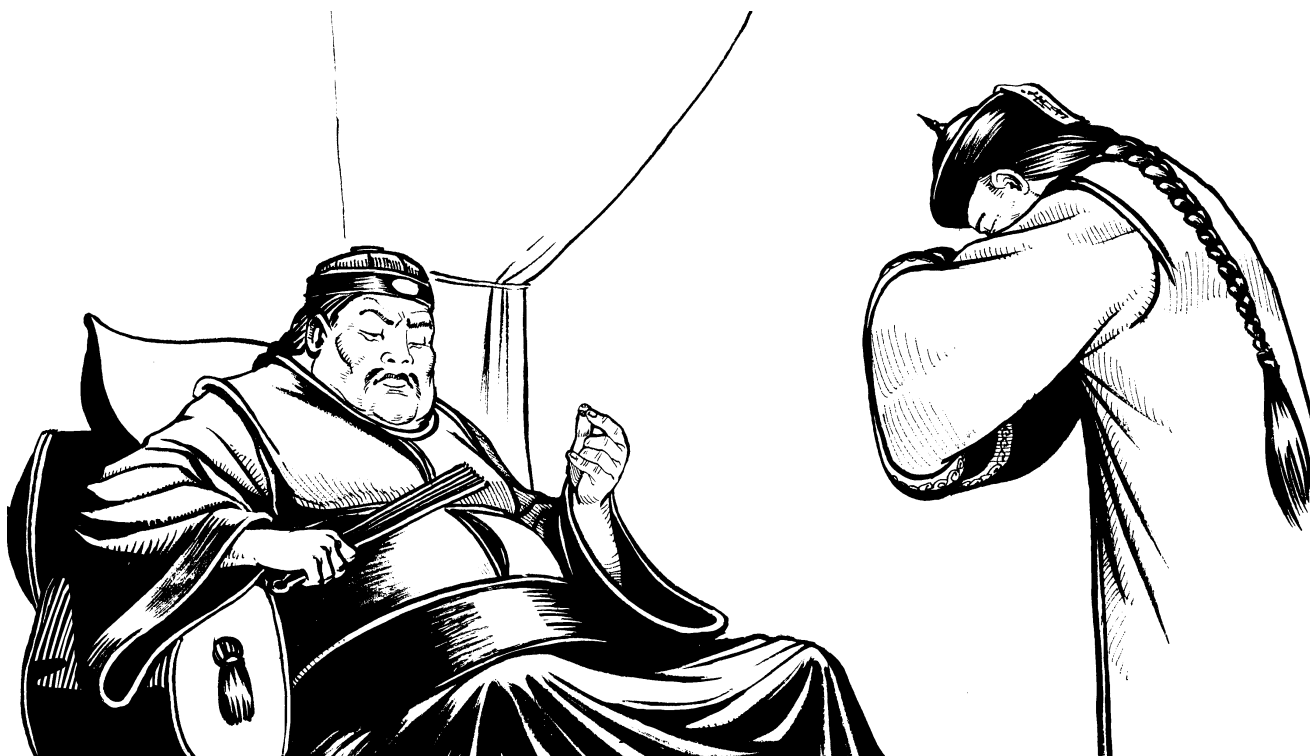
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*You ask me why I dwell in the green mountain;
I smile and make no reply for my heart is free of care.
As the peach-blossom flows down stream and
is gone into the unknown,
I have a world apart that is not among men.*

— Li Bai (701–762 A.V.)

Introduction

Source material about the world of *7th Sea*™ begins with an “about this book” offering brief descriptions of the content. In keeping with tradition, this section will do likewise. However, we needed to say more this time because of what lies behind the Wall of Fire and has tantalized adventurers in this rich world from the beginning. In short, there has been much speculation about whether we would handle the Cathay question.

There was debate as to whether we should write this book. Perhaps it would be best to leave the mystery of the East unsolved? Querying avid supporters of the world, we received a strong overall response. They explained to us that they wanted to see everything and nothing; they wanted answers but for everything to remain simultaneously, shrouded in secrecy. A tall order, indeed! In response to their input, we have revealed *some* of the secrets but left others to be discovered by intrepid adventurers risking all for a taste of the truly unknown. We have given GMs a veritable *bao* (treasure) of ideas with which to tantalize (and probably torment) their players.

The Subject of China

We approached the source material itself with a great deal of respect and with no small sense of awe. When you contemplate a subject as large and diverse as an alternate Asia, you face challenges. How do you encapsulate thousands of years of history spanning thousands of miles in one short book? We knew where we could not go because a true Wall of Fire exists between *7th Sea*™ and the world of *Legend of the Five Rings*™, but that still left more than enough ground for us to cover.

Asia is the birthplace of two of the world’s great religions, home to a family of cuisines, and is responsible for the development of a staple food crop now produced on most continents and feeds a staggering proportion of the world’s population. We knew that the Chinese enjoyed advances the West would not see until much later. Chinese inventors developed moveable type, gunpowder, paper, and the compass well before the rest of the world. There is increasingly sound evidence that Chinese explorers reached the New World before any of the Western European nations.

We wanted to tie Cathay into the established world of Théah and to the intricate story line but we also wanted it to stand alone so that it did not become merely an “orientalization” of the Crescent Empire or a “Théanized” version of a martial arts movie.

And if all that were not enough, we had to find a way to present information with which many players are at least remotely unfamiliar—medieval Asia and martial arts, albeit sometimes more from a cinematic perspective than an historical one. Historically, we focus on the Han, T'ang and Ming dynasties, although there are elements of others woven into the chronology.

Geographically, we focus on mainland China with elements of Tibet, Korea, Mongolia, Thailand, India and Malaysia added for seasoning. As you will see, the lands that make up Cathay vary as much as the people who live in them. From the snow-covered peaks of Khimal to the rich jungles of Tashil, there is much beauty and wealth, and more than a little danger.

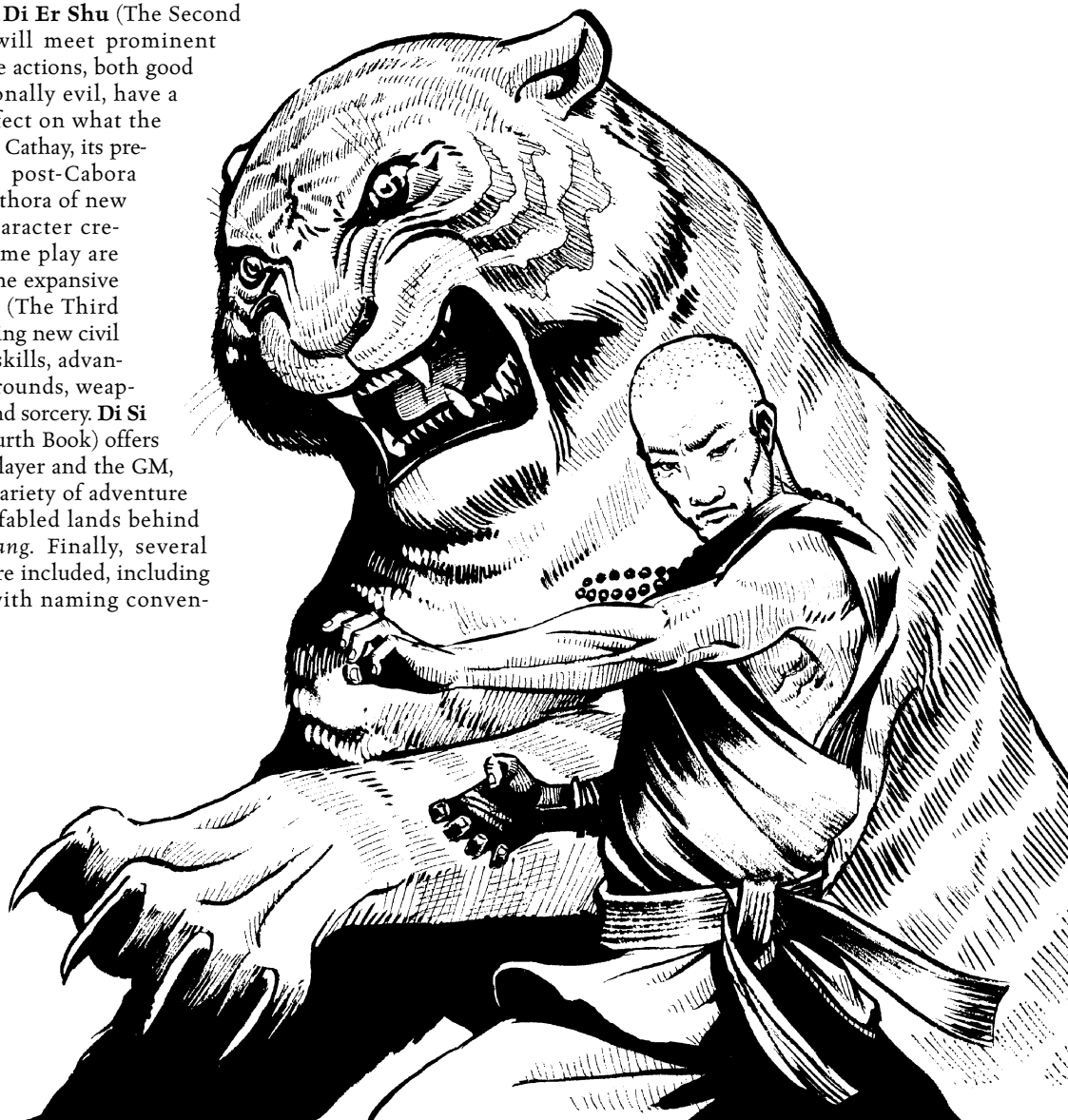
So we present *Cathay: Jewel of the East*. There is something here for everyone, whether you want to use the information to design an adventure behind the *Huo Qiang* (Wall of Fire) or to flesh out your campaigns in the rest of Théah. **Di Yi Shu** (The First Book) presents the standard elements of the history of the *Qi Guo* (the Seven Kingdoms,) their geography, government, religion, social structure and daily life. In **Di Er Shu** (The Second Book) you will meet prominent people whose actions, both good and exceptionally evil, have a profound affect on what the landed called Cathay, its present and its post-Cabora future. A plethora of new items for character creation and game play are revealed in the expansive **Di San Shu** (The Third Book) including new civil and martial skills, advantages, backgrounds, weapons, magic, and sorcery. **Di Si Shu** (The Fourth Book) offers help to the player and the GM, as well as a variety of adventure ideas in the fabled lands behind the *Huo Qiang*. Finally, several appendices are included, including a Glossary with naming conventions.

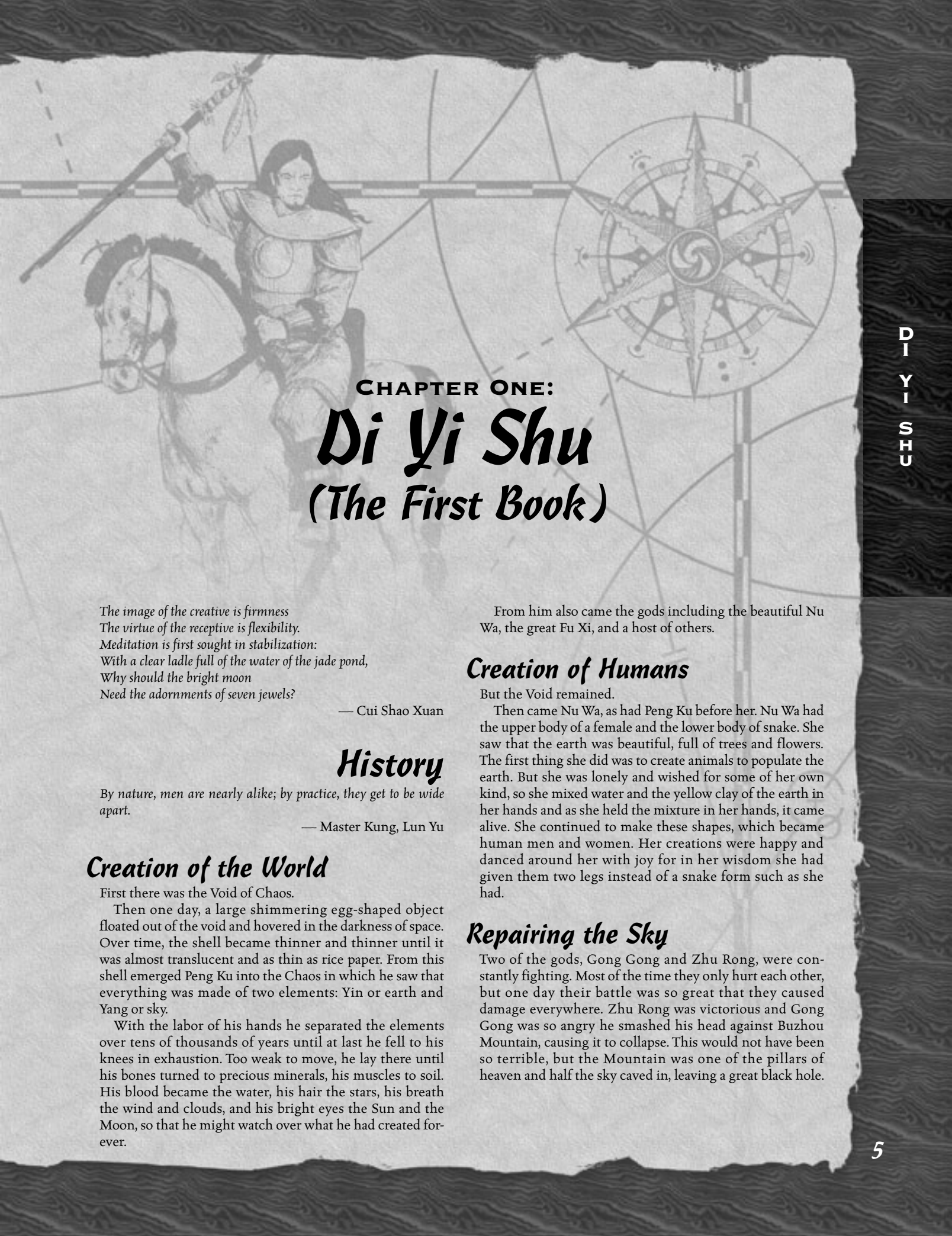
Here we reveal a part of Théah few Westerners have seen, let alone had the chance to visit. Should you be fortunate enough to return home, most will doubt the truth of your stories. Cabora is strange — but Cathay is beyond speculation. For those who yearn to experience life behind the *Huo Qiang*, you will learn to thrive in a nation where natural magic is an acknowledged part of life and ancestral piety is integral to who you are.

It is said those who journey to the East find their lives altered... forever.

*Green mountains range beyond the northern wall.
White water rushes round the eastern town.
Right here is where, alone and restless,
He begins a journey of a thousand miles.*

— Li Bai (701-762 A.V.)





CHAPTER ONE: *Di Yi Shu* (The First Book)

*The image of the creative is firmness
The virtue of the receptive is flexibility.
Meditation is first sought in stabilization:
With a clear ladle full of the water of the jade pond,
Why should the bright moon
Need the adornments of seven jewels?*

— Cui Shao Xuan

History

By nature, men are nearly alike; by practice, they get to be wide apart.

— Master Kung, Lun Yu

Creation of the World

First there was the Void of Chaos.

Then one day, a large shimmering egg-shaped object floated out of the void and hovered in the darkness of space. Over time, the shell became thinner and thinner until it was almost translucent and as thin as rice paper. From this shell emerged Peng Ku into the Chaos in which he saw that everything was made of two elements: Yin or earth and Yang or sky.

With the labor of his hands he separated the elements over tens of thousands of years until at last he fell to his knees in exhaustion. Too weak to move, he lay there until his bones turned to precious minerals, his muscles to soil. His blood became the water, his hair the stars, his breath the wind and clouds, and his bright eyes the Sun and the Moon, so that he might watch over what he had created forever.

From him also came the gods including the beautiful Nu Wa, the great Fu Xi, and a host of others.

Creation of Humans

But the Void remained.

Then came Nu Wa, as had Peng Ku before her. Nu Wa had the upper body of a female and the lower body of snake. She saw that the earth was beautiful, full of trees and flowers. The first thing she did was to create animals to populate the earth. But she was lonely and wished for some of her own kind, so she mixed water and the yellow clay of the earth in her hands and as she held the mixture in her hands, it came alive. She continued to make these shapes, which became human men and women. Her creations were happy and danced around her with joy for in her wisdom she had given them two legs instead of a snake form such as she had.

Repairing the Sky

Two of the gods, Gong Gong and Zhu Rong, were constantly fighting. Most of the time they only hurt each other, but one day their battle was so great that they caused damage everywhere. Zhu Rong was victorious and Gong Gong was so angry he smashed his head against Buzhou Mountain, causing it to collapse. This would not have been so terrible, but the Mountain was one of the pillars of heaven and half the sky caved in, leaving a great black hole.

Reckoning Time in Cathay

The people of Cathay have always been fascinated with the concept of time. It is an enigma that keeps scientists occupied for a lifetime and historians busy writing chronicles. Time is both the daily turn of a day, the progression of the moon in a monthly cycle, and the cycle of 12 moons. The progression of the years is marked not by a continuous count, as is done in the West, but by the years of a ruler's reign. There are some defining moments in history that could be counted as universally momentous – like the fusion of the seven separate kingdoms into one.

There is tomorrow towards which one strives, there is today which may be marked with certainty, there is yesterday, and then there is... then. When one's goal in life is to pass on to the next life and the next with a promise of eternal bliss in heaven, time becomes an endless river whose twists and turns one may only count in small segments.

The humans were struck with terror as the earth opened and the trees burst into flame and the waters rose so high everyone feared that they would drown. All manner of fierce and terrible creature fell from the sky – dragons, snakes, and things too terrible to describe.

Nu Wa was furious with Gong Gong and Zhu Rong for their selfishness and grieved over her creations so she took matters once again into her own hands. She melted five different stones to make a molten arch of color with which she repaired the sky. She took the legs from a giant turtle to serve as the pillars of the sky. She confronted the largest creature, a monstrous black dragon, and bested it in combat, causing all the other hideous creatures to flee back into the sky. Finally she stopped the floods and restored peace to the land.

The only reminder of this great disaster is that to this day, the sky slants to the northwest and the earth to the southeast, so the sun, the moon and the stars turn towards the west and rivers run east.

Nu Wa taught people about irrigation so that their crops would grow. She also taught them about marriage so that they would flourish and increase as well. To this day, she continues to watch over her creations with loving care. She especially delights in music and dancing.

The San Huang (The Three Noble Emperors)

Fu Xi

Nu Wa's husband and brother, the god Fu Xi, was human on the top and snake on the bottom, like Nu Wa. As Nu Wa was the goddess of earth, so did Fu Xi come to be the god of the heavens. He was also the first of the Three Noble Emperors.

Fu Xi taught humans the practical arts of survival and craftsmanship such as fishing, domestication of animals, painting, and most importantly breeding silk worms. He invented music so that his lady wife Nu Wa's human creations would have a pleasing way to worship her.

One day, as Fu Xi walked along the great *Huang He* (Yellow River), he saw a yellow dragon with strange markings on its sides. Thus was he inspired to create the *Ba Gua* or eight trigrams on which is based all writing and the sacred divination method of the *I Ching*. In addition he taught humans to use yarrow stalks for casting oracles and he assigned the 100 Family Names. In all things, he served as a wise and caring emperor for his people.

Shen Nong

According to legend, the second noble Emperor Shen Nong was obsessed with classifying all of the plants to be found in all of the kingdoms of the land. He reputedly undertook this research himself, ingesting close to 400 plants, until one day he turned green and expired. His notes formed the basis of what has become a mind-numbing collection of medical knowledge.

Despite the dark humor of Shen Nong's accidental death, the fact remains that the ancient classification of plants is the basis for medicine practiced in the Seven Kingdoms and has been annotated and refined to the point where Cathayan practitioners are the most advanced in Théah. Approximately 100 years ago, the compilation of those notes, called the *Pen Tsao*, was once again undergoing revision and augmentation.

Shen Nong thought that by taking precautions with regard to his body, he could prolong his life. Therefore, drinking only water that had first been boiled helped to preserve his health. One day he was working under the branches of a camellia tree when the aroma of the brewing water caught his attention. He tasted it and discovered its wonderful calming effect, so he started testing all the herbs that he encountered for their potential.

Shen Nong always carried two bags with him, one for plants that could be ingested as food; the other for medicinal plants. He claimed that the only way to know the application of herbs as medicine was to eat them. Although some of the herbs made him very sick, fortunately he always found an antidote until that last fatal dose.

This ancient ruler is also regarded as the father of agriculture and is credited with teaching people how to plow, sow, reap and use natural remedies to cure their ailments. He is also the creator of markets and trading; in essence, the first merchant of the Seven Kingdoms.

Sui Ren

The third Emperor of the *San Huang* dynasty made what is perhaps one of the greatest contributions to mankind – the art of cooking so that people would not become ill from ingesting raw food. Nowhere in Théah is the cuisine as varied or as unique as in the Seven Kingdoms. According to the *Pen Tsao*, all food can be classified as *yang* (heat) or *yin* (cold) and there are elaborate rules and calculations as to how much of which kind one needs and under what circumstances.

It is a pity that more Westerners do not know about the wealth of spices, herbs and foodstuffs to be found in the Seven Kingdoms, although if they did, it would mean more of them would flock east, so perhaps it is best that things remain as they are.

The Jade Emperor

Born from the union of the Sun and the Moon, this ruler declined to accept the throne and instead lived among men as a farmer. After thousands of cycles, he finally attained the *jing hueng* (Golden Soul) and returned to heaven to begin his apprenticeship as the great ruler. After hundreds of millions of cycles, he declared the *tien ming* and became the Jade Emperor, the ultimate superior man and ruler of heaven.

Before Numa

Long before Numa — in fact long before the first human settlements in western Théah — the people of what would become the Seven Kingdoms of Cathay learned to work the land, however inhospitable, with the help of the gods. Over time, the populations of the tribes ebbed and flowed until, like the great *Huang He*, their small communities became kingdoms. The two greatest tribes, the *Yangshao* in the northwest and the *Lungshan* in the east, leaned to domesticate animals, make pottery, and produce silk. Regardless of the individual traits the various kingdoms developed, two things have always linked the people of Cathay — a visceral love of the land and a fierce determination to survive.

For 1,000 years, the somewhat legendary leaders of the first dynasty ruled the land until at last the tribes were united. They built cities and established seats of power. Although there is more of legend than fact known today about the Xia, one thing is known to be true. They were called the “flood tamers” because of their ongoing attempts to wrestle with the *Huang He*. It was like a marriage: at times the river would be the most docile of wives and at others, she was a raging, roiling she-demon intent on sweeping all beneath her swirling waters.

The first “true” historical dynasty was the Shang, whose rule lasted 500 years. Their earthly power was centered where they could attend to it — in their palaces. All buildings and structures, even those of the poor, fanned out in concentric circles or squares from the royal palace. The Shang loved to build walls and developed a technique of stamping earth into frames that made walls moveable. This dynasty also saw the development of writing, samples of which can be seen today on the treasured oracle bones housed in the great gallery in the Imperial City in Jing Du. The Shang rulers worshiped the Jade Emperor as the supreme leader of the heavens and earth. During this time, when upon the ruler’s death, those who had served him went with him on his journey to the next life so that they could continue to perform those duties.

The Tien Ming

The Seven Kingdoms are governed by the Celestial ruler to whom has been granted the *tien ming*, the Mandate of Heaven. The *tien ming* is a concept unique to Cathay, although the former *Empereurs* of Montaigne would probably have agreed with the concept. To have the Mandate of Heaven is to know the moral order of the universe and practice it as a worthy example to the people. When one loses power and thereby power, one is deemed to have lost the Mandate and is therefore no longer worthy of holding the title. Like all altruistic concepts, the *tien ming* has been abused by those who have usurped power as a way to legitimize their rule.

(AUC 1 – 425): From Light to Darkness

The next dynasty, the Zhou, appears to have come out of southern Xian Bei about the same time as Numa was founded. Initially vassals to the Shang, they found that their overlords had become complacent, thanks to their walls. The Zhou claimed that the Jade Emperor, unhappy with the weak and helpless Shang, had passed the Mandate of Heaven to them to rule the land.

Despite their warlike nature, the Zhou were good rulers who abolished human sacrifice and established religious practices that worshiped the Jade Emperor in his role as god of the sun and the joyous day. As the emperors expanded their territory, they established feudal lords to manage the newly acquired lands. Over time, they began to lose control of such a large holding, and when invaders from the south challenged their rule, they called upon their vassals to defend them. It was during the repulsion of the invaders that the lords saw the weakness in their leaders and realized that they had the strength to break free of their vassalage, so they initiated a civil war that plunged the land into darkness.

Meanwhile, in Théah:

- Numan Empire founded. (1 AUC)
- Expansion of Numan Empire. (102-228 AUC)
- Battle of Palo di Olimpia. (213 AUC)
- Numan battles Eisen barbarians. (236-255 AUC)
- Numan constructs a wall on the River to keep Eisen hordes away. (255 AUC)
- Precious metal discovered in Acraga. (268 AUC)
- Acraga finally subsumed by Numan Empire. (344 AUC)
- Novgod and Ussurans defeat Eisen barbarians. (365 AUC)
- Numan General Julius Caius conquers Avalon. (424 AUC)
- Caius declares himself Numan Imperator. (425 AUC)

(AUC 425 – 440): From Chaos to Order

The civil war raged for 250 years but goodness had not deserted the land. During this tumultuous time Master Kung was born and came to write the *Lun Ya*, the great philosophical treatise that would become one of the sturdy legs on which the religious practices of the Qi Guo stand. Even with the war, the people maintained the land, as if they knew that peace would be restored one day. They reasoned that as the rivers rise and fall, so do the fortunes of man and when the raging waters of war subsided, life would return to normal. Much beautiful poetry was written in these tumultuous times and philosophers found the conditions of the life around them fertile soil in which to plant new ideas.

The great Qin dynasty arose from the west to heal the war-torn land. Despite the relatively brief reign, it would take more space than we have to detail the accomplishments of this favored dynasty for they reformed all aspects of life in Cathay and served as ardent patrons of the arts. They initiated the “legalist” form of government that had proven so successful in their own western territory. They divided the land into 36 “counties,” each with a civil governor, a military commander, and a representative of the central imperial council. This form of government expanded the role and power of the judges and decreased the power of the regional nobility, something they did not appreciate. Now they had to spend time away from their lands, forced to cool their heels in the halls of the Imperial palace at the whim of Imperial bureaucrats.



County leaders were required to make written regular reports, which were facilitated by a standardization of the alphabet as well as currency and measurements. One of the great wonders of world was built during this time — the tomb of Emperor Qin Shi Huang (*see below.*) Despite the accomplishments of this remarkable dynasty, however, the Emperor was not popular. The people labored under an increasingly heavy tax burden and grew discontented as they

watched their money siphoned to support the burgeoning bureaucracy in the capital. The nobles were furious at losing control over their own lands. After less than two decades, Emperor Qin Shi Huang died suddenly. His son ascended the throne but was ill equipped to deal with the situation.

(AUC 440 – 735): *From Chaos to Order*

The future founder of the Han Dynasty rode at the head of a great army of nobles to meet the Imperial forces at the Battle of the Wei Valley. The *tien ming* passed and Prince Liu ascended the throne in 440 AUC. However, the Han rulers

soon learned that trying to change the existing system was more difficult than it had seemed when they were planning the coup. It was difficult to turn a blind eye to the river of wealth that poured in and the comforts of the capital were extremely seductive. In their favor, they worked for economic expansion, especially with the contentious people of Xian Bei. There was some thinning of the bureaucracy and restoration of a limited amount of autonomy for the peasants.

The natural affect of these changes was to increase commerce, which fueled a rise in the middle class. None of this did anything to make the nobility happier, however. To make matters worse, Emperor Han Liu elevated his friends to the peerage and gave them land. The old nobility began to wonder why they had supported the coup. Not only had they not gained anything, they were actually worse off than before. However, they bided their time and quietly strengthened their personal holdings. Like the Huang He, the fortunes of the land rose and fell. There were small uprisings, but each time, they were quelled either by Imperial forces or local nobility, and things returned to an approximation of normal.

The Han Dynasty’s goal to unify and expand the land continued. The kingdoms of Koryo and Lanna came under their sway. Relations with Khimal were stable. Xian Bei was always a bit problematic but nothing that could not be resolved by allowing the nomads to posture a bit. The Dynasty itself underwent a number of changes and at one point it appeared that the royal line had been “overthrown” by a horde of relatives who had risen from middle class to nobility through intermarriage with the royal line. Emperor Han Wang Man sought to restore the luster to the Imperial crown. A popular young man, he was supported by Han Hua’s wealthy middle class. One of his “royal” gestures was to institute use of an Imperial Seal, an intricately carved jade stamp that symbolized the Emperor’s power. Any document stamped by the Imperial seal carried the weight of the Emperor’s authority.

Not everyone found the Emperor's efforts so pleasing. Many of his Han relatives were unhappy at being overlooked for positions of power. They found an unlikely ally — a movement among the peasants who were tired of working so hard to support the idle rich. They dubbed themselves the "Red Eyebrows" as a token of the blood from their heavy burdens. After a bloody civil war, the leader of the alliance ascended the Imperial throne, taking the name of the Dynasty he conquered — Emperor Han Wu Ti. The peasants regained control over their land and better yet, relief from the crushing debt to their overlords.

Emperor Han Wu Ti was a great military leader, a scholar, and a Fu master. He was able to implement improvements through the land that expanded agricultural and commercial production, especially of silk and pottery. He was personally involved in improving access to education. Scholars produced volumes of encyclopedic knowledge, cataloguing everything that could be counted. It looked as though peace had finally settled over the land.

Thus began the second phase of the Han Dynasty. Relations with the Crescent Empire were firmly established, which opened trade across the Mirror Sea between the two nations. The Emperor turned a deaf eye to the complaints from Ussura about marauding Xian Bei. How could anyone control the force of the Steppes, he asked. Surely those who worshiped Matushka should understand that. Internally, as long as Xian Bei continued to pay their tribute, no one cared how the treasures were obtained.

As long as the marauding tribes were small groups of nomads, they were nothing about which to be concerned. However, one tribe — the Toba — began to collect others under their ragged banner. They were particularly ruthless and bloodthirsty and their incursions into Ussura became more and more outrageous. The Emperor was an old man when Ussura announced that Matushka had reawakened, ready to unleash her full fury upon Cathay. He knew that if he sent the Imperial army north, it would leave the rest of the nation, especially the capital, at risk. When the Toba leader sent the body of the Imperial negotiator back to Jing Du in a bag, the Emperor had no choice but to resort to magic. In 735, he raised the great Fire Wall, which trapped the Toba squarely in Ussura and left them to Matushka's tender mercies. The morning after this great feat, the Emperor was dead and with him, the Han Dynasty as well.

Meanwhile, in Théah:

- Barbarian raids destroy Numan's Eisen colonies. (AUC 502-508)
- Contact with Avalon is lost and the Numan Emperor declares the nation cursed. (AUC 573)
- The Age of Imperators ends with the rule of Clementes the Mad. A popular uprising restores the Senate to power. (581 AUC)
- Avalon reappears. (623 AUC)
- General Gaius Philippus Macer declares himself Imperator and overthrows the Senate. (698 AUC)
- The Bargain between Numan senators and an unknown supernatural entity. All areas of Théah are affected, except Cathay. Matushka reawakens. (724 AUC)

- The kingdom of Gallenia is founded. (734 AUC)

(AUC 735 – AV 217): A Kingdom Divided

None of Emperor Han Wu Ti's descendants were able to control the outbreak of civil strife that occurred almost immediately upon the ruler's death. Decades of civil war weakened the nations, which withdrew from each other. The people of Khimal moved higher into the mountains while the inhabitants of Koryo moved deeper into their forests. Tiakhar removed its support from the Imperial Army and focused all of its efforts on building its own strong navy.

Around 835 AV, a group calling itself the Tai Ping Tao or Yellow Turbans arose in central Han Hua. They espoused a philosophy based on the teachings of Yu Chi, a great magician and healer. In essence, they wanted a utopian society whose goal was to eradicate evil and sickness by adhering to quest for the jing hueng. The rise of this sect led to a resumption of intermittent civil war, out of which eventually emerged a powerful duke named Tsao Tsao.

During his brief but brilliant leadership, reunification efforts commenced which had their greatest impact on the make-up of the Imperial Army. No longer was it comprised of Han Hua forces only, but now contained soldiers from almost everywhere in the Seven Kingdoms. The fiercest troops came from Xian Bei, while a cadre of military-minded nobles in Southern Han Hua began to form their own elite units. Led by the Ssu Ma family, they challenged Duke Tsao Tsao who lost the tien ming — and his life — at the battle of Red Cliff in 217. Ironically, the site was close to that of the Wei Valley conflict that had launched the Han Dynasty.

Meanwhile, in Théah:

- The arrival of the First Prophet. (774 AUC/1 AV)
- The Crescent Empire drives Numa from its lands. (32 AV)
- The Numan Empire is split in two. (98 AV)
- The Imperators recognize the legitimacy of the Prophet's faith. (105 AV)
- The Eastern Imperator converts to the Prophet's faith, sending sorcerous nobles feeling. (203 AV)

(AV 217 – 533): Soldiers of Fortune

Once the kingdoms were brought back under Imperial control, Emperor Ssu Ma Yen's Chin Dynasty no longer feared an internal uprising. The Fire Wall cut off Ussura (and the troublesome Toba). Trade with the Crescent Empire was consistently profitable. Under these circumstances, the need for a strong standing army did not seem to be quite so pressing. Acting on the advice of his non-military advisors, the Emperor disbanded the Imperial forces. Initially shocked at such a move, nobleman around the Seven Kingdoms began to see that the nation's loss would be their gain. Personal guards, staffed with some of the most elite soldiers in the land, were formed.

When the Emperor died, the Chin Dynasty remained but in a severely weakened condition, prey to assassinations and resistance from landed nobility who knew that the "Imperial Army" posed no real threat to their political endeavors.

The noblemen were not the only ones to have strong personal armies. The warriors of Xian Bei returned to the Steppes, armed with new weapons and the knowledge of how other soldiers had been trained to fight. Ussura was blocked by the Fire Wall, Khimal by its towering mountains, and Koryo by the daunting dark forests, so the plains of Han Hua were the most likely target of aggression. The Chin retreated to the eastern borders of the Kingdom and the Xian Bei took over control of the northern kingdoms. The people in southern Han Hua sought protection from the forces of Tashil and fortunately, the Xian Bei appeared to be content not to pursue them.

Meanwhile, in Théah:

- The fall of the Numan Empire. (297 AV)
- The Second Prophet appears from the Crescent Empire. (305 AV)
- Emperor Corantine declares the Faith of the Prophet as the Empire's official religion. (312 AV)
- The Orthodox Church is founded. (~327 AV)
- The Vaticine Church founds the Knights of the Black Cross (die Kreuzritter). (347 AV)
- Emperor Corantine dies. (376 AV)
- First appearance of the White Plague. (~400 AV)
- Ussura unites at Matushka's command. (525 AV)

(AV 533 – 858):

A Brief Respite

Thanks to skillful negotiation and a desire for peace, the two Emperors the Sui Dynasty and its were able to reunite the Seven Kingdoms except for Koryo. After several unsuccessful attempts to invade the small, heavily forested kingdom, a peaceful truce was negotiated with Koryo agreeing to pay a nominal tribute in return for being left alone.

The first thing the Sui Emperors did was to restore the Imperial Army. Although the nobles were loathe to give up their personal militia they knew that they could not afford to pay for another civil war. The other major activity was to restore the landworks around the Huang He that had fallen into disrepair over the generations. Tribute from Tashil, Lanna, and Tiakhar was also re-established.

Control of Cathay passed smoothly to the Tang, a branch of the Sui family by marriage that brought the Seven Kingdoms to a level of glory unknown since the days of legends. These Emperors were patrons of the arts, wise statesmen, and clever soldiers who managed to keep the peace and increase the welfare of the land. They returned to an early bureaucratic form of government, but kept a tighter control on it than their predecessors had done. The judicial system was completely overhauled and for the first time, infractions were codified across the land, although Xian Bei and Tiakhar continued to use

their own system of punishment when an Imperial circuit judge was not present.

Peasants were finally able to own their land through legal documentation. Taxation was calculated per person rather than by land ownership, which enabled the government to calculate a relatively accurate census. Rice production was extended from Lanna through the Seven Kingdoms, which improved the daily diet and health of the poor. The Imperial Cavalry was expanded, mostly in the north where the nobility could afford horses. For the first time, a force was deployed that could approach parity with the Xian Bei although the nomads would never lose their superior edge in this type of combat. However, service in the cavalry carried benefits that many young Xian Bei, especially second and third sons found appealing.

The Tang Dynasty was graced by Wu Tse Tien, the predecessor of the current Celestial Empress and the only other woman to rule the Seven Kingdoms in her own right. Despite an ignominious beginning as a concubine, she rose to power as the Emperor's official wife and upon his untimely death, became the wife of his eldest son (by another concubine). She took an active hand in running the government, especially commercial enterprises. She enthusiastically supported the development of the tea and salt industries, which proved very lucrative for the government and her own personal coffers. Much has been written about Empress Wu, not all of it flattering, but this is to be expected. Master Kung did not believe in women rulers. The military regarded her as a usurper of royal power and many bureaucrats were angered when she gave appointments to her relatives. Unfortunately, the poor were heavily taxed which reduced the luster of her 15-year reign that ended, as so often happens, in civil strife and contention with the military.

Meanwhile, in Théah:

- Carleman becomes High Imperator of Théah. (609 AV)
- Carleman dies (654 AV)
- Carleman's son Charles dies. His widow, Isabeau, marries her cousin Léon Montanus and renames their new nation Montaigne. (659 AV)
- Dracheneisen first discovered in Eisen mountains (686 AV) and Stefin I founds Eisen (691 AV)
- Eisen Imperator Gottschalk I conquers much of Vodacce including old Numa. (782 AV)
- Fierce barbarian tribes in the Trade Sea united under Gunnef the Raven-haired who names them Vestenmannanjar. (818 AV)

(AV 858 – 930): Breaking Apart

Cathay was plunged yet again into civil war but it seems that the people had grown used to it, because they were able to survive and even be productive during the chaos. The tea trade grew, mostly in Tashil, while the porcelain industry flourished on both the east and west coasts of Han Hua. Moveable type was invented which enabled printers to produce books that made the classics more accessible. This also gave rise to a short-lived experiment with paper money. Although there was a succession of self-declared emperors,

most people regarded the local nobleman or civil governor as the authority in their region. Once again, the various kingdoms turned inward, relying on their own infrastructure rather than whoever happened to lay claim to the Imperial seal that week.

Meanwhile, in Théah:

- The White Plague returns. (~900 AV)

(AV 930 – 1230):

The Glory Returns

General Chao Kwon Yin was so beloved by his troops that after he successfully subdued all of the warring factions, they demanded that he accept the tien ming. Fortunately, General Chao was a religious man who observed Master Kung's precepts and led a moderate life, which enabled him to live well beyond middle age. He was also smart enough to know that trying to conquer the Xian Bei was futile, so he turned his attention south to the kingdoms of Tashil and Tiakhar. Quickly sizing up the situation on the island kingdom, he realized that they were best left alone. Although larger than its southern neighbor, Tashil was more peaceful and easier to subdue by a simple display of arms and a great deal of diplomacy. In fact, during this dynasty, tribute and diplomacy replaced armed response to problems.

Like the Tang, the Song dynasty's encouragement of arts and sciences resulted in a dazzling array of inventions including gunpowder. The Cathayan Navy quickly developed into a force to be reckoned with as the first *bao chuan* set sail. (See Chapter 4, *Bao Chuan*) Guided by a stern post rudder and navigated by charts and compasses, these huge treasure ships could carry 500 men. Practical applications of medical theory resulted in new discoveries and extended healthier lives. Scholarship flourished, but it was nothing compared to the magnificent development in the arts. The porcelain of this period remains almost unequalled. Certainly one of the most significant artistic contributions of this dynasty was a new form of entertainment called *jing ju* or opera. (See below)

The people of the Seven Kingdoms rejoiced in the benefits of peace — all, that is, except the Xian Bei. They were not happy about the tribute they had to pay and they were not happy about being regarded as barbarians by everyone else. The army was weak and the people were fat. It was time to make a move.

Meanwhile, in Théah:

- The Third Prophet arrives in Castille (1000 AV) and the pro-Crescent High King of Castille dies (1009 AV).
- Vodacce's "Mad" Queen Marrietta tries to end the Crusades with Sorte, only to destroy her family and island. (1011 AV)
- The Hieros Wars. (1012–1019 AV)
- Ramon Sandoval is crowned High King of Castille; "Mad Jack" O'Bannon returns to Inismore and drives out the Vestenmannavnjar invaders. (1014 AV)
- The Hieros Wars end. (1019 AV)
- Mad Jack O'Bannon abdicates from the Inish throne. (1021 AV)

- Henri du Montaigne invades the Glamour Isles; the Sidhe flee from Avalon with the Graal. (1028 AV)
- The Third Prophet dies. (1030 AV)
- Eisen tries to invade Ussura (again). (1034 AV)
- Hughes Allais du Crieux establishes the Poor Knights of the Prophet. (1118 AV)
- Eisen tries to invade Ussura (again). (1207 AV)
- Robert the Dark becomes High King of the Highland Marches. (1219 AV)
- The Stein is built on the Rotstrom River. (1257 AV)

(AV 1230 – 1319):

The Barbarian Invasion

At one time, the Xian Bei had been as far south as Pei Lin and even controlled the northern region, except for Khimal because it was too high and Koryo because it was too well defended. However, they had never entered Jing Du as victors nor had they received the tien ming. As far as they could tell, everyone in the Seven Kingdoms thought they were only good for breeding horses, providing archers, and paying tribute. Now they wanted a chance to prove they could do more.

They swept south, overcoming the poorly defended cities, until they reached the gates of Jing Du. They had achieved their objective, but as often happens, they found that having was not as satisfying as wanting. They did not need to speak Han Hua to know that they were despised. However, they were in power as the Yuan Dynasty and they were going to rule the Seven Kingdoms no matter what.

The Xian Bei are different from their fellow Cathayans. A very proud people, they trace their origins back to the original Yangshao tribe. They speak a dialect that is almost unintelligible to their city-dwelling neighbors. Used to tribal laws and customs, they find Imperial bureaucracy utterly baffling and unnecessary. Most Xian Bei cannot read, which puts them at a distinct disadvantage. While they are not as barbaric as the city people think, they certainly are not accustomed to bathing every day or to the elaborate grooming rituals that are customary among the people of Han Hua.

What ensued was a complete disaster. The new rulers could not communicate directly with their officials so they required translators. The translators were perfectly happy to lie to their superiors about what was being said because they knew there was no way they would be caught. The Xian Bei might not be able to read, but they knew how to spend money. Granted they made improvements, especially in the canal system throughout Han Hua, but for the most part they managed to run through the Imperial treasury in relatively short order. They were now masters of a domain that hated them.

Meanwhile, back home in the north, conflicts threatened to dissolve Xian Bei into a loose and unfriendly congregation of warring tribes. The peasants were unhappy, the nobility was unhappy, the military was unhappy and the Yuan emperors began to wish that they had never ridden south. An uprising, led by a peasant, brought the conflict to Jing Du, screaming for Emperor's head. It was definitely time to go home.

Meanwhile, in Théah:

- The Vodacce Renaissance begins. (~1300 AV)
- The Poor Knights of the Prophet are condemned as heretics and executed. The Church closes the borders to the Crescent Empire and forbids all contact, ending the Second Crusades. (1308 AV)

(AV 1319 – 1600):

From Peasant to Noble

The road back to stability was not an easy one, but fortunately Hong Wu, the man who led the revolt, was extremely practical. He knew that the source of Cathay's power came from the land. As the first Ming Emperor, he focused his efforts on laws to improve the peasants' lives. He reduced the land tax and made sure that granaries throughout the nation were well stocked in anticipation of famine. He ordered that all bridges had to be inspected and repaired regularly. He encouraged farming and barter to strengthen self-supporting communities. He was far less concerned with luxury trade goods and had absolutely no interest in pursuing foreign trade.

Emperor Hong Wu, as befits his name, built up the military, restoring it as an honorable profession. He knew that one day the Xian Bei would grow restless again and he wanted to be sure that they would not be able to make incursions beyond their own borders.

During this Dynasty the great cultural contribution to literature was the novel, highly accessible, printed stories with woodcut illustrations and chapters. Novels were especially popular among the middle class. (See below) Other literary developments included encyclopedias and dictionaries.

During the Ming Dynasty, the government underwent a reduction designed to prevent it from gaining enough power to usurp the Emperor. With the office of Prime Minister eradicated, the Emperor had to take on far more work, which meant that he had to get some help. Rather than appoint autonomous officials, he appointed a staff of personal assistants and secretaries. This may have increased his level of comfort, but created something of a bureaucratic nightmare because everyone had to get his personal approval before they could take action.

The Yuan Emperors has ransacked the treasury and Cathay was for all intents and purposes broke. Individual kingdoms had their own treasuries and they paid tribute, but there was no way the army was in a position to invade any of them to get more money. The Emperor tried printing paper money but soon found out about the disastrous effects of inflation when the qian dropped to 1/70th of its value in coin. Resumption of minting stabilized the economy and gave people jobs. Realizing that the sea could provide another source of wealth, the navy was ordered to continue building the bao chuan, which far surpassed anything that western Théah had afloat on the seas.

Despite the restoration of the treasury, Emperor Hong Wu was unable to achieve his dream of building a great wall across Cathay. His plans were well designed and the model he presented to his advisors was cunningly wrought, but alas, there simply was no money for such a thing.

As any Cathayan knows, like the Hueng He, fortunes rise and fall. The personal assistants clustered around the Emperors began to regard themselves as the true source of power and they isolated the rulers from the people. This suited the landed nobles very well because they could build up their power unmolested. With no wars to fight, the Imperial Army grew bored and jealous of the Imperial Navy. Politics in the Imperial City became as convoluted as a spider web, and just as sticky. Children were put on the throne so administrators could rule through them. Courtiers dabbled in all sorts of colorless, odorless poisons to do away with rivals. Corruption was rampant and the nation's infrastructure began to crumble.

Meanwhile, in Théah:

- The White Plague breaks out and lasts for a few months, causing the most devastation in Avalon. (1347 AV)
- Eisen attempts an invasion of Ussura for the last time, after which the Eisen Emperor forbids future forays. (1348 AV)
- The White Plague breaks out in Castille, killing the entire royal family. (1386 AV)
- Cristóbal Gallegos leaves Castille to sail around world, but is never seen again. (1402 AV)
- Die Kreuzritter is destroyed in Eisen at the Battle of Tannen. (1411 AV)
- David III assumes the throne of Avalon (1413 AV) and defeats Montaigne. (1418 AV). David's son ascends the throne but dies (1422 AV) and Avalon relinquishes its claim to Montaigne. (1425 AV)
- Vestenmannavnjar carls and thralls seize power from the warrior kings. (1516 AV)
- The Objectionist movement begins, led by Matthias Lieber, an Eisen monk. (1517 AV)
- Vestenmannavnjar changes its name to Vendel despite protests of its militant tribes. (1528 AV)
- Richard II, King of Avalon, invades Inismore (1531 AV) and annexes the island. (1541 AV)
- A massive prison is built on *La Palabra de Dios*. (1552–1563 AV)
- The last Vestenmannavnjar king disappears after an argument with Vendel merchant leagues. (~1565 AV)
- The Rilasciare take credit for the Firework Dam incident. (1570 AV)
- Cameron McCormick founds the Explorer's Society. (1598 AV)
- The revolt on La Bucca kills 90% of the inmates and 1/3 of the guards and the Vendel Merchant Guilds are formally established as the nation's governing body. (1600 AV)

(AV 1600 – present): *Salvation From an Old Family*

The Wu family has always been one of the most powerful throughout the nation's long history. They have consistently provided Han Hua and Cathay with generals, statesmen, and rulers whose vision has lifted the Seven Kingdoms out of chaos and turmoil. Once again, as the Ming Dynasty began to rot from inside, the Wu family saw an opportunity to save Cathay and elevate themselves to the Imperial rank at the same time. Adherents of Master Kung, they believed in the quest for the jing hueng, which meant that they had no tolerance for waste, corruption, or impiety. Soon the personal assistants and secretaries and toadies were gone from the Imperial City. Examinations were required for civil service and woe betide the person found cheating or buying the answers.

External relations with the Crescent Empire were strengthened, and internal relations re-established with every kingdom, including Tiakhar and Xian Bei. Both the Imperial Army and Navy underwent a thorough reorganization that streamlined the chain of command and instilled responsibility as far down the ranks to the level of an unit stationed at a border outpost. In the interest of restoring public works, taxes were lightened and the money collected was used within the region rather than shipped to Jing Du for the Emperor's pleasure.

Empress Wu Shang Fon became Empress in 1649 AV, when she was approximately 20. Her beloved father's health was failing and he did not wish to weaken the Imperial power, so he consulted with the High Lama of Khimal as to which of his children should receive the tien ming. Based on the omens and auguries, there was no question that it was to be Wu Shang Fon. Her beauty, intelligence, wit and physical prowess were in ideal harmonic balance for an enlightened ruler. Her way would not be easy, the High Lama warned, but she would prove equal to the challenge.

Meanwhile, in Théah:

A great deal happened, including...

- The microscope is invented (1608 AV) and the first "map" of the human body is completed. (1610 AV).
- Léon XIV is born in Montaigne. (1610 AV)
- The Knights of the Rose & Cross are founded. (1615 AV)
- Jeremy Cook founds the Royal Fraternity for Scientific Minds. (1620 AV)
- Richard IV creates the new Church of Avalon with the king as its head. (1620 AV)
- Léon XIII dies; his wife and Cardinal d'Argeneau become co-regents of Montaigne. (1622 AV)
- Léon XIV turns 18, ascends the throne, banishes his mother, and wisely reduces Cardinal d'Argeneau's power. (1628 AV)
- Emperor Reifenstahl assumes the throne of Eisen and the War of the Cross begins. (1636 AV)

- The Swordsman Guild is founded. (1644 AV)
- Khereid-Din makes his first raid on western Théah. (1648 AV)
- The Inish revolt against Queen Margaret of Avalon for their independence. (1650 AV)
- Elaine appears with the Graal and Glamour returns to Avalon. (1656 AV)
- First reported appearance of the Crimson Rogers. Gaius Nikolai of Ussura dies under mysterious circumstances and his son Ilya succeeds him. (1658 AV)
- The Castillian Armada sails against Avalon but is defeated by Berek and his privateers. (1659 AV)

For the events of 1660 ft., see *Swashbuckling Adventures™*, *The Montaigne Revolution™*, or the 7th Sea website (<http://www.7thsea.com>)



Geography

"Those in the West have the peculiar notion of a place called 'Cathay' where we all move about like stately porcelain figurines. These people are very simple-minded."

— High Lord Cheung Yang Yue
Han Hua Ambassador to the Court of Sultán Timur

The Kingdoms of Cathay

The nation of Cathay, as it is known in western Théah, is comprised of seven kingdoms. From the north to the south they are Khimal, Xian Bei, Koryo, Han Hua, Lanna, Tashil, and the island of Tiakhar. Its history has affected the development of the Crescent Empire, and to a lesser extent, that of Ussura. The great *Huo Qiang* or Fire Wall has stood between Cathay and her neighbors to the north and east, if there are any. With the rise of Cabora, contact with this mysterious land is beginning to move from fantasy to reality.

Starting in the north, the kingdom of Khimal, which borders Ussura, boasts Mt. Qomolangma, the highest mountain in all of Théah (although Théans outside of the Qi Guo know nothing of its existence.) Most of the inhabitants of Khimal live high above the clouds in buildings that cling to the sides of the impossibly high mountains. Southwest from Khimal is the tiny kingdom of Koryo, a thickly forested region whose inhabitants are devout worshippers of tree spirits. Like the people of Khimal, they tend to be quiet and reclusive. They share a portion of the border with Ussura.

The forests open up onto the territory of the Xian Bei, who live a nomadic life on the vast Steppes. They are the progenitors of the *Atlar'vahir* of the Crescent Empire and the original tribe from which came the Toba (erroneously called the "Tumen") who were trapped on the Ussuran side of the Wall of Fire in 735.

The Steppes spread out to a vast area of fertile plains that make up the mighty kingdom of Han Hua with its great river, the Huang He (Yellow River) which bisects the kingdom from east to west. The northwest corner of Han Hua completes the border with Ussura, while the southwest coast sits on the Mirror Sea.

South of Han Hua is another small kingdom called Lanna. An ancient land, it once held more territory but its borders have been inexorably pushed south, wedging it up against Tashil, which covers the tip of the subcontinent. Tashil's coastline touches both the Mirror Sea and the Corridors of Flame. Lanna and Tashil share a small rain forest that is rich in rare woods, exotic birds and poisonous snakes.

Southeast of Tashil is the island kingdom of Tiakhar, a beautiful but dangerous place ruled by hereditary kings who claim the patronage of a bloodthirsty god named Ravana. Tiakhar pays tribute to Han Hua but with a less than gracefully bent knee.

The *Huo Zhi Zou Lang* (Corridors of Flame) run north along the eastern coasts of Tashil, Han Hua, Xian Bei and Khimal, and from there they lead off into uncharted territory.

Khimal

Ruler: The High Lama Kunchen Choden

Major Places: Potala (capital), Mt. Qomolangma

Far to the north, the world's tallest mountain, more than

29,000 ft. high, watches over Théah, even if most of Théah is not watching back. Here is the small kingdom of Khimal, life proceeds at its own pace due in part to the environment and in part to the gentle influence of the High Lama. To survive at these altitudes is difficult for those who have not been born here. The effects on the human body are swift and devastating, frequently resulting in a most painful and agonizing death. Yet the people of Khimal thrive and live to very old ages. Why?

They claim that it is because they are blessed to live so close to the gods and to be in the presence of the High Lama. It is his example of the Golden Soul that proves how beneficial the ways of *jing hueng* are. They believe that through meditation, exercise, and a simple, natural diet they are able to keep their physical inner pathways open so that qi flows evenly, permitting blood and air to move properly in the thin, icy air.

Yarlong Tsangpo is a shrine-city, full of temples and pagodas. The people used to trade with Gallenia before the Wall of Fire, but now their major commercial partner is Backje in Koryo. Life here is very old-fashioned and almost otherworldly. Although not as high in the mountains as Potala or Shegar, the air is still thin and cold, so the people spend much of their time indoors at prayer and meditation. The reason the woven products from Yarlong Tsangpo are so beautiful, they say, is because the city is actually a bridge between this world and the supernatural one, so the gods are freer to come and go at will. Under their supervision, the people create works of art as a practical expression of their faith. *Thangkas* (prayer tapestries) from Yarlong Tsangpo are the most prized in the entire Qi Guo.

Shegar on the southeastern border with Xian Bei is a low-land city and the main trade venue. It is also the location of an auxiliary government office as most outsiders cannot make the trip to Potala. Shegar has the best fish market in the northern part of the Qi Guo where one can also buy rare flame colored pearls, if one has the price. One of the favorite songs tells about the sighting of the *Mi Shi De Chuan*, the Lost Ships, and how a local hero bested the dreaded *Chiang Shi*.

Potala is one of the most inspiring cities in the Seven Kingdoms, but only a few people outside of Khimal have ever been there. It is the home of the High Lama and thus is a religious enclave of tremendous holiness. Once a year, in the summer, the Celestial ruler makes a pilgrimage to Potala. The trip must be done in slow and careful stages, and much physical preparation, prayer and meditation is done prior to the arduous journey. The Celestial Empress Wu is a great favorite of the High Lama who appreciates her humor and honest heart.

Legend says that the site was chosen because the Goddess of Mercy appeared to the ruler of Khimal in a dream and told him to move further into the mountains. There would come a time, he was told, when the people of Khimal would need to save the secrets of the world from destruction but to do so, they would need to live above the world of men. The name Potala was chosen because the Goddess spoke from her sacred cave on Mt. Potala, a mythical peak supposedly located in the Kathmandha Mountains of Tashil.

After consulting with wise and holy men, construction began on two palaces, the *Potrang Karpo* (the White Palace for the ruler) and the *Potrang Marpo* (the Red Palace for the temple and tombs of the former High Lamas.) Each High Lama has continued the construction although the White Palace is now used for governmental or secular business and the Red Palace for spiritual business.

The combined buildings form an immense structure over 1,400 sq. ft. The palace is built in concentric squares and only the highest officials and most devout may enter the inner quarters. The current High Lama, Kunchen Choden, a delightfully practical man, is completely unpretentious despite his rank and the esteem in which he is held by almost everyone in the Qi Guo. He frequently leaves the palace and visits the market where he prefers to shop for fruits and vegetables himself. He is also an expert dog breeder of *rincen kyi*, the soft-coated little spaniels trained to turn the temple bells. He is fond of children and likes to visit classrooms of young monks to quiz them on their studies. The High Lama is probably one of the finest qi players alive today and would have been a brilliant general if he had not been called to the religious life.

On state occasions, the High Lama sits in a special reception room dominated by the great Snow Lion Throne, a magnificent golden chair decorated with flowers, fruits and leaves made of gems and precious metals. A rainbow arches above the High Lama's head. Pearls, and precious and semi-precious stones, especially fire opals found in the local mountains, cover the front and back. Set in each arm are three perfect jewels to represent the Six Perfections of the Golden Soul: *prajna* (wisdom), *dhyana* (concentration), *virya* (effort), *kshanti* (effort), *shila* (morality), and *dana* (generosity). The throne's value is incalculable, not only for its earthly value, but because it was a gift from the gods to the first Lama. So precious is it that peacock feathers are the only thins used to dust it. The Imperial Throne of Han Hu, a gift from Khimal, is modeled after the Snow Lion Throne.

An extremely sacred section of the palace at Potala contains two small chapels, which are actually the oldest structures in the complex. The most sacred statue in all of Khimal is that of the Lokeshvara, a *bodhisattva* or enlightened spirit, enshrined in the smaller chapels. Throughout the Qi Guo, the faithful dream of making a pilgrimage to Potala to see the statue in person.

Those who are not Khimali may find the mountain cities like Potala eerie and disturbing. Sound travels differently in the thin air and the high-pitched prayers mixed with the ring of temple bells and prayer bowls may not be soothing to outsiders' ears. There are also times when the only thing one can hear is the wind whistling through the halls and the distant chime of the bells.

Almost no vegetation grows here except on the hillsides during the brief spring and summer. Small valleys among the mountains contains thick grassy meadows and icy clear lakes that will freeze a man's heart in a matter of seconds; however, reaching these valleys is treacherous. Most of the bridges in Khimal are made of thick rope and sway at the slightest wind, so trying to cross above a deep, snow-filled gorge is not an easy task. There are caves throughout the mountains and some enclaves of nomadic Khimali who spend the winter with their animals, sheltered from the snow but completely dependent on what they have been able to save from the harvest or buy at a market. At least they are assured of a steady supply of fresh water.

The people of Khimal are kind and generous, blessed with a practical approach to life, a good sense of humor, and a strong faith. They are shrewd bargainers and love a brisk trade. They are also inveterate gamblers and enjoy games of chance. Despite the fierce competition, they do not regard losing as shameful nor does it make them particularly angry and "I'll do better next time" is a loser's common response. In their homes, they are generous hosts who enjoy sharing songs and jokes. They seem to have physical traits in common

with the people of Xian Bei so it is assumed by some that the people of the Steppes were actually mountain folk who came down to find better pastures for their animals... or perhaps some adventure in their lives.

Xian Bei

Ruler: Khan Dalan-Tai

Major Places: Sukhbataar (capital)

Drink, my horse, while we cross the autumn water!

The stream is cold and the wind like a sword,

As we watch against the sunset on the sandy plain,

Far, far away, shadowy Lingtao.

Old battles, waged by those long walls,

Once were proud on all men's tongues.

But antiquity now is a yellow dust,

Confusing in the grasses its ruins and white bones.

— Li Bai

Between the grassy fertile plains of Han Hua and the dense forests of Koryo, the Steppes stretch out their long dusty golden fingers. It is a difficult land on which to survive. There is precious little water, a long bitter winter and the ever-present wind. Land like this breeds strong hearty people and that is how the Xian Bei think of themselves. They are the outriders of the Qi Guo, fierce unrelenting warriors who can stand astride a pony galloping at full tilt, twist their small, lithe bodies and fire a volley arrows with deadly accuracy.

They are also the forefathers of the Atlar'vahir in the Crescent Empire, who traveled north long before the Wall of Fire was raised and eventually settled in the beautiful green valleys to the west. For those who stayed behind life never got any easier but the tribes grew in strength and number. A nomadic people even now, the Xian Bei dwell in cities that are little more than collections of ger pitched for a season and then packed up for the move to the next site.

Khovsalnur nestles next to the Huo Qiang (or as close as it can get without being consumed.) It is the main spring camp for the Khan who visits four main sites in rotation each year, depending on the season. Before the Wall of Fire was raised, this was actually the territory of the fierce Toba who raided Gallenia and were poised to spread both north and south when they were trapped on the other side of the fiery barrier.

Yolyn Am is the summer gathering spot and the site of the largest festival in Xian Bei, the *Naadam*, a week-long open market, horse fair, social gathering, and major athletic competition. Visitors from Khimal and Koryo attend to do trading and watch the competitions. The High Lama has even attended once and thoroughly enjoyed participating in the heavy wagering that goes on throughout the week.

The *Naadam* is an excellent time for weavers and jewelers as everyone wants to have something new, especially for the banquet at the end of the week. Artisans spend all year getting ready for the great market.

The athletic competition consists of a triathlon of horse racing, archery and wrestling. Men and women compete together in archery and horse racing, but have separate wrestling bouts. There is some good-natured jesting to a young man who loses a match that perhaps he ought to sign up on the women's side, but in truth Xian Bei men have a healthy respect for women.

The *Naadam* (from the Xian Bei word *naadah*, to play) brings a burst of color to the normally dun and brown landscape. Booths and ger are decorated with ribbons and brightly colored cloth. Everyone wears bright new outfits.

Blue, orange, red and magenta predominate in all the decorations, including the banners and ribbons that festoon the racecourse. Riders braid colored ribbons and semi-precious stones into their mounts' manes. Thankfully, due to being raised amid the constant swirling winds, Xian Bei horses are not easily spooked by suspicious "traps" the way horses in Western Théah might be. At the end of two days, the five racers with the best time, regardless of age, compete in the "Airag" finale. (Children begin competing in the riding competitions when they turn five.) The winner is showered with the powerful fermented beverage and his or her horse is given a new name to reflect a hero from Xian Bei's past.

Archery competitions cover many categories including speed of reload, distance, accuracy, and ability to use the heaviest bow. In the final competition, 360 leather rings are set up between two dirt mounds in a line perpendicular to the archer. Shooting at 70 meters, the object is to skim the arrow just above the mounds and pierce the rings. A red ring gives extra points. Xian Bei bows have no sights and the arrows use willow shafts, usually fletched with vulture feathers and tipped with bone or metal. The bowstring is made from tough bull or yak tendons. Despite the rough-sounding materials, these bows are graceful and beautifully made.

The wrestling competition is the most popular. The competitors gather along the sidelines and there is a moment of silence while everyone says a prayer to the gods. Then, as if with one mind, the wrestlers throw off their coats and run into the center of the ring, clad in brief leather outfits. The rules are simple: if any part of your body other than your feet touches the ground, you are out. Finally, two wrestlers are left. A temporary hold is called while they clean off and move to opposite ends of the ring. At a signal from the Khan the two rush at each other and duel for victory. The winner performs the "flying eagle dance" by flapping his arms and leaning on his toes as if to fly away.

On the next to last day, an open court is held during which grievances are aired and decisions rendered by the Khan and the council of tribal elders. The evening is devoted to the women who have a special private feast. Girls who have entered womanhood during the past year are welcomed into the tribe as eligible brides with a great deal of singing and dancing. Men are expressly forbidden to attend or come anywhere near the site, which is guarded by armed female archers. Naturally, some young men cannot resist the temptation but most come away red-faced and refuse to speak about what they saw or heard.

On the last day, all of the prizes are given at a public recognition ceremony and a great feast is held with dancing and theatrical performances. Betrothals are announced and weddings are performed. While the Xian Bei people are respectful of marriage, there is a good deal of drinking and carousing during the week, and occasionally there are indiscretions. A child born nine months after *Naadam* to an unwed mother is called a "festival gift."

If necessary, the Khan will announce his successor at *Naadam*, although *Dalan-Tai* is a healthy man and expects to live for some time. In any event, *Naadam* is unquestionably the highlight of the year for the Xian Bei people.

Amarbaya, the autumn gathering place, is on the border with Han Hua. It is an occasion for a large open trading market but is only a seasonal city with no permanent buildings.

Dharkan is the winter gathering place on the east coast. It is one of the few Xian Bei cities with permanent buildings and residents. The tribe here is mostly fishermen and net-

makers, and the seasonal festival celebrates the harvest from the sea. Seeing as the Xian Bei are not sea faring people, the barrier does not bother them one way or the other, although children like to sit on the beach and watch it especially at night. This is also the time when the Khan meets with emissaries and officials from Han Hua to pay the annoying tribute to the Celestial Empress.

The capital of Xian Bei is **Sukhbataar**, an ancient location from a time when the Xian Bei ruled a much larger territory stretching into Gallenia. It is also a main camping ground year-round for any who wish to pitch their ger or build a permanent residence, and start a business. The Xian Bei are not by nature kindly disposed to permanent buildings, and often those who leave for *Naadam* do not return, having once again felt the call of the Steppes. Sukhbataar is also a military staging ground because it is centrally located which reduces the possibility of uninvited visitors from neighboring kingdoms.

There is a fairly new monastery in Sukhbataar, only 100 years old or so, next to the main temple. It actually looks more like a small fortress than a religious building, but this is due to the need to create silence for meditation, so the walls are higher and thicker than normal to block out the wind. The High Lama is very interested in the future of the monastery and has gifted it with beautiful *thangkas* to the Green and White Tara in hopes of inspiring the monks in their meditation. He approves of the proximity to the military training camp as it enables the monks to take daily physical exercise, a necessary component of a healthy life.

Koryo

Ruler: King Kyu Hwang Bae

Major Places: **Shilla** (capital)

The people of Koryo live in deep forests between the mountains of Khimal and the steppes of Xian Bei. An intensely private people, they are quiet and reserved and avoid eye contact upon first meeting. They move with quiet grace and are not given to idle chatter. Koryo women are almost unearthly beautiful, tending to be shorter than the women of Han Hua, with flawless ivory colored skin and long straight black hair. The men are lithe, handsome, and quite limber, due no doubt from spending so much time climbing trees.

More than 80 percent of the kingdom is forest, so the people's relationship with the trees is the most important part of life in Koryo; Although in their ancient past they were fierce warriors, circumstances forced them to retreat to the forests where they have remained. However, this does not mean that they are weak or timid. They practice the martial art of *Tie Xiong Kung* as part of their daily regimen. In fact, one of the King's twin daughters, Princess Kye Lim Ho, is at journeyman level even though she is only 16.

Cities in Koryo tend to be small settlements in clearings surrounded by trees. There are very few formal paved roads as the materials to make them are not readily available. **Kayasan** sits right at the border between Xian Bei and Khimal and is Koryo's major trade city, and actually the largest city in the kingdom. The King maintains a residence and visits during the summer. Kayasan is also the local collection center for *hu po* (amber).

Backje is actually the former capital from ancient times when Koryo was more aggressive and frequently tangled with its Ussuran neighbors. The "city" is actually a complex of ruined shrines reputedly inhabited by spirits of the dead — certainly not a place to go wandering, especially at night.

The capital of **Shilla** is the most beautiful city in Koryo thanks to its unique location. The forest rises up into the steep cliffs so part of the city is on the lower land and part, including the royal palace, in actually in the forest proper which gives it the appearance of having houses in the trees themselves. With no enemies coming though the Wall of Fire and the thickly forested mountains as protection, the people have little to fear from invasion. The city's defenses take full advantage of being on the cliffs, which affords them a perfect view of invading forces and excellent camouflage as well. The thing the people of Koryo fear far more than invasion is a lightning strike that causes a forest fire.

Deep in the forest is the sacred city of **Songnisan**, which does not appear on any map. It is forbidden for anyone other than a native of Koryo to visit because this is the temple complex of the *shin liung nim* ("tree spirit friends") where they learn the special magic of Koryo called *song hwang tung*. Princess Kye Lim Min is a student of this powerful magic and promises to be one of most adept. Shin liung nim believe that the trees will protect them against any who would enter the Shin Liung Forest with intent to harm. The Koryo people as a whole believe that should their land be invaded, the shin liung nim can call upon the trees to defend the land. When asked if this is possible, or just an old wives' tale, the High Lama reminds the asker that perfect harmony between man and nature is part of the quest for the jing hueng, the Golden Soul.

Han Hua

Ruler: The Celestial Empress Wu Shang Fon

Major Places: **Jing Du** (capital), **Sheng Tao**, **Pei Lin**, **Huo Long Cheng**

There are hundreds of cities, towns, and villages in this, the largest kingdom in Cathay. Home to the Celestial Empress, Han Hua is also the seat of government for the nation. The vast plains separate the southern kingdoms of Lanna, Tashil, and Tiakhar from the northern kingdoms of Xian Bei, Koryo, and Khimal. A fertile area, blessed — and sometimes cursed — by the great Huang He (Yellow River), Han Hua is what most travelers from the West think of when they hear the word "Cathay." Evidence of Han Hua dominance over the rest of the nation, with the exception of Tashil, can be seen as far back as the beginning of recorded history in Western Théah.

Bei Hai Guan, a fortified city in the north, serves as a military staging point in the event that tribes from Xian Bei decide to head south for the winter. Khan Dalan-Tai pays tribute to the Celestial Empress but it is well known that he wears the yoke of feudalism none too graciously. Duke Tzou takes the advice of the ancient scholars that an army must always be prepared very seriously.

Xi Huo Guan still shows some Ussuran influence from the earliest days before the Wall of Fire was raised. Now, however, it is a fishing town. Like other towns along the east coast, the fishermen do not venture too far out into the Huo Zhi Zou Lang. They know what will happen if they do; every town tells the tale of sighting the dreaded Mi Shi De Chuan and sailors fear being dragged onto the ghost ships worse than they fear an encounter with Tiakhari pirates.

Pei Lin is not quite as much a formal city as it is a sanctuary for a huge collection of monuments and tablets. It is a very sacred place and the monks who maintain it will offer sanctuary to those who seek protection from unjust pursuit.

The monuments here are, for the most part, stone tablets that commemorate everything from historical events and people to prayers for the safety of loved ones. No one who has not been properly buried may have a tablet erected in their memory for fear of calling their wandering spirit to haunt the place. The beautiful Da Xiong Bao Dian temple provides a cool and serene place for deep contemplation amidst hundreds of statues and a multitude of tiny jewel-like gardens. No creature found within the temple may be killed. While the monks permit the temple mao family to keep the insect population under control naturally, they gently but firmly draw the line at permitting the felines to fish for snacks in the carp pools.

Tien Jin is the location of the most important porcelain production done in the Seven Kingdoms. Everything in the city revolves around this major industry; even the statues in the temples are made of glazed ceramics and painted bright colors. A fine dust coats almost everything, making the city a housekeeper's nightmare. There is a saying when food with fine grit in it must have come from Tien Jin.

This city does a brisk trade along the coast as far south as Andaman in Tashil (always with a cautious eye out for Tiakhar ships) and as far north as the fishing villages of Khimal, especially when the monks come from down from Potala with trade goods from the mountains.

The First Switch

Khereid-Din claims that he found the First Switch for Cabora in Cathay, in a "great engine in the midst of a hidden oasis." In fact, on a clandestine visit to Tien Jin to conduct some nefarious slaving business, he was the guest at the home of a wealthy merchant. His host's elaborate hospitality included the ingestion of *afyam*. It was through this drug-induced vision that the Corsair leader believes he communed with his spiritual guides who led him to what he later described as a "*Syrneth engine*."

Further down the east coast is the industrial city of **Bai Tao**, the location of the secondary Imperial naval shipyards. Most of the major "public" ship building has been done on the west coast at **Xi Hai Long**. Since the influx of outsiders, however, development of new ships and innovations has been moved to the east where it will not be observed by those who might wish to gain more knowledge about Cathay's seafaring defenses.

On the north side of the Liang Guo He is **Hua Ting** where the focus of sailing is traversing the river rather than the coastal sea, transporting goods to and from Lanna along the river. Merchants here prefer to have a more certain return on their investment and let the sister city of **Nan Gang** handles transport of goods along the coast.

On the northwest coast is the city with the charming name of **He Hai** which handles both seafaring and river traffic at the western end of the Huang He and its tributary the Fei Huang He or "Small Yellow River" which branches off and runs south to Xi Hai Long. Traveling south you reach **Ji Long**, another center of ceramics production. This city has a thriving open market and a more relaxed atmosphere than Dong Hai which, according to its southern neighbors, takes its porcelain production entirely too seriously. Art done under the auspices of the gods, they say, should be done with joy rather than drudgery and restriction.



An Bang is another fortified military city on the southern border with Lanna. Although hostilities are not expected with the smaller nation, it never hurts to be prepared. An assignment to An Bang is far superior to Bei Hai Guan because of the warm weather and the opportunity to interact with the charming and gracious people of Lanna.

Sheng Tao, considered the most luxurious place in the Seven Kingdoms (other than, perhaps, the private palace of Sayari Razak, but very few people see the inside of that building!) Sheng Tao has or can acquire anything a person desires in relatively short order. Nestled in a jewel-like valley on the banks of the Huan Le He, Sheng Tao is the special place designated by the Han Hua royal family as the ultimate pleasure destination in the land. Here one finds the most beautiful men and women, the best theatre, the finest music, the best food — in short, everything one could want for a complete indulgence of the senses.

There are elements in the government and religious orders who find a city dedicated to pleasure to be a violation of the precepts of philosophy and faith, and caution the young Empress against overindulgence, but so far she seems to be able to moderate her activities. The worst thing she does by far is stay up all night playing xiang qi and mah jong, neither of which will harm her immortal soul, says the High Lama.

There is a darker side to Sheng Tao, which is not surprising, especially with it being so close to Tiakhar and the dreaded city of Bandar Serai, whose slave market is far worse than that of Erivan in the Crescent Empire. Sheng Tao is not a city one goes to alone in search of one's fortune; it is best to have a trusted patron arranged in advance. There are rumors of a new entertainment involving afyam but so far it is not widespread.

The capital city of **Jing Du** is a huge magnificent bustling metropolis surpassing even Charouse or Iskandar. It is quite easy to get lost in Jing Du because of the convoluted streets that seem to run every which-way. The city is extremely old and over time, additions have been made to existing streets and buildings that further complicate travel for those who have never been there. In the middle of Jing Du is the **Gu Gong**, the Imperial Palace, which is a entire self-contained city. One need never leave the Imperial City, let alone Jing Du, for the entirety of one's life for everything is here. People from Jing Du tend to look upon from the country with scorn.

Huo Long Cheng, the most sacred city in Han Hua, is home to the sacred burial site of the Celestial rulers. There are two remarkable monuments that bring pilgrims and sightseers from all over the Seven Kingdoms.

The first is the great tomb of Emperor Qin Shi Huang. A soldier at heart, he wanted to be certain that he would have a huge army to command in the next life, so he commissioned a huge tomb with two sections. The first room is approximately 700 by 200 feet with trenches ranging from 15 to 22 feet deep and filled with terra cotta statues: 6,000 soldiers arranged in battle formation. The soldiers are fully armed and armored, with exact details designating their rank. The uniforms are painted red or green and their lamellar armor is painted brown or black. The soldiers are either archery or infantry; amazingly, each of the 6,000 figures has a distinct facial expression. Some are accompanied by their horses which seem so life-like that one expects to hear them paw the ground in anticipation of the upcoming battle.

Architects and artisans from all over the land were brought to work on this vast project. The Emperor insisted that the body of each figure be built and painted separately and then attached so that it would appear as though they were real men who could come to life at any moment. The soldiers range in height from 5'8" to 6'5".

The huge second room (64,000 sq. ft.) contains another 1,400 warriors including infantry, cavalry, and commanders. It is a testament to the sculptors that the facial expressions of these warriors differ from those in the other room.

Sadly, the Emperor died while on campaign; however, there is every assurance that he is the happy general of a very large army.

Huo Long Cheng is also the site of the great *Pai Wei*, the memorial tablet and statue commemorating the fusion of the seven separate kingdoms into the *Qi Guo* during the reign of Emperor Han Wu Ti.

THE HUO QIANG (THE WALL OF FIRE)

Emperor Han Wu Ti received the *tien ming* at the age of 16 and ruled for 54 years. He was a strong and vigorous man who is responsible for bringing the other six kingdoms under Han Hua's control. Through a combination of skilled negotiation and military strength he managed to subdue or charm the rival kingdoms into forming "alliances" with his more powerful central kingdom. He established a system of taxation and tribute that was (more or less) beneficial to all kingdoms. He also gathered scientists and architects to find solutions to the constant flooding of the Huang He. He was a great patron of the arts and a poet of some merit.

Towards the end of his reign, however, he realized that that not all problems could be solved with *qian*, diplomacy, and earthly might. When it became brutally apparent that the Toba presented a significant threat to his newly formed *Qi Guo* (Seven Kingdoms), he used one of his less well-known skills — Fu sorcery.

One of the wonders — and mysteries — of the world is the origin of the great fiery barrier that blocks Cathay from its mainland neighbor Ussura. At one time it was believed that the entire subcontinent was ringed with fire, but that is a gross exaggeration based on myth and legend rather than fact. In truth, until 735 AUC, there was normal contact between Gallenia and the kingdoms of Khimal, Koryo, Xian Bei, and Han Hua on its northeast border.

Plagued by particularly violent raids from the Toba nomads along the northern border with Gallenia, and concerned about the fragility of the newly aligned *Qi Guo*, Emperor Han Wu Ti invited hundreds of dignitaries, including 63 Fu sorcerers, to the sacred city of Huo Long Cheng. The public purpose: to dedicate a great *Pai Wei*, a stone memorial he commissioned to symbolize the new nation. The true purpose? To perform what may be the largest act of sorcery in the history of Théah since the Bargain.

The aged Emperor insisted that the Imperial Throne be carried from Jing Du to the sacred city, which was no small task given its size and weight. When asked why he insisted on such a thing, the Emperor replied that because it was modeled after the great Snow Lion Throne of the High Lama, it would represent the holy man at the ceremony.

The massive *Pai Wei* depicted a procession of figures coming to greet the Celestial Emperor who is the central figure seated on the Imperial Throne. On one end of the statue is a beautiful Tashili natya dancer and a proud warrior walking between two huge elephants. Next to them is a Xian Bei figure of an archer in full gear, mounted on a Steppes pony. Khimal's symbol is a group of monks carrying stone *thangkas* and temple bells and accompanied by proud waist-high mastiffs. On the other side of the Emperor was Lanna's section, which includes dancers in full regalia and farmers carrying baskets of rice. Tiakhar naval officers flank a miniature version of a ship laden with treasure, and on the other side, men and women who seem to be emerging from a forest represent Koryo.

During the dedication ceremony, which lasted all day, many people placed offerings on the great *Pai Wei*, praying for peace, tranquility, and prosperity in the new nation. The final ceremony occurred at sunset, as the frail and exhausted Emperor was brought forward in his Throne to make his offering. He placed a single perfect lotus blossom at the foot of his own image and touched the replica of his own feet with thin quivering hands. He was assisted back to his throne and asked to be carried to his private chambers as it had begun to rain and he was cold and very tired.

The next morning it was announced that the Celestial Emperor had died during the night. On the second day of mourning, exhausted riders began to arrive on lathered horses from the north and east — at sunrise of the previous day, those from the north announced, a wall of fire had burst up from the ground, rising high into the sky! Nothing — water, various chemicals and powders, even incantations — could bring it down. Those from the east reported flames rising atop the waters off the coast as far as the eye could see! Surely this was the work of gods!

The Imperial Throne

The Imperial Throne is not, in point of fact, a Talisman in the normal sense. It was not created by any sorcerer and bears none of the trigram or hexagram marks that Talismans do. The seat of power was a gift to the people of Han Hua from the High Lama of Khimal.

Each Master may alter only one Talisman in the whole of his life. If a Talisman has multiple enchantments, that number of Fu Masters must participate in altering the magic. Virtually any kind of magical effect can be accomplished when doing this, although there seems to be some law of conservation of magical energies, which is probably why it took 64 hexagram Talismans to produce the Wall of Fire. The only exception to this is the Imperial Throne, which serves as a focus of power, so a Fu Master can use its power to alter even a Talisman with multiple effects.

To use the Imperial Throne, a player must be a Fu master and have permission to sit there. This series of events would most probably only occur if current ruler is not a Fu Master (or is dead) and the fate of the entire nation hangs in the balance. If a PC uses the Throne without permission, and manages to survive being attacked by the Imperial guards or killed by the Emperor (if he is a Fu Master) or by Imperial sorcerers, there is still a chance that he or she will die from channeling such powerful magic. The Throne knows its master.

**WARNING! THE FOLLOWING IS FOR
THE GM ONLY! PLAYERS WHO READ THIS
SECTION MAY SPOIL THE GREATEST
ADVENTURE OF THEIR LIVES!**

Raising the Huo Qiang was, in fact, the extraordinarily skillful work of 64 Fu sorcerers including the Celestial Emperor himself and one special visitor disguised as a Xian Bei emissary. That man was Koschei.

The Emperor had searched the land and gathered other Masters who were willing to sacrifice their one-in-a-lifetime ability to create a new Talisman, in essence to turn the Pai Wei itself into Shen (Keeping Still), the Talisman of the Mountain. When he inspected the Pai Wei before its unveiling, the wily Emperor placed a Talisman in the base of the statue, through which he was able to activate the sorcery with the combined presence of the Imperial Throne and Crown. Only those Celestial rulers who were Fu masters knew the secret of these two items but had never had a reason to use it.

The only way that the Huo Qiang can be brought down and Corridor of Flame returned to normal is to collect all 64 Talismans and find 64 Fu sorcerers who are powerful and skilled enough to reverse the spell.

Where Are the Talismans?

Over time, the Talismans belonging to the original 64 Fu sorcerers have become scattered across Théah. The whereabouts of some are completely unknown. However, the High Lama and a handful of trusted Fu sorcerers know the location of 16 Talismans. Note that finding the location does not insure that the Talisman can be retrieved (or even identified as a Talisman):

TA YU (POSSESSION IN GREAT MEASURE)

One of the gems in the Imperial Crown... ah, but which one?

HSU (WAITING)

On a dusty shelf in the back of a dusty antiquities shop located at the end of an unremarkable alley somewhere in Freiburg...

CHEN (AROUSING)

Duchess Meng has it. Finding a Fu Master is relatively simple. Finding the other Talismans is not simple but she has some very clever people working on the problem.

KAN (ABYSMAL)

On one of the early voyages of the Bao Chuan, a ship sank to bottom of the sea off the coast of Avalon. Now Queen Maab has herself a strange treasure from a far-off land. She does not know what to do with it, but she knows it is magical. Perhaps Derwyddon knows what it is...

KEN (KEEPING STILL)

Ebedi Yilan is rumored to have this Talisman deep in the center of the Muglak'kum desert of the Crescent Empire. Is this perhaps a clever ruse designed to throw people off the track and into the unforgiving desert, or worse, into the madman's clutches?

LU (WANDERER)

Admiral Hai Ping took this Talisman, a gift from his beautiful Fu sorceress mistress, on the seventh voyage of the Bao Chuan. He entered the Corridors of Flame some 200 years ago and has not been heard from or seen since.

CHIA JEN (FAMILY)

Koschei carries this Talisman with him at all times.

TUI (JOYOUS)

This Talisman is located somewhere in the vast Imperial quarters of the pleasure palace at Sheng Tao.

THE OTHER EIGHT TALISMANS

Emperor Han Wu Ti knew that Talismans have strange and not always wonderful effects so he gathered the eight that he and his sorcerous colleagues regarded as the most potentially dangerous and secreted them in the vast Treasury in the Imperial City. These are Po (Splitting Apart), Ko (Revolution), Kuei (Opposition), Sheng (Pushing Upward), Shih Ho (Biting Through), Sung (Conflict), Kuai (Breakthrough), and Chien (Obstruction). The Imperial Treasury is extremely well guarded by iron gates, heavy doors, fanatically loyal and well-armed guards and, of course, sorcery.

Is it possible to bring the Wall of Fire down? Technically yes, but it will probably be the most difficult thing the adventurers have ever done. It is not a quest for the fainthearted or novice hero. It will require a tremendous amount of time, energy, and resources, and very well may take an entire lifetime... or more.

YOU MAY RESUME READING HERE...

Lanna

Ruler: King Suraphand and Queen Vidura

Major Places: Chiang Mai (capital)

Set between Han Hua on the north and Tashil on south is the tiny kingdom of Lanna, the Land of a Million Rice Fields, which has managed to survive the power struggles between its stronger neighbors for centuries. The people of Lanna are small-boned with golden brown skin and dark brown to black hair. They are incredibly graceful and extremely artistic. The current King is a charming man who has a great many ideas about how to improve the quality of life for his people; fortunately, the Queen is a very practical woman and works as his partner in the governance of the land.

The normal temperature in Lanna is much warmer than in any of the lands to the north, and there is significant rainfall, so that everywhere you look you see green. Lanna has three seasons instead of the usual four: hot (in Théan terms, Tertius to Sextus), rainy (Julius to Octavus), and cool (Nonus to Secundus). Lanna is best described as semi-tropical, sitting on the same latitude as the Muglak'kum of the Crescent Empire but blessed with rain two-thirds of the year.

The two port cities on the west coast, **Ko Si Chang** and **Ko Samui**, have seen a significant increase in activity since the rise of Cabora, especially in the latter as Western Théans seem to be as fond of the famous black pearls as are the people of Han Hua. The coastal people are natural sailors, so there is some reason to believe that the people of Cinada'ya in the

Crescent Empire are descended from Lanna explorers. They tend to favor long slender boats with many rowers; these are called "dragon boats" because they are usually decorated with a dragonhead at the prow and the tail at the back, both of which are carved and gilded. A raised platform at the back, often covered with a canopy in rich silk brocade, affords the captain (and invited guests) an excellent view as the boat skims along the water. Boat races are a national pastime and part of any festival celebrated on the coast. As part of their tribute last year, the King and Queen commissioned a special dragon boat for the Celestial Empress which pleased her greatly.

Wat Phra Meru in Lanna's answer to Han Hua's An Bang. While not a militaristic kingdom by nature, Lanna does not shy away from battle and in fact, a cadre of soldiers armed with seurng tjat koen can do a great deal of damage in a very short time. Originally a fortified complex of temples, Wat Phra Meru is more like a cross between a monastery and a garrison. There is also a good theatre here, although most of the plays have religious themes, and several clean, well-stocked taverns that serve tai pi jiu, the delicious light beer for which Lanna is well known. However, the main business at hand is patrolling the border and praying to the gods to prevent invasion.

Ayuthaya, the ancient capital built in the foothills, is now a thriving city, supported by its mining activities. Although some precious metals are extracted, gems are the main products of such efforts, especially rubies and sapphires. Unlike mining towns in Western Théah, Ayuthaya is not a rough-and-tumble shantytown but rather a thriving center for the arts. Jewelers from all over the Qi Guo come here to obtain the finest gems. A skilled gem carver can live like a prince in Ayuthaya and in fact many of them do. Gold and silversmiths have taken up residence as well and everywhere you look there are exquisite little shrines and altars shining with gem-encrusted statues. Surprisingly, crime is very low.

The capital of Lanna, **Chiang Mai**, is a beautiful city, full of buildings with distinctive wooden cutwork walls and doors, peaked roofs, and upturned eaves decorated with fantastic beasts. Red and gold abound in decorations, so the bustling city seems to glow with color and qi. The people are gregarious and talkative, and market day in Chiang Mai is a wonderful if exhausting experience that will send you in search of a quiet moment in one of the many gardens throughout the city. The capital is often called the "city of smiles" because the people are so hospitable and friendly.

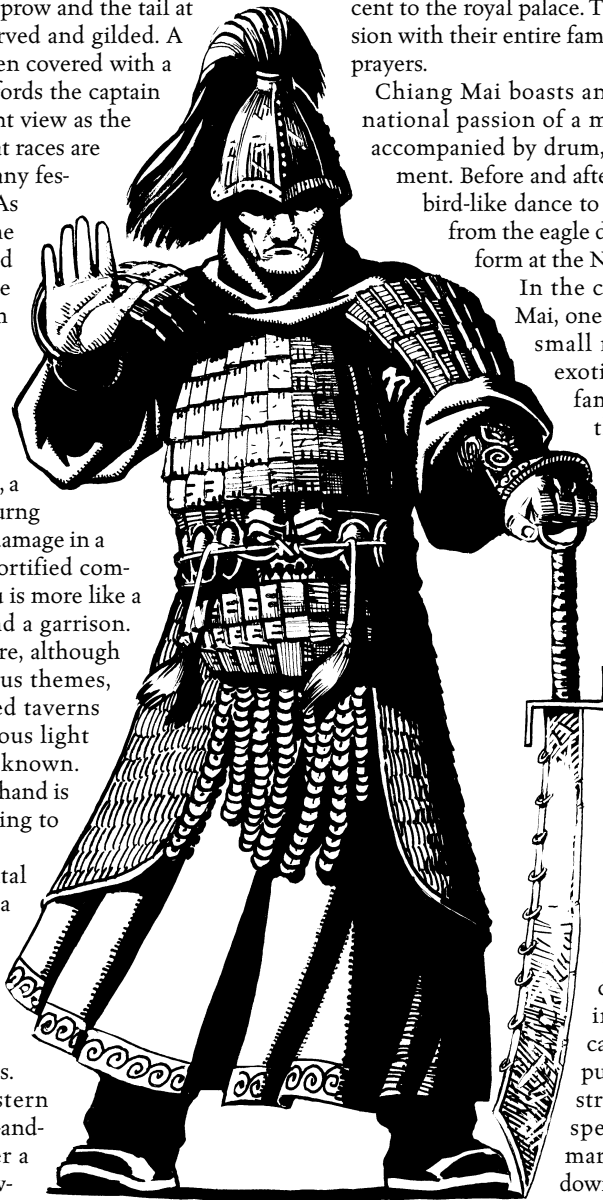
It might also be called the city of temples, for one finds a temple or a shrine on every street and walkway. The most magnificent Temple of the Golden Soul sits in splendor adjacent to the royal palace. The King and Queen make a procession with their entire family every morning to say their daily prayers.

Chiang Mai boasts an actual sports arena used for the national passion of a martial arts form of boxing that is accompanied by drum, cymbals, and a woodwind instrument. Before and after the match, combatants perform a bird-like dance to honor their teacher, not dissimilar from the eagle dance that wrestlers in Xian Bei perform at the Naadam.

In the countryside surrounding Chiang Mai, one finds numerous plantations in the small rain forest where they grow the exotic fruits for which Lanna is justly famous. They are as exotic tasting as their names: *rambutan*, *magosteen*, *longans*, *lychee*, *langsats*, and *durian*.

The latter, a melon-like fruit, requires a very strong stomach to grow, harvest, and prepare as the stench from it can best be described as the equivalent of a lodge full of Vestenmannavnjar warriors who have been locked inside with no windows (and no bathing) for several weeks. It is widely regarded as the most hideous smell in entire Seven Kingdoms. Even the normally kind High Lama has asked that perhaps *durian* would not make the most suitable gift, what with the journey north being so long.

Durian trees can grow as high as 40 meters. The green fruit grows in clusters which when opened split into five segments. Assuming one can get past the nauseating odor, the pulp is actually quite delicious, if a bit strong. Durian sellers must obtain a special permit to bring the fruit to market and have to set up their stalls downwind of everyone else.



Tashil

Ruler: Raj Yezdi Mitra

Major Places: Varanasi (capital), Mt. Vajravahari

The Raj of Tashil has a problem. He can certainly afford to pay the annual tribute to Han Hua several times over without making even a small dent in his treasury. He likes the Celestial Empress and always sends her a magnificent gift on her birthday (the last one was a golden cage with a mechanical jeweled bird that "sang" her favorite song.) His people are happy and prosperous. He is very fond of his wives and his concubines, all of whom seem to get along fairly well. His children are beautiful and talented. Fewer people than usual perished in the last *monsoon* thanks to his program of reinforcing buildings and removing standing water. All seems to be going well...

Except for the nagging voice in his head, which sounds suspiciously like that of his neighbor to the south and repeatedly insinuates it might be time to consider whether the gods might be dishonored by the ancient kingdom of Tashil bowing to the upstart nation to its north. The conscientious and devout Raj has written to the High Lama and awaits the holy man's reply...

Tashil covers in the southern tip of Cathay, a land of magnificent scenery from the port cities that dot the coastline to the Kathmandha Mountains that run through the center of the land. The second highest mountain in the Qi Guo is located here, Mt. Vajravahari, which is home to a rare and sacred breed of boar. Along the northern border with Lanna is a small rain forest.

Chandela, a port on Tashil's west coast, is famed as the "diamond capital" of the Qi Guo. Merchants from throughout the land come here to buy the glittering stones. Recently ships from Western Théah have docked in the harbor, intrigued by tales of fabled wealth, and so far they have not been disappointed. Once they understand that their flimsy paper guilders are worthless, they will probably be more than happy to provide coin in exchange for goods.

East of Chandela and a little ways into the mountains is the famous Rauza Banu, a magnificent shrine and mausoleum built in honor of Tashil's greatest queen, Arjumand Banu, by her grieving husband, Raj Khurram. Facing west and constructed almost entirely of local stone, it gleams like gilded ivory in the rays of the setting sun. Women who wish to marry make a pilgrimage there to place red flowers in the reflecting pools that lead to the sanctuary and pray to the spirit of the Begum to bring them the man of their dreams. The Sisters of the Golden Soul maintain the Rauza Banu as well as a hospital for sick women and a large orphanage.

Further south is the city of **Srinagar**, another thriving port, and famous for three different commodities — coral, black pearls, and the elegant gazelle hounds of Tashil. These regal dogs are prized throughout Han Hua for their stylish appearance and hunting abilities. Knowing how fond the Celestial Empress is of dogs, the Raj is hoping that the newest litter from his favorite bitch Zanande will provide a suitable treasure to send north to Jing Du.

On the east side of Tashil is the port of **Jaisalma**, which is the main source of rare dragon's eye gems. Neighboring Tiakhar relies heavily on its navy and the last thing they want on their ships is something that will negatively affect navigation, so they tend to ignore Jaisalma in favor of Andaman to the north, which might as well be a satellite of the island nation. The Raj does not wish to go to war with his powerful neighbor, so he allows the Tiakhari sailors somewhat free run of the city. When things get too difficult, a discrete word to the highest-ranking naval officer and things calm down, at least for a little while.

Varanasi is the ancient capital of Tashil, slightly inland and set amongst the rising mountains of the Kathmandha. The city is one of the oldest in the land and the ancient sections are reminiscent of a maze, with old narrow streets and small square buildings. It is possible as one walks through Varanasi to see the kingdom's history reflected in the juxtaposition of old and new. The bazaar is incredibly busy, full of every kind of goods and ware imaginable. Like most of the people in the Qi Guo, Tashili merchants love to haggle and the sound of commerce often rises to quite a din.

If you travel inland through the Kathmandha Mountains, you will find small towns, villages, and the occasional military outpost although it is highly unlikely that anyone would attempt to conquer Tashil by this route. Not as high as the mountains of Khimal, the Kathmandha are high enough in places to present something of a physical challenge. Legends say that there are ancient tribes living near the top of Mt. Vajravahari, but no one has ever returned from a journey there with conclusive evidence. The mountains are sacred and if indeed the gods reside there, it is perhaps best to leave them in peace.

Tiakhar

Ruler: Tuanku Sayari Razak

Major Places: **Khajuraho** (capital)

Tiakhar is an island paradise, lush and green, with soft air perfumed by exotic flowers, beaches with warm water that laps gently at pristine white sand that feels like silk, twisting roads that open onto breath-taking waterfalls and grottoes with blue-green water and dense vegetation. It is quite possibly the most beautiful place in all of Théah. It is also home to some of the deadliest creatures in the Qi Guo, not the least of whom is the current ruler. Tuanku Sayari Razak believes that everything and everyone on the island belongs to him, body and soul.

Despite tyrannical rule, harsh laws, kidnappings in the middle of the night, and fresh graves beyond the walls of the royal palace, the people of Tiakhar maintain the hope that if they pray fervently enough, the Goddess of Mercy will turn the tuanku's heart away from Ravana, the blood-thirsty god he worships.

In the meantime, they have learned to live quiet lives, stay off the streets at night, and avoid attracting the attention of the city guards and officers in the Royal Navy. They take whatever price government officials pay for their goods and find ways to pay the increasing taxes. They attend all public functions dutifully, cheering the tuanku and remaining on their knees, their foreheads pressed to the ground until well after his palanquin has passed by them. Beautiful daughters are forbidden to leave their homes for fear of being taken into the vast harem where it is said the tuanku and his minions do things for which they will certainly be punished for the next hundred lifetimes. Such is the way of the gods that the people are blessed to live in such a beautiful place and cursed with such an evil ruler.

Even the shame and degradation of the slave market of **Bandar Serai** cannot tarnish the beauty of the city or its surroundings, however. In addition to the despicable trade in human flesh, the city is the headquarters of Royal Navy, which on Tiakhar means that it is basically a thriving pirate enclave. Priests who continue to live here must turn a blind eye to the people's plight or suffer the consequences; all of the priests and priestesses, that is, except those in the magnificent Temple of Ravana.

As the patron god of the royal house of Tiakhar, worship of Ravana sees a thriving business. The Temple boasts many spacious and exquisitely decorated “offering” rooms in which wealthy patrons come to pay their respects to the god, whether with ringgit, specially prepared delicacies, tapestries, new robes for the resident priesthood, or other gifts of a more personal and carnal nature. It is considered a great, if terminal, honor to be chosen as the “child” of Ravana at the annual festival at mid-summer. Although a family knows that they will never see their son or daughter again in this lifetime, they pray that the willing sacrifice will enable them to find higher joy in the next life.

The royal enclave at **Khajuraho** is reputed to be nothing short of a miracle of art and architecture with relics and items of great value and beauty adorning every inch of the building, inside and out. It is an exercise in conspicuous consumption as Tuanku Razak appears to have unlimited funds. He fancies himself a patron of the arts and education although the learning seems to be particularly narrow, focusing on herbs and their poisonous properties, and devices of exquisite torture.

As expected, the royal enclave is heavily guarded by both human and canine guards. The Tuanku is said to have a panther at his side at all times, held by a jeweled collar and a strong steel leash. Those who have seen the beast say that it is abnormally sleek. A special section of the palace houses Razak's collection of rare poisonous snakes whose venom is milked several times a day.

A learned man, Razak loves to spend time in his magnificent library, which contains a number of volumes from Vodacce including notes of Blood Science research done by members of the Invisible College.

On his birthday, he enjoys playing a game of qiang ji with human pieces and has an unbroken record of victories.

Perhaps the most famous (or infamous) section of the enclave is the harem. What goes on here is anyone's guess, but considering that the tuanku is a man with severely jaded tastes who requires a great deal of amusement, it is probably an unspeakable hell.

Buildings in Cathay

Most cities and towns in the Seven Kingdoms have the same basic buildings, even the temporary seasonal cities in Xian Bei (replace permanent structures with gers.) Note: Throughout Cathay, wood and charcoal are the common fuels used for cooking, heating, and smelting.

Miao (Pagoda and Temple)

At least one, but usually more unless the town is incredibly poor in which case they have at least one small shrine or altar. Every town, no matter how poor will have a shrine to Cheng Huang or the Town God.

Fa yuan (Court of Law or official building(s))

These can be anything from a large ger in Xian Bei to an entire government complex; housing official, lawyers, scribes, etc.

Si ji (Marketplace)

At the very least, every place has an outdoor square or an open covered area, depending on weather and season. In coastal towns, there is usually a fish market near the water's edge and a produce market in the center of town. One can usually pick up interesting news about outlying areas from a *nong ren* (farmer) who has brought his goods to the market. In larger cities these markets are sprawling affairs, packed with goods and merchants eager to haggle.

Yao hung (Apothecary/Herb Shop)

At a minimum, a hut from which the cao yao conducts business to a large, multi-room store.

Ke zhan (Tavern/Inn)

At least one and almost always more unless the town is incredibly poor. In larger towns and cities, the quality of the inns will undoubtedly vary from clean and comfortable to positively disreputable. And in Cathay, as in the rest of Théah, many good adventures being in a ke zhan...

Dian (Shop)

Miscellaneous merchants selling clothing, pottery, furniture, musical instruments, baked goods, confections, kites, woven goods, paper, art supplies, charcoal sellers, etc.

Ju chang (Theatre)

In villages and small towns it will be an outdoor or covered stage; in larger towns and cities, it will be a separate building. The audience sits slightly below the stage.

Feng shui shi

Depending on how successful his practice is, a feng shui geomancer may have a small store front, or perhaps receive clients in the anteroom of his home, but he must visit the client's home at some point.

Cao yao

The healer who may be the proprietor of the apothecary shop. In smaller towns the cao yao may be an older person who lives in modest circumstances.

Hong nian

The matchmaker, who almost always comes to the homes of the prospective couple, may also meets with parents at a cha guan (tea house) or a public garden.

Tie jiang

The blacksmith usually has at least a pen or two for stabling horses. He may share a forge with a weapons smith, but these artisans are rare.

Cha guan (Teahouse)

This may be a small cozy shop or a larger establishment that provides additional “services.”

Yuan lin

A landscaped garden or park for meditation and contemplation. Every town has at least a small plot of land for this purpose. The wealthier the town or city, the more yuan lin there will be, including private ones for wealthy residents. Time spent in a yuan lin is part of the practice of jing hueng.

Xiao (School)

It may be one room in a building used for another purpose or a covered open area that is shared by students of all ages. In outlying farming villages, there probably is no school because no one has time to attend. There may be traveling scholars who pass through, but they rarely stay long.

Ji nian guan

The Cathayan equivalent of a museum/art gallery, found only in more prosperous town, in cities, and in royal enclaves. The people of the Seven Kingdoms revere their history and deem it proper to preserve items from their ancient past so that everyone can enjoy them.

Mo zi (Mill)

Mills are only found in rural villages and towns that produce grain products.

Dang pu (Pawnshop)

The only difference between pawnshops in Cathay and those in the rest of Théah is the type of items for sale.

Cang ku (Warehouses)

In coastal towns and cities, there is the usual array of wharves and docks, as well as fisherman, net makers, and ship builders.

Homes of all sizes, shapes, and incomes

Homes in rural areas are made of wood, with thatched or tile roofs. Homes in cities are made of stone. In coastal areas, the poor may actually live on their boats. Unless a home is very poor, there will always be a bathing and personal area with the home itself. As a rule, Cathayans are fastidious about their personal hygiene, although the Xian Bei find regular bathing both challenging due to lack of water and somewhat dangerous due to superstition and inclement weather. However, after a long day in the saddle or a particularly energetic wrestling match, the Xian Bei love a soak in a hot tub.

Almost all towns and cities have wells unless they are close to a river or a natural water source is accessible.

Relations with Other Groups

"I would rather spend a week haggling with the Ruzgar'hala than one hour negotiating with a Han Hua merchant."

— Antonio Bernoulli

Nations

Avalon

The main source of contact between Cathay and Avalon has been through the seafaring members of the Explorer's Society and the Sea Dogs, but no formal contact between the Celestial Empress and Queen Elaine.

Unbeknownst to the ruler of Avalon, one of the great Bao Chuan ships sank off the coast of her nation. What makes this remarkable is not only that a ship from Cathay reached the island kingdom but that it was carrying K'an, one of the famous talismans used to raise the Huo Qiang. In fact, this talisman represents Kan (Abyss), one of the most powerful water hexagram in the I Ching. It is prophetic, perhaps, that the item now resides in the treasure trove of Maab, who believes it is a sign that she is the sole ruler of the seas.

Castille

Cardinal Verdugo is too good a tactician to divert any of his forces to extensive exploration east. He is aware of the Church's previous attempts to establish a foothold there. For now he is content to maintain clandestine contact with the few enclaves in northern Han Hua. Once his control over young King Sandoval is secure and contact with the Crescent Empire has been established, it will make sense to keep moving the cause of the Prophets beyond the Mirror Sea.

Crescent Empire

The Sultán does not regard Cathay as a threat to national security; far from it — in fact, in some ways, it is a potential ally against the influx of Westerners currently swarming all over the Mirror Sea. The Seven Kingdoms also provide excellent trade goods and useful slaves, and contact at Erivan and Kulkadir is always peaceful, if somewhat hampered by language and custom differences. However, commerce speaks a universal language, so as long as the markets along the eastern coast have access to Cathayan goods, there is no need to cause problems. Besides, the Celestial Empress has been most generous with gifts, including gems, a number of stimulating herbal remedies and some of the loveliest ladies in the harem.

Eisen

There are probably fewer than a dozen people in Eisen who even care about Cathay. Who cares when there are so many enemies within one's own borders?

Montaigne

Montaigne is still not in a position to turn its eyes eastward. Revolutionaries who are fanatical about eradicating all aristos from Théah may head towards Cabora but it is unlikely that they will find a warm welcome if they plan to continue the hunt to the western shores of Cathay.

Ussura

Ussura and Cathay have a long-standing relationship thanks to the Huo Qiang. Other than Koschei, no Ussuran has crossed through the barrier. The superstitious Ussurans will not venture near the Rteshoi Desert in Gallenia, claiming that mighty salamanders that breathe fire live among smoldering heaps of ash. Those among the Lyontosh legions stationed in Gallenia continue to monitor the area, but no one has ever emerged from the other side.

The Huo Qiang (Wall of Fire) reaches across the length of Cathay's land border with Ussura while the Huo Zhi Zou Lang (Corridors of Flame) runs along the eastern border from Tashil north beyond current reckoning. The western coast is completely open and technically approachable by sea.

Vendel

The rise of Cabora was an event worthy of celebration among the Vendel League, which was ecstatic at the thought of more access to trade routes to Cathay. The Vendel League knows a good thing when they see it; based on Cathayan goods from Erivan and Kulkadir in the Crescent Empire, the riches that await in the East are well worth the investment in an alliance with the Explorer's Society and a strong motivation to get there before Vodacce does.

Vestenmannavnjar

Is there perhaps a connection between ancient Cathay and Vestenmannavnjar? Both nations revere their ancestors unlike any others in Théah. Both believe in the talismanic powers of stones and both are masters of the seas. Is it possible that ancient sailors from Cathay found a way through the Corridors of Flame and ventured west even before the voyages of the great Bao Chuan? There is a Cathayan fairy tale about a child who runs away and has a terrifying encounter with a hong mao gui ("red haired monster"), which might refer to the Vestenmannavnjar.

These are questions that perhaps only a truly gifted Explorer's Society Scholar might be able to answer. For now, with the focus of the world turned southeast on Cabora, the Vestenmannavnjar are focused on keeping themselves from assimilation into what passes for culture among the Vendel.

Vodacce

The Vodacce princes know that the Bernoullis are busy protecting their precious "exclusive" right to conduct business with the Crescent Empire, which conveniently leaves the seaways to Cabora and Cathay open for business. Anyone with sufficient wealth would be able to build a small merchant fleet off one of the private islands and sail east without attracting much attention in these turbulent times. Who would be the wiser as to whether Cabora or somewhere else is the destination? Especially if it means beating the hated Vendel League to the treasure!

The Brotherhood of the Coast

The rise of Cabora offered the Brotherhood yet another sanctuary and certainly the possibility of feasting upon the poor unsuspecting adventurers of all types and nationalities. Contact with Cathay would open a direct line to the Corridors of Flame. Despite grim stories of failed missions, including vague tales of a ghost fleet, what self-respecting pirate would turn down a chance to test uncharted waters? There is, of course, the little matter of the Tiakhari Navy but nothing ventured, nothing gained.

The Vaticine Church

A small, secret mission was sent to Cathay almost two hundred years ago under the direction of Father Giovanni di Monte Corbino ago to bring the ways of the Prophets to the heathen. His tales of extravagant hospitality from the "great Khan" seem to confirm that his visit occurred during the Xian Bei rule of Han Hua but no one has been able to verify his claims of massive conversion among the Cathayans.

The Hierophant sent a larger delegation under the leadership of Father Ricardo Matteus in 1582, during the reign of Celestial Emperor Wan Li. For public historical purposes, this is the first "official" contact between the Vaticine Church and Cathay.

Although not wildly popular, the Vaticine faith gained a brief foothold in the Han Hua cities of Xi Long and He Hai. However, the precepts of the faith did not include worship of ancestors, and thus fell out of fashion.

Given the situation in Cabora, the Church has more important things to worry about than a handful of heathen halfway across the world. Secure in the knowledge that eventually all Théans will kneel before the Prophets, Cardinal Verdugo can afford to wait.

Solomon Antone

The Han Hua city of Pei Lin (Forest of Tablets) contains hundreds and hundreds of stone monuments, some religious and some offered as tribute from throughout the Seven Kingdoms. Tucked away amongst these commemorative carvings is a small tablet on which a large pearl-shaped element floats above a lotus, with a sword and a snake on either side. Directly under the lotus is a triangle, which forms a canopy over clearly carved large ancient Cathayan characters. The literal translation is "This Monument Commemorates Solomon Antone, the Sword of Prophet, who has returned to us."

Secret Societies

Die Kreuzritter

Cathay presents a difficult dilemma for the Black Crosses. There is no question that the inhabitants do not worship the Prophets and thus are technically infidels. However, the Order has learned during its existence that sometimes those in other nations can display great honor and nobility. Their resources are currently focused on trying to prevent sea travel eastward, which means an uneasy secret alliance with the Inquisition. After they are successful with the blockade, they can begin investigating and assessing any secret societies.

Explorer's Society

It is definitely a great time to be a member of the Explorer's Society! Cabora has risen and the Society is more than up to the challenge! Their ships have taken on extra Shield Men and been equipped with artifacts to combat the Syrneth forces and inventions they are sure to encounter in these dangerous waters. And then there's Cathay... Even if rumors of no Syrneth influence behind the Wall of Fire are true, there will be more than enough to uncover in the ancient land. Those who have traveled to the Crescent Empire's east coast have heard stories about fabulous tombs, jewels the size of a man's fist, and exotic weapons. The sheer excitement of new places to explore far outweighs the potential dangers that await beyond Cabora.

Invisible College

Ah! The opportunities to discover new elements! To catalogue new plants and new animals! The chance to study the taxonomy alone is enough to send the Invisible College into raptures! Then there are the inventions. What could be achieved by tapping into the creative mind of these people beyond the Fire Wall! Working through their contacts in the Crescent Empire, members of the Invisible College are working to find ways to travel East without attracting unwanted attention from the ever-watchful eyes of the Inquisition. It might even call for a brief alliance with the Explorer's Society...

Knights of the Rose & Cross

Given the Order's interest in esoteric knowledge and their accumulated store of artifacts and relics, the Knights are attracted to Cathay for philosophical reasons. Intrigued by references to pursuit of a "Golden Soul," they are hoping to find ancient documents. Travel eastward is extremely dangerous and there are those among the brotherhood who might venture eastward simply because it represents a challenge.

Los Vagos

If the members of Castille's guerilla society are too busy with the Inquisition and Montaigne to become involved with the Crescent Empire, they have even less time to worry about traveling to the east. The only benefit gained from the opening of Cabora is the opportunity to attack ships from Montaigne that sail too close to Castille's southern shores.

Rilasciare

Based on vague reports from Cathay, there is a feudalistic social structure in Cathay. Other than Tiakhar, there does not appear to be the kind of wholesale slavery found in the Crescent Empire. However, the society has recently learned about

a growing underground movement called the Golden Coin Society dedicated to the overthrow of Tiakhar's tyrannical ruler, so the establishment of a Rilasciare cell to do first-hand investigation is becoming a distinct possibility.

Sophia's Daughters

Unfortunately, the Order recently learned that the Cathayan contact, a young Tashil princess, was kidnapped while on a seaside outing at Varanasi. Her ship was set upon by Tiakhari pirates who ransacked the hold for precious cargo, killed the crew, and delivered the princess directly to the harem of Sayari Razak, Tiakhar's ruler. Despite her extraordinary beauty, the princess is, like many of her sisters in the Order, quite outspoken, and will probably be shunted almost immediately into the less favored ranks, which does not bode well for a long and happy life.

Religion

"Chanting is no more holy than listening to the murmur of a stream, counting prayer beads no more sacred than simply breathing, religious robes no more spiritual than work clothes."

— Master Lao

Religion in the Seven Kingdoms is like a three-legged ting or cauldron because there are three parts of the faith system: the philosophy of Master Kung (augmented by the mystical teachings of Master Lao), a dizzying panoply of gods, the quest for the jing hueng, the Golden Soul. In addition, each kingdom has its own set of myths, legends, and local gods, as well as the spirits of deceased relatives and a range of natural spirits who appear as animals, trees, and plants.



Jing Hueng (The Golden Soul)

The Golden Soul is the achievement of perfect harmony between the body, the mind, and nature which enables the soul to achieve Enlightenment and join move from the Dharmachakra (Great Wheel of Life) to the eternity of immortal life. In each lifetime, a person is given a chance to move closer to the ideal not only through religious practices but also through performing righteous acts. When a person dies, there is an accounting of their actions in that lifetime called the karma, and should they be found to have harmed or damaged others or themselves, they are forced to atone in the next. Thus it is important strive for the ideal of the superior man so that one does not do anything which will impair their karma and set them going backwards on the road to Enlightenment.

The Eight Immortals

In the quest for the Golden Soul, there are eight wise men, called the Eight Immortals, who may be called upon for guidance through dreams and visions. All of them have some connection with everlasting life:

CHUNG LI KUAN

The greatest of the Immortals, it is said the through deep meditation, he achieved the Golden Soul and discovered the Elixir of Life.

LAO CHUNG KWOH

A reclusive monk with mystic powers who had a bull that could carry him a thousand miles in a day, which he could then fold up like a piece of paper and put in his pocket. All he had to do was sprinkle it with water to restore the bull. When again required he had simply to sprinkle it with water and it resumed its normal proportions.

LU TUNG PIN

The young reclusive monk to whom Chung Li Kuan passed the secret of immortality. During his training, he was subjected to Ten Temptations. Upon passing the tests, he received a supernatural sword with which he was able to fight dragons.

TSAO KUO CHIU

A military commander who turned hermit. During his meditations, the wall of his cave split open to reveal a jade casket with scroll on which was a scroll. As he read the scroll, the cave was filled with shining clouds out of which emerged a silver stork. Master Tsao climbed upon his back and was taken to the next life. He is regarded as the patron of actors who can, for a while, transport the audience to another place.

LI T'IEH KUAI

A disciple of the mystical Master Lao, Li was a humble crippled beggar. One day the Master appeared and told him to rise and leave his body to ascend to the clouds. Li left his body in the care of a young monk who was suddenly called away to the bedside of his own dying mother. While he was gone, Li's body died and was burned, according to custom. When Li returned from the clouds, all he could find of himself were his ashes so he entered the body of a beggar who had just died. Master Li is the patron of cao yao.

HAN HSANG TZU

A pupil of Lu Tung Pin, Han could make flowers grow out of thin air. One day Master Lu told him to climb a peach tree. As Han reached the top he fell but never hit the ground for he had become immortal. He is the patron of musicians.

LAN TSAI HO

A strolling performer, Lan sang about how fleeing life is until one day she herself disappeared into a cloud. She is the patron of flower arrangers.

HO HSIEN KU

A beautiful girl who lived in the forests of Koryo, she ate nothing but mother-of-pearl until she became so light that she floated up to the mountains of Khimal and disappeared into the clouds above Mt. Qomolangma. Her symbol is the lotus, the perfect flower of contemplation.

There are hundreds of stories about the various miracles achieved by the Eight Immortals, all of which serve to teach the lessons about life upon the Dharmachakra and how one should strive to achieve the Golden Soul.

Both Master Kung and the precepts of the Golden Soul require that a person strive to be fit and healthy through regular exercise and a healthy diet. Cathayans believe that the so-called "Elixir of Immortality" is actually a spiritual concept rather than an actual potion or magical incantation. The benefit of a healthy physical life is longevity while the benefit of a healthy spiritual life is immortality. No one has the power to halt death as it is a natural part of life. Those who try court disaster and may damage their karma beyond repair. The goal of the seeking the Golden Soul is to gradually rid oneself of dependence upon the elements of the material life; only then can a person's essence shine through and guide his path to Enlightenment.

Gods and Goddesses

Cathayans make a distinction between the matters of this world and the next. This world is full of gods and goddesses who have a more or less beneficial interest in humankind.

Some of the better known ones include:

The Goddess of Mercy

Known by many names, she is likened to the Queen of Heaven, the all-compassionate one, who stands upon an open lotus and heals wounded hearts with her tears.

The Goddess of Prostitutes

She watches over women who have been forced to earn a living in this manner to insure that they are treated fairly.

The Goddess of the Moon

She presides over the monthly festival of the New Moon as well as the annual Moon Festival. She lives in a house made of carved cinnamon wood.

The Goddess of the Winds

She is responsible for air, wind, storms, and rain.

The River Goddess

She watches over the rivers, especially the great Huang He.

The Goddess of the Earth

This goddess insures fertility and healthy crops.

The Kitchen God

A rotund and earthly fellow, he is the god of the hearth and household. He is the one who sees and hears everything that goes on in the house. A bride who does not make proper obeisance to him on her wedding day is doomed to have a miserable marriage.

The God of War

A statue of this god must always be placed facing the entrance to a home, to defend it against evil spirits.

The God of Wealth

This god must be placed facing the front door, to insure that wealth will flow into the home.

The Gods of Prosperity, Power, and Longevity

These three gods should be displayed together, as high up as possible but where you can still see them, in any room other than the bedroom or the kitchen.

The Town God

The Cheng Huang acts on behalf of the Celestial Ruler to keep evil and corruption away, to insure the town's prosperity, and to bring the rain when it is needed. He is also the god who watches over ditches and walls.

The God of Thunder

A difficult fellow to please, he punishes wicked people and gets rid of evil spirits, but being around so much bad all day makes him very irritable. He also urges people to avenge wrongful deaths and seek retribution.

The Divine Judge

The stern faced dispenser of justice.

The God of Happiness

He watches over situations involving love, happiness, and personal success.

The God of Wine

Patron of viniculture who supervises both the grape crops and wine production.

Ravana, Drinker of Blood

This powerful demon of Tiakhar and Tashil is the ruthless God of all that is Evil. Among his many foul deeds, he seduced his sister, then shamed her before her husband, which drove her to commit suicide. His demand for blood sacrifice and live body parts is a strong indication that he is not playing on the side of the heroes.

Religious Practices

The path to the Golden Soul differs slightly in Tashil, not so much in philosophy but in practice. The Tashili practice a physical and spiritual regime called yoga that consists of physical and mental exercises. Through different types of yoga, both active and meditative, they seek to control their bodies and their minds. The object of contemplation is the mandala, an intricate circular design. They also believe that the spirit of the divine is part masculine and part feminine, and one must acknowledge both to achieve enlightenment. The feminine part is especially important as it enable the person to become complete.

In Han Hua, there is more emphasis on practical applications of Master Kung's philosophy and reverence for one's ancestors. Many people have portable shrines that they take on journeys so that they can meditate upon familiar things as they travel.

Khimali believe in *daka* and *dakini*, male and female spirits who live in the clouds and visit humans in their dreams, sometimes to guide them. Dakini are usually depicted as tiny graceful dancing girls, while daka often appear as handsome heroes. Often these spirits will come when the dreamer is troubled by a moral decision or when he has done something unsettling or improper to help guide him back to the proper path.

Death and Burial

The soul has two parts: the hun which leaves the body upon death to move to the next life and the p'o which remains with the corpse until it is properly buried. The family assists the hun on its journey by decorating the tomb and to ease the shock of being separated, they makes the p'o comfortable with food, flowers, wine, and personal items that the person used in life. In the Qi Gui, white is the color of mourning; red is the color happiness.

The dead are taken to the burial place accompanied by a funeral procession complete with drums, flutes, wailing mourners, and the bereaved family all attired in white. If a corpse is not buried properly or burned, the p'o can become a *chiang shi*, a hopping vampire.

While the Qi Guo is a life-worshipping nation, reverence for the dead is a crucial part of life, so cemeteries and tombs are important. The two most famous of these are the beautiful Rauza Banu in Tashil and the tomb of Emperor Qin Shi Huang in Huo Long Cheng.

Monasteries and Nunneries

Those who feel called to the religious life can become monks and nuns. Many live a quiet life, taking vows of poverty and celibacy to live in contemplation and meditation. There are also several fighting orders that accept both male and female students. The Sisters of the Golden Soul in Khimal maintain the beautiful mausoleum as well as a women's hospital and an orphanage.

Festivals

Each kingdom has its own regional festivals, and in fact many towns and cities have local celebrations. There are, however, several festivals that are celebrated across the entire nation:

Xing Nian (Spring Festival – New Year's) (1st day of the 1st moon)

This is the single most important holiday of the entire year. It is celebrated over three days, beginning with the evening prior to the first full day. Each region has its own special traditions, but throughout the Seven Kingdoms there is great feasting and celebrating with gift giving. The traditional gift is money given in a bright red envelope.

The two food traditions practiced universally involve eating long beans and at least one fish dish. It is important to leave a small amount of fish on the plate as a token of the hope that there will be ample food in the coming year.

In many regions, fireworks and parades marked by “dragons” (a number of people in line under a huge paper and gilt dragon head and body.)

On New Year's eve, families hold a feast at which they offer hospitality to the Jade Emperor as he makes his annual inspection to dole out rewards or punishments to those who have been good and evil during the past year. Throughout the land, special incense burns on the altar alongside offerings of vegetables to welcome him into their home.

There are specific things one must not do during the New Year's celebration. The most important is do not break anything! Broken things bring bad luck for the rest of the year. Do not say any bad luck or sad words. Sweeping on the night before New Year's is not a good idea but if it must be done, sweep into the house rather than out of it, or you will sweep your good luck away.

On the first day of the New Year, everyone makes a point of wishing neighbors and relatives “happy New Year.” On the second day, husbands escort their wives for a visit to the wife's family. On the fifth day, New Year's dumplings are prepared in anticipation of the next day's open house for visiting friends, neighbors, and relatives. Other welcoming foods include almonds, dates, hazelnuts, peanuts, sunflower seeds, apples, pomegranates, peaches (for longevity) and apricots.

The Birthday of the Jade Emperor (9th day of the 1st moon)

The birthday of the ruler of heaven is celebrated with a great festival during which people form a parade and process together to the main temple or shrine where they burn incense so that the Jade Emperor will find their prayers pleasing. It is a very lively ceremony that reflects the procession in heaven of the gods and goddesses with gifts for the Jade Emperor.

It is also regarded as a most auspicious day on which to present petitions, so government officers are on hand to receive hundreds of scrolls, each tied with a special red cord.

Yuan Xiao Jie (Lantern Festival) (15th day of the 1st moon)

This marks the end of the New Year's celebration. Everyone hangs lanterns outside their homes, even in Xian Bei, despite the weather. The story goes that the Jade Emperor was furious with a town for killing his favorite goose so he decided to burn it to the ground. A kindly spirit warned the townsfolk to hang lanterns on the day they were to be killed. When the Jade Emperor looked down from heaven, he saw that the town was already burning and assumed that his goose had been avenged.

Traditional lion and dragon dances are performed and people serve *tang yuan*, round boiled sweet rice dumplings with a variety of fillings. This holiday is also a time for people in rural communities to make special offerings to insure that the ground will be fertile. The day after the festival no one goes visiting because it is the day to get rid of ill health. One must take a walk on a circular path and cross at least one bridge. This is one of the busiest (and most profitable) days of the year for *cao yao*.

Qing Ming Jie (Tomb Sweeping Day) (2 weeks after the Vernal Equinox)

This day is reserved for visiting tombs and graves of one's ancestors, cleaning up the area, and then “sharing” a feast with the dead by having a picnic at their grave site. It is regarded as a very important family day throughout out Seven Kingdoms. One of the symbols of spring, boiled eggs, are dyed different colors and then broken open at the picnic to symbolize new life. The Celestial ruler always plants a tree in the Imperial City. This is also an official “courting” day for new couples and a day for kite flying as well.

Duan Wu (Dragon Boat Festival) (5th day of the 5th moon)

A fearless poet, angered over the emperor's cruel treatment of the people, drowned himself in a river in protest. The townsfolk were so impressed with his sacrifice and concerned that the fish would eat his body that they headed out to where his body was floating and started throwing rice dumplings wrapped in bamboo leaves so that the fish would eat the treats instead of the poet. Although the highlight of this festival in a dramatic dragon boat race, people also celebrate by eating rice dumplings steamed in bamboo leaves in honor of the poet. This is a most auspicious day on which to launch a new boat.

Chi Chi (The Seventh Eve) (7th day of the 7th moon)

This bittersweet holiday is based on the ancient legend of a mortal peasant and a spirit maiden who fell in love. One day, the seven daughters of the Jade Emperor went for a walk. They found a beautiful pool in which they decided to bathe. Suddenly a strong wind arose which they knew was a sign for them to return home. However, the youngest daughter's clothes blew away and a young peasant found them. Shyly, he returned then but when he and the maiden looked at each other, they fell deeply in love and she could not leave him.

The six sisters returned home and told their father that their youngest sister had drowned. Her father mourned for her and a year went by when one day he looked down and saw his youngest daughter, now the wife of a peasant. His fury knew no bounds and he caused the river near their home rise, separating them on opposite banks. Try as they would, they could not get across.

The girl cried out to the Goddess of Mercy who caused hundreds of birds to form a bridge over the water. The two were united but unfortunately the Jade Emperor was unappeased. After bitter negotiation he reluctantly agreed to let the two spend one day and night together each year. It is not unusual for it to rain on this day, representing the tears of the girl. This is a day for sending flowers, small gifts, and poetry to one's beloved and treating them with special care. It is not, however, an auspicious day on which to announce a betrothal.

Zong Yuang (The Ghost Festival) (15th day of the 7th moon)

Burial rites in the Seven Kingdoms must be followed very carefully; otherwise, the spirits of the deceased will become ghosts trapped between heaven and earth. On this festival people pray for those spirits without descendants and offer newly-harvested grain or rice to their own ancestors. The entire month of the 7th moon is called the "ghost" month and is devoted to honoring one's ancestors and spending time with one's family. At the end of the day, people go to the nearest river, stream, or other small body of water and release floating lanterns to comfort those ghosts without a home or a family.

Zong Qiou (Mid-Autumn Festival) (15th day of the 8th month)

This is the second most important holiday in Cathay, celebrating the full harvest moon. It is particularly important to celebrate with one's family while enjoying a feast. The special festival treat are moon cakes, pastries stuffed with an extremely sweet bean paste filling.

The Lady in the Moon was once the wife of a great emperor who won a draught of the Elixir of Immortality in an archery competition. His wife was not blind to her husband's faults and knew that if he lived forever, the world would be miserable so she tricked him and drank it herself. She became so light that she floated up to heaven and took up residence in the Moon where she lives alone, save for the company of the jade rabbit she had in her pocket at the time of her ascension.

The Kitchen God's Report (23rd day of the 12th moon)

On this day the Kitchen God makes his report to the Jade Emperor, with details about the domestic situation in the household's throughout the Qi Guo.

Military Service

The general who wins a battle makes many calculations in his temple ere the battle is fought. The general who loses a battle makes but few calculations beforehand. Thus do many calculations lead to victory, and few calculations to defeat: how much more no calculation at all! It is by attention to this point that I can foresee who is likely to win or lose.

— Zheng Ren, Bing Shu

The military code of the Qi Guo is taken from the ancient warrior's code of Koryo when that nation had an active standing army:

- Serve one's ruler with loyalty
- Look after one's parents with filial piety
- Treat one's peers with trust
- Withstand enemy attacks with courage
- Terminate life with discrimination

In addition the participation by levy in the Imperial Army or Navy, every kingdom has its own military defenses. Khimal and Koryo do not have a Navy, however, and Khimal's forces are more like personal guards than a formal army. It is understood that in the unlikely event of invasion, every Khimali citizen stands ready to protect the High Lama and follow his commands. The palace guards and local militia of Tiakhar function as an army of sorts, but the prevalent military force in the mostly "volunteer" Navy.

The ruler of Lanna has a special personal guard of female fighters called "Shadow Dancers." The lovely name belies their ferocity, however. Not unlike practitioners of the Yael School in the Crescent Empire, these women train from girlhood to serve as royal guards, fighting as a unit on the battlefield if needed.

During the Yuan Dynasty, the Xian Bei Emperors developed special cavalry units that were dubbed "The Devil Horsemen" by their opponents. To become a member of this elite cadre, one had to be the ultimate rider/archer; in essence, to turn a human and a horse into an integrated fighting unit. The Devil Horsemen, both male and female, were utterly loyal to the Khan and did as commanded without questioning the order.

The Bing Shu, written by the great General Zheng Ren, details tactics and strategy for military combat. The book is regarded as a primer for anyone in Imperial Military service and students at military academies through the Qi Guo are drilled continuously as part of their exams until, by the time they graduate, they know most of the book by heart.

A companion volume, entitled “One Hundred Uncommon Tactics” was written 200 years ago, but is still not widely accepted. Formal study is restricted to officers for fear that an enterprising underling may seek his fortune at the expense of his unit.

Sons and daughters of military families in Han Hua are expected to follow in their elders’ footsteps and may rise through the ranks faster by virtue of their connections. A commoner who enters military service must distinguish himself on the field or render the commander an invaluable service to be recognized.

In addition to receiving training in standard weapons according to their rank, military units also receive specialized training according to the kingdom of their origin (see Chapter 3: *Di San Shu*.)

Tou xian (title) and rank is critical in all social interactions in the Seven Kingdoms, especially in the military. Knowing a soldier’s rank is to know where one fits in the hierarchy and precludes critical moments of doubt on the battlefield.

Standard Units in the Imperial Army

- General
- Commanders
- Cavalry
 - * Mounted Spearman (Xian Bei unit with lightly-armored horse)
 - * Mounted Archer (Xian Bei unit with lightly-armored horse)
 - * Armored Cavalry (sword)
 - * Light Cavalry (javelin, lance, spear)
- Infantry
 - * Spearman (with and without shieldman)
 - * Shieldman (as phalanx or “turtle”)
 - * Foot soldier
 - * Crossbowman
 - * Archer (longbow)
- Artillery
 - * Rocket
 - * Handgunner
- Scout (usually a Xian Bei outrider)
- Standard bearers
- Drummers
- Orderlies, Quartermasters, Waterbearers, etc.

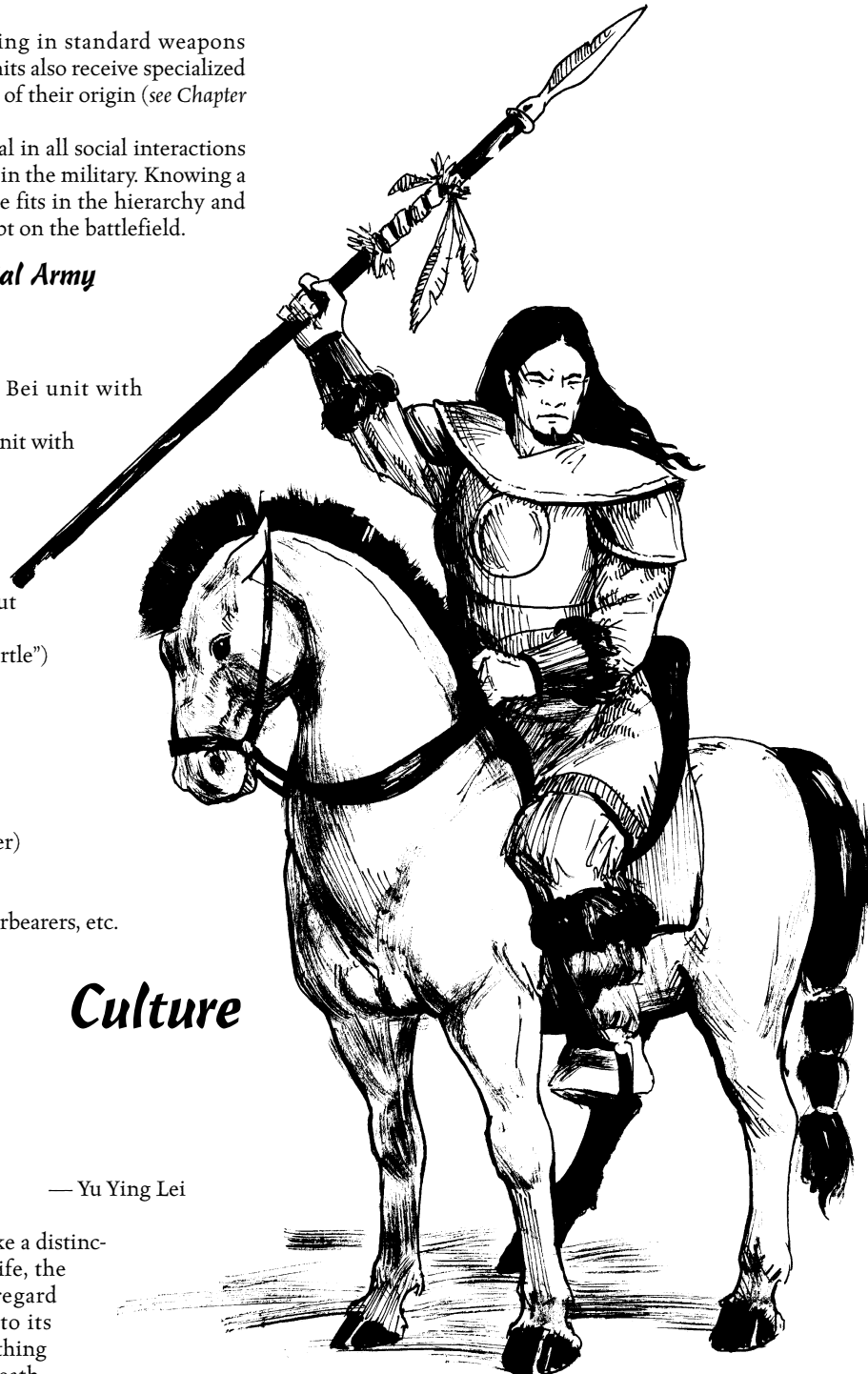
Culture

*I pause to gaze at the moon
And the silver light that touches
A jade bowl where a single grain
Of rice sits alone,
Like a pearl that someone left behind.*

— Yu Ying Lei

While western Théans tend to make a distinction between art and the rest of life, the people of the Seven Kingdoms regard everything they do with an eye to its function as well as its form. Something as simple as a rice bowl can be breath-

takingly beautiful in its design or color and yet be sitting on a makeshift table in a poor man’s home. Art – and beauty – is not reserved for the wealthy or the noble in the Qi Guo. Having said that, it should be noted that the privileged classes in this land enjoy access to a world of beauty that exceeds anything a western Théan can possibly imagine, even a Vodacce prince.



Each kingdom has unique ways of expressing art, whether it is through wood or stone carving, metal casting, the creation of porcelain, painting, poetry, music, or dancing.

Architecture

If one had to describe the architecture of the Qi Guo in only two words, they would be soaring and *graceful*. Unlike the stolid brick edifices of northern Théah that sit squarely upon the earth, buildings throughout the Seven Kingdoms seem to reach towards heaven. Despite the uninspired prehistoric mud and daub single-story dwellings, the people of Han Hua soon learned how to use wood and rice paper, replacing walls with columns, to let light and air into the house and permit the qi to flow freely.

Sometime in the Chou Dynasty, the most distinctive feature of Cathayan architecture became prevalent: a multi-tiered roof that ends in an upturned eave, giving the building the look of being airborne. The roof sits on a series of four-part brackets, which are themselves supported by clusters of brackets set on the columns. The brackets are often painted and carved, and the roofs covered with glazed tiling (which can make footing quite difficult, if one is forced to traverse a building this way in an emergency...)

As beautiful as the buildings in Han Hua are, in Lanna they are even more so. The warm almost climate precludes the need for reinforced doors and walls, so architects are free to create confections that look like palaces of the gods.

The floor plan of buildings in all of the kingdoms except Xian Bei include an exterior wall, the entrance gate, the spirit gate, the public area and the private quarters, all of which revolve around a central axis. Houses have at least one central court with a garden, and depending on the family's wealth, may have more. Private quarters usually have at least a small meditation garden with a pond. Gardens are always laid out with the help of a feng shui shi unless you wish to court disaster and evil spirits. A beautiful home is perhaps the most eloquent testimony to the principles of feng shui.

The palace at Potala, the capital of Khimal, is regarded as one of the wonders of the Seven Kingdoms, even by those who have never seen it. It rises up against the mountains, with terraces and staircases leading that force the eye to rise to heaven. It can be seen from anywhere in the valley below. It is considered to be a work in progress as people are constantly refurbishing and renovating the oldest parts of the massive complex. Inside the palace complex are several smaller buildings including some exquisite small temples with the distinctive upturned eaves with carved golden dragons perched on the ends. There are dozens of chapels in the complex, as well as living quarters. Not unlike the Imperial City, it is a self-contained living area.

The High Lama lives in a small palace at center back. While one might expect to find luxurious living quarters, the High Lama prefers to live in relative simplicity. Outside the palace is a bustling market that does a brisk trade in woven goods, yak products like cheese, and goods from Xian Bei.

The proper term for the round, somewhat cone-shaped tent in which a Xian Bei family lives is *ger* ("gurr"). The covering is usually made of felted material, although it can also be treated hide. The land on which a family pitches its *ger* is called a yurt. It is not considered polite to refer to a *ger* as a

The Ba Gua

To keep the qi (energy) flowing through a house, various areas are designated as being under the influence of an element and a color. The pattern, depicted on a map of the ba gua, is repeated in the layout of the property, the placement of the rooms, the décor of each room, and the garden. Bedrooms, nurseries and children's rooms, and guest rooms are usually located on the right-hand side as you enter the house. Office, kitchen, and library are on the left-hand side. The center area houses the main greeting/social room. In some homes the rooms are built around a garden while in others, usually in northern Han Hua, the center room is used for family gatherings. Application of the principles of harmonic alignment with nature and use of the ba gua are the purview of a feng shui geomancer.

yurt, as it implies that the family is so poor that they have to sleep outside on the ground. The basic *ger* has five walls that rise to a toono or spoked hub at the top of the *ger*. The inside may be as simple as a large area in which the family sleeps and eats together, or it may be divided with hangings into rooms. Khan Dalan-tai has a number of *ger* and all of them are comfortable and beautifully appointed, even by Han Hua standards.

Xian Bei has relatively few large cities that contain permanent architecture with the exception of the capital, Sukhbataar, but buildings tend to be square and solid, with dense walls and small windows to protect them against the harsh winds. Besides, Khan Dalan-Tai has been heard to remark more than once, living indoors is only for those pampered silk-clad puppies who are too weak to leave the confines of their fancy kennels.

Living amongst the trees, the people of Koryo tend to build one-story houses on raised platforms with low, wide open staircases leading up to the front. They also use the raised eave design, but roofs tend to be slate gray and buildings earth tones and greens so that they blend in with the forests around them. Occasionally there are red buildings but those are almost always temples or sacred buildings. It is a moment worthy of a poem when one sees a graceful Koryo house perched on the edge of a cliff as the morning sun rises through the mist.

The distinctive feature of Tashil and Tiakhari architecture is the extensive use of carving to create a filigree look. In addition, inlaid tile designs are very popular. The palace complex at Varanasi looks as though it was made out of spun sugar. Buildings tend to face east and west, so in the morning they look like silver and in the evening they look like gold.

The Pagoda

Architectural influences from Tashil inspired the creation of the pagoda, based on the stupa, a Tashil temple. The octagonal building is surmounted by a shaft or spire that is topped by a crowning element. Pagodas can be tiny little architectural jewels suitable for a small shrine or they can be soaring testaments to the gods, as is the massive pagodas in Jing Du and Pei Lin.

Gu Gong (The Imperial City)

The Celestial ruler resides in a city within a city. The royal complex at Jing Du, called “The Imperial City,” is a magnificent complex completed some 250 years ago. Gates, meeting halls, galleries, terraces, gardens, government offices, kitchens, temples, and living quarters are laid out around a central courtyard in the most auspicious manner possible. No expense was spared during its construction, which is obvious as one gazes at the marble, always freshly-glazed terracotta, glazed and brightly colored tiles, and woodwork that has been carved, lacquered, gilded and polished to a high sheen.

The Temple of Heaven where the Celestial Empress performs her daily worship is a pagoda of heart-stopping beauty. Naturally, her private quarters are luxurious on a level that exceeds that of the wealthiest noble in western Théah. There is nothing for which she lacks, day or night; she need but ask and her every wish is attended to immediately.

The Imperial City is heavily guarded and woe betide the person who wanders in without the proper authorization. The Captain of the Jian Wei takes her job very, very seriously.

Art

In addition to a myriad of crafted items, the Seven Kingdoms abound in paintings of all sizes and shapes on all types of materials. Landscapes and portraits of the gods are the most popular throughout all regions. Favorite motifs include flowers, birds, fish, and dragons. Miniatures are especially popular in Han Hua, as are long horizontal landscapes. Cut paper designs are prevalent in Lanna. The preferential art in Tashil and Tiakhar is carving and statuary, due in part to the warm temperatures that do not favor the preservation of paint on paper.

Lucky is the artist who finds a wealthy patron, especially if that person is close to a kingdom's royal house!

Textile arts flourish in the Qi Guo with everything from a belt of brightly colored woven yak fur from Xian Bei to a gossamer silk saree in Tashil decorated with motifs worked in gold thread. Hangings of all kinds, as well as tapestries, grace almost every home, including the gers in Han Hua. Khimali artisans produce beautiful appliqued and embroidered tapestries called thangkas in praise of the gods, especially the Green and White Tara.

Ceramics

As far back as there have been people in the Seven Kingdoms, there has been pottery. In fact, the great goddess Nu Wa who fashioned men out of water and the yellow clay of the earth. Initially, of course, pots and bowls and dishes and jars were all made for daily use, but ancient artifacts that can be seen in the great gallery in the Imperial City show that even then, the people already had a sense of beauty and style.

Two types of ceramics are produced in Cathay, mainly in Han Hua. These two designations have more to do with firing techniques than with regional preferences: kilns in forested areas which burn wood produce a finer porcelain because they can fire at an extremely high temperature. Kilns in areas where wood is not readily available must burn coal, which burns at a much lower temperature. These latter kilns produce a type of stoneware called Ji long named for the city where most of the production is done.

Ji long is notable for its simple, elegant shapes and multi-colored decoration. Color is applied as a “slip” (clay mixed with water and colorants to a consistency similar to paint) which is allowed to dry and then sometimes incised to create an overall decoration. The darker colors are the most popular and the potter who can create a true black has no trouble selling everything that comes out of his kiln. Scenes from nature or patterns that invoke natural plants or animal are the preferred decoration. Often a clear glaze is applied over the decoration for a shiny finish. All kinds of pots, dishes, vases, jars, and bottles are made of ji long, which is extremely durable. One very common ji long item is a ceramic headrest, which is always painted with birds to promote happy dreams.

True porcelain is called Nan gang after its major production center. It too is noted for simple, elegant shapes although these differ slightly from Ji long. Nan gang has its decoration carved into the clay itself before firing and then is covered with a single color glaze, usually green or white. The finest Nan gang will emit a clear resonant tone when tapped lightly with a rigid object. Nan gang is more delicate than Ji long and therefore is used more for decorative than practical every day items.

Most of the pottery produced throughout the Seven Kingdoms has four basic glazing colors: brown and amber (derived from iron), green (from copper), and a rich cream color which comes from the natural clay itself. Among the well-to-do, it is stylish to commission original jars to use for giving pickled or candied jiang as a “double gift,” for after the jiang has been consumed, the recipient gets to keep the beautiful jar.

In addition to everyday and ceremonial vessels of all kinds, both types of pottery are used to make figurines, from exquisite miniatures barely an inch high to those several times life size. The potters of Cathay are very proud of their ability to produce life size or larger figures of gods, men and animals. Often these figures are used to guard or decorate temples or to accompany important persons into the next life. (This is a relatively recent innovation. In ancient times, live soldiers, servants, war-horses and pets accompanied their master or mistress into the next life.)

The city of Tien Jin produces a very special porcelain. These vessels have no carved decoration and are always glazed a beautiful green-blue. Some process in the firing causes the glaze to form small cracks, which in no way affects the water-tightness of the vessel. The finer and more even the “crackle,” the more valuable the piece. Production is closely supervised and any item that has even a tiny flaw is destroyed.

Recently a new type of pottery has been seen in the markets of the major Cathayan cities, inciting a great deal of excitement, since the glaze on these vessels is a brilliant red. True red, as the makers of the more traditional pottery know, is almost impossible to achieve and even more impossible to achieve consistently. The makers of this new pottery are keeping the formula for this red glaze, and indeed their location, a secret. The consensus in the marketplaces is that the makers live somewhere in central Han Hua. Rumors abound about how they produce their fabulous red color — the favorite is that human flesh is added to the kiln along with the fuel. This rumor has not affected the popularity of this new pottery — or its price, which is considerably higher than most other ceramics.

Precious Stones

The Seven Kingdoms are a treasure house of fabulous and rare gems. Fortunately very little has made its way past the Crescent Empire, although the recent influx of Western Théans into the Mirror Sea may change this, and when it does, Cathay may find itself the subject of an intense assault of entrepreneurs of all types.

Tashil is famed within the Qi Guo for its *zuan shi* (diamonds.) There are mines in Tashil that have been producing diamonds of incredible size and purity for over 1,000 years. The best diamond cutters and polishers are also found in Tashil, mainly in the city of Chandela. In addition to diamonds, these mines also produce huge quantities of garnets, especially the rare orange garnets that occur nowhere else. *Lu bao shi* (emeralds), found in Tashil's rivers, are less common and much more expensive than diamonds.

The very best *hong bao shi* (rubies) and *lan bao shi* (sapphires) come from Lanna, where the mining city of Ayuthaya has made these gems its specialty. The huge open pit mines employ hundreds of workers, many of them convicted prisoners from all over the Seven Kingdoms. The rubies of Ayuthaya are prized for their rich red color and the sapphires come in pink, yellow, and lavender as well as all shades of blue.

Zhen zhu or pearls, once thought to be the tears of the gods, are found in many parts of Cathay, but some of the best pearl beds in the world are actually found in the eastern part of the Mirror Sea. Xi Hai in Han Hua, Ko Samui in Lanna and Srinagar in Tashil are the major pearl centers in Cathay which yield traditional black and white, as well as gold and pink oyster pearls.

The shores of the Corridors of Flame are the source of *baoyu* or abalone pearls prized for their rich blue-green-purple iridescence and conch pearls, which come in all shades of pink and red. The shells of these mollusks are jewels in themselves, used for small carvings and as inlay in furniture. Rarest of all pearls are the flame colored pearls found only in the marketplace of Shegar in Khimal. No one knows what creature produces these beauties, which glow like a live coal in the sunlight. Flame-pearl merchants are evasive about their origin but rumor has it that they are actually magically solidified fire from the Corridors of Flame.

Semi-precious Materials

In addition to the precious gems, Cathay abounds in semi-precious materials and artisans who are masters at carving them. Carved semi-precious items are extremely popular, not only for boxes and jars, but also figurines and tableware. Carved beads, commonly used in jewelry, are known throughout the Seven Kingdoms for their incredible detail. Piercing and multiple layers are the norm, not the exception, and it is not uncommon for both human and nature figures set within these layers to be accurate portraits of real people.

HU PO (AMBER)

Hu po is reputed to be the unconsumed fuel of the Huo Qiang that splatters to the ground and cools, leaving behind an exceptionally lightweight yet extremely durable substance. The best source of hu po is Koryo, where it is found in colors ranging from pale yellow through honey gold to almost black. The type found close to the Huo Qiang tends to have a reddish hue and an even crackling throughout the stone that is highly prized. (Note: Unlike the amber found in Western Théah, hu po does not contain magical properties.)

DAN SHA (CINNABAR)

This is a unique wood that grows in the rain forests of Lanna and Tashil. Its main attraction is its bright red color and almost non-existent grain, which makes it look more like stone than wood. For the very wealthy, whole pieces of furniture are carved out of dan sha with lavish decorations and scrollwork. The less affluent have to be content with much smaller boxes, jars and figurines. Carved balls of dan sha frequently adorn a necklace with a black silk cord and tassel. It is considered good luck to receive a gift of dan sha.

SHAN HU (CORAL)

Shan hu is found in the reefs along the southern coast of Cathay, off the shores of both the Mirror Sea and the Corridors of Flame. It comes in black, white, red and pink. There is a rare blue color that is not used much as it is very difficult to polish. The ocean gods are jealous of their coral, so it is never safe to go diving for it, for fear of encountering guardian sharks. In addition, shan hu is very sharp and more than one diver has returned to the surface cut and bleeding. Some forms of shan hu exude a toxin that can cause severe burning and damage to the skin. Chunks of shan hu that wash up on the beach are considered a gift from the gods and items made from these pieces are said to bring good luck.

LUNG TONG (DRAGON'S EYE)

This is a rare black or greenish-black stone found only in Tashil. When cut and polished in a cabochon the stone show a distinct star, although of only four rays instead of six like a star sapphire. Two of the rays are straight, while the other two usually appear wavy and not at right angle to the straight rays. Sailors regard lung tong stones as bad luck and forbid them on all ships — for good reason. The magnetic stones attract iron and can also affect compass readings. The more distinct the star, the higher the magnetism (and the more dangerous at sea.)

YU (JADE)

Jade is the most prized of all stones in Cathay. In fact, there are more than 14 words in Han Hua alone to describe the various types. The Han Hua word Yu is also the word for "precious." Jade's minute crystalline structure makes it a carver's dream. It is soft enough to carve easily, hard enough to make tiny details highly visible and also has incredible tenacity (which in stone working is the opposite of brittleness) so it does not break as easily as other types of semi-precious stones. This tenacity allows jade to be carved into amazing shapes such as linked circles carved from a single piece or jars with loose rings as handles. All jades are translucent and seem to gather light inside them. Polished jade also has a slick feeling to it. The rarest colors are gold and orange.

Jade is also strong enough to be used for buttons, buckles, cups and quai zi (chopsticks), and even holds an edge well enough to be used as blades for ceremonial daggers. Physicians use jade cups to administer medicine, as it is believed that jade increases health. Almost everyone throughout the Qi Guo wears a jade item on their person to preserve their health and drive off evil spirits. Jade comes in all shades of white, green, red, lavender and black and is found in all parts of Cathay. True emerald green is called luan yu and is reserved solely for the Imperial family's use.

SHI BAI SHI (OPAL)

Shi bai shi is found in the mountains of Khimal, and is another stone that, according to legend, owe its existence to the Huo Qiang. It is said that the intense heat of the Wall of Fire actually fuses stones together, and when that occurs, some bit of the fire itself is trap inside the melted stone. When looking at an opal, this story is easy to believe — there seems to be red, blue and green fire within the stone itself.

The base stone can be either a milky white (the more common variety) or a clear black, which are call huó shí bái shí (fire opals) because their fire can be seen more clearly. Because the fire inside an opal seems to move, many people believe that opals are alive and must be taken care of as if they were living creatures; otherwise, the opal spirit will depart the stone — after taking its revenge on the one who did not care for it properly.

Food

To the ruler the people are Heaven; to the people food is Heaven.
— Kwan Tze

Whether in famine, war, or peace the people of the Seven Kingdoms have a strong connection with the land as evidenced by the diversity and complexity of the various regional cuisines. No where else in Théah will you find a poem written to a pot of boiling bark and roots foraged during a particularly hard winter, nor will you find some of the extravagant and bizarre delicacies that grace the table of the Celestial Empress.

The standard greeting in all of the regions is not “How are you?” but rather “*Ni zu gou fan mei*” (“Have you eaten [taken rice] today?”) You can learn a great deal about people by studying what when, and how they eat. There are perhaps more techniques in the Seven Kingdoms for preparing food than in all of Théah combined. To name a few: boil, simmer, grill, stew, braise, steep, steam, fry, roast, bake, cure, preserve, smoke, red-cook, white-cook, velvet, flavor-pot, sizzle, scorch, drown, intoxicate — and of course, raw.

Cooking Utensils

There are a few basic items you will find in any Cathayan kitchen, one of which is a wok or wide, round-bottom iron pan with handles. This versatile container acquires a patina over time called “seasoning” and a good chef is known by the condition of her wok.

A variety of covered sand and clay cooking dishes can be found, some decorated and glazed and others elegant in their simplicity. These are used for simmering soups and stews and are especially popular in the temperate and cooler regions like Khimal, Koryo, and parts of Xian Bei. No self-respecting Cathayan cook or housewife is without a favorite simmer pot.

The deadliest weapon in Cathayan kitchen is probably the razor-edged cleaver, called *da dao* (big knife) and *shao dao* (lesser knife.) Lesser, however, does not mean less potentially dangerous! A skilled cook can chop a chicken into pieces in short order. Along with the cleaver is the wooden chopping block, made of oiled hardwood. With these two items, a Cathayan cook can prepare food in a range of sizes and shapes: minced, diced, chopped, sliced, slivered, slivered and even mashed.

As a rule, food in the Seven Kingdoms is served in small pieces as opposed to the great haunches of meat served in the northern nations of Théah. The reason for this is simple: fuel and temperature. In colder climates, fuel is at a premium and smaller food pieces cook faster, thereby conserving fuel. In warmer climates, especially southern Tashil and Tiakhar, the temperatures in summer can be brutal so a quick cooking time means less exposure to heat.

Eating Utensils

In the Seven Kingdoms, knives are cooking implements. Plates and platters are used for serving dishes. Dinners use bowls, small ladles, and quai zi. The latter can be made of everything from light bamboo to gold or jade, and are often given as gifts among the nobility. Spoons are customary and it is considered rude even in Xian Bei to spear one's food with a knife. Western Théans' habit of using a strange tined instruments for transporting food from plate to mouth is regarded as completely barbaric.

Agriculture

The earliest cultivation began in the plains of northern Han Hua and southern Xian Bei with planting and harvesting of millet, and the domestication of chickens and pigs. Dogs were used as herd animals. Simple coil pottery was common among the Xian Bei and in some areas of that kingdom the design has not altered much from its pre-historic origins.

The people of Lanna were the first to cultivate a weed found in flooded patches and after 1,000 years of planting and harvesting, the staple of all cuisines in the Seven Kingdom — *mi* (rice) — was fully established. Additional staples in the diet included millet, barley, rice, a variety of fresh vegetables, fish and poultry, all of which are used today.

Today the diet includes all manner of livestock and domesticated animal, including cow, pig, sheep, goat, yak, chicken, duck, and lamb. Fish, both finned and shellfish, is another staple of the diet especially along the coasts, while wild game is more prevalent in Koryo and the hunting preserves of Han Hua. The people of Cathay are adventurous eaters and it has been said that they will try anything once; thus even snakes and insects have been known to appear on a dining table.

Milk products like cheese and butter are eaten almost exclusively in Khimal and Xian Bei, as most Cathayans find these products difficult to digest. A variety of oils most derived from nuts are used for cooking. The ubiquitous *da dou* (soybean) provides both the base for a salty seasoning and a rather bland curd called *dou fu* that is extremely nutritious and inexpensive.

Vegetables and fruits come in a vast array of sizes, shapes, colors, and flavors. Some of the unique items that will not be found anywhere else in Théah include sun (bamboo shoots), mung (bean sprouts), and the delicately flavored water chestnuts (known by several names). Cathayans are particularly fond of mushrooms which are found in abundant variety throughout the land and ranging from a humble white variety to an extremely expensive kind that is found only in the deep forests of Koryo.

In the Seven Kingdoms, everything in the world has more than one meaning. To a Montaigne, a peach is simply a delicious summer fruit; to a Cathayan it means marriage, spring, and long life. Some of the more common symbolic items include:

- *Zhu* (bamboo): Longevity and Endurance
- *Limau susu* (citron, grown in Tiakhar): Wealth and Divine Protection
- *Shi zi* (persimmon): Joy
- *Liu* (pomegranate): Children and Posterity
- *Li* (pear): Purity and Benevolence

The basic cultivation pattern in the Seven Kingdoms is planting in spring, growing and ripening in summer, harvesting in autumn and enjoying what has been stored throughout the winter. Naturally, there is some adjustment in Khimal and in Tashil and Tiakhar to accommodate the long winter and oppressive summer heat respectively.

Rice

Without a doubt, the single most important ingredient in the diet of the Qi Guo is *mi* (rice.) To say it is a staple is to understate the case. It is an integral part of every single meal, regardless of region or season. There are dishes that are designed specifically to go with rice and which would not be considered complete without it. Even in the midst of the most elaborate banquet, the humble bowl of rice holds an honored position on the table.

Rice is never ever wasted. It is eaten at every meal, it is used to augment leftover food, it is even prepared as a stand-alone snack in a variety of ways. It is said that if a person wastes even a grain of rice, they run the risk of starving in the next life!

Rice is used in a variety of ways — not only as a starch (*mi fan* or basic cooked rice,) but also ground into flour, boiled to make a beverage or even fermented into vinegar or wine. There are two basic types of rice consumed in the Seven Kingdoms, both of which have been devised by the patient farmers of Lanna: *mi fan* and *nuo* which is a glutinous or “sticky” rice favored for desserts.

Thus the superior man is careful of his words and temperate in eating and drinking.

— I (The Corners of the Mouth), I Ching

Regional Cuisines

It would take more space than we have to explore all of the details about the cuisines of the Seven Kingdoms. Sufficeth to say that each kingdom has certain unique elements that take on even more variation depending on the region, city and even town. However, certain flavors and techniques mark the regions in a very general sort of way, as described below.

KHIMAL

The diet of the Khimali people relies on products produced from the versatile yak augmented with vegetables and wheat made into breads and dumplings. Due to the high altitudes and exposure to the cold, food in Khimal tends to be very rich and filling; however, the people show no ill effects as they work extremely hard during the day. The standard beverage,

po cha, has four basic ingredients: black tea, milk, salt, and butter. Once the tea is brewed, it is poured into a chandong or churn, in which it is mixed with the milk, salt and butter. The people claim that it keeps them warm so they drink a great deal of it.

One of the most popular dishes is *thenthuk* (“tentook”) or noodle soup. Long thick noodles are cooked in a rich broth with vegetables, onions and field greens. On festival days, meat is added to the dish. Besides yak meat, the mountain people enjoy mutton, while those living along the eastern coast have a rich supply of fish.

XIAN BEI

A cuisine definitely marked by the nomadic lifestyle of the people, the staples revolved around products from horses (especially the powerful fermented horse’s milk called kumiss) and dishes that can be cooked over an open fire.

Giovanni di Monte Corbino spent some time among the Xian Bei and detailed the process for making kumiss. The women collect the milk, which he claimed was a sweet as cow’s milk, and pour it into skins, then churn it until it bubbles and begins to ferment. After extracting the butter, they determine whether it is ready by tasting it: if it burns on the tongue but leaves an aftertaste of almonds it is ready. He noted that “It produces a very agreeable sensation inside and even intoxicates those with no strong head; it also markedly brings on urination.”

A special type of kumiss, called *karakumiss* or “black” kumiss is made for the leader of the Xian Bei and visiting dignitaries. The results of the process are not black, but rather clear and sweet as opposed to the more opaque texture of plain kumiss, and it is even more potent.

In addition to horses, the Xian Bei people also raise cattle, from whose milk they make a variety of mild cheeses ranging from soft to hard which can survive long treks across the Steppes. When necessary, they will boil the hard curd to make a beverage, as they are superstitious about drinking water. Their diet includes mutton from goat, and is heavily flavored with onions, leeks and garlic. When they can obtain wheat through trade, they make flat griddle breads that they use as both a platter and a utensil.

KORYO

The people of Koryo have a diet heavily accented with vegetables and herbs. Suan (garlic) is far and away the most frequently used seasoning, along with a pungent red pepper sauce. They favor beef over chicken for meat, preferring to raise poultry for eggs. Lacking the open plains of Xian Bei or Han Hua, Koryo cows graze in small densely grown pastures of exceptionally lush and plentiful grasses. A range of delicious and rare mushrooms are cultivated in the dense forests and bring fantastic prices at the markets of Han Hua.

Common dishes of Koryo include bulgogi, slices of a rich beef that has been marinated in a dark sauce heavily flavored with suan and then cooked on an open grill and bibimbop, an assortment of vegetables and meat placed on top of rice that has been cooked in a stone pot so that the bottom is crispy. Bibimbop is usually topped with a raw egg that is cooked as you stir it into the hot mixture and then seasoned with a powerful hot-flavored sauce. The Celestial Empress is particularly fond of a Koryo dish called posotbap, which contains rare mushrooms, rice and garlic. Koryo is also known for several varieties of fruit wines, including plum, honey and pear wines.

The cuisine of Koryo is elegant in its simplicity but also somewhat deceptive, as it is able to deliver quite a blow to the palate of the uninitiated.

HAN HUA

The largest kingdom naturally has the most diverse cuisine. In the north, where wheat is more plentiful, one finds meals relying more on dumplings and steamed breads than on rice; however the further south you travel, the more prevalent rice becomes as the staple of the meal. You will find every kind (and almost every part) of meat, fish, and fowl cooked in every possible way depending on where you travel. Food is usually served communally, as is the custom throughout the regions, in bowls and on platters. Dining is a very communal activity and done at a leisurely pace whenever possible.

LANNA

The name Lanna means “Land of a Million Rice Fields” so it stands to reason that the cooks of this region know more ways to prepare rice than any others in the Seven Kingdoms. The most potent rice wine comes from Lanna as well. The cuisine is delicate and sophisticated, combining sweet and spicy tastes in a multi-layered array of flavors. Rice noodles come in an array of sizes and shapes from short sticks to translucent coils that look like sea creatures when they are boiling. The main seasoning ingredients are chilies, suan, and *hua sheng* (peanuts.)

Two of the signature dishes of this nation include a mixture of rice “sticks” and bits of chicken, beef and shrimp in a sweet, pungent sauce and garnished with *hua sheng* and *sui* (coriander). As with the *kaari* of Tashil, each Lanna cook has her own versions of this satisfying dish.

TASHIL

Of all the cuisines in the Seven Kingdoms, that of Tashil is probably the most “exciting” for the palate. Using a variety of pungent and colorful spices, they produce a family of dishes based on what they call *kaari* (which means sauce.). It is basically rice, vegetables and frequently meat served in a rich and flavorful sauce. In addition to its distinctive taste, it has a rich golden color thanks to the inclusion of brightly colored spices. *Kaari* is actually a catch-all word for sauce with a variety of masalas or blends of spices and every housewife in Tashil claims that her *kaari* is the best in the land.

TIAKHAR

Tiakhari food shows a marked influence from its proximity to Tashil, with its own version of *kaari* which they call *gulai*, many of which are designed to go with fish and poultry. Because it is an island, Tiakhar relies on the sea for most of its protein, although there are private herds of cattle maintained for the royal family. However, there are no pigs on the island, as Tiakharis regard pork flesh as unclean. *Cymbo* (lemon-grass,) *shi hui* (lime) and *jiang* are primary seasonings along with sambals or fiery mixes of chilies and other seasonings. Thanks to its tropical climate, the island produces a variety of exotic fruits including the mango that is Empress Wu’s favorite of all fruits.

Spices

BADI ELAICHI (CARDAMOM)

Badi elaichi, grown in the hot rain forests of southern Tashil, is a labor-intensive spice to produce, which accounts for its high price. The seeds are too precious to use for planting so new trees are started from small sections of trunks from older trees. The trees start producing flowers in their second or third year and keep producing until they are about 15 years old, at which time they are chopped down and their trunks used to grow the next plantation.

The tree produces flowers for as much as a quarter of the year and each pollinated flower becomes a pod full of strangely shaped but delicious seeds. Each pod is harvested by hand when it is about three-quarters ripe and is then either left to dry in the sun which bleaches the pods white or in a heated room which keeps the pods green. There is a subtle taste and property difference between these two drying methods, and recipes and formulae will usually state which type of pod to use.

Badi elaichi’s culinary and medicinal uses are very closely related, as it is recommended for use in various foods to prevent illness as well as for flavor. The traditional first course at Tashil feasts is heavily flavored with badi elaichi to prevent stomachaches that frequently occur from overeating. It is also known for its aphrodisiac properties, which might also account for its heavy use in feast food and its high price.

BA JIAO (ANISE)

Anise is the fruit of a tree that grows in the forests of Lanna. It is unusual for a spice because the entire fruit is used, not just the seeds. The fruit is picked at the end of the rainy season, then dried whole in the sun after which the fruit and its seeds are then crushed for use. Ba jiao is a favorite for flavoring sweets and small candies are often served at the end of meals to aid digestion and sweeten the breath. The dried fruits are quite pretty — the best ones are star-shaped — and are also used for fragrant household decorations. A garland of ba jiao fruits is traditionally hung over the children’s beds to keep bad dreams away and an ointment made from ba jiao seeds is said to restore youth to the skin and reverse baldness.

JIANG (GINGER)

Jiang is the traditional food of the gods throughout Cathay and is therefore part of any temple offering. It is thought that eating jiang is what keeps the gods immortal and the traditional blessing when eating it is to wish one’s guests a long and remarkably youthful life. Fortunately, the gods are not greedy about their jiang and happily share it with their worshippers, who are encouraged to share it with each other. In Lanna and Han Hua one can find made little jars of a special shape made from the finest materials especially for giving jiang as gifts symbolizing long life and happiness.

Jiang and its milder-tasting cousin *gao liang jiang* (*galangale*) are prolific plants that grow in damp areas throughout much of Cathay. There is no need to cultivate it — it grows wild and will soon take over any area in which it is planted. The edible part of the plant is its oddly shaped rhizome that can grow either above or under ground.

Jiang is eaten cooked as a vegetable, candied in sugar syrup, pickled in salt and/or vinegar, or the dried rhizome can be ground and used as a spice. It is also used medicinally for digestive complaints and joint ailments, and it is the base for most temple incense. The flowers of the jiang plant have a sweet delicate fragrance and are a symbol of happiness, so brides throughout the Qi Guo wear jiang wreaths on their wedding day. The flowers are also used to make a delicate perfume. Oil from the jiang rhizome is used for men's scents.

Raw jiang is fed to horses as a treat and especially to war-horses before going into battle. Horses seem to love ginger and perform at their best after eating it, so wise horse buyers smell the breath of prospective purchases while examining their teeth. It is not unknown for horse merchants to perk up their wares by feeding them jiang.

JIANG HUANG (TURMERIC)

In addition to a bright yellow color, this relative of jiang grown in Tashil adds a warm flavor to foods. If fact, unscrupulous merchants will try to pass it off to the unsuspecting visitor as bargain-priced xi hong hua (saffron.) Wise customers know that the real thing is a yellow powder, while ji hong hua is red in its powder form. Jiang huang is said to promote the flow of chi, relieve depression and despite its rich color, cool the blood. Tashil cooks are particularly fond of using jiang huang when cooking chicken and rice dishes.

JIAO (PEPPER)

Cathay is the land of jiao, although the shrewd merchants of the Crescent Empire have tried to fool the West into thinking it comes from their own country. The truth is that, until now, pepper has been funneled through the Crescent Empire to western Théah at a huge markup. A Western traveler bringing home a cargo of jiao can claim that markup for himself and still undersell the regular merchants. The market for jiao in the West is huge, as it is the most popular spice after salt.

Several different varieties of this pungent spice grow in the southern parts of Han Hua and in Tashil, and naturally every place thinks its variety is the best. Peppercorns are the berries of the jiao tree and black, white and green peppercorns all come from the same tree. Green peppercorns (*lu jiao*) are dried unripe berries and have a mild bite and a fresh taste. Black ones (*hei jiao*) are dried ripe berries in their skins and white peppercorns have been peeled before they were dried. White bai jiao tastes smoother than the black variety, which has the ziest bite of all three varieties. In addition to flavoring food, jiao is used in making incense and, it is rumored, its oil is used to make a perfume called bai huo or "White Fire" and supposedly has powerful aphrodisiac properties.

JOU KUEI (CINNAMON)

Jou kuei and its cousin rou gui pi (cassia) grow wild in the dry canyons leading to the steppes of Xian Bei. While it is easy to find and grows abundantly, it is quite dangerous to harvest and only the most experienced and lucky harvesters can expect a profit, much less a long life. The first danger in the cinnamon trade comes from water — jou kuei bark is harvested just before the rainy season and flash floods have been known to wipe out entire harvesting teams.

The second danger is more subtle — *jou kuei gun* (canelle snakes). These small but extremely venomous reptiles live amongst the roots and branches of both jou kuei and rou gui pi bushes, whose twigs they resemble. It is very difficult to determine what is a twig and what might be a snake.

The spice itself is made of the ground dried bark of these two related shrubs. The bark of the cinnamon shrub is pale tan with the best quality having a coppery sheen to it. It is very delicate and thin and can be easily crushed by hand. Its warm sweet taste is delicate as well. Rou gui pi bark is dark red, also with a coppery sheen on the best quality bark. The bark is thick and dries rock-hard and so must be ground in a mortar or handmill. It has a much stronger taste than jou kuei and tends to be hot and bitter. Rare oil can be pressed from true jou kuei bark, although it takes a vast quantity to gain any measurable amount of oil. This oil is used for the rarest perfumes and incense. Rou gui pi bark is infused in oil to produce a reasonable although far less expensive substitute.

MO YAO (MYRRH)

Mo yao, which is used in perfume and incense, is extremely rare and expensive. It is the dried crystallized sap of a tree that grows only in the gardens of Khimal's mountain top monasteries. The monks explain that the gods have touched the trees in their gardens, as what seem to be the same species of tree growing elsewhere does not produce mo yao. The sap is harvested once a year in late winter.

After several days of ritual, during which the monks fortify and thank the trees and purify the harvesters, cuts are made with almost surgical precision in the bark of the trees. The sap is allowed to run down the side of the tree and drip to the ground for several days, by which time the tree has healed itself and the flow stops. The runnels of sap stay on the trees for a number of weeks until they are solid enough to be handled. Harvesters then carefully detached the sap from the trees and let it dry, at which point it can be broken up into small chunks for use.



Drops of mo yao that fall to the ground are very carefully collected, as their scent is said to be superior to that of the broken chunks. Most of these drops are made into perfumed jewelry for the very wealthy, but extremely rare drops that dry into perfect teardrop shapes that are offered up to the gods.

SUAN (GARLIC)

Even if the flavor of this spice were not utterly delicious, its shape would entitle it to a place of honor in a Cathayan kitchen. Sometimes referred to as shi zi tou or “lion’s head,” a cook always feels as though he is unwrapping a gift when he peels a clove of garlic. In addition to its flavor, suan also has medicinal properties, including use as a digestive aid. Some say it even prolongs life. It is the favorite seasoning in the kingdom of Koryo.

XI HONG HUA (SAFFRON)

The most expensive of all spices, xi hong hua comes from the stamens of the fan hung hua (autumn crocus), which grows in abundance on the western border of Xian Bei, near the Huo Qiang. It is said that the proximity to the Wall of Flame is part of what give saffron its wonderful taste and certainly some of its mystic properties.

The story in the xi hong hua fields is that one of the magical Talismans used to raise the Wall of Flame is in the shape of a saffron crocus. The flowers bloom almost simultaneously but only for three days a year, so harvesting the precious spice is a hectic undertaking. It takes tens of thousands of flowers to make one pound of xi hong hua, and the name taken from flowers on their first day of blooming is considered superior to that of subsequent days.

Xi hong hua is prized not just for its subtle taste but for its ability to impart a bright yellow color to foods and fabrics. Cathay takes its saffron trade very seriously and while there are many merchants throughout the country who will be happy to sell saffron to you, the penalties for smuggling it are very severe. One needs to be careful to know the difference between this and jiang huang (*see above*).

YING SU (POPPY)

Many varieties of ying su grow throughout Cathay. Some varieties have edible seeds that can be used whole or ground into flour while others have medicinal and magical uses in their seeds, petals, roots and sap. The *feng ge shou* (“Wind Singer”) variety is especially useful. Syrup made from the entire plant is a powerful painkiller and sedative. In addition, depending on the phase of the moon under which the poppy is picked (it is always harvested at night) it has various magical properties. This poppy has never been domesticated and is always found wild in high mountain meadows. (*See New Poisons — Afyam*)

ZHI MA (SESAME)

The seeds of the zhi ma plant and the oil pressed from those seeds have many uses in food, cosmetics, perfume, medicine and magic. The oil is so delicious that only a tiny amount is needed to flavor any dish. It is said that if one stares into the flame of a lamp of pure alabaster burning zhi ma oil of the utmost purity, one can see the future. Most zhi ma comes from Tiakhar and the southeast coast of Tashil. There are reports that the huge plantations on Tiakhar are worked by thousands of slaves, unfortunate captives of the fierce pirates.

Entering a spice shop or the equivalent of an apothecary’s shop will be close to a mind-altering experience for a western Théan. The smell is indescribable — rich, sweet, acrid, bitter, pungent, altogether... exotic. It is not unlike a cross between a dusty antique store in a back alley of Freiburg and a magician’s supply shop in Urfa. It is important to remember, however, that the herbs and spices you see are all natural. They have not been conjured from some other dimension. The shriveled homunculi are nothing more than a full jiang or ren shen root and the pointed little brown things are ba jiao. Do not be surprised if the proprietor scans you up and down, gathers some herbs and presses them upon you. It is obvious to him that your qi is in need of a tonic!

Medicine

“Nature creates a cure for every problem provided humans haven’t destroyed it first.”

— Shen Nong

A Word to the Wise

While the herbs detailed below are real, some of their properties have been augmented for the world of *7th Sea*™. It is assumed, hopefully not erroneously, that our readers are sensible enough to know that they should not attempt to use any of these items in any way other than what is prescribed by the instructions on the real-world bottles or packages!

The great emperor Shen Nong set forth a theory of health and disease based on the Five Elements — Wood, Fire, Earth, Metal, and Water. Each element has its own corresponding association with a season, a color, a taste, an emotion, and different parts of the body. For good health to be maintained all the elements must be in harmony. If one becomes too dominant or is out of balance with the others, illness can result. Keeping the elements in balance is a complex process, and herbal practitioners can be apprenticed for as long as 20 years before they develop an instinctive knowledge of where the imbalance exists. In addition to knowing which herb or combination of herbs to prescribe, practitioners also learn where these herbs can be found and how to prepare them as medicine.

Ci hai (Aloe)

Ci hai came north from Tashil where the topical healing benefits of this plant are well known. It is especially useful for treating burns because it forms a soothing, cooling salve, which eases pain almost immediately and prevents scarring. Field healers in the military carry ci hai as part of their medical kit because it aids in more rapid healing of wounds. Ci hai requires a tropical environment, which both Tashil and Tiakhar provide. The best ci hai comes from plantations near Jaisalma.

Da huang (Rhubarb Root)

Da huang, which grows in northern Han Hua and southern Xian Bei, has been used medicinally throughout the Seven Kingdoms for thousands of years. Its name translates as “Big Yellow” because that is the color of its root and all prepara-

tions containing it. While the plant's root is beneficial in many ways, the leaves are fatally toxic. (Note: this is NOT the same plant as edible rhubarb!) The root is taken internally for digestive and liver ailments and applied externally in a wash for skin disorders. It is never used on those suffering from gout or other joint complaints.

Gui zhi (Cinnamon twigs)

Gui zhi is grown in Xian Bei and the twigs are actually a useful by-product of the spice trade, once all the bark has been removed. (See *Spices*.) A decoction of the twigs is a digestive and circulatory stimulant when taken internally and a joint pain and inflammation reliever when applied as a hot compress which also relieves frostbite. The herb is essentially hot in nature and should never be used on a feverish patient.

Ma huang

Not to be confused with da huang above, ma huang grows in Tashil. A stimulant, its twigs are used to treat chronic lung ailments such as asthma and hay fever. A strong tincture is used for severe complaints while a lighter dose in a decoction is prescribed for common colds and coughs. It also has fever-reducing properties. A decoction of its root is used to treat qi (energy) weakness and also excessive sweating. This is a very powerful herb and must be used cautiously — too strong a dosage can prove to be fatal.

Ren shen (Ginseng)

Ren shen is one of the most prized herbs in the Cathayan pharmacopoeia and one of the most expensive. It comes from the root of a swamp-growing plant in southern Han Hua. It is used as a tonic to strengthen all the systems of the body and to restore qi (energy.) Ren shen is a powerful immune system stimulant given to fatally ill patients as a last resort, often with amazing results. It is expensive because it requires magical assistance in its preparation — it must be found growing under certain special conditions, picked at a time when the planets and stars are in propitious alignment, and prepared with certain secret rituals and spells in order to be effective.

Other common herbs include:

- *Ban xia* (pinellia): harmonizes twisted intestines, stops vomiting, disperses excess fluids.
- *Bo he* (mint): clears fever, headache, sore throat and eye infections; heals skin rash, reduces stomach bloating; treats mouth sores and toothache.
- *Chen pi* (tangerine peel): Revitalizes qi, strengthens the spleen, stops vomiting, aids digestion.
- *Gou qui zi* (wolfberry): nourishes liver and kidneys; brightens the eyes and treats visual disturbances; cures impotence.
- *Huang qi* (milk vetch root): increases blood cell production; boosts immune system; drains swollen tissue.
- *Ju hua* (chrysanthemum): antibacterial, anti-inflammatory; treats liver problems.
- *Pai kuo* (gingko): Found in Tashil. Promotes energy, endurance and mental stamina; used by soldiers on long campaigns and students preparing for exams.

One of the most prized possessions of the royal family is an extensive medical library which contains not only encyclopedias of medical knowledge, but also a treasured copy of Shen Nong's extensive work, purportedly in his own hand. Court physicians constantly conduct research to devise new herbal formulas intended to protect the health and prolong the life of Celestial Empress.

The *cao yao* (healer) holds great stature in the Qi Guo. Unfortunately, there are those who would take advantage of the unwary by setting up shop with a myriad of bottles and jars full of strange things, hanging all manner of official-looking scrolls about, and providing a fast-talking patter about the beneficial properties of oil derived from two-headed snakes and the like. As in all things, those who would dupe the public and endanger the health of another will pay for such actions in the next life.

While *cao yao* tend to maintain medical records on scrolls, the shaman of Koryo write theirs on the treated bark of trees; as a mnemonic device, they use the bark of a specific tree to log information about that tree's healing properties. In Xian Bei, shamans keep their records on bones, which sometimes double for oracle casting.

Bu fa (herbal tonics) are the most prevalent form of medical treatment, but Han Hua *cao yao* also use other methods including *zhen jiu* (acupuncture and moxibustion, which redistributes yin and yang in the body). A modified form of *zhen jiu* involves applying pressure to particular points on the body. In dire cases, a *cao yao* may perform blood-letting to relieve pressure and reduce excess qi. In his learned text *Hsi Yuan Lu* (A Collection of Vindicated Cases), the famous healer Sung Tzu advocated both blood-letting and studying the bodies of the dead to understand the causes of disease.

In Lanna, they practice *nuad bo rarn*, a gentle form of therapeutic massage. In Tashil, there are a variety of types of therapeutic massage designed to do everything from relax the mind and body to stimulating energy throughout the system. Tashil healers are concerned with alignment of what they call the *chakras*, the seven areas of the body that govern qi. Starting at the bottom:

- *Muladhara* (Spine/Red/Instincts): Emotional and physical safety, individuality, stability, courage, patience, success.
- *Svadhithana* (Sacral/Orange/Sexuality): Energy, creativity, generosity, self-respect.
- *Manipura* (Solar Plexus/Yellow/Digestion and Emotions): Confidence, personal power, enthusiasm, authority, will, self-control, laughter.
- *Anahata* (Heart/Green/Blood circulation): Love, forgiveness, compassion, acceptance, peace, harmony, contentment.
- *Visuddha* (Throat/Blue/Communication): Communication, peace, knowledge, wisdom, honesty, loyalty, kindness, devotion, aspiration.
- *Ajna* (Third Eye/Indigo/Vision): Concentration, detachment, pure clear mind, intuition, perception, wisdom, clairvoyance, insight.

- *Sahasrara* (Crown/Violet/Spiritual Illumination): Spiritual Will, inspiration, wisdom, idealism, perception beyond space and time, awakening of consciousness.

A skilled healer can tell, often by looking at a person, what needs realignment. Most certainly by touching the patient they will know where energies are trapped and where they need to be redirected. In addition to therapeutic massage, they will recommend that the patient devote more attention to specific asanas and increase the amount of time they are spending in meditation.

Tea

One day the great Emperor Shen Nong sat down to study his notes under the shade of a tree. Beside him, on a brazier, a large pot of water was boiling in preparation for an experiment. A strong breeze blew across the garden and a few leaves from the overhanging branch fell into the boiling water. At first, the noble scholar, who had grown sleepy, paid no heed but soon an enticing aroma caught his attention. Excited by the possibility of testing a new herb and a firm believer in trying things out himself, he poured some of the greenish mixture into a cup and drank it.

He was stunned with pleasure at the aroma and slightly bitter but refreshing taste of the clear brew, and even more amazed as he felt his qi fill with energy. His mind was alert and all thought of sleep banished from his mind. He called for his servants and made each of them drink some of the refreshing brew, and to a person, they experienced the same effect.

Thus did Emperor Shen Nong discover *cha* and forever after do the people of the Seven Kingdoms praise his memory when they partake of the most popular drink in the land.

Cha is to Cathay what *kaffe* is to the Crescent Empire. It is one of the oldest cultivated plants and the first plant domesticated for pleasure rather than sustenance. Both Han Hua and Tashil claim to be the homeland of cha, but the truth is lost in the mists of time, as brewable plants grow readily almost everywhere — although almost everywhere is not necessarily the place to grow the best leaves. The most flavorful cha is grown above 5,000 feet with more than 100 inches of rain falls each year.

Tea cultivation is extremely labor-intensive and, considering the huge demand for it in all seven kingdoms, it is surprising that the price is not higher. In fact, each kingdom subsidizes cha farming, as the beverage is a household necessity no matter one's rank or income.

The basic cha plant in the wild grows into a tree about 30 feet high, but a tree like this does not produce the best tea leaves and would be hard to harvest. Cultivated trees are pruned into bushes about 3 feet high. Shade trees are planted amongst the bushes so the sun does not scorch the young cha leaves. Each spring, the fresh young leaves are plucked by hand. All the leaves in a single plucking must be the same size so that they will dry evenly. (Rumor has it that on the Imperial tea plantation, harvesting is done by specially trained monkeys but the origin of that may be due to the use of children because their hands are small.) Smaller leaves produce the best flavor but make for smaller harvests, so each farmer must decide whether to go for quality or quantity. After harvesting, the leaves are processed one of three ways to the three kinds of tea:

Lu cha (Green Tea)

The leaves are bruised and pan-fried, then allowed to dry. This tea has the most delicate flavor.

Oolong

The leaves are allowed to partially ferment and then are dried. Oolong has a stronger flavor than green tea and takes well to added flavorings like cardamom, clove, jasmine flowers or mint.

Hong cha (Black Tea)

These are fully fermented tea leaves. Hong cha is hearty and robust and somewhat more bitter than the other two.

Cha drinking is an art in itself, and specially colored pottery is made to complement the color of the tea. Cha is served at every meal and on every occasion. Most religious rituals in Cathay require the drinking of cha, and successful business deals are always concluded with a cha ceremony.

Although cha has little nutritional value, it is still used as a food as well as a beverage. Steamed tea leaves are wrapped around small balls of rice and meat or fish, then eaten. As noted above, the common breakfast food in Khimal is tea mixed with milk, butter and salt.

In addition to being the beverage of choice throughout the Seven Kingdoms, cha is also used medicinally. Lu cha can also be used as a poultice in the mouth to prevent tooth decay and freshen breath or externally as a compress to reduce the inflammation of insect bites and stop bleeding. When taken as a beverage, lu cha and hong cha act as stimulants to the immune system. Hong cha is also used internally to counteract food poisoning and as a hangover remedy. A poultice of hong cha leaves is used for tired eyes and a weak infusion is a cooling wash for sunburned skin. Oolong cha taken after meals aids digestion and prevents circulatory diseases.

Some of the more exotic blends of cha have names like *Lung zhao* (Dragon Pool), *Ju cha* (Iron Cha), *Huo yao cha* (Gunpowder) and *Qin cha* (Royal Cha) which is not only flavored with rare ingredients but sold in a very expensive container. One is expected to return the container to the giver with an equally precious gift when the cha is gone.

Because everyone in the Seven Kingdoms partakes of cha, the enterprising people of Han Hua have recently opened up small shops in the cities where patrons can gather. They enjoy cha and dim sum, a variety of small buns and cakes that are filled with bits of meat, vegetables or an extremely sweet paste made from bean curd, and then streamed or boiled. These shops are particularly favorite gathering places for conducting social business like matchmaking. When a city family is going to entertain a hong nian (matchmaker), they will frequently order an array of dim sum as a sign of respect. A wise hong nian knows that a selection of dim sum costing more than it appears the family can afford means there may be something not quite favorable about the marital prospects.

Wine and Beer

Long ago Cathayans found the fermenting rice and fruit produced a clear intoxicating beverage. In addition to “discovering” cha, Emperor Shen Nong is credited with developing the fermentation technique that produces *jiu* (wine). It was during the Wu Di dynasty that brewing became an art with the creation of Shao xing or “yellow rice” wine. In rural areas of Koryo, Han Hua, and Lanna, upon the birth of a daughter, the family begins fermenting the wine that will be served at her wedding banquet.

Despite claims that Han Hua produces the finest wine in the Qi Guo, Lanna far surpasses its neighbor in terms of clarity, quality and power of intoxication. Koryo produces the best grape-based *jiu*. Tashil, Han Hua, and Lanna produce several pleasant varieties of *pi jiu* (beer). Xian Bei sticks with kumiss, although Khan Dalan-Tai is always happy to receive gifts of any fermented beverage. Khimal is the only kingdom in which intoxicating drinks are not consumed, as they learned long ago that excessively high altitudes and alcohol do not produce a felicitous state of mind, and in fact can be fatal.

Clothing

For the most part, clothing in the Seven Kingdoms is far simpler than in western Théah, although the cloth tends to be more brilliantly colored. Fabrics range from low-grade loose weave cotton to the finest silk and brocade, often over-embroidered with gold and silver threads. Blue is a common color among the lower classes throughout the Qi Guo because the dye is inexpensive and stays fairly well. Yellow is reserved for the royal family and saffron for the High Lama. White is never worn except for mourning garments.

The basic attire for men and women in Khimal, Xian Bei, Koryo, and Han Hua includes loose pants and a seamless tunic with a high collar. The tunic's closure runs diagonally from one shoulder to the opposite underarm, diagonally from the neck down to under both arms, or straight down the middle. Tunic length varies from waist to ankle and on longer tunics, movement is assisted by a slit up either side. Undergarments may include tunics in lighter fabrics with longer sleeves that show under the shorter overtunic.

The people of Khimal and Xian Bei wear loose-fitting pants tucked into wide flat-soled boots and a tunic with a diagonal closure, wide sleeves, and a flaring A-line silhouette. Men and women wear their hair long and adorned with beads and feathers or braided with brightly colored threads. In the winter, they wear coats made of brightly-colored patches of fabric and quilted for warmth.

In Koryo and Han Hua, pants and tunic are covered by a longer robe. In Lanna, there is a fusion between the loose-fitting robes of the north and the tighter clothing in Tashil and Tiakhari. Men wear loose pants with the long end of the fabric brought forward between their legs and tucked it into a wide belt. Women wear a two-piece outfit with a tight fitting, often sleeveless or one-shoulder bodice and a narrow skirt or sarong that is pleated or folded in the front.

In Tashil, women wear a saree, a 6-yard long piece of fabric that is hand-pleated and wrapped around their waist like a skirt with the end brought over their shoulder and hanging down their back. They wear a choli or tight-fitting short-sleeved bodice that usually leaves the midriff bare, although the end of the saree can be used for modesty. Men wear a high-necked tunic either cut at the waist or just above their knee, with loose-fitting pants underneath. Noblemen wear turban that are often decorated with jewels and bird feathers as a sign of wealth and rank. Women usually wear one long braid while men tuck their hair into a close-fitting cap worn under the turban.

Tiakhari women wear a combination of Lanna and Tashili garments, with a tight-fitting bodice, a sarong skirt, and occasionally, a longer piece of fabric over the shoulder. Men's garments are the same as in Tashil, although the turban is reserved exclusively for nobility.

Silk

Han Hua is the home of a blind flightless moth that lays more than 500 tiny eggs over four to six days from which emerge as many as 30,000 hungry little worms who proceed to eat one ton of white mulberry leaves. The result — 12 pounds of a smooth, fine raw silk thread and an industry unique to Cathay.

The moth's life is simple: mate, produce eggs, die. The process of making silk is lengthy and complicated. To produce high quality silk, the moth hatching has to be monitored closely under strictly supervised conditions and the little worms must receive their very special diet at regular intervals. Two conditions must be met: prevent the moth from hatching too soon and keep them fed. It is said that in larger silk-producing house, the sound these ravenous creatures make when feeding resembles a heavy rainfall.

A well-fed silkworm grows quickly and sheds its skin several times. Once it has enough qi it begins to build a cocoon, excreting a jelly from its silk glands. It takes three to four days for a worm to spin a cocoon around itself until it looks like a soft white cloud. Eight or nine days later, the cocoons are steamed to remove the worm inside, then dipped in hot water to loosen the filaments, which are then unwound onto smooth wooden spools. The best cocoons can produce as much as 900 meters of silk thread.

The spinner takes five to eight of these filaments to make a single thread, which can be woven into cloth or processed as embroidery thread. Silk thread holds dye extremely well, and clothing made of silk is cool in summer and despite its light weight, warm in winter.

Women handle all aspects of the silk industry, although some men perform dyeing and weaving. It is, however, a tradition passed down through the maternal side of the family in honor of Hsi Ling Shi, the wife of the Yellow Emperor and the goddess of spinning and weaving. Every spring, the Celestial Empress celebrates the festival that officially begins the silk-raising season, which includes judging a competition for the finest fabrics, threads, and embroideries from throughout the Seven Kingdoms.

There is some evidence that the Numans knew about the existence of silk as noted in ancient scientific texts but how they obtained the information is a mystery. The punishment for removing silkworms from Cathay is death.

Cosmetics

The use of cosmetics to enhance beauty is universal throughout Théah, although in Cathay it is sometimes as much ritual as common practice. The women of Khimal wear cosmetics only on their wedding day, when they use a natural lip stain and put a spot of red on either cheek. In Koryo and Lanna, upper class women use rice powder, natural lip stain, and kohl around their eyes but as a rule do not use a lot of cosmetics because as it is regarded as a sign of desperation to find (or keep) a husband. Excessive cosmetic use with regular daily attire is regarded as a mark of an actress or a woman of the streets.

In Tashil women use kohl around their eyes and natural lip stain. They also apply a brown stain called henna to their palms, the back of their hands, and the soles of their feet. No one knows for certain what women inside the harems of Tiakhar use for cosmetics; it is assumed that they apply whatever their husband or master finds appealing.

In Han Hua one sees a wide range of cosmetic use, from a flat white face with huge kohl-ringed eyes and a perfectly painted mouth to the simple, natural faces of young girls and peasants adorned with a touch of lip stain during a festival.

Men in Cathay do not use cosmetics; however, they do use a variety of hair grooming products and perfumes, as do women.

The people of the Qi Guo, as a rule, have ivory colored to dark brown skin; black or brown almond-shaped; slanted eyes that have an epicanthal fold; short flat noses; and wide high cheekbones. Their long dark hair is usually worn in a braid, although upper class and noblewomen of Han Han often affect elaborate coiffures adorned with jeweled hair pins, ribbons, and tiny ornaments.

Cathayans' hair ranges from dark brown to blue-black, straight to wavy, but almost never curly. Although most people have very long hair, they have relatively little body hair compared to western Théans. The women of Tashil are especially known for their luxuriant wavy hair that they usually grow well past their waist.

Marriage

Marriages are almost always arranged, regardless of the rank and status of the family. The higher one's rank, the more important it is to make an advantageous match. Royal and noble families rely on a hong nian, an astrologer, a feng shui geomancer, and at least one political minister during negotiations. At the very least, one must consult a hong nian and an astrologer. Not only must the marriage be negotiated, but also the date of the ceremony, as one would never wish to wed on an inauspicious day.

Final Negotiations

When the negotiations are complete (which includes a thorough inspection of the prospective bride and groom's horoscopes), the groom's family places the bride's horoscope on the family altar and waits for three days. Assuming there have been no bad omens, they authorize the hong nian to arrange a meeting.

The two families meet at a "neutral" place, often the local temple or the town's central public building in a room set aside for domestic business. In some cases, this may be the first time the bride and groom see each other. Assuming there is nothing untoward in the appearance or behavior of either family, the groom's family agrees to make a formal proposal.

The Proposal

The hong nian makes a formal proposal of marriage to the bride's family, which is accompanied by an initial set of gifts from the groom's family. This initiates more negotiations about the details of dowries and more gifts. Once this has all been agreed to and memorialized in a witnessed document, the hong nian appears before the bride and her family with even better gifts and makes the proposal.

When the proposal is accepted, the bride and groom exchange gifts through the hong nian.

The groom normally sends qian, cha and sweet dim sum, while the bride sends savory dim sum, clothing, and fabric. In some cases, either party may send a suitable personal gift to acknowledge the interest of the other, such as a flute, a set of calligraphy brushes, perhaps a sheaf of paper, but nothing intimate. To do so would be considered highly inappropriate. If, however, this is a true love match, the gifts will have a special meaning to each other which, if done with subtlety, is permitted.

At this point, the betrothal is considered binding. Only a great tragedy or intervention on the highest level can stop the marriage. War only postpones the ceremony unless by some unfortunate happenstance, the bride and groom's families are on opposite sides of the conflict. If the groom's side is victorious, the marriage will most probably proceed. If the bride's side is victorious, she does not have to return the gifts nor does she have to marry the groom if she does not wish.



Western Help with Cathay's Calendar

In approximately 1591, Deacon Johann Adamus von Bell, an Eisen Objectivist obsessed with time-keeping devices, made the dangerous journey to Cathay to learn more about their calendar system. Throughout his research, which included the writings of Crescent scholars, he found references to Cathay's elaborate lunar calendar and determined that he had to travel there himself.

Despite language and social barriers, Deacon von Bell managed to gain sufficient support to be permitted to study the records. He could not read the strange ideograms but he understood the diagrams and little by little managed to find a way to communicate with his Cathayan counterparts. The elaborate rules Cathayan astronomers had devised over centuries did not preclude the occasional error in calculation. During his sojourn in Han Hua, Deacon von Bell tried to help member of the College fix some of these mistakes but he was only minimally successful.

Approximately nine years after Deacon von Bell came to Cathay, Father Sabbatino Ricci arrived in Jing Du. Ricci had spent most of his life studying what little there was about the Qi Guo, which gave him an advantage. He had spent a great deal of time in Erivan learning Cathayan customs and had even picked sufficient language skill to prevent disgracing himself when he spoke. More importantly, he was an accomplished astronomer in his own right, so he wisely approached the Cathayans not as a missionary but as a fellow scholar. He worked closely with members of the College to help straighten out errors in their calculations but not all the astronomers saw the wisdom of outside "interference."

Unfortunately, Father Ricci died of a fever while on a trip to Tashil. His Cathayan colleagues mourned him and in fact he achieved a position of honor posthumously when it was discovered that in fact his method for calculating an eclipse was indeed correct. Deacon von Bell found that the astronomers were more amenable to his presence after that. Things progressed well and the arrival of two another Théan astronomers, Juan Tantoya del Torres from Castille and another Vaticine scholar Renata Ciosa, created a small enclave of Westerners. However, court astronomers found the presence of these barbarians an affront to ancient traditions and began plotting against them.

When the Théans learned about an incipient attempt on their lives, they fled with the help of friendly Cathayans and arrived safely in Erivan, somewhat worse for wear but thrilled to be alive and in possession of a great deal of information. It will take them a long time to sort through the material sufficiently to succeed in aligning the Théan and Cathayan calendars completely.

(Continued on next page.)

Betrothals can be made when the bride and groom are small children, with the understanding that when the bride turns 12, the marriage will proceed. As noted above, the betrothal is binding regardless of whether the bride or groom falls in love with someone else as they grow up. In very rare cases, a betrothal can be "un-negotiated" but the cost in goods and qian, not to mention potential loss of family honor, can be extremely high.

The Invitations

Invitations to the wedding are sent to the guests, often accompanied by little cakes or sweets to indicate that a feast will be served.

The Dowry Procession

Three days before the ceremony, a procession leaves the bride's home and travels to the groom, bringing the bride's belongings to her new home. When the marriage is one of political convenience (the bride and groom will remain in their respective domains), a token procession arrives at the groom's home with a large pot filled with fruit and qian.

In very wealthy families, the bride is given a *swer lin non*, a red bag embroidered with a dragon and a phoenix. In it is jewelry that is the bride to keep as her own. Although there is every expectation that the husband and his family will be able to provide for the duration of the marriage, Cathayans are very practical about the turns and twists of fate, so the *swer lin non* is the bride's "insurance," as it were, against disaster.

The Bride's Lament

Two days before the ceremony the bride, her servants, attendants and female family members retreat to the bride's chambers and remain in seclusion as they "mourn" the loss of her childhood. (For some, this is a time for feasting and poring over the beautiful gifts the bride has received; for others, it is truly a time of sorrow and fear at the impending dramatic change in the bride's life.)

The Marriage Bed

While the bride is in seclusion, the groom, servants, and male relatives install a new bed and decorate the marriage chamber. The less said here the better about what goes on behind the closed doors but it rivals any exuberant pre-wedding celebration in Vestenmannavnjar or the Highland Marches of western Théah.

The Wedding Day

The bride rises early and after a bath in scented water, begins her elaborate ritual garbing for the ceremony. After donning brand-new undergarments, she lights sacred candles and sits while her hair is dressed in the elaborate wedding style, which varies from kingdom to kingdom. During this time, she meditates and tries to calm herself so that she will appear serene during the ceremony.

Red is the color of joy and good luck throughout the Seven Kingdoms, so a bride is resplendent in red and gold garments on her wedding day. She is adorned with an elaborate bridal headdress that includes a veiling, usually made of coins, crystals, or precious stones. She moves slowly down the hall to the front of her home where she bows to her parents and sits on a chair to wait for the groom. The headdress and garments are so incredibly heavy that her female attendants must insure she does not faint. Fainting would be regarded as a very bad omen.

Meanwhile the groom is attired in red and gold, although his outfit is considerably lighter than the bride's. After gathering with his family to ask for a blessing from his ancestors, he proceeds to the bride's house. This procession is a joyous and loud one, accompanied by gongs, drums, and firecrackers. In wealthy families, the groom's attendants throw candies and coins to the people along the way; in less wealthy family, candies and/or flower petals have to suffice.

The groom arrives at the bride's house and together they go back to his home. The bride customarily rides on an enclosed chair carried by her male relatives. It is important that she not see any ill omens, such as a widow, between her house and the groom's. Once they arrive safely, she alights from the chair and the groom raises her veil. Satisfied that this is indeed the girl to whom he is betrothed, they both cross the threshold of his home, being careful not to step directly upon it.

The Marriage Ceremony

The ceremony itself is very simple. Presided over by a priest or a monk, the couple makes offerings to the groom's ancestors. They share a cup of special *hun yin cha* (wedding cha) which is the first official time their hands will touch as the groom hands the cup to his bride.

The bride makes an offering to the Kitchen God, asking him to bless the union. Even if the bride is an accomplished cook in her own right, she never presents her knives as the offering because this would be a very bad omen for the marriage, indicating that she will not be a dutiful wife.

The Marriage Chamber

The bride and groom are escorted to the bedroom where they sit on the end of the bed together and exchange gifts in front of the attendants. These gifts are not opened at this time, as they contain items of a most personal nature. The couple shares three cups of wine and then is escorted to the banquet.

The Wedding Feast

The guests are waiting anxiously for the new couple and greet them with cheers and loud noise to drive away any jealous evil spirits that might be lurking about the room. The feast is as elaborate as the groom's family can afford and may take hours, or in the case of noble families, several days.

The Wedding Night

When the moon begins to rise, the bride leaves the banquet hall, escorted to the wedding chamber by her closest attendants. There her heavy wedding garb is removed and she is dressed in sheer red garments with her hair brushed and flowing down her back.

The attendants retire and return to the banquet hall to fetch the groom, who may actually be waiting right outside the door in his eagerness. He enters his wedding chamber alone and his new wife helps him remove his wedding garb.

They open the private gifts they have given each other and proceed with the business of the evening, which is much like that of any other newly married couple in Théah...

The First Morning

When the newlyweds emerge from the chamber the next day, the bride is introduced to the groom's entire family who has gathered to greet the new couple. Each member of the family gives the bride a small token of welcome.

(Continued from previous page.)

The Cathayan calendar, despite some variations in individual kingdoms, is based on a lunar system and does not correspond, at least in pre-history to the Théan calendar. The Cathayan Lunar New Year is the longest chronological record in history, dating back thousand of years, when the concept of the cycles of the zodiac was first introduced. A complete cycle takes 60 years and is made up of five cycles of 12 years each. Each year is named after an animal occurs five times in each 60-year cycle in concordance with a corresponding cycle of elements. Legend has it that when the Jade Emperor summoned the animals of the earth to come before him before he began a long journey, only 12 came to bid him farewell. As a reward he named a year after each in the order in which they arrived. The year in which a person is born is "ruled" by this animal and feng shu geomancers teach that this animal has a powerful influence on one's life as the creature which "hides in the heart."

The Third Day

On the third day after the marriage, the bride and groom return to the bride's home, where she is now received as a guest. She offers gifts to her family and returns to her husband's home where she will live for the rest of her life. She is expected to treat her mother-in-law and the elder female relatives of her groom's family with great deference and respect.

With variations, this is the standard procedure for marriages throughout the Seven Kingdoms, except in Tiakhar where the bride does not return to her own home on the Third Day. Once she has crossed the threshold of her husband's home, she is considered to be his property and may not leave without his permission.

Cathayan couples who wish to divorce peacefully on the basis of mutual consent may have their marriage dissolved pending successful negotiation of a financial settlement. A person who has received a peaceful divorce may remarry without penalty. Text from the divorce decree states:

"Since we cannot live together harmoniously, we have agreed to divorce. Once the decree is complete, may my former wife be considered to be as young and beautiful as before. May she find a more satisfactory husband. May the divorce not plant hatred between us in the future."

A widow may remarry unless there is some suspicion about the circumstances of her husband's death.

Hospitality

It is considered an affront to the gods if one fails to offer hospitality to a visitor, regardless of how simple it may be. Except in the case of slaves, even the poorest Cathayan is expected to offer a visitor a place to sit and a cup of cha at the very least. A visitor is expected to bring a *lu wu* or gift. In the case of a person of higher rank visiting one of lower rank, cha is an acceptable gift but never a cup, as that would imply that the host is too poor to offer hospitality.

It is considered polite to thank someone with a *chou da*, a gift specifically designed for that purpose. In some cases, a gift is received in a container that the giver expects back. One must never return such a container empty. *Mi* (rice) and *cha* (tea) are always appropriate fillers.

In *Xian Bei*, it is acceptable to visit someone without prior notice, although the gift one brings should be slightly finer to apologize for any inconvenience. In *Tiakhar*, one never visits a person of higher class without first asking permission and in some cases, even then it is better to wait for an invitation.

Rank and Social Class

Who you are, who your family is, who your relatives are, who your spouse is — all of these are crucial to your social standing and determine how you are treated by others. Whether it is your position in the tribe in *Xian Bei* or your position in the government in *Han Hua*, your station in this life is affected by a dizzying array of qualifiers. Are you the second son of the first wife or the first son of the least favored concubine? Perhaps you are the youngest daughter of the highest-ranking princess or of a soldier who distinguished himself on the battlefield and rose through the ranks to become a general. Even in *Lanna*, where the society is somewhat less stratified, those of legitimate noble blood will always take precedence.

Government officials are regarded with deference everywhere except *Tiakhar* and *Xian Bei*; there, the people find interference from the Imperial government annoying and while they are rarely rude, they do not go out of their way to be accommodating. An official from *Han Hua* may find himself cooling his heels in a side room of the palace in *Khajuraho* until *Sayari Razak* decides he is ready to receive visitors.

The only exception to the rule of rank involves priests, monks, and shaman, and, to a lesser degree, sorcerers and magicians. In some cases, deference is paid simply because it is not wise to anger one who can affect your place in the next life or make this life unbearable with a curse. Even *Sayari Razak* pays special deference to the High Lama of *Khimal*. Although he does not adhere to that faith, he is aware that the High Lama has achieved a degree of enlightenment that far surpasses that of anyone else in the *Qi Guo*.

A Variety of Customs

Detailing the customs of the Seven Kingdoms would fill an entire room with scrolls. Here is a sampling of some that adventurers will find useful (and possibly life-saving).

Tiakhar

In *Tiakhar* rank, title and family ancestry (among men) is very important. Achieving distinction outside of one's rank is not easy unless you are in the Navy or have done a personal service for the ruler.

Conducting business is a major source of a man's day so he expects to haggle and bargain and will be insulted if his first price is accepted.

The ruler of *Tiakhar* is called *Tuanku*. *Datuk* is the equivalent of Prince and is reserved for the ruler's brothers and male heirs by his official wives. *Tan Sri* is the equivalent of Lord (noble) and may be granted through heredity or by the ruler as he sees fit.

Women in *Tiakhar*, even the *Tuanku*'s official wives, do not have titles.

- *Tiakharis* (both men and women) greet each other by clasping their hands together and bringing them to their chest as they bow their head slightly forward. Cocking one's head to the side is considered rude.
- Pointing in general is considered rude; if you must point, use your thumb.
- Never point with your feet (unless of course you have no hands).
- Never show the soles of your feet whether shod or bare. This is reserved for behavior in the bedchamber.
- Never touch another adult's head in public.
- Never use the left hand to offer or receive objects, or when eating or drinking.
- Never open a gift in front of the giver.
- Never ever touch a woman who is not a female relative or concubine in public.
- When you encounter someone who is older or of higher rank, do not initiate conversation until they have spoken to you first. This is especially important when in the presence of the *Tuanku*.

Xian Bei

There are dozens and dozens of customs and taboos amongst the *Xian Bei* and only the tribal elders know all of them. Here, however, are a few of the basic ones that all *Xian Bei* know:

- When offering and receiving food and drink, extend your right hand as you cup your right elbow with your left hand. It is acceptable to use both hands to offer or receive, but never put the left hand ahead of the right hand. Never use the left hand to offer or receive.
- Never offer or receive with your forearms bared and be sure to roll down your sleeves before greeting an older person.
- Always hold a cup from the bottom, never by the rim.
- Never pass a knife by the blade unless you intend to defend yourself immediately.
- To refuse food or drink when it is offered is to insult your host. Likewise, failure to offer hospitality to a guest brings dishonor upon your tribe. As a guest, should you choose not to partake of what is offered either touch it to your lips, or take a small portion between your fingers and toss it in the air as an offering to gods. To do otherwise is to accuse your host of poisoning you. Never ever wave proffered food or beverage away with your left hand.

- Should you spill kumiss, airag, or milk upon the ground, immediately dip the first and second fingers of your right hand into the bowl and touch them to your forehead lightly.
- Never offer a guest a cup that is cracked or broken.
- Avoid standing when drinking.
- It is not unseemly for men to great each other with an embrace, nor for women. However, do not embrace a man or woman who is not your spouse, child, or relative without first asking permission.
- Do not offend your host by showing him the soles of your feet, whether shod or bare. Never place your feet or shoes on a table, a chair, or other furniture on which people sit or recline.
- When entering a ger, never step directly on the threshold. Never approach the east side of the ger without permission, as this is the women's area.
- Instruct your daughters that they must never sit cross-legged like a man when inside a ger.
- Never ever whistle inside a ger or any other kind of building, as it will bring evil spirits upon you.
- Offer the daily greeting of sayn bayn o ("How are you?") only once per day per person. To ask more frequently tempts evil spirits to bring bad fortune.
- When the women are milking horses or cows, do not interrupt them or trod across their path.
- Never begin a conversation by asking about business.

Western Théans may not be prepared for the kind of social interaction that they will encounter in Xian Bei. When approaching a ger, your guide will call to the host to curb the dog. This is not an insult but rather is good practice as most Xian Bei have trained their sturdy lieh chien to be very suspicious of strangers. Do not be surprised if you are not introduced to your host immediately (or at all upon the first visit); your guide will act as your representative. However, when you are introduced, do not be surprised if your host embraces you if you are male as it is considered a greeting between warriors.

When a Xian Bei asks how you are, always respond initially that things are going well. Wait until later in the conversation to share details about ill health or misfortune.

Although people in other kingdoms of the Qi Guo are very fond of cats, the Xian Bei regard them as agents of evil spirits and will spit over their left shoulder three times if a cat crosses their path. They are, however, passionately devoted to their horses and their dogs.

A shooting star is a sign that someone has died, so a Xian Bei will spit once over his left shoulder and thank the gods that it is not his star.

Xian Bei Tribal Justice

While the tribal council could wait for an Imperial circuit judge to make his quarterly visit, the proud people of Xian Bei prefer to conduct their trials in the time-honored method of the forefathers. (They do save a few cases for the judge so that he does not feel that his trip was in vain, but those tend to be minor disputes whose outcome is irrelevant. There are even situation in which the Xian Bei will rehearse prior to the judge's arrival to provide him with a satisfying experience and insure that his report to his superiors will give the nomads another quarter without Imperial involvement.)

When a tribal council is convened for a hearing, the injured party can call for the manner in which the case will be decided. The following is a sampling of such actions:

OATH

The accuser and the accused gather their friends and relatives (or in larger cases it may their entire tribe) and take turns swearing oaths to the gods. If someone on either side refuses to swear, or if the tribal council determines that the oath sworn is not sincere, the person they represented loses the case.

HOT STONE SOUP

In cases where neither party is able to provide solid evidence of wrongdoing, a black stone and a white stone are dropped into a pot of boiling oil. The accuser and the accused must reach into the pot barehanded to fetch a stone and the person who retrieves the white stone wins. If one party is unable to pull out a stone, he loses the case. If neither party can retrieve a stone, the case is considered a draw and the council decides the outcome, which usually favors neither party.

COLD STONE SOUP

A variation of the trial above, but used for less serious cases. A wide bowl or wide-mouthed jar is filled with muddy water. Identically shaped stones, one black and one white, are dropped into the vessel. Each party must plunge his hand into the water to retrieve a stone with the same results as above. During the winter, the muddy water is made as cold as possible.

HOT SICKLE

Each party must hold a red-hot sickle barehanded and walk seven steps. After that, the hand is wrapped in a white cloth for three days, then unwrapped. The party with no sign of injury is telling the truth. The council in these cases includes a cao yao to insure that neither person surreptitiously medicated his burned hand.

Personal and Family Honor

Throughout Cathay, the theme of personal honor as a reflection of family honor is stressed in every aspect of life. One's actions, even those of a slave, reflect on the family in which one was born or for whom one labors. To act independently is to insult one's ancestor, disregard one's family, and call down disfavor both in this life and those to come.

The closest approximation to this is the tribal culture of the Crescent Empire, but even that is not as pervasive as this concept is in the Qi Guo. For a child to disobey a parent or a soldier to disobey a leader or worst of all, a subject to disobey a ruler, is to earn censure that in the extreme case will result in death. Only by removing oneself and taking the punishment in the next life brought on by committing *zi sha* or ritual suicide, can one undo the damage to the family's honor.

GMs are encouraged to use Reputation (*7th Sea*TM) or a combination of level and Cha (*d20*TM) to reflect the amount of respect a player commands through reputation. (See Chapter 4, *Reputation Awards and Losses* for more information.)

Slaves and Servants

Both are a fact of life in Cathay. It is not that the people of the Qi Guo regard human life with disdain; it is just the way things have always been. Each person progresses through his or her life on the Great Wheel according to fate. Sometimes they return in a position of power and influence, others times they must endure a life of servitude. A good master values his servants and treats them with compassion and a firm but gentle hand.

Slavery is also a punishment for crimes and as such, the criminal slave is not regarded with as much consideration as one who was born into that class. There are rare cases in which the criminal slave may perform some heroic act to save the master, but even that rarely will earn him freedom once he have been convicted of a crime. The laws are very clear — almost to a fault — and those who break them are usually fully aware of the risk they are taking.

In certain cases, a criminal may be branded or marked in some way to show his transgression. If he is condemned for a set period of time and then released, he will always bear the mark of his criminal act. Neither the laws or nor precepts of faith in the Seven Kingdoms are kindly disposed toward those who refuse to pursue a good life.

Punishment for crimes often involve public beating or other forms of humiliation including carrying a heavy wooden block around one's shoulders which precludes being able to feed or cleanse oneself. Removal of fingers and hands is accepted in certain parts of the Seven Kingdoms as punishment for thievery. Branding on the face, arms, or back may be used for repeat offenders of petty crimes as a warning to others to shun them.

As harsh as these sound, the justice system, if one may call it that, in Tiakhar is much harsher. Sayari Razak tolerates no dissension or crime from which he does not benefit. One of the goals of the Jing Chiang Tuan is to bring an end to the tuanku's tyrannical rule.

Education

When you know a thing, to realize that you know it; and when you do not know a thing, to allow that you do not know it: this is knowledge.

— Master Kung

In Han Hua, Tashil, Lanna, Koryo, and Khimal, all children receive some education, even slaves if the person who owns them is willing to spare the expense. Everyone is expected to

be able to read their own language even if they cannot always write it. There are scribes to perform that task, should someone need to send a letter or obtain an official document.

A modestly educated child will be able to read and write his own dialect, play basic tunes on a simple instrument, do simple calligraphy, and be able to perform simple mathematical calculations on an abacus. The more time and money that can be devoted to study, the more adept the student will become. Girls of high-ranking families are expected to dance, sing, play an instrument passably well, and be conversant with at least one practical art form. When a child shows a true affinity for a subject or skill, parents usually are happy to devote more resources to education so that the child can earn a living or make a good marriage and help support the family, if need be.

Boys and girls receive very basic martial training everywhere except Tiakhar, where girls are precluded from learning how to wield a weapon. In the rest of the Seven Kingdoms, girls are taught military history, politics, and geography along with boys. In northern Han Hua and in Xian Bei, a child learns to ride before he can walk and the first thing put into his hand is a tiny bow. In cities along the coast, children are also taught to swim and fish.

Throughout the Seven Kingdoms there is a true reverence for education and wherever possible, adults continue to learn skills and arts as a way of improving themselves.

Teachers are held in the highest esteem throughout the land, not only for their knowledge but because they are recognized as integral to the six basic relationships as defined by Master Kung. One regards one's teacher (in Tashil and Tiakhar, the guru) with as much reverence and respect as is given to parents and rulers.

Cathayan Calendar

Throughout the Seven Kingdoms, but most especially in Han Hua, maintenance of detailed time-keeping records is a task worthy of the highest officials. A college of approximately 200 tian wen xue jia or astronomers were entrusted hundreds of years ago with studying the heavens, predicting astronomical occurrences including the phases of the moon. The movement of the heavenly bodies is especially important for marking dates of the constellations in the Chinese zodiac, the times of the solstices and equinoxes (to note the seasons,) and the powerful eclipses of the sun and moon.

The study of astrology and astronomy are inextricably linked in the Qi Guo, so that the concepts of auspicious and inauspicious days are as important as the mathematical calculations used to track the actual movement of celestial entities. The Li Puo (Bureau of Rites) had final say over what was deemed "official" and even Father Ricci at his most eloquent could not countermand these pronouncements (not unlike the Vaticine Church, Deacon von Bell noted in a secret missive to his Apostle.) Even their supporters in the College had to designate their calculations to indicate that they were compiled by the "new rule" as the Cathayans politely called the Western measurements. (See page 44)

Taxation and Tribute

The structure of a feudalistic society establishes a hierarchy in which each level provides support for the one above it through a system of tribute, which can be paid in goods, services, and/or funds. In the Seven Kingdoms, the hierarchy of tribute and taxation is complicated by the fact that the kingdoms must pay tribute to the Imperial government and thus pass this burden back down to the people.

Although Duke Tzou is working hard to institutionalize taxation, he cannot countermand long-standing traditions within each kingdom; he can only organize Han Hua as an example of how the others should function. Xian Bei customarily pays its tribute in horses and levies of archers, while Tiakhar (grudgingly) sends ringgit and rare spices. The only kingdom that is exempt from tribute is Khimal; however, the High Lama always sends the Celestial Empress a gift on her birthday and on sacred holidays.

Unlike Vodacce princes who are actively engaged in business on their own behalf, the Celestial Empress has no income, per se. She receives two types of gifts: those that become part of the Royal Treasury and those that are personal, usually in the form of jewelry, clothing, poetry, ceramics for personal use, and pets. Her favorite pet are the tiny rincen kyi puppies she received from the High Lama.

Any gift of food or beverage sent to a superior is tested first by a designated taster who is aware that the job is one of the riskiest in the Seven Kingdoms. The higher the rank, the more important it is to have tasters one can trust.

Games

It is difficult to deal with him who will stuff himself with food the whole day without applying his mind to anything good. Are there not liu po and wei qi players? To be one of these would still be better than doing nothing at all.*

— Master Kung, Lun Yu
(*refers to players of liu po, a popular dice game)

Games of all kinds are a passion with the people of the Qi Guo. Whether they employ cards, dice, or tiles, games of chance are particularly favored and wagering is an important part of playing. Wagers can be as simple of offering to find firewood for the next three moons to staking all of one's worldly goods — including wives and concubines — on a roll of the dice.

Kon Min Yeung (Pursuing Sheep)

Once upon a time, a boy and girl were betrothed but the girl's father died and her family lost all their money, so she was forced to become a tavern girl. She was very beautiful and had many suitors but she remembered what it was like when her family was wealthy and took on airs. Even in her reduced circumstances, she declared that she would only marry a man who could roll wong p'ang fu with her dice. Although the tavern keeper found her behavior annoying, she was beautiful and attracted many customers, so he tolerated it. When her former fiancé appeared at the inn, she slipped him her (loaded) dice. He won the roll and her hand, paid the tavern owner, and the two lived happily ever after.

Played with 6 dice usually for small stakes like snacks and treats, this is considered a game suitable for women and children. After determining who goes first (standard single-die high roll wins,) the player throws the dice until he gets 3 alike:

Tai min yeung (large sheep) = 6 sixes (takes the pot)
Min yeung kung (rams) = 6 of one through five (takes the pot)
Min yeung na (ewes) = Three alike or 6-6-5

If the player rolls min yeung na, the next player throws until he gets 3 alike. If his throw is lower than the min yeung na, he pays his wager; if his throw is higher, he is paid.

There is also special throw of 3 fours called wong pang fui. The person who makes this throw can either collect the pot or ask for a "forfeit" (a favor) from another player.

Mah Jong

Master Kung is credited with the creation of this elaborate game that uses 144 tiles decorated with symbols. There are many variations of mah jong, which would take an entire book of its own to detail. Mah jong sets (usually contained in a decorated lacquer box) make supremely elegant gifts, especially for weddings. The game involves making predetermined sets or hands of various tiles. Play moves very quickly and the clicking sound of the tiles on the table is one of the distinctive memories people have of their childhood, listening to their mothers and aunts playing mah jong late into the night. So addicting is the game that even the most devoted husbands have been known to stay out all night at mah jong parlors, drinking, and gambling.

Nardishir

Tashil has produced several extremely popular games, including one based on luck, called nardishir. Played on a wooden board set inside an open box, the playing surface is marked by four sets of elongated triangles, one in each quadrant. The spine of the box serves as the resting point for pieces that have been "bounced" when the opponent lands on an occupied point. The object of the game is to bear off all of one's pieces first. It is an extremely exciting game that lends itself well to wagering. Craftsmen of nardishir boards and pieces command immense prices for the most exquisite sets that use rare woods and semi-precious and precious stones set in elaborate and complicated patterns.

Pachisi

This is a simplified version of nardishir involves moving markers around a flat game board according to dice roll and trying to block one's opponents on the way to getting all of one's markers across the goal first.

Pai (Tablets)

This game involves 32 rectangular pieces of wood, bone, ebony or ivory with two sets of one to six dots at either end. The one and the four dots are always painted red; the double threes have one set of dots painted red. All the other marks are painted black or white, to contrast with the color of the tile material. Pai sets can be quite elaborate and make wonderful gifts. The Celestial Empress has quite a collection.

There are two ways to play pai, either by "military" rules which do not use double tiles or "civil" rules which do. To begin, the tiles are stacked in a "woodpile" to a height that varies each game. Hands are dealt by an initial throw of three 6-sided dice. The first player counts the number of stacks and takes the one whose placement in the woodpile matches the roll. The opponent takes the next one. Play passes back and forth with players matching tile ends until one runs out of moves. Scoring possibilities vary according to region.

Sing Luk

This game is played with three large 6-sided dice. Each player rolls 1 die to determine who goes first. Wagers are placed in sums divisible by three. The goal is to make sing luk (4, 5, 6) or have three matching dice. Each player gets three throws of the dice.

Sing Luk (4-5-6) or Bao Zi (three matching dice): opponents pay wager to the winner.

Yao Er Shan (1-2-3), She Tsai (1-1-1), or Yat Fat (2 dice alike and the third is a 1): player pays his wager and play passes to the player on his left.

If the player rolls two alike with the third die lower than the other two, the player to his left rolls the dice. If the total of that roll is higher, play passes to the left.

Customarily, payment is determined by the difference between the throws and the odd die:

3 or 4 = full payment

2 = two-third payment

1 = one-third payment.

However, "house rules" abound through the Seven Kingdoms, especially when the wager is not paid in coin.

Wei Qi (Go)

Undoubtedly the single most addictive game in the Seven Kingdoms, wei qi involves capturing opponent's pieces on a square grided board. Played with pieces of contrasting colors (usually white and black), it is at first glance a simple children's game. However, there is much elaborate strategy and a player quickly learns that this is much more of a war game than it appears. Master Kung regarded it with scorn, especially when compared to mah jong. Great generals however regard it as an integral party of a prospective officer's military training.

Xiang Qi (Elephant Game)

Xiang qi boards have ten horizontal lines and nine vertical lines. In the center of board, running horizontally, is an open space called the "river" (no piece can sit in this space or it will "drown.") Two palaces are placed at opposite sides of the board, each marked by an X connecting its four corner points. The Governor, General, and the Guards do not leave the Palace. Pieces (red and black) are set at intersections (rather than on spaces, as in ajedrez.)

Each player has the following pieces:

2 Ju (Chariots)

2 Ma (Horses)

2 Xiang (Elephants)

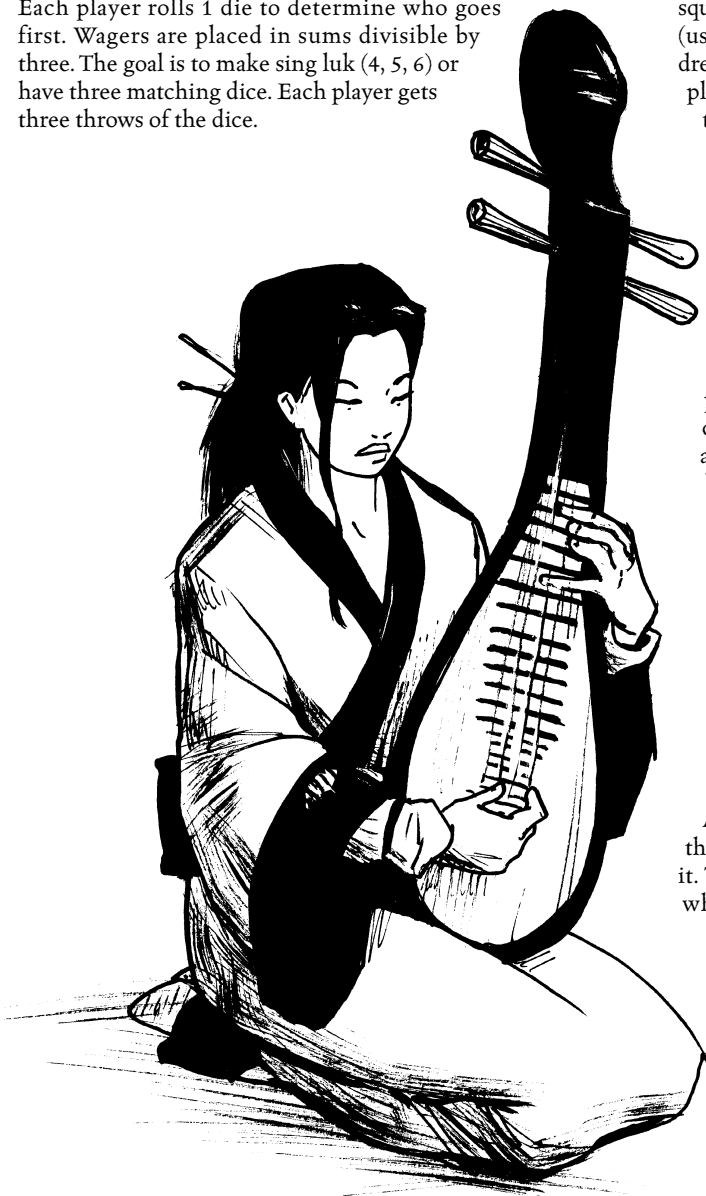
2 Shi (Ministers)

2 Pao (Cannons)

5 Zu (Soldiers)

1 Shuai (Governor) (defending) or 1 Jiang (General) (attacking)

A western Théan will discover that this is most probably the progenitor game of chess as he is accustomed to playing it. The Crescent version, ajedrez is derived from xiang qi, which in turn comes from the Tashili game *chaturanga*, which means "divided into four parts." In this ancient game, played on a board called an *ashtapada* ("eight square"), pieces include the *raja* (king), *mantri* (counselor), *gaja* (elephant), *asva* (horse), *ratha* (chariot), and *pedati* (infantry.) There is no question that all of these games were designed as a way to practice battlefield tactics prior to combat.



The Great Inventions

Long before the Invisible College was formed, the wise and clever people of Cathay were inventing — and using — wondrous things as a matter of course. Their creations are the result of a happy marriage of need and brilliance and do not involve magic or sorcery of any kind.

Abacus

The elegance of this bead counter is that despite its simple design it can perform advanced calculations and in the hands of a master sounds more like a musical instrument than a counting device. The abacus can be made of any material from simple wood to gold with jade beads, such as the one the Empress received from the Raj of Tashil.

Rainbow Bridge

People in Lanna and those who live along the banks of the Chao Praya had always had to contend with serious flooding. Early in the Han Dynasty, they developed a technical for “weaving” wood, especially hemlock, into an arch that could be made sturdy and high enough to permit passage of humans and animals over flooded rivers. They can be built in segments, which enables builders to adjust as they go. Called *chao chuo*, these bridges are remarkably efficient as well as beautiful. The best example is seen near Xi Hai Long where the bridge has 15 small covered segments that make a long alley. The most recent example was completed some 40 years ago to commemorate a trade agreement between Koryo and Han Hua. Wood in the bridge came from both kingdoms.

Paper

Although material on which to write was not invented by the Cathayans, the paper produced in the Seven Kingdoms was far superior to that in ancient Théah, thanks to the abundance of bamboo and its versatile fibers. In Lanna, they produce an exquisite but expensive paper using a process that involves rice.

Moveable Type

Printer in Han Hua developed a machine with moveable type some several hundred years in advance of Western Théah.

Clock Tower

The people of Han Hua seem to be obsessed with keeping time. During the Song Dynasty, the inventor Su Song (who was also the Master of Punishments at the time as well as a mathematician and an accomplished artist) devised a water powered-clock with 36 tilting scoops that rotated on a wheel. The device has kept perfect time since it was invented. His son Su Xie further improved the device by adding an armillary sphere and a celestial globe based on research done by predecessor inventors in the Han Dynasty. Today the entire device is housed in the Imperial Treasury.

Seismograph

A scientist during the great Han Dynastic invented a device consisted of a bronze vase decorated with dragon heads evenly spaced from each other that contained a ball in its mouth. Directly under each dragon head was a frog with its mouth open and inside the vase was a rod reaching into the center. Frogs surrounded the base of the vase and a long metal pendulum was suspended inside of it. When the ground began to move, the pendulum swung and hit the rod, which caused the ball to drop from the dragon's head into the frog's mouth and alert people to the impending temblor.

Stirrup

Not that they needed it, having practically been born on horseback, but the Xian Bei invented a leather loop suspended from their saddles that enabled them to maintain their balance as they stand and pivot in the saddle, which means they can use both hands to fire a bow. The stirrup made an already formidable foe even more dangerous.

Wheelbarrow

A *mu niu* (wood ox) enables the farmers of Han Hua and Lanna to carry large amounts of goods long distances. It is also used to remove the dead from the battlefield.

Gunpowder

Cathay developed *huo hua* long before the rest of Théah and would have changed the course of history, had the Cathayans taken it outside of their borders. Instead, they devised a unique use for *huo yao*, the explosive combination of sulfur, charcoal, saltpeter. They use it to produce *huo hua* or “fire flowers” set off during major festivals and celebrations as entertainment.

Compass

Fascinated with the concept of magnetism, scientists in Han Hua learned how to heat ore and then cool the pieces to create a *ci tie* or magnet that always points North/South. Placing magnet on a piece of reed and floating it in a bowl enables navigators to adjust their course as needed. The sailors of the Seven Kingdoms had this incredibly useful device as the Hieros Wars were beginning. Some believe that the great treasure ships may have used a rudimentary form of *luo pan* or compass even earlier than that and may actually traveled the seas as far as Avalon.

Umbrella

Based on the design of the Xian Bei *ger*, the *yu san* is either thin hide or treated paper stretched over a frame through which a short pole of bamboo or mulberry wood runs. The device is used to protect infants and the elderly from the rain and to keep the sun off of a lady's delicate skin. Red and gold *yu san* are reserved for royalty.

Master Kung

A Han Hua scholar and politician, Master Kung was born during the great civil war but lived to see the glory of the Qin Dynasty. During his long life, he was the architect of a philosophy by which most of the Seven Kingdoms continues to be governed. According to the Lun Ya (Analects), there are rules of behavior that define the best that man can achieve during his lifetime. The affect of his writings cannot be underestimated in its far-reaching influence. When accused of not being properly devout in his religious practices, Master Kung would smile and gently and praise the accuser for being so far along on his quest for the Golden Soul that he had time to offer him assistance.

Li

Defined as “proper ritual,” Master Kung described that which should be part of everyone’s daily life in terms of manners, mores, and social behavior. Paramount among them is respect that children owe their parents (hsaio or “filial piety”) and subjects owe their ruler

Jen

Respect for humanity overall and a sense of duty to the community and the state by striving to behave appropriately. Jen is inextricably tied to the next concept, Shu.

Shu

The concept of mutual reciprocity. Master Kung instructs that one should use oneself as an analogy when determining what would be beneficial to others. “Do not impose on others what you do not wish imposed upon yourself.”

Chih

Refers both to obtaining factual knowledge (learning) and understanding how that knowledge affects our destiny. Master Kung believed that one must seek knowledge through education throughout one’s life. This concept is tied to the next one, Wen.

Wen

This is the total wealth of the arts and culture, and how those elements affect human welfare. People must nourish the arts through practice and patronage and strive to make the world as beautiful as they can. Master Kung defines four “basic” arts that everyone should attempt to have in their lives: *qin* (music), *hua* (brush painting), *shu* (calligraphy), and *qi* (games of strategy, as opposed to chance.)

If one cannot sing in a pleasing manner, one should learn at least a few simple tunes on a flute or even a whistle. Hua teaches how to control the brush and the ink to achieve a flowing motion and serves as an analogy for learning to control one’s thoughts and emotions. Shu is nothing more than being able to write in a legible and pleasing hand, although there are those for whom calligraphy becomes a work of art. Everyone should know how to play at least a simple game of *xiang qi* or *pai*. The more one practices strategy games, the more disciplined one’s mind becomes. Learning to become adept at *qi* is a required part of military training throughout the Seven Kingdoms.

(Continued on next page.)

Entertainment

It is by poetry that a man's mind is aroused, by the rules of ritual that his character is established, and by music that he is perfected.

— Master Kung

Throughout the Seven Kingdoms, the people take the pursuit of entertainment very seriously, which is to say, with a great deal of focus and enthusiasm. Music of all kinds, poetry, theatre, storytelling, dancing — if there is way to entertain, the Cathayans know how to do it.

Music

Ancient Cathayan instruments included drums, pipes, bones and stones. From there they advanced to single stringed instrument and more woodwinds. Most Cathayan instruments are designed to be played solo or in small groups of three or four, usually with a drum and a woodwind. Variations in rhythm, beat, tone quality, and embellishments are unlike anything one would hear elsewhere and most western Théans will probably find Cathayan music dissonant, repetitive and shrill.

The Imperial court boasts an orchestra with four parts: plucked string, bowed string, woodwinds and percussion. Composing and playing for the Empress is regarded as the highest honor a musician can achieve.

Stone

Includes the *pien ching*, L-shaped stones struck with a special hammer and played during religious ceremonies.

Metal

Includes *luo* (gongs) and *bo* (cymbals). In Khimal, the bells in the temples are often accompanied by drums and simple flutes.

Silk

Stringed instruments are either bowed or plucked. The strings are usually bamboo strands or animal gut rather than silk, despite the poetic name.

Bamboo

Includes the *dizi* (flute) and *suona* (trumpet).

Wood

Percussion instruments like wooden boxes and blocks.

Skin

Drums of all sizes, shapes, and sounds.

Gourd

The *sheng* is found in rural areas, especially in Lanna and Khimal. A mouth organ made from a gourd with bamboo pipes, it supposedly replicates the sound of a phoenix.

Clay

The ocarina is the most common clay instrument, although all sorts of things can be made from clay, usually for children.

Opera

Every kingdom in Cathay has a full range of theatrical entertainment from wandering storytellers and puppeteer to full-fledged multi-act dramatic plays that retell exciting moments in history, desperately romantic stories, and broad domestic comedy. The great contribution of the Song Dynasty was the inception of *jing ju* (opera) which combines poetry, music and dance into an epic performed on the stage with an orchestra, a chorus, and elaborate costumes, sets, and props.

Initially, stories included dialogue sung or spoken in rhyme with no acts or scenes. The performers were accompanied by string and wind instruments and an offstage chorus (although sometimes the audience sings along!)

The current form of the opera is called *za ju* meaning "multi act" because the play contains four acts. The main character sings a lyric aria and there is a single major rhyme scheme throughout the entire act; the other characters actually speak rather than sing their lines. *Za ju* has three basic roles: *dan* (a heroic woman, often a warrior or woman forced to take up the sword); *mo* (a venerable older man, often a general or a king); and *sheng* (the young male hero.) A fourth character, *chou* (clown) provides comic relief and also narrates, often with comic or sarcastic asides to the audience.

An increasingly popular form is the *chuan qi* or "marvelous tale" which retells famous myths on an epic scale. Two of the most common ones performed are "The Lute Song" which shows the characters in conflict between filial piety and loyalty to the ruler, and "The Ballad of Hua Mu Lan" about a young warrior woman who saves the kingdom from a vile barbaric invader from the far north.

Lead actors in an opera company have achieved great status as artists. There are schools all over the Seven Kingdoms where young children begin their training at an early age, learning to tumble and dance and sing. They continue to train in all aspects of theatre until their voices break, at which time they are assessed and assigned a position. The best of them learn to perfect one of the three lead roles, while the rest take on roles as character actors, supernumeraries, chorus or technical crew. Training for the orchestra is also done at these school and sometimes young people with musical talent whose mature voices are not acceptable become musicians instead.

Puppetry is a popular form of entertainment, especially in Lanna and Tashil. Stick puppets entertain children at fairs and festivals while the most sophisticated shadow puppets are used to retell ancient myths and legends.

Dance

Lanna, Tiakhar, and Tashil have dance styles unique from the rest of the Seven Kingdoms. While theatrical dancing in Han Hua, Xian Bei, and Khimal is either lyrical and flowing or exuberantly acrobatic, the southern Kingdoms have developed a very difficult and highly stylized form of dance in which the movements of the head, hands, and feet are isolated.

(Continued from previous page.)

Chun tzu

This is the concept of the superior man, the ideal, the person who follows the ways described by Master Kung so that he might fully express the ultimate in human virtue and further his quest for the Golden Soul.

Master Kung's words, when studied with the I Ching, describe how the *chun tzu*, the superior man, should conduct himself to achieve balance and harmony both internally and externally. Through the actions of a superior man, the state will flourish.

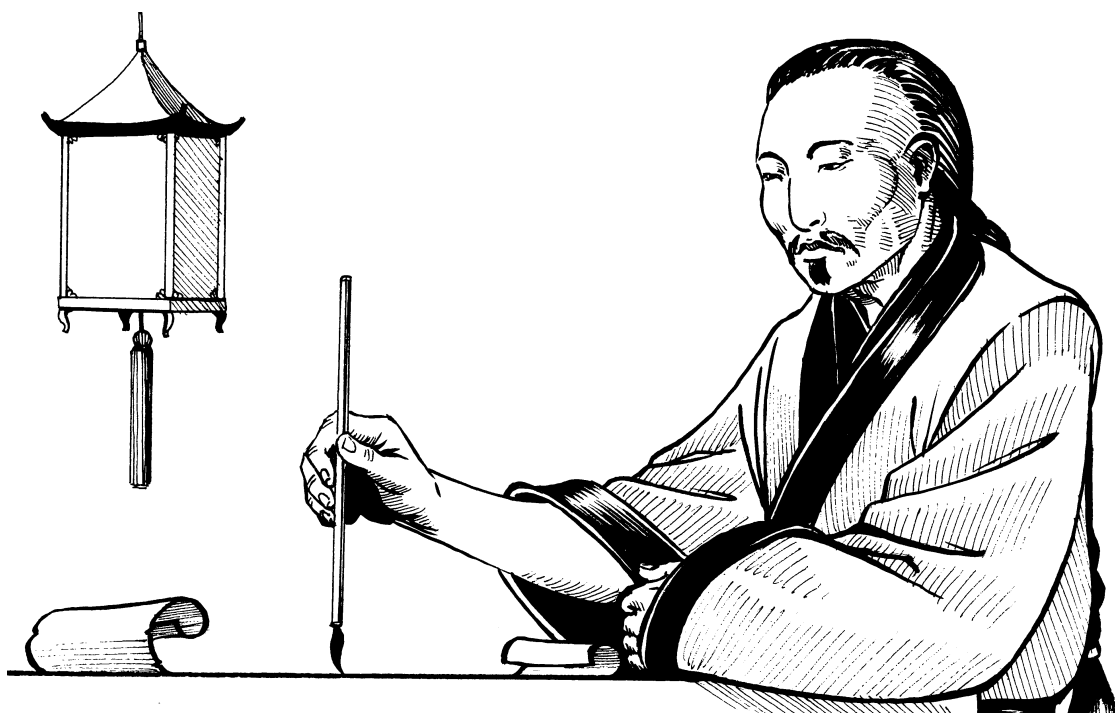
In khon, the dance tradition of Lanna, balance and flexibility are key elements that dancers must learn to perfect, especially when wearing the tall elaborate headdresses that are part of the dance costume for queens and other royal characters, while the other characters wear masks. In these performances there is no scenery; the dancers and their costumes tell the entire story. Originally performed only for royalty, this form of theatre is becoming more common. Stories usually involve myths in which the hero and heroine must overcome demons and evil gods.

In Tashil, dance dramas called *natyas* tell long, elaborate stories full of emotion about how the characters strive to achieve enlightenment. The human spirit can achieve moments of joy and thus receive a glimpse of nirvana or the heavenly place of the Golden Soul through expression of the *sthyari* or nine permanent emotions: *shringara* (erotic), *hasya* (comic), *karuna* (pathetic), *raudra* (impetuous), *bhayanaka* (terrified), *bibhatsa* (odious), *adbhuta* (mysterious), *shanta* (peaceful) and *vira* (heroic). Dances are frequently performed as solos or duets and only occasionally trios. Each dancer has the responsibility to tell a full story with facial expressions (especially the eyes), voice, body (especially hands), and costume. The origins of this dance form are religious and in fact the majority of performances are done at religious festivals.

Little is known about theatrical performances in Tiakhar. There are local dances performed at religious festivals, which appear to be a fusion of Lanna and Tashil dance forms. It is probably safe to assume that in the privacy of the home, a man may command his wife or concubine to entertain him as he sees fit. Female *Natya* dancers who must travel to the east coast of Tashil rarely go without an armed bodyguard for fear of being kidnapped by Tiakhari pirates.

Literature

The people of the Seven Kingdoms enjoy hearing and telling stories, and reading. Poetry is a fine art used to express praise, social commentary or love. Romantic novels, especially with a historic theme, are extremely popular. The most popular is *Shui Hu Zhuan* or "Outlaws of the Marsh" a four-volume epic about the Song Dynasty in which 108 men and women band together to overcome their cruel feudal overlords. It has everything from murder to war to adventure to love, and is told in a unique style of interconnected stories. In addition to the heroes, each of whom represents some aspect of the personality, there are 36 heavenly spirits and 72 earthly villains (fiends, demons, all the usual suspects...)



The *Shui Hu Zhuan* is also the subject of many plays, songs, and poems. With such a rich cast and such dramatic action, it is a universal favorite throughout the Seven Kingdoms.

The evocative poetry of the Seven Kingdoms is deceptively simple because it is a fusion of the words, the sounds of the words, internal rhyme, and the ideograms when the poem is written. In classical Han Hua poetry, poems consist of lines of four characters with every other line rhyming. There are, of course, exceptions. Lines were allowed, however, of more or fewer words. Under the reign of the great Emperor Wu of the Han Dynasty, who was himself quite an accomplished poet, new forms were added to the "canon" especially the five-character and seven-character forms which have remained dominant. Emperor Wu introduced also the Po Liang style, which is a seven-character poem with every line rhyming in the last word. Po Liang was the name of a pavilion in his private garden where, during informal banquets he would challenge his guests to write a line so that, at the end of the meal, they had a new poem to commemorate the occasion.

Wu Bao Shu (Five Treasured Books)

There are five important books that the people of Cathay regard as requisite texts for anyone's personal library:

I CHING (THE BOOK OF CHANGES)

This is perhaps the single most important book in all of Cathay, written by a mystic named Master Lao. It is unclear whether he was a single individual or a group of scholars is but the conjecture does not detract in any way detract from the wisdom of the words. (There are even some who claim that the book was written by Master Lao's young wife when he was too old to leave his bed but that is generally regarded as a silly romantic notion.)

SHU CHING (THE BOOK OF WRITINGS)

The Shu Ching is a five-part volume of historical documents compiled over almost 1,750 years. Many of the great philosophers, including Master Kung himself, refer extensively to

this masterwork. It is not a history of the Seven Kingdoms, but rather a collection of historical memorials maintained by a cadre of annalists, recorders and clerks in the employ of the various rulers of the Seven Kingdoms. Their job was to chronicle (and glorify) their masters' reigns.

Naturally, from time to time, entries in the Shu Ching were "purged" when a new regime took power. The penalty for retaining copies of forbidden or unofficial material was death so many scholars saved themselves instead of their work, although a few rare copies survive.

SHIH CHING (THE BOOK OF SONGS)

This collection of poetry is one of the great treasures of the Qi Guo. Containing some 300 works, it is an outstanding example of the fusion between philosophical polemic and lyrical verse that reflects the artistic brilliance of Han Hua poets and the unique rhyming quality of the language used to illustrate religious and political views and practices. Although there are several translations in various other languages, one cannot say that they have experienced the Shih Ching until they have heard the poems spoken in their original dialect.

The Shih Ching is divided into four books: *Feng* (politically-inspired Lessons from the States); *Xiao Ya* (Songs for Lesser Festivals); *Da Ya* (Songs for Greater Festivals, which includes poetry about ancient dynasties); and *Sung* (hymns and eulogies.) Most of the poems are written in three stanzas with four syllables per line and the distinctive rhyming that marks Cathayan poetry.

CHU'UN CH'IU (SPRING AND AUTUMN ANNALS)

Master Kung is credited with editorship of this prose historical record of events in his home province during the Qin Dynasty.

LI CHING (THE BOOK OF RITUALS)

Separated into three books, this is a record of the important rituals that Master Kung instructed his students to observe.

CHAPTER TWO:
Di Er Shu
 (The Second Book)

Prominent People

New NPCs

The Evil Duchess — Meng Xian Nu

*Clouds bring back to mind her dress, the flowers her face.
 Winds of spring caress the rail as sparkling dewdrops cluster.
 If you cannot see her by the jeweled mountain top,
 Maybe it is on the moonlit Jasper Terrace you will meet her.*

— Li Bai

The beautiful Duchess of Bei Han Guan is to all appearances the epitome of an accomplished and dutiful Cathayan noblewoman. An adept entertainer, she has a beautiful voice, plays several instruments proficiently, and is an exquisite practitioner of flower arranging. She is well educated and writes in a lovely if somewhat firm hand. Her poetry, while not innovative, is competent and on occasion amusing. She always dresses as befits a woman of her rank and moves with quiet grace and dignity.

Duchess Meng is also an accomplished swordswoman, although she does not feel the need to gad about in armor and behave as some of her female compatriots. She knows exactly how men react to her and manipulates their responses to suit her needs, but always with great delicacy. Even though she is, in essence, the most powerful noble in the region, she listens dutifully to her advisors and older male relatives and asks questions designed to make them feel that she could not run her demesne half as well if they were not around to guide her.

Although she is young — only slightly older than the Celestial Empress — she is a widow who still mourns the death of her husband the Duke with great piety. If she seeks male companionship, it is done with such discretion that there is not even a whisper of scandal. However, most assume, and apparently correctly, that when night falls she is either still hard at work among her scrolls or sleeping peacefully by herself. Her servants appear to be extremely devoted to her as none ever speak against her, even in jest.

The Duchess of Bei Han Guan is not the most ardent supporter of the current Imperial regime but her expressions of dissension are quite public and always above reproach. She describes herself as a voice of the old ways, concerned with maintaining proper respect for ancient traditions and for preserving the memory of those who have gone before. She does not support contact with the West and refuses to permit anything in her castle that has been made outside of the Qi Guo. She always declines such gifts with exquisite courtesy and all the appearances of genuine regret.

The young noblewoman is also the guardian of a distant relative, a young boy named Lei Fe Hu, who is of very ancient noble blood. At her hands he is receiving an extremely traditional education and he shows every promise of becoming a bright and most dutiful young man.

Meng Xian Nu is a stunningly beautiful Han Hua woman with very long blue-black hair and dark brown eyes. Her eyebrows are described by admirers as arched like the wings of night and her skin like the finest porcelain. Of medium height, her slender body belies great strength and agility. The hint of a smile plays about her perfectly formed mouth and if there is a lack of warmth in her eyes, it is quickly forgotten at the sound of her voice and the movement of her graceful hands.

Meng Xian Nu (a20™)

Cathayan Noble 15: CR 15; SZ M (humanoid); HD 15d8 +15; hp 82; Init +2 (Int); Spd 30 ft.; AC 12 (+2 Dex); Atks: knife +13/+8/+3 melee (1d4 + 2); SA Commanding Presence +4, Friends in High Places, Improved Leadership, Iron Glare 2/day, Leadership Feat, Seduction, Taunt; SV Fort +7, Ref +7, Will +12; Str 14, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 18, Wis 16, Cha 17; AL NE; Skills: Bluff +12, Diplomacy +12, Gather Information +12, Hide +6, Intimidate +8, Innuendo +7, Knowledge (criminal underworld) +5, Knowledge (law) +12, Knowledge (politics) +12, Listen +5, Move Silently +5, Perform +5, Profession (accountant) +5, Ride +7, Sense Motive +5, Speak Language (Han Hua [alternately, any appropriate language from your campaign]), Spot +5, Swim +3. Feats: Appearance (Above Average), Armor Trained, Brilliant, Dangerous Beauty, Membership (Lung Yin), Politicker, Martial Weapon Proficiency (polearms).

Meng Xian Nu — Villain (7th Sea™)

Brawn: 4, **Finesse:** 4, **Wits:** 5, **Resolve:** 5, **Panache:** 4
Reputation: -109

Background: Dragon Dreams 3, Vow 3

Arcana: Brilliant

Advantages: Han Hua (R/W), Appearance (Stunning), Armor Trained, Dangerous Beauty, Membership (Lung Yin), Noble

Courtier: Dancing 4, Etiquette 5, Fashion 5, Oratory 5, Diplomacy 4, Gaming 3, Gossip 5, Lip Reading 5, Politics 5, Scheming 6, Seduction 5, Sincerity 6

Criminal: Gambling 1, Shadowing 4, Stealth 5, Ambush 5, Lockpicking 5, Pickpocket 4

Gwai Liao: Etiquette 5, Mathematics 3, Oratory 5, Research 5, Writing 4, Accounting 4, Diplomacy 4, Law 4, Politics 5, Scheming 6, Sincerity 6

Spy: Shadowing 4, Stealth 5, Bribery 5, Conceal 5, Cryptography 5, Disguise 3, Forgery 5, Hand Signs 5, Interrogation 4, Lip Reading 5, Poison 5, Sincerity 6

Streetwise: Socializing 4, Street Navigation 5, Shopping 3, Underworld Lore 6

Athlete: Climbing 3, Footwork 5, Sprinting 3, Throwing 1, Break Fall 2, Leaping 2, Rolling 3, Swimming 3, Side-Step 3

Fencing: Attack (Fencing) 5, Parry (Fencing) 5, Cavalry Attack 5

Knife: Attack (Knife) 5, Parry (Knife) 5, Throw (Knife) 5
Polearm: Attack (Polearm) 3, Parry (Polearm) 3

Rider: Ride 4, Trick Riding 2

GM Secrets: The beautiful Duchess Meng Xian Nu had many secrets. Her political goals far exceed her desire to serve as a beacon of traditional Han Hua ways. She is committed to the restoration of the old regime, which was defeated by the Celestial Empress' family in a brutal civil war. To that end, she has devoted herself to the thorough education of her young ward whom she regards as the rightful heir to the Imperial Throne. As his chief advisor she will be able to rule the land and keep the Qi Guo from opening up to intruders from beyond the Huo Qiang.

But usurpation is not Duchess Meng's darkest secret. As the leader of the Lung Yin (Shadow of a Dragon) secret society, she has formed an alliance of sorts with Sayari Razak to provide "hospitality" for those who are unwise enough to get in Duchess Meng's way.

That would be a sufficient reason to fear the woman, but unbeknownst to all but her most trusted advisors, the Duchess holds Chen (Arousing), one of the original 64 Fu Talismans.

She firmly believes that if she could gather the rest, she could control Cathay and eventually Théah. For now, it suits her purpose to have people discover "by accident" that she is making what appears to be a half-hearted attempt at polite rebellion on behalf of the "Boy Emperor." In the meantime, it is the active pursuit of her studies that keep her burning the oil lamps late into the night in hopes that she might tap into the powerful Fu magic used to raise the Huo Qiang.

The Outrider — Dalan-Tai

Asleep in spring I did not heed the dawn

Till the birds broke out singing.

Last night, in the clamor of wind and rain,

How many flowers have fallen?

— Meng Hao Ran

Imagine the challenges a man has to face when he stands between the Wall of Fire and the rest of the Qi Guo? As the proud leader of the fierce Xian Bei, whose power once stretched the length of the land, Dalan-Tai sits astride the Steppes pony he loves more than any of his wives, looking out across the windswept plains and wonders what the future will bring. A handsome but hard-faced man, he is accustomed to the difficult life of the Steppes, a life that no silk-covered Han Hua nobleman could withstand for a week, let alone a day. Winter lasts longer in Xian Bei than anywhere else except Khimal and the fierce winds blow constantly, exchanging icy blasts for furnace-hot gales when the all too brief summer is at its height.

Those who rise to the ranks of leader among the Xian Bei are special men who claim a heritage that rings with names whose vitality flies out of the mouth like a warrior's swift silk-tasseled spear. The Xian Bei regard themselves as the true people of the land and have little or no regard for anyone other than the gentle people of Khimal.

Dalan-Tai is typical of his countrymen. Of medium height compared to a Western Théan, he has small dark almond-shaped eyes angled above wide high cheekbones. Slender but wiry, he walks with a slightly bow-legged gait, a testament to having been strapped to a horse as a young boy and learning to ride before he could walk. When he is on horseback, he wears his long dark hair in a braid beginning at the crown of his head, but prefers to let it loose when he is relaxing in his ger among his wives and concubines.

A skilled warrior, Dalan-Tai can both ride and shoot extremely well. Even though he is not the best archer among his men, he is extremely competitive and enjoys participating in challenge matches whenever he can. He is also addicted to playing games and has quite a collection from throughout the Seven Kingdoms. He is especially fond of ajedrez, which he learned from a Crescent concubine and insists on teaching all of his children to play.

He is a genial host who enjoys good drink, good food and a good joke, usually at someone else's expense. He is passionate about everything but especially about his beloved pony and his children. Dalan-Tai trains his sons and his daughters to be fierce warriors in the true Xian Bei tradition. He is good to his wives and treats his concubines with affection. He will not tolerate internecine warfare of any kind, whether it is among his women or his tribe. When dealing with those who are not Xian Bei, he lends the appearance of a simple man of the plains. The truth is that he is far cleverer.

Dalan-Tai (d20™)

Xian Bei Wanderer 7/ Fighter 2/Chima Gongjian Shou 5: CR 14; SZ M (humanoid); HD 7d8 +21 plus 7d10 +21; hp 123; Init +3 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 20 (+3 Dex, +7 Unarmored Defense Proficiency); Atks: lance +14/+9/+4 melee (1d6 +2), short bow +15/+10/+5 ranged (1d6); SA Break Charge, Efficient Bow, Evasion, Mounted Fury, Rapid Fire, Speed of Thought, Tradesman, Uncanny Dodge (Dex Bonus to AC, Can't Be Flanked), Ward of the Albatross; SV Fort +12, Ref +12, Will +4; Str 15, Dex 16, Con 16, Int 14, Wis 13, Cha 16; AL NE; Skills: Balance +10, Bluff +7, Climb +6, Craft (snares and traps) +6, Handle Animal +12, Hide +8, Intimidate +5, Jump +5, Knowledge (strategy) +7, Listen +7, Move Silently +9, Profession (gambler) +7, Ride +16, Sense Motive +8, Speak Language (Han Hua, Koryo, Xian Bei [alternately,

any three languages from your campaign]), Spot +7, Tumble, +5 Wilderness Lore +10; Feats: Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Unarmored Defense Proficiency (Beginner), Membership: Hei Jing Hu, Mobility, Mounted Archery, Mounted Combat, Victorious, Youya Chima Ren.

Dalan-Tai — Villain (7th Sea™)

Brawn: 4, Finesse: 4, Wits: 5, Resolve: 5, Panache: 5

Reputation: -26

Background: Hunting 2 (Lost Clans)

Arcana: Victorious

Advantages: Cathay Accent (Xian Bei), Han Hua (R/W), Koryo (R/W), Xian Bei (R/W), Appearance (Above Average), Indomitable Will, Membership (Hei Jing Hu), Noble, Steppes Pony, Toughness

Criminal: Gambling 3, Shadowing 2, Stealth 4, Ambush 5, Cheating 3, Scrounging 5

Hunter: Skinning 3, Stealth 4, Survival 5, Tracking 4, Trail Signs 3, Traps 4, Ambush 5, Animal Training 5

Archer: Attack (Bow) 5, Fletcher 4, Horse Archery 5, Snapshot 5, Trick Shooting 4

Athlete: Climbing 2, Footwork 4, Sprinting 3, Throwing 3, Break Fall 3, Leaping 2, Long Distance Running 3, Lifting 2

Commander: Strategy 6, Tactics 6, Ambush 5, Artillery 3, Cartography 1, Diplomacy 2, Incitation 5, Leadership 6, Logistics 3

Hard Martial Arts: Attack (Hard Martial Arts) 4, Block (Hard Martial Arts) 4, Footwork 4, Balance 3, Jab 3, Kick 3, Break Fall 3, Leaping 2, Corps-à-Corps 3

Heavy Weapon: Attack (Heavy Weapon) 4, Parry (Heavy Weapon) 4

Knife: Attack (Knife) 4, Parry (Knife) 4, Throw (Knife) 3



Polearm: Attack (Polearm) 5, Parry (Polearm) 3, Set Defense 2
Rider: Ride 5, Animal Training 5, Mounting 5, Trick Riding 4
Chima Gongjian Shou (Master): Arc 5, Charge (Bow) 5, Exploit Weakness (Chima Gongjian Shou) 5, Horse Archery 5
Magic: Youya Chima Ren

GM Secret: Dalan-Tai is being courted by the Hei Jing Hu to join their cause. It suits his purpose to play both sides of the fence for now. He hopes that with the help of the Hei Jing Hu, he can make contact with the Xian Bei tribe trapped in Ussura when the Wall of Fire was raised. Erroneously called the Tumen, they are in fact the Toba, a tribe closely related to the Xian Bei. It is Dalan-Tai's hope that he can find them and together they can reclaim their territory and their autonomy.

As sometimes happens when attempting to translate languages whose origins are unfamiliar, the word *tumen* is actually an ancient Xian Bei word that means 10,000 men. While it is impossible to calculate how many tribesmen were trapped on the north side of the Huo Qiang, the word *tumen* would indicate that it was a considerable number. In fact the Toba may have referred to themselves as *tumen*, in the somewhat poetic way the Xian Bei have when it comes to talking about themselves.

The Black Heart — Sayari Razak

When he became the ruler of Tiakhar, Sayari Razak consumed the blood of his predecessor, as is the custom. The ceremony was perhaps a bit easier for him than for others because he has been a devotee of the dark god Ravana since he can remember. His amah, a wizened old crone, loved to tell the story about how on their first trip to the main temple, the toddler prince crawled directly to the bloodstained statue of the vengeful god and hugged it with his chubby little arms.

Razak fancies himself a "pirate king" and delights in his growing reputation not only among sailors of the Qi Guo, but also among the Western Théans who flock to the Mirror Sea in growing numbers. If asked, he will express admiration for the great Prince Villanova who seems like the sort of person who might appreciate the way the *tuanku* runs his island kingdom. In fact, the ruler of Tiakhar is planning to send a small but well-laden entourage to Vodacce in hopes of opening talks about a possible alliance.

If the negotiations go well, it could be beneficial for both; if they fail, at least his sailors will be ready to bring back a few "extra" items to add to the treasury or the already well-stocked harem. *Tuanku* Sayari has very exotic tastes in the type of entertainment he enjoys, so his staff has to work ceaselessly to keep him amused. In other parts of the Qi Guo, admission to the ruler's harem is an honorable thing; in Tiakhar it is, more often than not, the prelude to a torturous existence that will most probably end in death, although probably not soon enough for the tortured victim.

Called "The Black Heart of Tiakhar," Sayari Razak is a small-boned, tanned, very agile man with a feral grin. He is ruthless, vicious, bloodthirsty and completely without scruples. He does what he wants when he wants to whomever he wishes. Perhaps because of his stature, he favors Crescent headgear and has an array of turbans with some fairly spectacular jeweled decorations. His normal attire on shipboard is a sleeveless silk tunic, loose pants and high leather boots bristling with an array of very sharp weapons.

Sayari Razak (120")

Tiakhari Pirate 12/Jasni 5: CR 17; SZ M (humanoid); HD 12d10 +24 plus 5d8 +10; hp 125; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 12 (+2 Dex); Atks: *tulwar* +21/+16/+11/+6 melee (1d6 +4), knife +20/+15/+12/+5 melee (1d4 +2), pistol +29/+14/+9/+4 ranged (1d10); SA Ambidexterity, Boarding Maneuvers, Blood Mark (see nearby sidebar), Bridge the Gap, Burning Blood (see nearby sidebar), Close Combat, Frenzy (see nearby sidebar), Lust (see nearby sidebar), Pirate Feat (pirate trick), Regenerate (see nearby sidebar), Roguish Style, Sea Legs, Seasoned, Shatter the Blade, Sure Feet, Swinging Assault; SV Fort +14, Ref +14, Will +9; Str 16, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 16, Wis 17, Cha 18; AL CE; Balance +4, Bluff +6, Climb +4, Concentration +6, Escape Artist +5, Gather Information +7, Hide +7, Innuendo +4, Intimidate +8, Intuit Direction +6, Jump +6, Knowledge (sea lore) +4, Knowledge (shipping lanes) +5, Listen +6, Move Silently +7, Perform +7, Profession (sailor) +10, Profession (tactician/strategist) +9, Sense Motive +4, Speak Language (Han Hua, Tshil, Tiakha, Aldiz-baraji, Tikaret-baraji, Vodacce [alternately, any six languages from your campaign]), Spot +5, Swim +6, Tumble +7, Use Rope +6; Feats: Appearance: Above Average, Combat Reflexes, Cruel, Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Leadership, Left-Handed, Membership (Volunteer Navy), Pirate Trick (Quick Draw, Sea Legs), Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (*tulwar*), Weapon Specialization (*tulwar*).

Sayari Razak — Villain (7th Sea™)

Brawn: 4, **Finesse:** 4, **Wits:** 4, **Resolve:** 5, **Panache:** 5

Reputation: -108

Background: Vendetta 2

Arcana: Cruel

Advantages: Cathay Accent (Tiakhar), Han Hua (R/W), Tashil, Tiakhar (R/W), Aldiz-baraji, Tikaret-baraji, Vodacce (ACQ), Combat Reflexes, Dangerous Beauty, Left-Handed, Membership (Volunteer Navy), Noble
Courtier: Dancing 5, Etiquette 2, Fashion 4, Oratory 3, Diplomacy 2, Gaming 4, Gossip 5, Lip Reading 2, Mooch 3, Politics 2, Scheming 4, Seduction 5, Sincerity 4

Criminal: Gambling 5, Shadowing 4, Stealth 5, Ambush 5, Cheating 5, Lockpicking 4, Pickpocket 3, Prestidigitiation 4, Scrounging 3

Sailor: Balance 5, Climbing 4, Knotwork 4, Rigging 3, Cartography 2, Leaping 5, Navigation 3, Pilot 4, Sea Lore 4, Swimming 4, Weather 3

Spy: Shadowing 4, Stealth 5, Bribery 4, Conceal 4, Cryptography 2, Disguise 2, Forgery 3, Hand Signs 4, Interrogation 5, Lip Reading 2, Poison 4, Sincerity 4

Streetwise: Socializing 5, Street Navigation 4, Scrounging 3, Underworld Lore 5

Athlete: Climbing 4, Footwork 5, Sprinting 4, Throwing 3, Break Fall 4, Leaping 5, Lifting 4, Rolling 5, Swimming 4, Side-Step 4

Captain: Strategy 3, Tactics 4, Ambush 5, Bribery 4, Cartography 2, Diplomacy 2, Gunnery 3, Incitation 4, Leadership 3, Logistics 2

Dirty Fighting: Attack (Dirty Fighting) 4, Attack (Improvised Weapon) 4, Eye-gouge 3, Kick 4, Parry (Improvised Weapon) 2, Throat Strike 3, Throw (Improvised Weapon) 3

Exotic Paired Weapons: Attack (Exotic Paired Weapons) 5, Parry (Exotic Paired Weapons) 4, Double Parry (Exotic Paired Weapons) 4
Fencing: Attack (Fencing) 5, Parry (Fencing) 5
Firearms: Attack (Firearms) 4
Knife: Attack (Knife) 5, Parry (Knife) 3, Throw (Knife) 4
Jasni (Master): Boarding 5, Corps-à-Corps 5, Disarm (Fencing) 5, Exploit Weakness (Jasni) 5
Magic: *Mayawi-Shakti:* Blood Mark 6, Burning Blood 6, Frenzy 6, Lust 6, Regenerate 6

GM Secret: The origin of *Tuanku Sayari's* epithet "The Black Heart" means something far more sinister than just his elevation ceremony. When he defeats a ship, he keeps the captain alive long enough to slice him open and eat the man's beating heart! This ghoulish practice would be enough to add to his already fearsome reputation but some whisper of a even darker purpose. A few of the volunteers claim there is a small island to which Razak travels alone to visit the sacred temple of Ravana where he communicates with the god himself though this bloody pact. For every heart Razak eats, Ravana reveals some important truth to him. This, they whisper, is why the Black Heart seems to know the inner secrets of those he encounters upon the seas.

What Razak does not know (because the gods never reveal everything to mortals) is that with every heart he consumes, he brings himself closer to Ravana's complete domination of his body forever. When that occurs, it will release a scourge on the Seven Seas that could even make the great Reis cower in his cabin like a frightened child!

The Loyal Warlord — Tzou Tze Lung

"When gentlemen perform well all their duties to their relations, the people are inspired to virtue. When they remain true to their old friends, the people are preserved from irresponsible behavior."

— Master Kung

As the *zai xiang* or Prime Minister, Duke Tzou Tze Lung, serves the Celestial Empress with a loyalty that is without equal in the Qi Guo. He regards her not only as the holder of the *tien ming* but also as if she were his proper niece. He advises her on all matters including ways to handle the other Kingdoms with a firm but delicate hand. He is quoted as saying "A prince does not forsake kinsmen, nor offend great vassals by neglect. He will not discard an old servant, unless he has great cause. He asks perfection of no man."

Tzou became deeply involved in governing his lands following the tragic death of his brother, the reigning Duke and his beloved wife while they were on a journey to Khimal. He became the guardian for his orphaned nephew, assuming the title as regent. He took his duties seriously, and brought the boy into his household, teaching him the ways of statesmanship. A compassionate man, Tzou accompanied his nephew on the sorrowful journey to recover his parents' bodies and give them a proper burial.

While in Khimal, Tzou made the acquaintance of the High Lama, one of the most holy people in the Qi Guo. To this day, Tzou has told no one what transpired between them, but he returned to Han Hua a much calmer and stronger man. When his nephew reached his 12th birthday, he confided to his uncle that he wished to return to Khimal to become a monk at the lamasery and thus Tzou became Duke.

Mayawi Shakti (Tiakhar)

When a new ruler ascends the throne of Tiakhar, he is initiated into a dark sorcery called Mayawi Shakti. So devoted is *Tuanku Sayari Razak* to the worship of Ravana that he god has granted him powers beyond the range a Tiakhari ruler normally receives. The abilities below are indicative of those gifted with Mayawi Shakti sorcery. (Note to the GM: Mayawi Shakti is not available to PCs. However, you may impart some of these abilities to NPCs in the bloodline or create additional abilities for Razak or his progeny.)

Frenzy [Tiakhar Ruler Only] — (d20")

Sayari Razak may add +4 to his Initiative total, as well as +2 to all To Hit and damage rolls. However, he is easily goaded and must make a Will Save (DC 25) to resist attacking anyone foolish enough to mock him.

Frenzy [Tiakhar Ruler Only] — (7th Sea")

The *tuanku's* demonic blood sometimes boils within him, causing him to seethe with rage. Add 6 Frenzy + his Initiative total to the result of every Damage roll and Wound check he makes, and to ever attempt at an Intimidation Repartee action. Subtract 6 from any roll he makes when some poor fool tries to Taunt him.

Lust [Tiakhar Ruler Only] — (d20")

Sayari Razak receives a +6 Competence bonus (supernatural) on any attempt to charm or seduce a member of the opposite sex. Any member of the opposite sex receives a +4 bonus on any attempt to Seduce the *tuanku*.

Lust [Tiakhar Ruler Only] — (7th Sea")

A gift from Ravana, the *tuanku's* demonic blood causes him to crave carnal pleasures and exude animal magnetism to attract a partner. Whenever he tries to charm or seduce someone of the opposite sex, *Sayari Razak* gets a bonus to his roll equal to 18. Whenever someone of the opposite sex tries to seduce him, they add 12 to their roll.

Regenerate [Tiakhar Ruler Only] — (d20")

At the end of each combat round, the GM rolls 1d6 and subtracts the result from damage Razak has taken in that round only.

Regenerate [Tiakhar Ruler Only] — (7th Sea")

Blessed with Ravana's blood, *Sayari Razak* heals more quickly than do mere mortals. At the end of every even-numbered Phase (2, 4, 6, 8, 10) he reduces the number of Flesh Wounds he has taken by 6.

Among his many contributions to the governance of Han Hua and based on his own experience, Duke Tzou has streamlined the clan inheritance system. According to his plan, leadership of a clan passes to the first wife's eldest child. Younger sons and concubines' children are given freedom to found their own noble house as long as the lines of fealty were established. This restructuring significantly reduced the amount of familial contention and created a much stronger feudal unit. It also gave the subsidiary branch a sense of connection with the crown.



Duke Tzou works tirelessly to perfect the system of feudalism currently in place in the Qi Guo. He believes in a hereditary landed warrior aristocracy and encourages the Empress to find and reward faithful nobles with the honor of holding lands in her name. He follows the lessons of Master Kung, using the concepts in the Lun Ya to create a positive dependence and stabilize the nation. In this way, he encourages others by his example to adhere to a system of authority based on religious observance, family loyalty, and feudal obligations.

Not only is Duke Tzou a student of history and warfare, he is also a philosopher whose interest in divination methods led him to write learned commentaries on the I Ching. His work is held in high regard by many religious leaders throughout the Qi Guo, including the High Lama of Khimal himself. His personal library is one of the great wonders of the land, and he is well-versed in the Wu Bao Shu.

His own household serves him joyfully, for he is a fair and genial master. He has three wives, all of whom care deeply for him and for each other. Concubines are welcomed into his household and treated kindly. If the Duke has a fault, it is his extreme generosity among his family and his concubines; he cannot resist bestowing gifts, especially upon his children. His most prized possession is a stunning breastplate adorned with a phoenix, a gift from the Empress herself.

Taller than average, the Duke is a large man with a wide open face and long moustaches framing an otherwise sensitive mouth. He is quick to laughter but implacable when dealing with those who are deceitful.

Tzou Tze Lung (d20™)

Han Hua Fighter 6/Shan Dian Dao Te 3: CR 9; SZ M (humanoid); HD 9d10 + 18; hp 72; Init + 5 (+1 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC X (bonus); Atks: dao +14/+9 melee (1d12 +4) chu-ko-nu +11/+6 ranged (1d8); SA Bonus Feats (*see below*), Improve Initiative; SV Fort +10, Ref +7, Will +7; Str 18, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 14, Wis 15, Cha 12; AL LG; Skills: Balance +4, Climb +3, Handle Animal +4, Intimidate +4, Jump +3, Knowledge (court) +5, Knowledge (law) +5, Ride +5, Sense Motive +4, Speak Language (Han Hua, Xian Bei, Tashil, Koryo, Lanna [alternately, and five languages from your campaign]) Swim +3, Tumble +3; Feats: (9) Brawny, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (*Chu-Ko-Nu*), Improved Initiative, Large, Mobility, Parry, Passionate, Toughness, Weapon Focus (*dao*), Weapon Specialization (*dao*).

Tzou Tze Lung — Hero (7th Sea™)

Brawn: 5, Finesse: 3, Wits: 4, Resolve: 4, Panache: 4

Reputation: 67

Background: Obligation (3)

Arcana: Passionate

Advantages: Han Hua (R/W), Xian Bei (R/W), Tashil, Koryo (R/W), Lanna (R/W), Age and Wisdom (Middle Aged), Combat Reflexes, Large, Noble

Courtier: Dancing 2, Etiquette 5, Fashion 3, Oratory 3, Diplomacy 4, Gaming 3, Politics 4

Scholar: History 4, Mathematics 2, Philosophy 3, Research 3, Law 4, Occult 3, Theology 2

Athlete: Climbing 1, Footwork 5, Sprinting 2, Throwing 1, Side-Step 3

Commander: Strategy 4, Tactics 4, Ambush 3, Artillery 3, Cartography 4, Diplomacy 4, Incitation 4, Leadership 4, Logistics 4

Crossbow: Attack (Crossbow) 4, Fletcher 1, Reload (Chko-nu) 4

Fencing: Attack (Fencing) 3, Parry (Fencing) 3, Cavalry Attack 3

Heavy Weapon: Attack (Heavy Weapon) 5, Parry (Heavy Weapon) 5

Rider: Ride 3

Shan Dian Dao Te (Journeyman): Beat (Dao) 4, Corps-à-Corps 5, Exploit Weakness (Shan Dian Dao Te) 5, Feint (Dao) 4

Magic: None

"Is he not a man of complete virtue, who feels no discomposure though men may take no note of him?"

— Master Kung

GM Secrets: Tzou Tze Lung is very much the chun tzu, the superior man so highly praised by Master Kung and General Zhen Ren in his treatise on warfare. The good Duke is completely as he appears — open, honest, caring, faithful and utterly loyal to the Celestial Empress. He has no secrets, not even what he thinks should be done to the Empire's enemies.

The Ancient Shaman — Kunchen Choden, High Lama of Khimal

All the birds have flown

A lonely cloud floats leisurely by.

We never tire of looking at each other —

The mountain and I.

— Li Bai

The mountainous land of Khimal has always been a mystery to the rest of the Qi Guo. Once a great nation, Khimal has retreated to the world high above the clouds where the people seem to be quite content (and able) to live at altitudes that no one else besides yaks generally tolerate. Their ways are simple, due in part to the difficult terrain and in part to the devout practices of their faith requires. Their spiritual leader is the High Lama who resides in the beautiful palace in Potala, the capital city.

The position of High Lama is illustrious. The first High Lama was actually the original god of compassion who chose to remain on earth to help people make their way through this life by teaching them the principles of a spiritually enlightened life. The people of Khimal believe that the intrinsic soul of the High Lama is passed from the current leader to his successor.

One of the duties of the High Lama is to leave written instructions to aid in the selection of his successor. Of course, the process itself is not simple. A small group of monks are entrusted with guarding a sacred lacquer box that contains a number of the items including one that belonged to the leader. Upon his departure from this world, they search among the young boys of Khimal until they find the one who is able to select the item that belonged to the now deceased leader. Combined with the written instructions from the previous High Lama, they are able to identify his successor. They have used this method since time immemorial. To date it has

not failed to produce a leader of with great kindness and pervasive wisdom.

The current High Lama is Kunchen Choden, an ancient shaman whose name means "All-Knowing Devout One." He is a very old man with long white hair and moustaches. He dresses in traditional saffron and crimson robes appropriate to his office. Lama Choden is a man of great intelligence with a keen mind and a delightful sense of humor. He has learned to find joy in life no matter the circumstance. He is especially fond of children and enjoys spending time playing endless games of go with them. In all things, he is the living embodiment of the Four Gates: Joy, Compassion, Kindness and Equanimity.

Kunchen Choden (420")

Human Khimal Monk, Level 13: CR 13; SZ M (humanoid); HD 13d8 + 26; hp 87; Init +5 (+1 Dex, +4 Improve Initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 13 (+1 Dex, +2 monk ability); Atks: unarmed strike +9/+6/+3 melee (1d12); SA Unarmed Strike 1d12, Stunning Attack, Evasion, Still Mind, Slow Fall (50 ft.), Purity of Body, Wholeness of Body, Leap of the Clouds, Improved Evasion, Ki Strike (+2), Diamond Body, Abundant Step, Diamond Soul; SV Fort +14, Ref +9, Will +12; Str 10, Dex 13, Con 18, Int 17, Wis 19, Cha 14; AL NG; Skills: Balance +8, Climb +5, Concentration +15, Diplomacy +10, Escape Artist +4, Heal +5, Hide +4, Jump, Knowledge (arcana) +10, Knowledge (astronomy) +8, Knowledge (fortune telling) +4, Knowledge (history) +5, Listen +8, Move Silently +8, Perform +4, Profession (Cartography) +6, Ride +3, Speak Language (Han Hua, Khimal, Koryo, Lanna, Tashil, Teodoran, Tiakhar, Xian Bei, [alternately, any eight languages from your campaign]), Swim +5, Tumble +9; Feats: Baofong Xue Wudao, Deflect Arrows, Faith, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Inspirational, Ordained.

Kunchen Choden — Hero (7th Sea™)

Brawn: 2, **Finesse:** 2, **Wits:** 5, **Resolve:** 5, **Panache:** 2

Reputation: 84

Background: Dragon Dreams (3)

Arcana: Inspirational

Advantages: (Khimal), Han Hua (R/W), Khimal (R/W), Koryo (R/W), Lanna (R/W), Tashil (R/W), Teodoran (R/W), Tiakhar (R/W), Xian Bei (R/W), Age and Wisdom (Old), Faith, Linguist, Ordained

Artist: Drawing 3, Writing 5

Cao Yao: Diagnosis 4, First Aid 3, Masseur 2, Acupuncture 4, Compounds 3

Feng Shu Shi: Chanting 5, Gardener 4, Interior Design 2, Oratory 5, Philosophy 5, Astronomy 5, Cartography 4, Geomancy 3, Meditation 5, Occult 5, Theology 5

Fortune Telling: Oratory 5, Palm Reading 2, Cold Read 5, I Ching 5, Occult 5, Omens 5

Gwai Liao: Etiquette 5, Fashion 2, Mathematics 4, Oratory 5, Writing 5, Accounting 2, Diplomacy 5, Law 4, Politics 2, Sincerity 5

Rahib: Calligraphy 4, Chanting 5, History 5, Menial Tasks 3, Philosophy 5, Unobtrusive 2, Writing 5, Diplomacy 5, Occult 5, Storytelling 5, Theology 5

Scholar: History 5, Mathematics 4, Philosophy 5, Research 3, Astronomy 5, Law 4, Occult 5, Theology 5
Servant: Etiquette 5, Fashion 2, Menial Tasks 3, Unobtrusive 2, Accounting 2
Rider: Ride 3
Soft Martial Arts: Balance 1, Block (Soft Martial Arts) 2, Footwork 3, Grapple 1, Yield 6, Disarm (Unarmed) 3, Escape 5, Break Fall 2, Leaping 5, Meditation 5
Wu Tsain (Master): Exploit Weakness (Wu Tsain) 5, Escape 5, Leaping 5, Tagging (Unarmed) 5
Magic: Baofong Xue Wudao

GM Secrets: Is Kunchen Choden his own man, or is he an immortal who is able, through great magical powers, to alter his appearance? The people of Khimal live well into old age, far beyond that of any other people in Théah. Have they found the great Elixir of Life? Is there a Khimali version of the Balm of Westmoreland?

Alone in his private chambers, Lama Choden writes about many things. He is a scholar equal to any in Western Théah but unlike many, he has not permitted his knowledge to bedazzle his perception of himself.

He writes about old age, Are we immortal? The concept is romantic but not realistic. There are many reasons, all of them revolving around the care of the body and the spirit, why do we in the Land of the Snows live so long. Do we die? Of course we do, for we are creatures of flesh and blood. Death comes at the end of the slow dance and takes us into its arms with grace and compassion."

He knows much of what lies beyond the borders of the Seven Kingdoms and his heart is heavy. "Will men become so enamored of warfare as to imperil all that is beautiful and harmonious in our world? Should that day arrive, will we here in the mountains be able to withstand long enough to see the peace that will come?"

The Empress — Wu Shang Fon

"No country is permanently strong. Nor is any country permanently weak. If conformers to law are strong, the country is strong; if conformers to law are weak, the country is weak."

— Han Fei

Although there are notable women in positions of power in Western Théah, it is not common to have a female ruler over the Seven Kingdoms. Even the great Master Kung was skeptical about a woman's ability as a leader, equating it to a "hen crowing like a rooster at daybreak." However, there have been two outstanding female rulers during Han Hua's long history and both hail from the great Wu clan: one was Wu Ze Tian and the other is the current Celestial Empress Wu Shang Fon.

Unlike her predecessor, Empress Wu Shang Fon is neither ruthless nor a woman pretending to be a man. She is an extremely talented and bright young woman, with a great deal of common sense and blessed with the guidance of the loyal Duke Tzou Tze Lung. Unlike her predecessor, she does not live in a period that is particularly peaceful.

The women of Han Hua have always enjoyed freedom in terms of their education and military training. (Unfortunately, marriage arrangements are still firmly in the control of the family and the matchmaker.) Wu Shang Fon has had a thorough education and can even speak tikaret-baraji, although this is not common knowledge, as she has no wish to anger the more conservative among her military advisors.

Like her idol the warrior maiden Hua Mu Lan, she is an excellent commander and frequently receives praise from her compatriots-at-arms on her abilities as a warrior. She genuinely loves her daily weapons practice. Although she is exquisitely beautiful, she is far from fragile.

The Empress is at present unmarried. There are a number of ardent suitors. Some seek her hand because an alliance with the great Cathay would be politically advantageous and others because she is simply an extremely beautiful young woman. Dalan-Tai's oldest son is very taken with her, as is the Prince of Srinagar. However, Wu Shan Fon is not about to make a decision in haste. She has high standards for a prospective consort, but make no mistake about it, has no intention of sharing her throne.

When the time comes, she will marry but if she never finds anyone, her sister Princess Wu An Jiang has a son who is very bright and shows great promise so the succession will be secure.

In the meantime, the Empress has much to concern her. Dalan-Tai is making grumbling noises about the movement of Imperial troops into his territory. The Xian Bei have lived quite safely next to the Huo Qiang for centuries so why send extra support now? The tree-worshipping people of Koryo have been very quiet, thank the gods, but Lanna has recently begun sending a series of increasingly more aggressive ambassadors. All seems to be peaceful, more or less, in Tashil, but that tends to change with the seasons. Tiakhar is always a problem. On the one hand, they make for a convenient watchdog along the southern border, given the incursion of Westerners crawling all over Cabora. On the other hand, Sayari Razak is an abomination and appears to have some sort of unholy alliance with Duchess Meng Xian Nu.

There are times when Wu Shang Fon find the burden of the tien ming heavier than the great Imperial Crown...

Wu Shang Fon (d20™)

Human Han Hua Noble, Level 10: CR 10; SZ M (humanoid); HD 10d8; hp 47; Init +2 (Dex bonus); Spd 30 ft.; AC 12 (+2 Dex); Atks: none; SA Commanding Presence (+3), Friends in High Places, Seduction, Taunt, Iron Glare (1/day); SV Fort +3, Ref +5, Will +9; Str 9, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 16, Wis 15, Cha 17; AL LG; Skills: Diplomacy +12, Gather Information +10, Intimidate +5, Knowledge (accounting) +3 Knowledge (imperial court) +14, Knowledge (law) +8, Knowledge (politics) +8, Knowledge (strategy) +5, Listen +8, Perform +7, Ride +3, Sense Motive +10, Speak Language (Han Hua, Tashil, Théan, Tikaret-baraji, Xian Bei [alternately, any five languages from your campaign]), Spot +3, Swim +2; Feats: Appearance — Above Average, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (Chu-Ko-Nu), Leadership, Light Armor Proficiency, Lunge.

Wu Shang Fon — Hero (7th Sea™)

Brawn: 3, Finesse: 3, Wits: 4, Resolve: 3, Panache: 3

Reputation: 106

Background: Hunting (2)

Arcana: Self-Controlled

Advantages: Languages: Han Hua (R/W), Tashil, Théan (ACQ), Tikaret-baraji, Xian Bei (R/W), Appearance (Above Average), Armor Trained, Noble

Courtier: Dancing 3, Etiquette 3, Fashion 2, Oratory 3, Diplomacy 3, Politics 1, Sincerity 2

Gwai Liao: Etiquette 3, Fashion 2, Mathematics 2, Oratory 3, Research 2, Writing 1, Accounting 2, Diplomacy 3, Law 3, Politics 1, Sincerity 2

Athlete: Climbing 1, Footwork 4, Sprinting 2, Throwing 1, Break Fall 2, Leaping 1, Swimming 2, Side-step 1

Commander: Strategy 3, Tactics 1, Ambush 1, Artillery 1, Cartography 2, Diplomacy 3, Gunnery 1, Incitation 2, Leadership 3, Logistics 4, Rocketry 2

Crossbow: Attack (Crossbow) 3, Fletcher 1, Reload (Chuko-nu) 2

Fencing: Attack (Fencing) 3, Parry (Fencing) 3, Cavalry Attack 2

Firearms: Attack (Firearms) 1

Hard Martial Arts: Attack (Hard Martial Arts) 2, Block (Hard Martial Arts) 2, Footwork 4, Balance 2, Jab 2, Kick 1, Break Fall 2, Knife Hand 2, Leaping 1

Heavy Weapon: Attack (Heavy Weapon) 2, Parry (Heavy Weapon) 2

Rider: Ride 3, Mounting 1, Trick Riding 1

Soft Martial Arts: Balance 2, Block (Soft Martial Arts) 1, Break Fall 2, Footwork 4, Grapple 1, Leaping 1, Side-Step 1, Yield 2

Magic: None

GM Secrets: The Celestial Empress has consulted the High Lama about finding a way to establish contact with Queen Elaine. Obviously, both women would be in great peril from within their kingdoms and from Vodacce should even the slightest hint of such an alliance become apparent. To further complicate matters, it appears that Koschei wishes to have a meeting with the Empress regarding the Huo Qiang. Wu Shang Fon is not afraid of very many things, but the Ussuran wizard makes her extremely uneasy. She is unsure whether he is acting on his own behalf or as an emissary from Matushka. In either case, negotiations are underway for a secret meeting in Potala when the Empress makes her annual visit to the High Lama.

Previously Published NPC

Koschei

"Immortality is not a blessing; it is a curse. Soon, too soon, you will understand this truth. And then, you will never be able to escape it."

— The Legend of Koschei (reprinted from *Ussura*™)

Koschei (d20™)

Medium-Sized Outsider

Hit Dice: 20d8 (161 hp)

Initiative: +3 (Dex)

Speed: 30 ft.

AC: 20 (+3 Dex, +7 natural)

Attacks: None, normally

Damage: None

Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft. 5 ft.

Special Attacks: See below

Special Qualities: See below

Saves: Fort +15, Ref +15, Will +20

Abilities: Str 10, Dex 18, Con 11, Int 20, Wis 20, Cha 17

Skills: See below



Feats: Brew Potion, Craft Arms and Armor, Craft Wondrous Item, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Indomitable Will, Intuitive, Linguist

Climate/Terrain: Wherever he wills, but generally in the region of Ussura.

Organization: Unique.

Treasure: None

Alignment: Neutral

Special: Koschei is an immortal human, having walked the face of Théah for over a thousand years. As such, his knowledge is nearly limitless. He receives a +20 circumstance bonus on any and all skill checks, and automatically succeeds on any Knowledge-based checks. He has all of the powers, spells, and special abilities of a 20th level Pyeryem shapeshifter, and has fire and fortune telling powers identical in effect to the spells and special abilities of a 20th level Fate Witch and a 20th level El Fuego Adentro mage. (See *Swashbuckling Arcana* for more). His is intended as an advisor, guide, or nonlethal challenge to player characters, not a monster to be slain.

Koschei (7th Sea™)

Brawn: 2, **Finesse:** 5, **Wits:** 6, **Resolve:** 2, **Panache:** 4

Reputation: 95

Background: None

Arcana: Intuitive

Advantages: Avalon (R/W), Castille (R/W), Crescent (R/W), High Eisen (R/W), Eisen (R/W), Montaigne (R/W), Teodoran (R/W), Théan (R/W), Ussuran (R/W), Vendel (R/W), Vodacce (R/W), numerous offshoots and dialects, Indomitable Will, Legendary Trait (Wits), Linguist.

Skills: Koschei is considered to have every Skill in the game, and all Knacks at Rank 5.

Pyeryem (Master): All Knacks from each Trait at 5.

Sorcery: Koschei has mastered several other forms of sorcery (equivalent to Sorte and El Fuego Adentro) at the same level as his Pyeryem abilities. No one knows where he acquired them and he has yet to teach anyone their secrets. Neither a hero nor a villain, Koschei been around too long to conform to normal dictates of behavior or morality.

GM Secret: Koschei has been alive for so long that it is difficult fathom everything he has seen. He has willingly embraced all the despicable things demanded of him to keep his beloved Molhyna safe. This is his great tragedy: the sacrifice of his soul to save his nation. Matushka's blood sustains him and grants him immortality; should he "die" in the physical sense, he will be reborn.

Adding to his legendary luster, it appears that he was one of the masters of the Huo Qiang and in fact holds one of the 64 talismans (Chia Jen or Family). Because he is impossibly clever and adept, it is unlikely that anyone will ever wrest the item from him (or even survive an attempt to do so.) It is also doubtful that he would be willing to participate in a concerted effort to bring the wall down, as he rather enjoys the privilege of being one of only two non-Cathayans who can pass through the barrier unimpeded.

Cathayan Characters

Feng Shu Shi (Priest/Geomancer) (d20™)

Monk 2: CR 2; SZ M (humanoid); HD 2d8; hp 12; Init +1 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 11 (+1 Dex); Atks: unarmed +1 (1d6); SA Evasion, Stunning Attack, Unarmed Strike; SV Fort +3, Ref +4, Will +6; Str 12, Dex 13, Con 10, Int 14, Wis 16, Cha 10; AL LG; Skills: Balance +2, Concentration +3, Hide +3, Jump +4, Knowledge (geomancy) +5, Knowledge (history) +3, Knowledge (mathematics) +2, Knowledge (philosophy) +5, Listen +2, Speak Language (Han Hua [alternately, any language from your campaign]), Tumble +3; Feats: Deflect Arrows, Small, Uncanny.

Feng Shu Shi (Priest/Geomancer) (7th Sea™)

Brawn: 2, **Finesse:** 3, **Wits:** 4, **Resolve:** 3, **Panache:** 2

Reputation: 0

Background: Dragon Dreams (2)

Arcana: Uncanny

Advantages: Language: Han Hua (R/W), Natural Aptitude: Geomancy, Ordained, Small

Feng Shu Shi: Chanting 1, Gardener 1, Interior Design 1, Oratory 1, Philosophy 2, Geomancy 1

Scholar: History 1, Mathematics 1, Philosophy 2, Research 1

Soft Martial Arts: Balance 1, Block (Soft Martial Arts) 1, Footwork 1, Grapple 1, Yield 1

Staff: Attack (Staff) 1, Parry (Staff) 1

Income: 180 qian (starting); 30 qian per month plus fees and gifts

Jian Wei (Imperial Guard) (d20™)

Fighter 3: CR 3; SZ M (humanoid); HD 3d10 +6; hp 28; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 17 (+2 Dex, +5 breastplate); Atks: polearm +4 melee (1d10), dao +4 melee (1d8); SA None; SV Fort +5, Ref +2, Will +0; Str 14, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 15, Wis 10, Cha 9; AL LN; Skills: Balance +3, Climb +3, Jump +3, Knowledge (imperial etiquette) +2, Knowledge (law) +2, Profession (commander) +3, Ride +2, Speak Language (Han Hua [alternately, any language from your campaign]); Feats: Academy, Armor Trained, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (dao), Weapon Focus (polearm).

Jian Wei (Imperial Guard) (7th Sea™)

Brawn: 2, **Finesse:** 3, **Wits:** 3, **Resolve:** 2, **Panache:** 2

Reputation: 10 (Captain)

Background: Romance (3)

Arcana: None

Advantages: Languages: Han Hua (R/W), Academy, Armor Trained, Citation, Commission (Army, Captain)

Courtier: Dancing 1, Etiquette 1, Fashion 1, Gaming 2, Oratory 1

Athlete: Climbing 1, Footwork 3, Sprinting 1, Throwing 1

Commander: Strategy 2, Tactics 2, Ambush 1, Incitation 1, Leadership 1

Hard Martial Arts: Attack (Hard Martial Arts) 1, Block (Hard Martial Arts) 1, Footwork 3, Balance 1, Jab 1

Heavy Weapon: Attack (Heavy Weapon) 3, Parry (Heavy Weapon) 2

Polearm: Attack (Polearm) 2, Parry (Polearm) 2

Income: 450 qian (starting); 150 qian per month

CHAPTER THREE:

Di San Shu

(The Third Book)

...Let wise and hopeful men harbor no complaint.
The greater the timber, the tougher it is to use.
— from “A Song of an Old Cypress”

Creating Cathayan Characters

Modifications (d20™)

Cathayan characters are considered human and their construction follows the basic parameters detailed in *Swash-buckling Adventures™*. Use the standard range of heights for Humans in the *Player's Handbook™*, Chapter 2: Races.

Class Skills

Note: Characters only get 2 bonus skill points rather than 4 at 1st level. (See *Player's Handbook™*, Chapter 4: Skills for definitions.)

Natural (Automatic) Language: Every Cathayan character speaks the dialect of the kingdom in which he was born. (See New Advantages: Cathay Accent below for further detail)

Familiarity with Western Théan languages is determined by how much contact Cathayan characters have with Western Théans in the Mirror Sea (and with the GM's concurrence, of course.)

Modifications (7th Sea™)

Characters from Cathay are created in the same manner as are those of other nations. To begin, choose a profession and a Swordsman School, then assign Traits as described in the *7th Sea Players' Guide™*. While Cathay is considered a single nation by the rest of the world, within its own borders it is referred to as Qi Guo because it is comprised of seven regions or “kingdoms.” Each region is treated like a nation for purposes of determining your Trait bonus.

After selecting your kingdom and receiving your Trait bonus, continue with the character creation process as described in the *7th Sea Players' Guide™*, spending points on Skills, Advantages, Backgrounds, and Arcana as normal. The only other special consideration when creating a Cathayan character is defining Wealth and Income because the guild and any other foreign paper currencies are as good as worthless on this side of the Wall of Fire. (See below for more information.)

Modifications to Existing Advantages

The player may purchase the Small Advantage for 1 HP instead of the normal 2.

Bonus by Kingdom

After you spend points on Traits, add one free Rank to one Trait, as determined by your character's kingdom on the table below. This may increase the Trait to 4.

There are very few Cathayans who do not feel a strong connection to their kingdom of origin, even if fate has taken them elsewhere. Determine your character's birthplace both to receive your Trait bonus and to purchase kingdom-specific benefits such as Advantages.

TABLE 3-1: BASIC CLASS SKILLS PER KINGDOM

Kingdom	Skill
Han Hua	Appraise
Han Hua	Diplomacy
Khimal	Concentration
Khimal	Heal
Koryo	Knowledge (Nature)
Koryo	Heal
Lanna	Knowledge (Nature)
Lanna	Listen
Tashil	Concentration
Tashil	Knowledge (Arcana)
Tiakhar	Balance
Tiakhar	Climb
Xian Bei	Animal Empathy
Xian Bei	Ride

TABLE 3-2: KINGDOM TRAIT BONUSES

Kingdom	7th Sea™ Trait Bonus	d20™ Trait Bonus
Han Hua	+1 Wits	+1 Int
Khimal	+1 Resolve	+1 Wis
Koryo	+1 Brawn	+1 Str (or) +1 Con
Lanna	+1 Finesse	+1 Dex
Tashil	+1 Wits	+1 Int
Tiakhar	+1 Panache	+1 Cha
Xian Bei	+1 Resolve	+1 Wis

Wealth and Income for Cathayan Characters

The guilder is not recognized within the boundaries of Cathay. Other Théan coin-based currencies (especially that of the Crescent Empire) may be accepted but only for its precious metal content. Each of the Seven Kingdoms has its own currency, but by Imperial decree, the qian of Han Hua is accepted for all public transactions and payment of debt throughout the realm, thus providing the main basis for comparison. The currencies are as follows:

TABLE 3-3: CURRENCY EXCHANGE PER KINGDOM

Kingdom	Currency	Exchange Rate
Han Hua	<i>Qian</i>	1 qian = 1 qian
Khimal	<i>Yuan</i>	7 yuan = 1 qian
Koryo	<i>Doh Nul</i>	3 doh nul = 2 qian
Lanna	<i>Tien</i>	2 tien = 1 qian
Tashil	<i>Rupay</i>	10 rupay = 1 qian
Tiakhar	<i>Ringgit</i>	1 ringgit = 4 qian
Xian Bei	<i>Togrug</i>	12 togrug = 1 qian

Variance in coinage does not discourage trade, however. Far from it — commerce is almost a holy pursuit in Cathay and merchants hold a highly respected position in society. Western Théans who have done business in the Crescent Empire will find their experience with Cathayans, especially with the people of Xian Bei, quite similar. Cathayan characters who take Advantages that give them Wealth or Income (such as Noble) receive a number of qian equal to twice the number of guilders they would have received from those Advantages with other nationalities.

Optional: 1 Ching Consultation

The counterpart for the Destiny Spread in Cathay involves consultation with a *Feng Shui Shi* to ascertain the major influences present at the time of a child's birth. Randomly generate a hexagram (see Appendix — Hexagrams). This is not an Advantage so there is no cost; it is merely an aid to creating a Cathayan character. The Feng Shui Shi will expect appropriate compensation for rendering such a service. A non-Cathayan character may request such a reading; its validity will be affected by the regard with which the practitioner holds the questioner.

New Advantages (7th Sea™)

Note: Some Advantages do not have a d20™ equivalent.

Armor Trained (6 Points, 4 Points if from Cathay and has the Commission Advantage in an Army)

You are accustomed to wearing a quotient of armor on a daily basis, so you are not as impaired by it as you normally would be. When you wear armor, your penalties from the Specific Penalties from Armor Table (see below) are treated as if the armor type was one column to the right on the table.

Cathayan Accent (0 Points, Cathay Only)

An accent is an identifying characteristic of speech that indicates a person's origin. Only a PC fully proficient in the language can identify accents. Language Acquaintance and Pidgins are no help, and those who are not from Cathay may never have one of these accents.

Each region of Cathay has its own accent. Cathay characters with one of these accents pay slightly different costs to learn foreign languages. The costs on the table below replace the costs on the table in the Language Advantage that appears later. Each column of the table gives the costs for the Accent for one kingdom, see table 3:4.

Cathayan Servant (6 Points, 5 for Cathay)

You have a Cathayan Servant in your employ at the beginning of the game. In addition to performing everyday duties of a servant, he or she has a talent as a cao yao (Healer.) The Servant is considered a Henchman and should be built like other Henchmen. In addition to the normal 75 HP for a Henchman, he receives a 3 in all Knacks of the Cao Yao Skill (see New Civil Skills).

Cathayan Servant (d20™)

Cathayan Servant gives you, in essence, an additional cohort and requires the Leadership Feat and Cathayan heritage. (See *Player's Handbook™*, Chapter 5: Feats, Leadership and *DUNGEON MASTER'S Guide*, Chapter 2: Characters, Leadership.) Note: the servant only gets Expert Class. Skill points should be distributed among languages and one of the following Skill Focuses (Profession):

- *Physician* — Skill Focus: Herbalism, Medicine, Anatomy, Physiology; or
- *Herbalist* — Skill Focus: Alchemy (making curatives and antidotes), or

- **Surgeon** — Skill Focus: Heal, Animal Handling, Animal Empathy.

The servant should also have the Doctor Feat (see *Swashbuckling Arcana*™).

Cold Climate Conditioning (2 Points, 1 for Ussura, Vestenmannavnjär, Khimal, Koryo)

You are acclimatized to cold weather and do not suffer from it as much as others. However, heat affects you more than it does other people. You may not have both this Advantage and Cold Climate Conditioning.

When you take Wounds from cold weather, you roll one less die (-1k0) for Wounds. Unfortunately, you are not used to warm climates, so when you take Wounds from warm weather, you roll one more die (+1k0).

Feat: Cold Climate Conditioning [General] — (d20™)

You are used to cold weather as described above.

Prerequisites: Con 11+.

Benefits: When in cold temperatures (between 0°F/–18°C and 40°F/4°C and unprotected, you need only roll once per day (instead of once per hour). In instances of extreme cold (under 0°F/–18°C,) you need only make a roll once an hour instead of once every 10 minutes. (See the *DUNGEON MASTER'S GUIDE*™, Chapter 3: Running the Game – Temperature.)

Double Jointed (1 Point)

Your fingers can be bent backwards without causing damage. You are immune to damage caused by a Joint Lock on your fingers, and you get two Free Raises to Escape from such a Joint Lock. It also gives you a Free Raise to your Wound Check if you are disarmed while using a sword with Fencing

TABLE 3-4: CATHAYAN ACCENT DESCRIPTIONS

Accent	Description
Han Hua	The purest form of the Imperial Language, it sets the standard for other kingdoms. This is the typical “Cathayan” accent described on the Language Table below.
Khimal	People from Khimal tend to draw out their vowel sounds more, with less definition in their inflections than the speakers of Han Hua.
Koryo	Koryo natives tend to speak quickly, slurring vowels and accentuating their explosives.
Lanna	People from Lanna tend to have a nasal intonation and speak more quickly than people from Han Hua.
Tashil	Tashil speakers sound like they are singing when they speak, and tend to mix in words from their own language, especially adverbs and adjectives.
Tiakhar	People from Tiakhar have the thickest accents of any kingdom, possibly due to physical separation from the mainland. To people from Han Hua, they seem to be mumbling and their language sounds quite guttural. When Tiakharis become angry or excited, they have a tendency to accompany their speech with grunts, whistles and foot stomping.
Xian Bei	The speech heard in Xian Bei is known for its rapid tempo and tendency to blur the end of one word with the beginning of the next, except when between sentences. It is also full of metaphors about horses and weather on the steppes.

TABLE 3-5: CATHAYAN ACCENT

Language	Han Hua	Khimal	Koryo	Lanna	Tashil	Tiakhar	Xian Bei
Aldiz-baraji	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Atlar-baraji	4	4	4	4	4	5	3
Avalon	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
Castille	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Eisen	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Han Hua	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
High Eisen	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
Jadur-baraji	4	4	4	4	3	3	4
Kanu	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Khimal	3	1	2	3	4	4	2
Koryo	2	1	1	1	3	3	2
Kurta-baraji	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Lanna	2	2	1	1	2	2	1
Montaigne	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Ruzgar-baraji	4	4	4	4	5	4	4
Tashil	3	3	4	2	0	1	3
Teodoran	5	3	5	5	5	5	4
Théan	4	4	4	4	4	5	5
Tiakhar	2	4	3	3	1	0	3
Tikaret-baraji	4	5	4	4	4	3	3
Tirala-baraji	4	5	4	4	4	5	5
Ussuran	5	4	4	5	5	5	5
Vendel	5	4	5	5	5	5	5
Vodacce	4	5	4	5	4	3	5
Xian Bei	1	2	2	2	3	2	1
Yilan-baraji	4	5	5	4	4	5	5

Ring Grips. This Advantage does not benefit you in escaping from Grapple nor does it help to get away from a Joint Lock made on any additional joint. (See *Vodacce™* or *Swordsman's Guild™*.)

Language (Varies)

You are multilingual. Practically everyone in Cathay speaks Han Hua (even in Tiakhar,) but each of the kingdoms had its own language as noted above. In Tashil and Tiakhar, the use of their native tongue continues to some degree in everyday speech. In Lanna, Khimal, and Koryo, the use of the old language has almost disappeared from everyday life, although it is still used in some religious ceremonies, ancient poetry, and other special circumstances.

The point cost for different languages can be found using the methods below. Note that Literacy (the ability to read and write, rather than just speak) increases the cost of a language by 1.

Determine the cost for characters from foreign nations to learn the languages of Cathay by the chart below. Find your native country (or tribe, if you are playing a Crescent character) down the side, then find the language you want to speak along the top. The intersecting point shows the cost.

Literacy (Varies for Cathayan Languages) (d20™)

The spoken languages of Han Hua, Khimal, Koryo, Khimal, and Xian Bei are different, but share pictographic written language. Becoming literate in one of them allows you to read and write in all of them, even if you cannot speak them. The written forms of Tashil and Tiakhar are not similar enough to each other to allow a similar benefit.

Tashil/Tiakhar: one language slot (at character creation) or 1 point in Speak Language later.

Han Hua/Khimal/Koryo/Xian Bei: one language slot (at character creation) only allows you to speak the language, 2 slots lets you speak it and be literate in it. 1 rank in speak language lets you speak it, 2 lets you speak as well as be literate.

Literacy (Varies for Cathayan Languages) (7th Sea™)

The cost of learning Literacy in Han Hua, Khimal, Koryo, Khimal, and Xian Bei increases the cost of the first of those languages by 2 HP instead of 1. The cost of learning to be literate in the flowing script of Tashil or Tiakhar is 1 HP, just like any language in Théah or the Crescent Empire.

Membership (Cathayan "Secret Societies") (5 Points, Cathay Only)

There are many organizations in Cathay that claim to be "secret" and you belong to one of them. While not all of these groups are hidden away plotting a coup d'etat (in fact, some may not be hiding at all), just being a member means that you have undertaken sizable risk and responsibility. While it is not always easy, you must maintain the profile of your secret society, and try to fulfill their goals as well. You may purchase membership in only one Secret Society.

The following are the most prominent Secret Societies in Cathay. (GMs should feel free to create others as needed. However, remember there is no indication of any Synchrony or Sidhe influence or presence in the land behind the Huo Qiang.)

Membership: Lung Yin (Shadow of a Dragon) (Han Hua)

An organization devoted to furthering the criminal and political machinations of Duchess Meng, the Lung Yin includes those who knowingly do her dirty work and those who have been duped into giving her aid and support. The Lung Yin is definitely opposed to the Jing Chiang Tuan.

D20™ MECHANICS:

Lung Yin Membership

Prerequisites: Cathayan Nationality, Evil Alignment.

Benefits: Sense Motive is always considered a class skill for you (cf. Grandmaster Training — Sincerity). You also can communicate secretly in the codes of the Yung Lin.

TABLE 3-6: CATHAY LANGUAGES FOR FOREIGNERS

Language	Han Hua	Khimal	Koryo	Lanna	Tashil	Tiakhar	Xian Bei
Avalon	6	6	5	6	4	4	5
Castille	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Eisen	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Montaigne	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Ussura	4	4	4	5	5	6	4
Vendel	4	6	4	5	5	5	6
Vodacce	4	6	4	6	6	6	6
Aldiz'ahali	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Atlar'vahir	4	4	4	4	4	4	3
Jadur'rihad	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Kurta'kir	4	4	4	4	4	4	3
Ruzgar'hala	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Yilan-bazlik	4	5	4	4	5	6	5
Midnight	6	5	6	6	5	4	5
Archipelago (Kanu, etc.)							

Membership: Jing Chiang Tuan (Golden Coin Society) (Tiakhar)

*Behind the gates of the wealthy,
food lies rotting from waste
While outside it is the poor
who lie frozen to death.*

— Du Fu

This secret and organization wants to overthrow the wicked tyrant of Tiakhar, bring an end to piracy, and establish Tiakhar as an upstanding trading nation. While the majority of the membership of this Secret Society is from Tiakhar, people from other kingdoms are quite welcome. It is entirely possible that members of the Rilasciare have tried to contact the leadership of the Jing Chiang Tuan.

D20™ MECHANICS

Jing Chiang Tuan Membership

Prerequisites: Cathayan Nationality, Good or Neutral Alignment.

Profession: Merchant or Diplomacy 4 ranks. (See *Swashbuckling Adventures™*, Chapter 4: Feats – Merchant and Diplomacy).

Benefits: Diplomacy is always considered a Class skill for you.

You may make an ointment to remove a Blood Mark from someone; however, it requires an Alchemy check (DC 25) to make one dose. When applied to the forehead of someone who has been Blood Marked, the victim takes 1d4 damage and loses the Blood Mark. The ointment takes two days to make from scratch. (Note: Ingredients are determined at the GM's will.)

Membership: Haathi ke Lokh (Elephant People) (Tashil)

You are devoted to liberating Tashil from its vassal status to Han Hua, so that it might reclaim its honored status as a full-fledged independent nation. Most of the members of this Secret Society are from Tashil, but supporters from other nations are welcome if they can demonstrate that their devotion to the cause is true. (Note: Members of the Rilasciare should be aware that the Haathi ke Lokh plot to restore a monarchy and have no intention of establishing a democracy.)

D20™ MECHANICS

Haathi ke Lokh Membership

Prerequisites: Cathayan Nationality (Tashil).

Benefits: Ride (Elephant) is always a class skill for you. You also receive a +4 competence bonus on any rolls you make regarding the history or legends of Tashil.

Membership: Hei Jing Hu (Black Metal Tigers) (Han Hua)

Now in order to kill the enemy, our men must be roused; if there may be advantage from defeating the enemy, they must have their rewards.

— Zheng Ren, Bing Shu

Some members of the Imperial Military are not content with the size of the empire. They seek to expand their borders into other nations, but cannot pass through the Huo Qiang and do not have the resources to take over the Imperial Navy. Their immediate efforts are bent on finding a way to bring down the wall or expand the region it encompasses — from there, they plan to sweep as far west as possible.

D20™ MECHANICS

Hei Jing Hu Membership

Prerequisites:

Cathayan Nationality (Han Hua), Lawful Alignment, Han Hua Imperial Army Membership.

Benefits: Intimidate is always a class skill for you. You receive a +2 competence bonus to Intimidate Rolls, as well as a +2 Morale bonus on Will saves to resist Fear.

Benefits of Membership

What follows is a partial list of the benefits of membership for each of the Cathayan Secret Societies. A full list of benefits, Advantages, Backgrounds, and Swordsman Schools available exclusively to members of these Secret Societies is beyond the current scope of this book.

TABLE 3-7: GRANDMASTER TRAINING

Lung Yin	Haathi ke Lokh	Jing Chiang Tuan	Hei Jing Hu
Scheming	Interrogation	Accounting	Leadership
Sincerity	Ride (Elephant)	Diplomacy	Strategy
Underworld Lore	Traps	Oratory	Tactics

BENEFIT ONE: GRANDMASTER TRAINING

It is possible to reach a Rank 6 in a Knack under certain circumstances. First, the character must first have a Rank 5 in the Knack. Next, he must find a Grandmaster to train him. Training can take from one month to a year (at the GM's discretion.) Finally, the character must spend 25 XP to complete the process. This does not make him a Grandmaster, however; it only gives him a Rank 6. Note: normally, only NPCs and PCs retired by their players will ever possess the title of Grandmaster, since the ability to grant others Rank 6 in a Knack can be game-breaking in the hands of a player.

Consult table 3-7 to see which three Knacks you may learn from the Grandmaster(s) of your Secret Society.

BENEFIT TWO: RESOURCES

Secret Societies do not usually expect members to provide their own funding for some of the missions to which they are assigned. Whenever you are sent on a mission by your Secret Society, you are given 250 qian (or the local Kingdom's equivalent) to help finance your activities. Any money not spent on the mission must be returned, and all of these organizations expect a detailed account of how the money was spent.

BENEFIT THREE: HERO POINT DISCOUNTS

Members of these Secret Societies each get a 2 HP discount on the price of one Advantage.

TABLE 3-8: HERO POINT DISCOUNTS

Secret Society	Point Discounts
Lung Yin	Scoundrel (<i>See Swashbuckling Adventures™, Chapter 4: Feats — Scoundrel</i>)
Haathi ke Lokh	Indomitable Will (<i>See Swashbuckling Adventures™, Chapter 4: Feats — Indomitable Will</i>)
Jing Chiang Tuan	Connections
Hei Jing Hu	Commission

BENEFIT FOUR: ODDS AND ENDS

Each of the Secret Societies provides one other unique benefit.

Lung Yin: You know a pair of secret codes, one that allows you to leave messages for each other by arranging objects in special patterns. There is a subtle series of gestures and inflections that allow you to communicate secretly even when observed closely.

Haathe ke Lokh: You have taken special care to see to it that Tashil's national identity is not lost despite its subjugation to Han Hua. You get 2 Free Raises to any roll that involves Tashil's history or legends.

Jing Chiang Tuan: In its quest to overthrow the rulers of Tiakhar, the Jing Chiang Tuan has discovered how to make an ointment that will remove a Blood Mark from someone. By making a Wits + Compounds roll against a TN of 30, they can make 1 dose, plus one more dose per Raise they make on the roll. Applying the ointment to the forehead of someone who has been Blood Marked will cause him or her to take damage as if from a 1k1 Firearm attack, and destroys the Blood Mark. The main ingredients for this compound are the roots of lotus plants plus finely ground white coral. It takes two days to make the ointment from scratch.

Hei Jing Hu: You are praised for your courage and aggression, and reprimanded for any sign of hesitation or cowardice. You get a Free Raise to all Intimidation rolls, either to Intimidate someone else or to avoid being Intimidated. You also lose one fewer unkept die whenever you are affected by a Fear Rating.

Membership (*Tiakhar Volunteer Navy*) (4 Points, 3 if *Tiakhar*)

You have sailed with the pirates of Tiakhar, and still have connections amongst the cutthroats running along the Corridors of Flame. You know all the codes and signals the pirates use and do not need to make a roll of any kind to decipher the secret messages they send each other. Also, anytime you encounter a pirate from Tiakhar, there is a chance that one or both of you may have knowledge of the other. You will roll and keep a single die, which does not explode. Consult the table below to see the outcome.

TABLE 3-9: ENCOUNTERING TIAKHAR PIRATE

Roll	You have...
1–2	...been in a fight against him once. The two of you still do not like each other.
3–4	...never heard of him or seen him before.
5–6	...seen him before, but never spoke with him; you know about how good he is in a fight. He had no real reason to dislike you then.
7–8	...served with him on a vessel before. You got along all right with him on that voyage.
9–0	...served with him on many journeys. You and he got to know each other very well, and could be considered friends.

D20™ MECHANICS

(*See Swashbuckling Adventures™, Chapter 4: Feats — Sailor.*)

Natural Aptitude (6 Points for Basic Knack, 7 Points for Advanced Knack, 10 Points for a Sorcerous Knack)

You have a natural aptitude with one Knack of your choice, which must be specified when you take this Advantage. This allows you to attain spectacular results without trying very hard. You may not have more than one such aptitude. If you do not have this Knack from any of your Skills, you do not suffer the extra penalties that normally are involved when you make a roll without having that Knack (dice not exploding, higher TN). Whenever you make a roll with this Knack, you may declare Raises after you have made your roll instead of before rolling the dice.

Steppes Pony

You have a horse from the Xian Bei steppes. Steppes ponies, from whom Crescent Windrunners are derived, are shorter than most Théan horses. While they have not been as selectively bred as the Windrunners, there are a few exceptional individual ponies that display the properties that made the Xian Bei nomads such successful conquerors long ago. You have such a Steppes Pony.

Steppes Pony (Special Breed) (d20™)

Large Animal

Hit Dice: 2d8+16 (34 hp)

Initiative: +3 (Dex)

Speed: 60 ft.

AC: 16 (-1 size, +3 Dex, +4 natural)

Attacks: 2 hooves +7 melee; bite +2 melee

Damage: Hoof 1d6+5; bite 1d4+3

Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 10-ft./ 5 ft.

Special Qualities: Easy Handling, Expert Pack Animal, Responsive Mount

Saves: Fort +8, Ref +7, Will +3

Abilities: Str 20, Dex 16, Con 18, Int 2, Wis 14, Cha 8

Skills: Listen +8, Spot +8

Climate/Terrain: Any land (mainly steppes)

Organization: Domesticated

Challenge Rating: 2

Treasure: None

Alignment: Always neutral

Advancement: None

Easy Handling: When training a Steppes Pony, you receive a +5 to your Handle Animal checks.

Expert Pack Animal: When properly loaded and equipped, a Steppes Pony's Strength is treated as being 40 for load (weight) carrying purposes only.

Responsive Mount: When riding a Steppes Pony, you receive a +5 bonus to all Ride checks.

Steppes Pony (Special Breed) — Henchman (d20™)

(3 Points, Cathay Only, 2 Points for Xian Bei)

Brawn: 4, **Finesse:** 3, **Wits:** 1, **Resolve:** 2, **Panache:** 1

TN to be hit: 15 (30 when Galloping)

Attack Rolls: 3k2 Bite, 3k2 Kick, 3k2 Trample

Damage Rolls: 0k1 Bite, 4k2 Kick, 4k3 Trample

Skills: Footwork 2, Long Distance Running 1, Sprinting 5, Leaping 3

Special Abilities: Steppes Ponies carry twice the normal encumbrance limit for their Brawn if they are properly loaded. Also, this pony is particularly easy to train; you get a Free Raise to any Animal Training roll you make when trying to teach this pony a trick. Its responsiveness to your handling gives you a Free Raise to all Ride and Trick Riding rolls you make when riding this beast.

Warm Climate Conditioning (2 Points, 1 for Tashil and Tiakhar)

You are used to warm weather and do not suffer from its effects as much as others. However, cold affects you more than it does other people. You may not have both this Advantage and Cold Climate Conditioning. When you take Wounds from warm weather, you roll one less die (-1k0) for Wounds. Unfortunately, you are not used to cold climates, so when you take Wounds from cold weather, you roll one more die (+1k0).

D20™ MECHANICS

In the d20™ system, this advantage takes the form of a new feat, Warm Climate Conditioning (see below).

Warm Climate Conditioning [General]

You are used to warm weather as described above.

Prerequisites: Con 11+.

Benefits: When in warm temperatures (between 90° F/32° C and 110° F/43° C and unprotected, you need only roll once per day (instead of once per hour). In instances of extreme heat (over 110° F/43° C,) you need only make a roll once an hour (instead of once every 10 minutes.) (See the DUNGEON MASTER'S GUIDE™, Chapter 3: Running the Game.)

New Backgrounds (7th Sea™)

Backgrounds are plot devices used in the 7th Sea™ system to provide part of a character's history. They have no equivalent in the d20™ system.

Afyam Addict

Afyam is a black substance, used as a painkiller in Cathay. In Tashil and Tiakhar, it is consumed recreationally to produce fearlessness mixed with euphoria. Alas, it is habit-forming, and you are addicted to it. The strength of your addiction depends on the number of points you have in this Background. Obviously the stronger your addiction, the greater the dose you must consume to feel the euphoria, and the greater the pain of your withdrawal.

Each day on which you do not take a dose of afyam, you must make a Resolve roll against a TN equal to ten times your Rank in this Background, plus 5 for every day it has been since you last took a dose of afyam, plus an additional 10 if the last dose you took was only a medicinal dose instead of a recreational dose appropriate for someone with your degree of addiction. If you fail, your body begins to undergo withdrawal symptoms, including malnutrition, chills, sweating, nausea, and chronic pain. Many addicts continue to take doses of afyam to avoid this pain rather than to feel euphoria.

The effects of these symptoms cause you to have the TNs of all rolls that you make to be Raised by the Rank of your Afyam Addict Background. These effects, which are cumulative, last until you take a dose of afyam. These Raises do not apply to the roll made each day to see if the withdrawal symptoms get worse nor does it include Wound Checks.

For example, someone with a Resolve of 4 and an Afyam Addict Background of 2 takes a recreational dose (in his case, 4 medicinal doses' worth) of afyam. The next day he does not take a dose, and must roll a 4k4 (from his Resolve) against a TN of 25. He rolls a 23 and fails, and all of his TNs are increased by two Raises. The next day, he still does not take a dose, and must roll 4k4 against a TN of 30. Again he fails, rolling a 26. Now, all of his TNs are Raised four times. On the third day, he buys a medicinal dose and takes it, and all of his withdrawal penalties go away. The next day, he must either take another dose, or roll 4k4 against a TN of 35, because his last dose was only a medicinal dose.

D20™ MECHANICS

For every day an afyam addict goes without their dose, they must make a Will Save (DC 15, increases by 2 each day). If they fail the Will save and do not obtain the dose, they must then make a Fort save (DC 20, increases by 2 each day) or suffer a -4 penalty to everything they do until they get some.

Dragon Dreams

In your dreams, you have felt the sheng chi, the celestial breath of a dragon who came bearing a prophetic message, the exact nature of which you don't remember during your waking hours. The more points you have in this Background, the more important the message is and the more the dreams disturb you.

Escaped from Tiakhar

You were a captive in Tiakhar but have somehow escaped from your captors and fled to freedom. You probably need to worry about bumping into your old master; while he might not be actively hunting for you, he would not mind having you back, especially if he paid good money on the transaction.

The more points you have in this Background, the more powerful your former captors are and the more upset they will be if they ever run into you again.

Huo Qiang (Wall of Fire) Talisman

One of your long-dead relatives was one of the 64 Fu sorcerers who participated in the creation of the Huo Qiang (Wall of Fire.) The more points you have in this Background, the more directly you are related to this person and the more attention you get because of it, especially from those who are hunting for the talisman that belonged to your relative. Unfortunately, not only do you not have it, the only clues you have regarding its whereabouts are tall tales passed down through your family network, are of course wildly contradictory.

New Beasts

Ai wu, ji wu (Love me, love my dog.)

— Ancient Han Hua saying

Canines (d20 Sea™)

(See MONSTER MANUAL™, Appendix I: Animals, Dog Small Animal and Dog Riding)

Canines — Henchman (7th Sea™)

Brawn: 2 (varies by size), Finesse: 1, Wits: 1, Resolve: 1,

Panache: 1

TN to be hit: 15 (varies by size)

Attack Roll: 4k1 Bite (adjust for larger dog)

Damage Roll: 2k2 Bite (adjust for larger dog)

Skills: Footwork 2, (Tracking as noted below by type)

Lap Dog

Brawn: -1

Bite Damage: 1k1

Advantage: +1 to owner's Detect Ambush Knack when accompanied by dog



Rincen Kyi (Khimal): Bred high in the mountains of Khimal by lamasery monks, these little pets are never sold, but rather given as gifts to one's closest friends. In addition to providing companionship, rincen kyi also learned to turn prayer wheels thus serving an important function in the daily routine. Despite their size, they are extremely sensitive and intelligent, with keen sight and a shrill bark, so they make excellent watchdogs. The High Lama of Khimal recently sent a pair of rincen kyi to the Celestial Empress as a token of friendship, perhaps in hopes of keeping the Imperial armies away from the rich mountain temples.

Shih Tzu (Han Hua): Although often called xia hua ("silly flower") by those who favor larger dogs, the shih tzu is a favorite among Han Hua court ladies (and those who would emulate their betters.) This strong-minded and demanding little creature requires at least a half-hour of grooming once a day to keep its luxurious double coat gleaming. Properly groomed, the shih tzu should look like it is flowing as it walks. Court ladies like to use them to send secret messages. Visiting admirers fear these creatures who are notorious for getting underfoot and squeaking ferociously.

Hunting/Guard Dog

Gu Tsei (Han Hua): (Add Tracking 4) A medium-height and agile creature, the gu tsei is bred as a watchdog and hunting dog. It has a distinctive "sandy skin" rough coat in a range of brown shades with a tendency to fall naturally into folds, especially around its notably square muzzle. There are efforts by some breeders of exotic pets to enhance these folds which quite probably will result in a reduction of the dog's efficiency as its grooming needs are increased.

Tien Kou (Han Hua): (+ 1 Brawn, Bite Damage 3k2) This stocky broad-chested, thick-coated dog is well known throughout Han Hua as a palace and temple guard dog. Despite their sweet faces, they are fiercely protective. Once their large teeth sink into a foe, escape is simply not an option. The breed originated in Xian Bei where it was a hunting dog. Because of their coats, tien kou prefer cooler weather.

Lieh Chian (Xian Bei): (Add Tracking 4). The Xian Bei are attached to these animals whom they regard as working members of the family. In plains-based areas, herd dogs function like another member of the tracking team. Ranging in size from 80 pounds (small female) to 160 pounds (large male), they stand 24 to 30 inches, with a broad head, thick neck and short tail. Lieh chian are noted for being intelligent and loyal.

Wei Chuan (Khimal): (Add Tracking 4). The wei chuan is a large guard dog bred high in the mountains of Khimal. Outside the lamaseries, it is used as a hunting and guard dog. Fiercely loyal to its family, a wei chuan is extremely suspicious of strangers (especially at night,) making it an ideal camp dog for the nomads who traverse the area between lower Khimal and Xian Bei.

They are highly intelligent and have an exceptional memory. Once introduced to someone, they will rarely forget that person. Wei chuan require enough room to be exercised and trained properly, especially because they love to dig and chew. They are an ancient breed, seen in the wise look in their eyes.

Cobra (120")

(See *MONSTER MANUAL™*, Appendix I: Snake, Tiny Viper)

The cobra is a venomous snake that can spread out the flesh behind its head to make a hood, which has a distinctive mark on the back that resembles a pair of eyes. It is found in Lanna, Tashil and Tiakhar. The average length of a cobra is between four and five feet, but some have been known to be as long as seven feet long. They are extremely aggressive, and attack without provocation. The venom of the cobra is a fatal neurotoxin.

Cobra — Henchman (7th Sea™)

Brawn: 2, **Finesse:** 3, **Wits:** 1, **Resolve:** 1, **Panache:** 3
TN to be hit: 15.

Attack Rolls: 5k3 Bite

Damage Rolls: 1k1 Bite

Skills: Footwork 2, Stealth 3

Special Abilities: When a cobra bites, it injects a dose of its venom.

Dragons in Cathay

In Cathayan mythology, dragons act as messengers of the gods and symbolize positive qualities like benevolence, boldness, heroism, perseverance, nobility, optimism and honor. Temples and shrines dedicated to these powerful spirits dot the landscape like jewels. Within the Forbidden Palace lies the sacred Hei Lung Tan (Black Dragon Pool) designed for the Celestial ruler's personal use.

A dragon's sheng chi or celestial breath appears in dreams as clouds, flames or raindrops. The dragon's voice had a metallic sound ranging from tiny bells to huge battle gongs.

Those who claim the ability to interpret dragon dream say that there are three main types of dragons:

Lung: a horned, whiskered, bearded creature with a pearl hanging from its chin that symbolizes immortality. Although the dragon can make sounds, it is deaf. This is the most important and powerful type of spirit.

Li: a hornless water-based dragon associated with oceans and seas. The Li and Chaio dragons are regarded as lesser spirits.

Chaio: a hornless land-based dragon associated with mountains and marshland.

The location of dragons in the dream is thought to be significant as well:

TABLE 3-10: BASIC DRAGON ICONS

Location	Meaning
On top of or wrapped around a bell or a drum	Warning, danger
On a stringed instrument	Seeking or finding a patron
Atop a stone tablet	Promises strength of purpose in important endeavors.
At the base of a stone tablet	Promises superior strength
On a bridge	Protection from fire
Under a bridge	Protection from drowning
On a sword hilt	Grants warrior spirit
Open gate	Freedom from strife, contention, or slavery
Closed gate	Dark deeds will be discovered

Note to GM: Dragon Dreams is a device to be used at your discretion and thus has been purposely kept vague. Dragons in Cathay appear only in dreams and should not be regarded as real (live) creatures. They are not related to the Drachen nor are they an "elder race" like the Sidhe, the Syrneath, the Drachen, the Thalusiai, etc.

The Cats of Lanna

Once upon a time, a Lanna Princess who was very fond of her beautiful jewelry went to bathe in a nearby stream. When she looked for somewhere to put her rings, she saw that her favorite cat had conveniently placed itself next to her and crooked its tail. Delighted at finding such a convenient and trustworthy guardian for her wealth, the Princess asked the Goddess of Mercy to bless the cat. That is why ever since, the cats of Lanna have been born with a tiny kink at the end of their tails.

Cobra Venom

D20™ MECHANICS

Bite, Fortitude save (DC 11 for all sizes Large and smaller; initial and secondary damage 1d6 temporary Con).

7TH SEA™ MECHANICS

1 Dramatic Wound / 5 Phases / 4 Rounds

Xiang (Elephant) (d20™)

(See MONSTER MANUAL™, Appendix I: Animals)

The elephant is a large herbivorous land mammal native to Tashil and Tiakhar, where they are used for labor. Their average height is eight feet at the shoulder; the tusked males weigh about six tons, and females weigh about four. They eat roots, grasses, leaves, and bark. A bull elephant can eat 300-600 pounds of food a day. In the wild, elephants live in matriarchal herds.

Elephant — Henchman (7th Sea™)

Brawn: 8, Finesse: 2, Wits: 2, Resolve: 3, Panache: 1

TN to be hit: 10 (15 while stampeding)

Attack Rolls: 3k2 Stomp, 5k2 Grapple, 4k2 Gore (males only), 3k2 Trample

Damage Rolls: 8k2 Stomp, 8k3 Gore (Males only), 8k3 Trample

Skills: Grapple 3, Swimming 4

Elephants can carry ten times the encumbrance for their Brawn if properly loaded.

Mao (Feline) (d20™)

(See MONSTER MANUAL™, Appendix I: Animals)

Feline — Henchman (7th Sea™)

Brawn: 1, Finesse: 2, Wits: 1, Resolve: 1, Panache: 1

TN to be hit: (varies with size)

Attack Roll: 4k2 Claw

Damage Roll: 2k1 Claw

Skills: Footwork: 3, Stealth: 3

House Cat

Brawn: -1

Damage: Claw Damage 1k1

Skills: Break Fall 1

Korat (common throughout most of Cathay): This lovely short-haired cat has a fine glossy coat that comes in a variety of colors including seal gray, blue-gray, silvery gray with a tinge of lilac and rich brown. As a rule the eyes are deep vivid blue. Korats are incredibly curious and playful, and are notoriously vocal.

Khao Manee (Lanna): Called the "White Jewel," this pure white cat always has mismatched eyes: sapphire blue, topaz yellow, emerald green. The penalty for a commoner caught owning a khao manee is death.

Green Tree Viper (d20™)

(See Monster Manual™, Appendix I: Animals)

The green tree viper is a poisonous snake found in Tashil, Lanna, Han Hua, and Tiakhar where it inhabits rain forests and plantations. The arboreal viper eats birds, lizards, and tree frogs. It grows to be up to 30 inches long, and is colored a uniform bright or dull green, with yellow lips. It is not particularly aggressive towards people but will strike if it feels threatened. Its venom is a hemotoxin that is seldom fatal, but does cause pain and local tissue damage.

Green Tree Viper — Henchman (7th Sea™)

Brawn: 1, Finesse: 3, Wits: 1, Resolve: 1, Panache: 2

TN to be hit: 15 (25 in a tree).

Attack Roll: 4k3 Bite

Damage Roll: 0k1 Bite

Skills: Ambush 4, Climbing 4, Footwork 2, Stealth 2

Special Abilities: When the green tree viper bites, it injects one dose of its venom.

GREEN TREE VIPER VENOM

2k1 damage / 30 minutes / 1 day

Krait (d20™)

(See MONSTER MANUAL™, Appendix I: Animals, Snake, Medium-Size Viper)

The krait is a poisonous snake indigenous to the open areas of Tashil. It is dark gray with narrow white cross bands and a white belly. Adults can be between three and six feet long. A nocturnal hunter, it is not aggressive but will defend itself. Its venom is a potent neurotoxin.

Krait — Henchman (7th Sea™)

Brawn: 1, Finesse: 3, Wits: 1, Resolve: 1, Panache: 1

TN to be hit: 15

Attack Rolls: 3k3 Bite

Damage: 0k1 Bite

Skills: Ambush 3, Footwork 2, Stealth 3

Special Abilities: When the krait bites, it injects a dose of its venom into its victim.

KRAIT VENOM

1 Dramatic Wound / 1 Round / 10 Rounds

Xou (Monkey) (d20™)

(See MONSTER MANUAL™, Appendix I: Animals)

Monkeys are small arboreal primates. There are several species of them in Cathay, most of which live in the forest of Tashil and on Tiakhar.

Monkey — Henchman (7th Sea™)

Brawn: 1, Finesse: 4, Wits: 2, Resolve: 1, Panache: 3

TN to be hit: 15 (20 while swinging)

Attack Roll: 4k4 Scratch

Damage roll: 1k1 Scratch

Skills: Break Fall 3, Climbing 4, Footwork 2, Leaping 3, Swinging 3

Special Abilities: Monkeys are bright, natural mimics. Anyone attempting to train one gets a Free Raise to the attempt. All Cathayan species have a prehensile tail they use to grasp branches and a variety of items (including things that belong to humans.)

Orangutan (d20[™])

(See MONSTER MANUAL[™], Appendix I: Animals, Ape)

Orangutans are a species of arboreal apes native to Tiakhar. They have long arms (some have an arm span of well over seven feet), large bellies, bowed legs and sparse coats of red fur. They can reach slightly more than five feet in height and weigh up to 220 pounds. They live in the treetops, constructing sleeping platforms of leaves and branches. Although most of their diet consists of fruit, leaves, tender plant shoots, bark, and flowers, they will also eat small animals such as birds.

Orangutans are intelligent, and have opposable thumbs. They are known to use leaves as umbrellas during rainstorms, and as cup to help them drink water.

Orangutan — HENCHMAN (7th Sea[™])

Brawn: 6, Finesse: 3, Wits: 2, Resolve: 2, Panache: 3

TN to be hit: 5 (30 while swinging)

Attack Roll: 3k3 Bite, 4k3 Slap/Punch

Damage Roll: 4k2 Bite, 6k1 Slap/Punch

Skills: Break Fall 2, Climbing 3, Swinging 5

Special Abilities: Male orangutans have a throat sac that allows them to make “long calls,” noises that sound like “grumph” which travels through dense vegetation for more than half a mile. They use this to define their territories. Also, orangutans may use their feet as hands.

Da Xiong Mao (Panda) (d20[™])

(See MONSTER MANUAL[™], Appendix I: Animals, Black Bear)

These giant “cat bears” are treasured animals who live in the forests of Lanna. Solitary creatures, they mark their territory and respect the boundaries each other sets. Legend says that their unique markings were a gift from the gods, that they might live peacefully, protected by their coloring. Other than humans, da xiong mao have no known enemies. The punishment for killing them is death.

Da Xiong Mao (Panda — HENCHMAN) (7th Sea[™])

Brawn: 5, Finesse: 2, Wits: 1, Resolve: 3, Panache: 2

TN to be hit: 15.

Attack Roll: Claw 4k2, Bite 4k2

Damage Roll: Claw 5k3, Bite 4k2

Skills: Bear Hug 4, Grapple 2.

Shi Mang (Rock Python) (d20[™])

(See MONSTER MANUAL[™], Appendix I: Animals, Snake-Giant Constrictor)

Yet another breed of serpent found in the Qi Guo, the shi mang or “rock snake” inhabits southern Han Hua and Tashil, as well as Tiakhar. Unlike its venomous relatives, the shi mang can grow up to immense lengths. In addition to a hefty bite, it is very aggressive and does not hesitate to attack large prey.

Shi Mang (Rock Python — HENCHMAN) (7th Sea[™])

Brawn: 6, Finesse: 2, Wits: 1, Resolve: 2, Panache: 1

TN to be hit: 10 (20 in a tree)

Attack Rolls: 6k2 Grapple

Damage Rolls: 6k1 Squeeze.

Skills: Bear Hug 6, Swimming 2, Climbing 3, Ambush 3, Footwork 1, Grapple 4

Special Abilities: Once the python has grappled its victim, it may squeeze as an Action.

Kharga (Rhinoceros) (d20[™])

(See MONSTER MANUAL[™], Appendix I: Animals, Rhinoceros)

The kharga is a sacred animal in Tashil, prized for its ferocity and legendary properties of its horn. When a Tashil warrior performs his daily meditations, he focuses on a vision of a kharga as a symbol of an earthly ideal of fortitude and defense. It is said that the powder made from the ground horn will, if ingested, enhance the ability to resist damage from attacks.

Kharga are very territorial and males will battle each other for control of an area. If the kharga's horn is broken off, it will regenerate. It is important when using kharga horn, that the item was either found on the ground or removed from a dead kharga. Anyone who ingests powdered horn or uses the hide from an animal slaughtered frivolously will be haunted by the dead creature's spirit.

Kharga (Rhinoceros — HENCHMAN) (7th Sea[™])

Brawn: 5, Finesse: 1, Wits: 1, Resolve: 5, Panache: 2

TN to be hit: 10, 30 when charging

Attack Roll: Trample 3k3, Gore 3k2

Damage Roll: Trample 5k3, Gore 6k2

Skills: Footwork 1, Sprinting 5

Special Abilities: The thick hide of the rhinoceros gives it a bonus of +15 to all Wound Check rolls.

Hai tun (River Dolphin) (d20[™])

(See MONSTER MANUAL[™], Appendix I: Animals, Porpoise)

Hai tun are blue-gray cetaceans, with a very long, narrow beak, abrupt foreheads, and tiny eyes that are set high on the sides of their heads. Their triangular dorsal fins end in a blunt peak. They can reach a length of around 8 feet and can weigh as much as 350 pounds.

These playful and intelligent creatures can be found along the western and eastern coasts. Said to be the spirits of children who have died before their ninth birthday, hai tun appear to be very intelligent and social, with a definite language and social structure.

They are especially fond of swimming and playing in coves, and at night they can be heard singing to each other. They are non-aggressive and when attacked, they swim away. To attack a hai tun is to bring great misfortune upon oneself and almost certainly death by drowning.

Hai tun (River Dolphin — HENCHMAN) (7th Sea[™])

Brawn: 3, Finesse: 3, Wits: 2, Resolve: 3, Panache: 4

TN to be hit: 30

Attack Roll: 3k3 Bump

Damage Roll: 3k2 Bump

Skills: Swimming 5, Leaping 4

Special Abilities: While a hai tun cannot breathe water, it can hold its breath for much longer than a human can. In fact, this creature can hold its breath for a number of Rounds equal to ten times its Resolve, and when Drowning, it loses one Rank of Resolve every ten Rounds instead of every Round. The Resolve of a hai tun returns to normal after one hour of rest in the water, instead of 1 day of rest out of it.

Ai Xiu (Snow Leopard) (d20™)

(See *Monster Manual™*, Appendix I: Animals — Leopard)

Snow leopards are rarely seen outside the mountains of Khimal. They are reclusive creatures and difficult to track because of their ability to adapt to their environment. Their spotted coats are highly prized but woe to anyone whom the Khimalese find hunting these treasured creatures.

Ai Xiu (Snow Leopard — Henchman) (7th Sea™)

Brawn: 3, Finesse: 3, Wits: 1, Resolve: 2, Panache: 2

TN to be hit: 20

Attack Roll: Claw 5k3, Bite 3k3

Damage Roll: Claw 3k1, Bite 2k2

Skills: Climbing 4, Leaping 4

Special Abilities: Ai xiu are considered to have the Cold Climate Conditioning Advantage.

Bai Hua She (Tiakhar Pit Viper) (d20™)

(See *Monster Manual™*, Appendix I: Animals, Viper)

The Tiakhar pit viper is a venomous snake native to Lanna and Tiakhar. Adults are two to three feet long. It has a reddish-brown back with darker brown cross bands and a pink belly. It has a calm disposition, but will bite if stepped on. Its poison is a hemotoxin that is stronger than the venom of the green tree viper, but is still not usually fatal.

Bai Hua She (Tiakhar Pit Viper — Henchman) (7th Sea™)

Brawn: 1, Finesse: 3, Wits: 1, Resolve: 1, Panache: 1

TN to be hit: 15

Attack roll: 5k3 Bite

Damage roll: 0k1 Bite

Skills: Ambush 4, Footwork 2, Stealth 3

Special Abilities: When the Tiakhar pit viper bites, it injects one dose of its venom. If the snake makes two Raises, it may inject two doses instead.

TIAKHAR PIT VIPER VENOM

3k1 damage / 20 minutes / 1 day

Hu (Tiger) (d20™)

(See *Monster Manual™*, Appendix I: Animals — Tiger)

Hu (Tiger — Henchman) (7th Sea™)

Brawn: 4, Finesse: 2, Wits: 2, Resolve: 1, Panache: 1

TN to be hit: 20

Weapons: (See Attack and Damage rolls).

Attack Rolls: 4k2 Claw, Bite 4k2

Damage Rolls: Bite 4k3, Claw 4k3

Skills: Footwork: 3, Stealth: 3.

Special Abilities: None

Yak (d20™)

(See *Monster Manual™*, Appendix I: Animals — Bison)

These sturdy creatures are to the inhabitants of northeastern Xian Bei and Khimal what cows are to those who live in Tashil. Over time, they have adapted to the thin icy air of the high mountains and are rarely, if ever, found below 6,000 feet. Male yaks can stand as tall as 6 feet and weigh a ton, while females are approximately 1/3 the size of males. Females have a gestation period identical to humans and they give birth to one baby, which is weaned after a year.

In addition to their milk, which can be turned into both butter and a very rich cheese, yaks produce a coat that is shed annually. The fur can be woven and spun into a sturdy fiber used for clothing or felted for use as the covering of a ger or round tent. Yak fur provides maximum warmth with minimum weight, and is very water-repellent.

Yak — Henchman (7th Sea™)

Brawn: 4, Finesse: 2, Wits: 1, Resolve: 4, Panache: 2

TN to be hit: 15

Attack Roll: Gore 3k2

Damage Roll: Gore 6k2

Skills: Footwork 2, Sprinting 2

Special Abilities: A yak can carry twice the normal encumbrance for its Brawn if properly packed. During winter, when they have their heavy coats, they count as having the Cold Climate Conditioning Advantage.

Yeti (d20™)

(See *Dungeons & Dragons™*: *Oriental Adventures*.)

Yeti are mysterious apelike mountain-dwelling monsters. There are two known varieties of these hairy ape-men: the light gray yeti of the mountains of Tashil and the pale yellow ones of Khimal. Both subspecies dislike contact with humans, and they frequently throw rocks from the heights at any men who come too close to their nesting places.

Yeti — Henchman (7th Sea™)

Brawn: 6, Finesse: 2, Wits: 2, Resolve: 3, Panache: 2

TN to be hit: 20

Attack Rolls: 5k2 Swing, 6k2 Grapple, 5k2 Throw (Improvised Weapon)

Damage Rolls: 6k1 Swing, Improvised Weapon as per the Knack

Skills: Ambush 3, Bear Hug 4, Climbing 5, Grapple 4, Leaping 3, Stealth 4, Throw (Improvised Weapon) 3

Special Abilities: Yeti are considered to have the Cold Climate Conditioning Advantage.

Yiu San (d20™)

(See *Monster Manual™*, Appendix I: Animals, Lizard Giant)

A yiu san is a beast that has eaten special magical plants that have made it immortal. They never stop growing as they age, and become giant, extremely intelligent versions of the animals they used to be. Since animals were never meant to live for so long, nor were they intended to have such genius, they become evil. They also learn how to transform themselves into human form, which they use to infiltrate human society and cause mischief.

Yiu San — Villain (7th Sea™)

Brawn: (varies with animal type, equal to base animal's Brawn + 2), **Finesse:** (varies with animal type, equal to base animal's Finesse), **Wits:** 5, **Resolve:** 7, **Panache:** (varies with animal type, equal to base animal's Panache + 1)

TN to be hit: Varies with animal type.

Weapons: Various.

Attack Rolls: (varies with animal type, equal to base animal's Attack rolls)

Damage Rolls: (varies with animal type, equal to damage from base animal's attacks +2k0)

Skills: (varies with animal type, equal to the Skills of the base animal + 1 each.)

Special Abilities: A yiu san's Special Abilities are the same as those of the animal from which it grew. The yiu san also has a new ability: it can transform itself into the shape of a human being. In this form, it has the same Traits and other abilities as it does in its animal form.

New Civil Skills (7th Sea™)

Acrobat

(Originally in *Ussura™*; reprinted here with a new Knack)

Similar to Performer, the Acrobat Skill represents the ability to perform dexterous feats such as tumbling, tightrope walking, and juggling. Although intended as a form of entertainment, the Acrobat Skill comes in handy during more pressing circumstances, such as the need to cross a chasm using only a thin line or having the ability to leap from a building with minimal harm.

Note: if you are playing a Cathayan character, a person with this Skill is called Yi Ren meaning Contortionist.

BASIC KNACKS

Balance: Quite simply, this is the Knack of not falling down, even under adverse conditions. It is used as the Defense Knack for those fighting aboard a ship or in situations where the footing is uncertain, such as walking a tightrope or standing on a rickety stairwell. The GM will give you the TNs for performing certain actions on board a sailing vessel, or as special circumstances dictate.

Footwork: Footwork is the art of putting yourself where your enemy's weapons are not. This Knack can be used as your Defense Knack even if you do not have a weapon.

ADVANCED KNACKS

Balancing: Balancing is similar to juggling, except that rather than trying to keep objects in the air you are elevating them with the aid of precarious support. For instance, you might balance a plate on the end of a pole, the other end of which is supported by only one of your fingertips.

Balancing a single object with a hand is easiest, with a TN of 10. You can try more difficult tricks, such as balancing more objects, large and/or oddly shaped objects, dangerous items such as flaming torches, or other complicated maneuvers but these call for a Raise for each new factor added to the Balancing trick.



For example, balancing a plate on each hand, a teapot on your head, and a bowl on your right foot while standing on your left foot, then tipping your head so that the teapot pours water into the bowl without falling off of your head, would require 5 Raises (3 extra objects, one oddly-shaped object — the teapot full of water, which does not shift its weight evenly — and the added complication of pouring the water.)

This Knack is also considered an Advanced Knack for the Performer Skill.

Break Fall: Adventurers tend to do a lot of falling but you on the other hand have learned how to do it right. You know how to absorb impact with your shoulders and how to roll with the fall (of course, that probably will not help if you fall into a spiked pit.) With every Rank in this Knack, one less die of damage is taken when a fall is incurred (minimum 0).

Circus: You have training in several circus acts including fire eating, sword swallowing, or drawing a crowd.

Contortion: A performer with this Knack can bend and twist his body into shapes that Theus surely never intended. While primarily used to amaze and amuse an audience, the character may also use this Knack to get into or out of tight spots.

Juggling: This Knack is very easy to learn but can still astound the uninitiated. It represents your character's ability to keep a number of objects in the air, seemingly defying gravity. Juggling three balls is easiest with a TN of 10. More difficult tricks (such as more items, larger, oddly shaped, or even dangerous items, or complicated maneuvers) count as calling for a Raise for each new factor added to the trick. For instance, juggling five knives one-handed would require four Raises (one for each item over three, one for the danger, and one for one-handed.)

This Knack is also considered an Advanced Knack for the Performer Skill.

Leaping: You can jump higher and farther than most people, which can come in handy when exploring dusty tombs or fleeing across rooftops. In addition, you use this Knack as your Defense Knack while leaping.

Lifting: There is a right way and a wrong way to lift heavy weights. Do it the wrong way, and you are liable to hurt yourself quite badly. This Knack allows you to lift great weights with less risk to yourself.

Rolling: Whether sliding or rolling across the floor, this is the Knack you use. This can be handy for using tables momentarily as cover or slipping under a descending spiked portcullis. While sliding or rolling, you use this Knack as your Defense Knack.

Stunt: One of the most important aspects of an acrobatic performance is the troupe's teamwork and precision while executing a routine. An acrobat with this Knack has learned to depend upon and be depended on when it comes to timely catches, throws, and assists (ever try to build a one-man pyramid?)

Swinging: You have learned to swing adroitly from ropes, chandeliers, etc. If someone attacks you while you are in mid-swing, you must use this Knack as your Defense Knack.

d20™ Mechanics: (See *Swashbuckling Adventures™*, Chapter 4: Feats — Acrobat and Performer.)

Feng Shui Shi (Cathayan Priest/Geomancer)

A feng shui shi is a priest/ess and an expert in feng shui, Cathay's art of geomancy. In the Qi Guo, only the very foolish would begin construction of a new building without first consulting one of these learned men.

BASIC KNACKS

Chanting: The ability to maintain the right tone without wavering is only part of your secret; breath control and stamina count for just as much. This Knack gives you the training to use your voice to its fullest as you chant in meditation and ritual activity.

Gardener: You are capable of laying out, planting, and maintaining a decorative landscape.

Interior Design: You have a talent for arranging the interior of a home or other building to make it both functional and pleasant.

Oratory: Sweet words of praise flow as easily from your lips as whispered words of poison. Oratory allows you to sway your listeners more easily to a particular side of an argument.

Philosophy: Beyond facts there are ideas, and those ideas can change the world. Theoretical debates are a hobby of yours, and with this Knack you stand a better chance of winning the argument.

ADVANCED KNACKS

Astronomy: Knowing the names and locations of the stars can provide entertaining banter over dinner, or it can save a ship lost at sea. You can read the heavens like a book, using them to understand the passage of time or the distance between locations, or to impress a potential client.

Cartography: You can make reasonably accurate maps using cartographer's tools. Reliable maps can fetch a high price if sold to the right buyer. Success with this Knack grants legible, accurate maps whereas failure might send the ship using them hurtling mercilessly into the Seventh Sea...

Geomancy: You have memorized the rules that tell you which features of a location affect its feng shui, and you know whether a place has good or bad energy based on the shapes and angles of the place. Roll your Wits + Geomancy against a TN of 20 in order to judge the energies of a location. You may also try to adjust the energy of a location by placing special mirrors to reflect energy and by adjusting contours. This takes time, and cannot raise or lower the Feng Shui Rating (see *Feng Shui below*) of the location by more than 1 from its original Rank. This requires a Wits + Geomancy roll against a TN of 40. This process takes one week, plus a number of weeks equal to the current Rank of the Feng Shui Rating.

Meditation: Your quest for inner peace gives you a sense of emotional balance and the ability to remain calm and rational. You may use this Knack to resist any Repartee Action made against you.

Occult: When studying the occult, there is precious little hard knowledge to be learned. However, you have acquired some of it and know how to use it, be it a trivial fact about a certain type of Cathayan sorcery or the solution to an ancient puzzle.

Theology: Divine will is a difficult subject — everyone feels that his way is right. You, however, have studied the various faiths within the Qi Guo dispassionately, looking for correlation and unseen connections, regardless of your personal beliefs. You know to whom everyone prays, how they worship, and how their daily lives have changed because of their faith.

D20™ Mechanics: See *Swashbuckling Adventures™*, Chapter 4: Feats — Priest.)

Gwai Liao (Bureaucrat — part Courtier, part Scholar, all Civil Servant)

A gwai liao is part courtier, part politician, part scholar, and all civil servant. You have studied for the extensive civil service exams, and can use your knowledge of a wide variety of subjects and your sense of tact to in the service of the government.

BASIC KNACKS

Etiquette: While it might be acceptable to throw the bones of your meal upon the floor in some regions, it is certain that other nobility would faint upon seeing some ruffian toss a greasy bone on their new rug. You have learned the niceties of events sponsored by the nobility and can avoid such social faux pas. When you are using this Knack in a place where you are unfamiliar with the customs, you are at a penalty of -2 unkept dice (-2k0).

Look to your conduct and weigh the favorable signs.

— Lu

Fashion: When appearing before nobility, it is an affront to their gentle senses to come ill attired. The conscientious courtier keeps careful tabs on the latest fashion trends, no matter how ridiculous. With enough knowledge, you can quickly throw together a presentable outfit, even if the materials at hand are less than satisfactory.

He flutters down, not boasting of his wealth.

— T'ai

Mathematics: "Numbers define the world," they say and you are certain that they are right. Measurements, navigation, troop placement, and even trade negotiations require calculation. How fortunate that you were a most attentive student! (Cathayans have an almost innate understanding of mathematics and practical science that underlies their remarkable ability to invent useful items without any sort of magical or sorcerous intervention.) (See *Di Yi Shu*, pg. 51 — Inventions.)

If there are some who are not yet sincerely in the work, sublime and enduring perseverance is needed.

— Ts'ui

Oratory: Sweet words of praise flow as easily from your lips as whispered words of poison. Oratory allows you to persuade your listeners more easily in any argument.

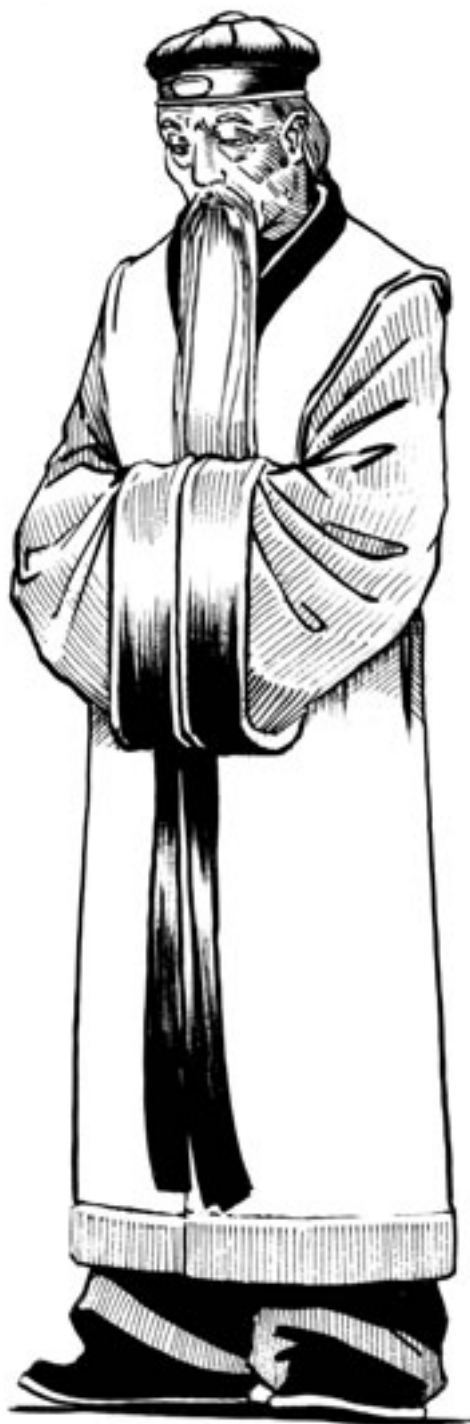
Thus the superior man stirs up the people and strengthens their spirit.

— Ku

Research: What is unknown can prove to be the most valuable part of any endeavor, and you know how to ferret out vital information. You have studied the ways in which knowledge is gained — where to look and who to ask.

He possesses truth, which links together.

— Chung Fu



Writing: Your quill flies across the page with the gift of prose, setting down words that can entertain the reader, outrage the nobility, or rouse the people to arms. Your words can make beggars into kings or topple the most entrenched tyrants. This Knack encompasses poetry, plays, and other written works.

Thus the superior man is inexhaustible in his will to teach.

— Lin

ADVANCED KNACKS

Accounting: Use of this Knack allows you to keep track of the income and expenditures of a large household or business with accuracy. With it, you can detect fraud or “cook the books.”

Pay heed to... what a man seeks to fill his mouth with.

— I

Diplomacy: The art of diplomacy is the art of peace; words have prevented more wars than guns ever initiated. Your soothing reassurances can calm all but the most enraged duelist, and keep your blood where it belongs — in your veins.

Thus the superior man encourages people to approach him by his readiness to receive them.

— Hsien

Law: Laws differ from country to country, sometimes from day to day as well. Even the most clearly written legislation can be twisted against you unless you understand it. With this Knack, not only do you know the current laws of a country, but also know how to manipulate them in your favor and extricate yourself from sticky situations.

Thus the kings of former times made firm the laws through clearly defined penalties.

— Shih Ho

Politics: Politics is power, and the truly clever courtier understands this. You can sense the ebb and flow of a noble's influence and determine whose coattails represent the quickest ride to the top.

The movement of heaven is full of power. Thus the superior man makes himself strong and untiring.

— Ch'ien

Scheming: Great minds think alike; so do devious ones. When you consider the complex world of political machinations, you can see the strings attached to each of its participants with a special clarity and, with enough practice, the puppet master is behind the scenes.

Whoever hunts deer without the forester only loses his way in the forest.

— Chun

Sincerity: Even the most adept lie is useless if the listener detects a tremor of fear or a pair of downcast, nervous eyes. While Oratory allows you to utter glib words for entertainment or impact, Sincerity puts the ring of truth behind them, concealing even the most bold-faced lie behind a veneer of honesty.

Thus the superior man refines the outward aspect of his nature.

— Hsiao Ch'u

Cao Yao (Cathayan Healer)

You have a strong knowledge of various healing techniques and substances. You are a practical physician, and make use of the healing skills available throughout the Qi Guo.

BASIC KNACKS

Diagnosis: Feeling for broken bones and listening for punctured lungs is a doctor's most elementary Knack. Without making a diagnosis, how can he possibly hope to treat his patients? The TN for using Diagnosis is 5, plus 5 times the number of Dramatic Wounds the patient has suffered. Success with this Knack will reduce the TN for Surgery or Acupuncture. Diagnosis requires one Action to use, and can only be used once per patient per Act.

First Aid: Even without formal training, you can administer simple treatment if the ailment allows for it. The TN for First Aid is the number of Flesh Wounds the patient has suffered. Success eliminates all current Flesh Wounds. First Aid requires one Action to use and may not be used more than once per patient per Scene. PCs with First Aid may use it on themselves with the same restrictions, but they will need to make one Raise because of the difficulty of bandaging themselves.

Masseur: You can give expert massages, a skill often in demand among nobility.

ADVANCED KNACKS

Acupuncture: By carefully inserting pins into special points on a person's body, you may relieve pain, tension, and illness. To use do this, make a Wits + Acupuncture roll. The TN is 15, plus 5 per die or +5 to Target Numbers worth of penalties that the patient suffers from the condition you are fixing. Success will remove one die (or reduce the TN modifier by -5) of penalties, plus one more per Raise you make. You may only perform Acupuncture on a patient once per Act.

For example, a healer is attempting to use acupuncture to treat a patient whose sickness is causing a penalty of two unkept dice (-2k0) due to joint pain. The TN for the roll is 25, but completely removing the penalties will require Raising the TN to 30.

Compounds: You know how to treat plant matter, and mix different kinds of flora to produce beneficial mixtures: healing balms, poultices, sleep aids, and the like. Note that such mixtures are not magical potions, but rather non-magical compounds that any hermit or midwife can feasibly prepare.

Quack: Specializing in “invisible” cures (such as sugar pills and colored water) that do more for the patient's ego than his body, you know how to make people feel like they're getting better. If they get some benefit from this, wonderful; if not, you will likely have already packed up and moved on.

Fortune Telling

(Reprinted from *Ussura*™ with a new Knack)

This skill consists of various means of divining the future — palm reading, card reading, and knowledge of omens — as well as ways to convince a paying customer that the divinations are true. Unlike the techniques used by *Sorte strega*, Fortune Telling is non-sorcerous, relying on traditional folk techniques rather than on supernatural power. There is no guarantee that any predictions gleaned by the skill will come true, and practitioners learn to speak in vague terms, allowing their subjects to fill in the particulars.

BASIC KNACKS

Oratory: Sweet words of praise flow as easily from your lips as whispered words of poison. Oratory allows you to convince your listeners more easily of the truth of any argument.

Palm Reading: This skill involves knowledge of what each of the specific lines in the hand signify — not just the head, heart and life lines, but the more obscure marks determining details like number of children or degree of financial success.

ADVANCED KNACKS

Bones: Casting the bones involves careful a selection of the bones (usually by the client), then application of the fortune-teller's knowledge for the meaning of the patterns created and the interaction between them. This is possibly the oldest medium for fortune telling and one of the most difficult. It is also often used in omens.

In Cathay, the oracle bones are inscribed with a special type of writing called *jia gu wen*. Diviners use these bones for predicting everything from crop yield to the outcome of a hunt to determining the most auspicious days for a range of activities.

Card Reading: Reading the cards requires knowledge of the traditions and symbols, and of course some understanding of the dual nature of each card. The ability to extrapolate is also helpful, as it is in most other Fortune Telling Knacks.

This Knack has no connection to the card reading powers of Fate Witches. Although similar on the surface, it uses entirely different (non-sorcerous) techniques that do not readily translate from one form to the other.

Cold Read: This is the art of deducing things about a person from his or her appearance and mannerisms. Handedness might be determined from a callus upon a knuckle, while a nervous twitch could reveal much to an observant eye. With this Knack you can always enter a conversation with at least a little information about the other person. More often than not, this Knack will be used in Contested Rolls against the Resolve of another, or against one of his other Knacks.

Haggling: Being able to bargain is only the beginning for a person who wishes to become a successful procurer of valuable goods. You must also know how to haggle — remaining aware of all the elements of a bargaining discussion at all times, and being able to use them to your advantage. Of course, you must be better at it than your opponent, for he is probably reading the same signs you are...

I Ching: You know the meanings of each of the 64 Hexagrams, and the eight basic Trigrams from which they are constructed. You are aware of the subtle nuances of using these elements as a means for divination. (See pg 140)

Occult: With the occult, there is precious little hard knowledge to be learned. You have acquired some of it and know how to use it, be it a trivial fact about a certain brand of sorcery or the solution to an ancient puzzle.

Omens: This involves predicting the future on a grand scale. It must encompass events and choices far larger than any one person, so a proper omen is often sweeping and obscure.

Other (specify): This is a catch-all Knack that covers a variety of methods for defining the future from tea-leaves to runestones, from entrails to bumps on the client's skull. You may have more than one variety of this Knack but you do not get a free Rank with it.

d20™ Mechanics: See *Swashbuckling Adventures*™, Chapter 4: Feats — Fortune Teller.

New Equipment

Armor

In Théah, most modern weapons pierce through armor. In Cathay, many old weapons are still in common use and firearms are not as common here as they are beyond the wall of fire. While armor does encumber a wearer, the fact that you are more likely to be attacked by a man armed with a wooden weapon than a pistol means that in this culture armor is still a viable option. The armor of Cathay is not the plate armor of Théah that is now worn only when made of Dracheneisen. Instead, it is metal lamellar armor consisting of splints of metal bound together. This armor originated in Xian Bei and spread throughout the Seven Kingdoms. Some people who cannot afford this lamellar armor wear armor made of leather, which does not protect the wearer as well as lamellar does.

Note: To satisfy reader curiosity, rules are provided here for the metal plate armor worn in past centuries in Théah, as well as lamellar and leather armor. This way, if characters choose to dress up in an old suit that they find decorating a hallway in an old mansion, the GM will have rules to cover the situation. Each piece of armor provides a certain number of Armor Points, which determines the effectiveness of the protection of the armor being worn. Armor does not need to be worn in complete suits, and it is possible to mix and match pieces of armor of different types. For instance, the armor known as plate and mail, which was used in Théah in the early fourteenth century before the advent of full plate armor, would consist of chain mail gauntlets, boots, and arm guards, and plate armor helmet, arm guards, leg guards, and breastplate.

TABLE 3-11: ARMOR COSTS

Armor Item	Cost (qian)
Helmet, full head and face, lamellar	70
Helmet, open-faced, lamellar	60
Face mask, lamellar	20
Gauntlet, lamellar	15
Arm guard, lamellar	40
Leg guard, lamellar	45
Boot, lamellar	30
Breastplate, lamellar	120
Helmet, full head and face, hard leather	10
Helmet, open-faced, hard leather	7
Face mask, hard leather	4
Gauntlet, hard leather	3
Arm guard, hard leather	5
Leg guard, hard leather	6
Boot, hard leather	5
Breastplate, hard leather	12
Helmet, full head and face, soft leather	5
Helmet, open-faced, soft leather	4
Breastplate, soft leather	9

Once you know how many Armor Points you have, consult the Modifiers from Armor Table to determine the effects of the armor you are wearing. Your armor may improve your TN to be Hit, and it will either reduce the dice of the damage roll your attacker makes or make it easier for you to take damage by giving you a Free Raise to your Wound Check. These damage modifiers do not affect attacks from bows, crossbows, firearms, or artillery such as cannons or rockets. There is also a penalty to your stealth and swimming rolls, which reflects the weight of your armor, and the noise it makes when various parts hit each other as you move.

TABLE 3-12: MODIFIERS FROM ARMOR

Armor Points	TN Modifier	Damage Reduction for Melee Attacks	Stealth, Swimming Penalties
1 – 6	None	Free Raise to your Wound Check	–1k0
7 – 12	None	–1k0	–1k1
13 – 18	+5	–1k1	–2k1
19 – 24	+5	–2k1	–3k2

In addition to the penalties seen above, there are additional penalties associated with each piece of armor you wear. These modifications are cumulative unto one another and with the modifiers from the Modifiers from Armor Table. Each piece causes its own problems, so, for example, wearing two plate armor boots causes a –2 modifier to be hit based on the Footwork Knack, and –4k2 to Stealth rolls. Fine manipulation refers to delicate tasks that require minute and precise motions of the fingers, such as picking locks and writing legibly.

Armor made with a superior degree of quality does not have any extra bonus to the Modifiers from Armor Table, but it does shift the column on the Specific Problems from Armor Table one column to the right, so plate armor that is superior quality has the penalties of chain mail, and so on. Quality soft leather armor pieces do not have any specific penalties associated with them. Inferior quality items double all penalties on the Specific Problems from Armor Table.

The following is a typical suit of lamellar armor for a Han Hua soldier:

7th Sea™: 17 Armor Points, which, according to the Modifiers from Armor Table, increases the wearer's TN to be Hit by +5, reduces damage rolls by –1k1, and gives an overall penalty of –2k1 to all Stealth and Swimming rolls.

If he uses Parry to determine his TN to be hit, the TN is reduced by –2.

If he uses the Footwork Knack to determine his TN to be hit, the TN is reduced by –6 because of the boots and greaves, while the boots cause a further –2k2 penalty to Stealth rolls.

The total modifiers from this suit are:

- –1 to the TN to be Hit
- –1k0 to all Perception Checks
- –1k1 to fine manipulation
- –4k3 to Stealth rolls

- –3k2 to Swimming rolls
- –1k1 to Lifting, Leaping, Swinging, and Rolling rolls.
- Reduce damage rolls by one kept die (–1k1)

Other Equipment

All prices are listed in units of the qian of Han Hua, and represent the average price paid for the goods or services throughout all of Cathay. GMs are encouraged to introduce some fluctuation in prices due to bountiful harvests, droughts, bandit attacks, and other such economic variables. Experienced GMs will note that, in most cases, the price of an object in qian is twice as much as its price in guilders, but due to the differences in supply in Cathay, some items are more expensive in Cathay than they are in Théah, and vice versa. Most textile items, especially silks, are significantly less expensive in Cathay than in Théah.

TABLE 3-13: CLOTHING

Item	Cost
Boots, fine	10+
Boots, plain	4
Boots, riding	6
Shoes, fancy	4+
Shoes, plain	1
Sandals	1/2
Cloak, fine	4+
Cloak, plain	2
Gloves, leather	2/5
Gloves, silk	2+
Gown	5+
Hat, wide-brimmed	1
Hat, straw	1/5
Jacket, plain	3/2
Jacket, fancy	3+
Mask	3/5
Belt	1/5
Suit, plain	1
Suit, silk	5+
Undergarment	1+
Veil	1/10
Vest	2/5
Wig	1+
Trousers	2
Loincloth	1/5
Dress, plain	2
Dress, fancy	5+

TABLE 3-14: TRANSPORTATION

Item	Cost
Cart (2 pony)	80
Cart (1 pony)	45
Overland passage, per 100 miles	6
Ship passage, per 100 miles	12
Donkey	70
Pony	90
Yak	100
Steppes pony	150
Horse (in Tashil)	100
Horse (outside Tashil)	300
Steppes pony, war-trained	1,350
Mule	90
Ox	180

TABLE 3-15: TACK AND HARNESS

Item	Cost
Bit and bridle	10
Bird cage	1+
Falcon hood	2
Falconer's glove	2
Harness	150
Hobbles	2
Horse blanket	1
Saddle bags	10
Saddle blanket	1
Saddle, pack	15
Saddle, riding	30
Saddle, war	70
Yoke	3/2

New Knacks

Fireworks

Not only can you make and use “fire flowers, you are also skilled at planning out fireworks shows for festivals and other special occasions. (This is a new Basic Knack for the Merchant Skill. In Cathay, it is called *Huo Hua* or “Fire Flowers.”)

BASIC KNACKS

Fireworks Safety and Use

ADVANCED KNACKS

Arrange Display

Make Fireworks

Rocketry

Kite Maker

You are skilled at making all manner of kites. (This is a new Basic Knack for the Merchant Skill. In Cathay this is called *Zuo Feng Zheng* or “Wind Kite Maker.”)

Reload (for Chu-ko-nu)

For every Rank you have in this Knack, your reloading time for a chu-ko-nu is reduced by 1 Action. Ordinarily, the time required to reload an empty chu-ko-nu is 6, plus the number of bolts that you wish to put into the box, up to its capacity of twelve. If, for example, you have a Rank of 4 in this Knack, you may completely reload the box in 14 Actions instead of 18. The reduction in time applies to the first bolt to go into the box only. This is an Advanced Knack for the Crossbow Skill.

d20™ Mechanics: The time required to reload an empty chu-ko-nu is a full round plus one full round for every two bolts you wish to put into the box (up to its capacity of 12.)

Feat: Efficient Reload (d20™)

Every time you take rapid reload, you reduce the number of rounds needed to fully load a chu-ko-nu by one round. Thus, if you take this feat four times, you can fully load an empty chu-ko-nu in three full rounds, as opposed to seven. (See *Swashbuckling Adventures™*, Chapter 4: Feats – Quick Reload.)

Ride (Elephant) (d20™)

(See *Player's Handbook™*, Chapter 4: Skills, Ride (Dex), pg. 72-73). Cathayans with no previous experience atop an elephant get a -2 to skill checks, while non-Cathayans receive a -5. After characters have ridden an elephant extensively and put a number of skill points equal to their penalty (2 or 5) into Ride, the penalty is removed.

Ride (Elephant) (7th Sea™)

Use this Knack for ordinary elephant-back riding. Your GM may call for checks when you do unusual things such as charge the elephant (TN 10), stay seated on a rearing mount (TN 20), or get the elephant to pick up something with its trunk (TN 15). A well-trained elephant may reduce such Target Numbers by 5. This is an Advanced Knack for the Rider Skill.

Feat: Sher Da Shi (Snake Charmer) [General, Profession] (d20™)

You can sit near a dangerous serpent and move with the proper rhythm and motions that will keep it alert to your presence but not willing to strike.

After one has this feat, the Perform skill can be used to charm snakes. (For every rank in Perform, you can play one additional instrument, or sing, dance, or, in this case, charm snakes.) The feat also gives the character a +3 on snake charming attempts.

After the feat is taken, the character makes a normal Perform check against the snake's Wisdom modifier + Dexterity modifier + 1/hit die. If the charmer wins, a good show ensues with the normal results of a Perform check. If the snake wins, the snake attempts to attack the charmer, and combat ensues.

TABLE 3-16: PROTECTION FROM ARMOR

Piece	Maximum Quantity	Armor Points (Metal Plate)	Armor Points (Lamellar or Chain)	Armor Points (Hard Leather)	Armor Points (Soft Leather)
Helmet, full head and face*	1	3	2	2	1
Helmet, open-faced*	1	2	1	1	1
Face Mask*	1	1	1	1	0
Gauntlet	2	2	2	1	0
Arm Guard	2	2	2	1	0
Leg Guard	2	2	1	1	0
Boot	2	1	1	1	0
Breastplate	1	6	4	3	2

* If you wear a full helmet, you may not also wear an open-faced helmet or face mask.

Sher Da Shi (Snake Charmer) (7th Sea™)

You can sit near a dangerous serpent and move with the proper rhythm and motions that will keep it alert to you but not willing to strike. This requires a Contested Roll of your Wits + Snake Charmer against the snake's Resolve + Footwork. If you win, you put on an entertaining show. If the snake wins, it tries to bite you. This is a new Advanced Knack for the Performer Skill.

New Advanced Knacks

New Skill: Rocketry (d20™)

Under the direct command of a leader with both Commander and Rocketry Skills, a rocket crew makes their Attack roll as normal, but receives a bonus equal to either one-fifth of their commanding officer's ranks in Rocketry or the commanding officer makes a Rocketry skill roll and the crew gets half of the result of his skill check.

Note: Once the commander has selected which bonus to use (1/5 or half his skill check), he cannot change his mind. Thus, if he chooses to make a skill check and rolls a 1, he must deal with the consequences.

The Rocketry skill indicates knowledge about rocket-based artillery, trajectories, etc. It basically enables a character to perform proper aiming and firing techniques for rockets and artillery. Although the only real bonus (in combat) is derived by a commander, anyone with this skill could use it to approximate where a rocket's point of origin (distance, direction, etc.) It can also be used to obtain information about different types of rockets and munitions.

Rocketry (Advanced Knack for Commander Skill) (7th Sea™)

When a rocket crew launches rockets, the crew commander's Rocketry Knack is used for the Attack Roll.

New Magic Advantages

Huan Shu (35 Points, Cathay Only) (7th Sea™)

Huan Shu ("Illusion") is a form of magic available to anyone from the Seven Kingdoms of Cathay, as long as they do not have any other Magic Advantage or Sorcery. Huan Shu magic is an ability to focus qi into physical expressions, so it is rare for this quality to be found in someone who is not a dedicated martial artist. Those who practice this magic are so graceful that they can leap and seem to levitate, walk up walls and balance on the tops of bamboo plants.

You get the Athlete Skill and your choice of either Hard or Soft Martial Arts for free when taking this Advantage. Furthermore, every Advanced Knack of the Athlete Skill is considered to be a Basic Knack of that Skill, so you get one free Rank of each of those Knacks when you create your Hero. So great is your grace that whenever you make a roll using one of the Knacks of the Athlete Skill, you roll and keep the dice from both your Trait and your Knack. Thus, an Active Defense roll from a person with a Wits Rank of 2 and a Footwork Rank of 3 would roll and keep 5 dice (5k5), but his TN to be Hit would still be 20.

You may also spend Drama Dice on your Initiative Roll. Each Drama Die you add to your Initiative Roll counts as an Action Die for this Round, but is added to the GM's pool of Drama Dice (if an NPC does this, the Drama Die simply goes away instead of going back into the GM's pool of Drama Dice).

Huan Shu I (Feat) (d20™)

Prerequisites: Cathay nationality, no levels or feats of sorcery, Improved Unarmed Strike, Wis 13+, Will save +4 or higher.

Benefit: You receive a +4 supernatural bonus to any Balance, Climb, Jump, or Tumble checks. These skills are always considered class skills for you.

TABLE 3-17: ENCUMBRANCE PROBLEMS FROM ARMOR

Piece	Metal Plate	Lamellar or Chain	Hard Leather	Soft Leather
Helmet, Full	-2k1 on	-2k0 on	-1k1 on	-1k0 on
Head and Face	Perception Checks	Perception Checks	Perception Checks	Perception Checks
Helmet, Open-Faced	-1k0 on	-1k0 on	-1k0 on	-1k0 on
Face Mask	Perception Checks	Perception Checks	Perception Checks	Perception Checks
	-1k1 on	-1k0 on	-0k1 on	None
	Perception checks	Perception Checks	Perception Checks	
Gauntlet	-1k1 for fine manipulation	-1k1 for fine manipulation	-1k0 for fine manipulation	None
Arm Guard	-3 to TN to be hit *	-2 to TN to be hit *	-1 to TN to be hit *	None
Leg Guard	-2 to TN to be hit based on Footwork Knack	-2 to TN to be hit based on Footwork Knack	-1 to TN to be hit based on Footwork Knack	None
Boot	-1 to TN to be hit based on Footwork Knack, -2k1 to Stealth rolls	-1 to TN to be hit based on Footwork Knack, -1k1 to Stealth rolls	-1k0 to Stealth rolls	None
Breastplate	-2k2 from all Lifting, Leaping, Swinging, Rolling rolls, -10 from TN to be hit based on those Knacks	-1k1 from all Lifting, Leaping, Swinging, Rolling rolls, -5 from TN to be hit based on those Knacks	-1k0 from all Lifting, Leaping, Swinging, Rolling rolls, -2 from TN to be hit based on those Knacks	-1 from TN to be hit based on Leaping, Swinging, or Rolling Knack

* based on Parry Knacks using the guarded arm

Huan Shu II (Feat) (d20[™])

Prerequisites: Huan Shu I.

Benefit: You may add your Wis bonus to any skill checks which benefit from Huan Shu, as well as any unarmed attacks. Further, your unarmed damage die type increases by one (i.e., d4 to d6).

Nha Nong (10 Points, Lanna Only) (7th Sea[™])

Among the peasants of Lanna are some who have a special affinity with small plants. Any bush, shrub, flower, vine, or other plant that is not a tree will grow especially well in their care. They refuse to believe that there is anything special about them.. They attribute the health of the plants to good fortune, so they call themselves simply nha nong, which in their native tongue means farmer.

There is actually far more to these people than they are willing to believe. They are immune to any poison from a plant, and never have allergies to any pollen. Of course, they attribute these things to luck and having built up a tolerance to such things. Every season, plants under their care yield twenty percent more grain or fruit than normal for each Rank of Panache the character has, so a Nha Nong with 2 Panache has plants that produce 40% more than they normally would. Nha Nong get two Free Raises to all rolls they make with the Flora Knack.

But that is not the limit of the Nha Nong's relationship with plants. Thorns never scratch them and branches bend out of the way to avoid hurting them. If they are ever lost in the jungle, they can be assured of finding fruits or leaves to eat and vines to drink from because the plants will not let them starve. No Nha Nong ever believes there is anything odd about this; they think it is simply evidence of their survival skills.

The most extreme powers of the Nha Nong are considered evidence of protection from guardian spirits. A Nha Nong can cause a plant to grow, ripen or die, and under extreme conditions, can even animate a vine. When the player wants his Nha Nong to do any of these things, he spends a Drama Die. An animated vine has Brawn, Finesse, Resolve, Grapple, and Bear Hug Ranks equal to the Nha Nong's Panache Rank, and Wits and Panache Ranks of 1, and is considered to be a Henchman.

Nha Nong (Feat) (d20[™])

Prerequisites: Lanna nationality, good alignment.

Benefits: A Nha Nong is immune to poison and may pass without trace as a druid of the same level. A Nha Nong may also cast diminish plant or plant growth (enrichment) and entangle once per day as a druid of the same level, though they may never blight or bless the same plant more than once per season. These are supernatural abilities, although the Nha Nong never views them as such.

Tashila (20 Points, Tashil Only) (7th Sea[™])

Among the holy men of Tashil are the Tashila, an order of ascetics who strive to attain their fullest potential by achieving their higher consciousness so that their bodies, minds and emotions can be unified. They seek this state through exercise and meditation. Tashila get the Rahib Skill (*Crescent Empire[™]*, pg. 73-74) book for free, and a free Rank of the Contortion Knack, considered to be an Advanced Knack of that Skill for them.

Tashila Yoga Asanas

The practice of yoga requires a great deal of discipline and practice. The ability to control the mind, the emotions, and the body — and to achieve complete harmony — is a goal which very few achieve. This does not, however, dissuade tashila from continuing their quest for this state of maximum physical and mental well-being.

There are eighteen basic physical positions or asanas. Once the tashila has put herself into the proper relaxed state by doing pranayamas or breathing exercises, she goes through the asanas in an order proscribed by her guru or teacher.

TABLE 3-18: YOGA ASANAS POSITIONS

Asana	Position
Padmasana	Lotus Position
Siddhasana	Perfect Position
Sukasana	Easy Position
Yogasana	Yoga Position
Virasana	Hero Position
Matsyasana	Fish Position
Dhanurasana	Bow Position
Bhujaungasana	Cobra Position
Shalabhasana	Locust Position
Bhastrikasana	Bellow Position
Janushirasana	Head-to-Knee Position
Bharadyajasana	Spinal Twist Position
Cakrasana	Wheel Position
Halasana	Plough Position
Sarvaungasana	Shoulder Stand Position
Shashaungasana	Rabbit Position
Utthita Trikonasana	Triangle Position
Shavasana	Corpse Position

In addition to the physical exercises, tashila perform *sadhanas* or meditation exercises during which they say or think a word or a phrase called a *mantra*. A tashila will have a personal mantra that has been devised for him by his acarya or the senior Tashila who serves as his spiritual mentor.

Tashila practice a number of different types of yoga, although the most common is called *hatha* or "physical" yoga, based on the exercises noted above.

A Tashila's physical exercises result in extraordinary health. A Tashila master rarely, if ever, suffers from the physical penalties of aging, and is immune to disease. His physical conditioning allows him to reduce the number of Flesh Wounds he has taken by his Rank in the Contortion Knack at the end of every Round of combat.

A Tashila's spiritual exercises lend extreme peace of mind and a balanced emotional state. A Tashila gets a Free Raise to every attempt to resist a Repartee Action for every Rank he has in the Meditation Knack. The Tashila's supreme sense of inner peace and calm means that he is affected by Fear as if the Fear Rating influencing him was reduced by his Rank in the Meditation Knack.



Tashila (Feat) (d20™)

Prerequisites: Tashil Nationality, Wis 15+.

Special: Must be an ascetic holy person (class: cleric, druid, monk, sorcerer, witch, or wizard).

Benefits: The following are always considered Class Skills for you: Concentration, Diplomacy and Knowledge: Religion. You may also add any ranks you have in Concentration to any attempt to resist intimidation or fear. You do not suffer the physical penalties of aging and are immune to normal diseases.

Youya Chima Ren (20 Points, Xian Bei Only) (7th Sea™)

The finest horsemen of Xian Bei, like the horsemen of the Crescent Empire, have a special bond with their mounts, such that the rider and the steed become much more than the sum of their parts. You can communicate verbally with your steed, and may make a Panache roll with a TN of 10 to try to understand it when it tries to communicate. Also, your mystical connection to your horse allows you to meld with it, so you become one creature. In this state, each of the “man-horse” combined Traits are equal to the higher of that Trait’s Rank from the man or that Trait’s Rank from the horse.

This combined form also provides a bonus to each roll equal to the lesser Rank of the two Ranks in the Trait used for that Roll. Damage rolls get a bonus equal to the lower of the two Brawn Ranks, and the lower Panache Rank is added to the Initiative Total. These are bonuses to the totals of the die rolls and not to the number of dice rolled.

While you are astride your horse, the two of you are considered as one creature (and one target). You take damage as one creature. Upon dismounting (or being knocked off the horse by other means), any Dramatic Wounds that the two of you have taken is split evenly between you. If you have taken an odd number of Dramatic Wounds, you receive one more than the horse does. This link can only exist between you and a single horse; no other kind of equine will suffice. This is similar to but more powerful than the Khêl-kalb Advantage found in the Atlar’vahir tribe of Crescent Empire, who are descended from riders from Xian Bei. (See *Crescent Empire*™, pg. 85).

Youya Chima Ren (Feat) (120th)

Prerequisites: Xian Bei Nationality, Ride: 8 ranks.

Benefits: When riding your horse, you may use the highest ability modifier of yourself or your mount. You may also take damage as one entity, with a total number of HP equal to the total of yourself and your horse. If you become unhorsed, divide all damage equally. You may only receive these benefits when riding your own specific mount.

Baofong Xue Wudao (20 Points, Khimal Only) (7th Sea[™])

Some mystics of the kingdom of Khimal, known as the Baofong Xue Wudao ("Snowstorm Dancers"), have a magical ability to manipulate ice and snow. This ability does not necessarily follow a bloodline, and no community has more than a handful of these people at any given time.

If you possess this magic, you are immune to the effects of cold weather. Specifically, you take no damage from it whatsoever. You are also immune to snow and ice. You can fall any distance onto snow or ice and will take no damage from the fall. Icicles cannot harm you. No matter how much ice or snow lands on you in an avalanche (or for any other reason), you take no damage, as long as the snow or ice falls directly upon yourself or your possessions (clothes, weapons and/or items you wear or carry upon your person).

If the snow or ice falls upon you indirectly, you take damage as normal. For instance, if a bag of ice were dropped on you from forty feet above, you would take damage because the fabric of the bag keeps the ice from contacting you directly.

Furthermore, airborne snow or ice storms do not limit your vision. Also, ice and snow will not suffocate you, no matter how much of it is dumped on you. Snow and ice do not prevent your motion while you are buried in it, and your voice will carry through it no more than anyone else's would. You may walk across snow without leaving footprints, and will not sink into it in the processes of normal movement. If there is plentiful snow nearby, you may call up a wind to create a snowstorm centered upon yourself. Make a Resolve roll against a TN of 15. For every Raise you make, you make the current weather one category rougher (one box toward the top of the 7th Sea Weather Table in the *Game Masters' Guide*) or one category colder. Take the damage done by that table, add 1 kept die (+1k1), and inflict that damage upon everyone in the area on the beginning of Phase 10 of every Round until the snowstorm ends or they find some form of cover. The snowstorm lasts for a number of Rounds equal to twice your Panache, after which it dissipates, returning the weather to the state it was in before you exerted your influence upon it. You may end the snowstorm at any time, merely by spending an Action.

You may also spend an Action to cause snow in a snowstorm you have created to target one particular person. Roll Finesse to attempt to hit your opponent, who may not use Parry or Block Knacks to defend against this attack (neither for determining the TN, nor for attempting an Active Defense). Roll a number of dice equal to your Resolve and Keep the highest one to determine the damage made by this Action.

Rather than creating a snowstorm, you may spend an extra Drama Die to create an ice storm, giving the storm +1k0 to hit and +0k1 damage for each targeted attack, and +1k0 damage on each Phase 10, but which lasts only half as long.

Baofong Xue Wudao I (Feat) (120th)

Prerequisites: Khimal nationality, Wis 13+, no other form of sorcery, Concentration: 4 ranks, class: cleric, druid, monk, paladin, ranger, sorcerer, witch, or wizard.

Benefits: You are immune to damage from normal ice and snow, may pass without trace in snow, and do not have impaired vision in snowstorms and other such conditions.

Baofong Xue Wudao II (Feat) (120th)

Prerequisites: Baofong Xue Wudao I.

Benefits: You may cast control weather for the purposes of summoning a snowstorm only, provided there is sufficient snow in the area. Further, you may direct ice in a snowstorm to strike a target by making a Concentration check (DC 15) as a Full Round Action. You may strike one target for every five character levels you possess for 1d4 damage, +1 damage for every level (so a 15th level character who possesses Baofong Xue Wudao would deal 1d4 + 15 damage to up to 3 targets).

Song Hwang Tung Tree Magic (10 Points, Koryo Only) (7th Sea[™])

The people of Koryo venerate trees, regarding them as guardian spirits. Some holy men and women, usually one or two per village, are able to make special requests for aid from the trees. A Koryo Tree Magician can spend one Drama Die and make a Resolve Roll against a TN of 15 to make a tree grow enough fruit and nuts to feed one man for one day, plus one man-day for every Raise he makes. In times of war, the Tree Magician can request a special boon from a forest or jungle.

By spending a Drama Die and making a Resolve roll against a TN of 10, the Tree Magician can cause himself, plus one more person per Raise he makes, to enter into another dimension known as the Tree Spirit Forest. While there, they cannot go beyond the boundaries of the forest, nor can they eat or drink. They can see into the real world, but they cannot be seen, heard, or felt by anyone in the real world. Returning to the real world from the Tree Spirit Forest requires a roll of the Tree Magician's Resolve, with a TN of 20. All of the people who came into the Tree Spirit Forest with the Tree Magician leave with him when he does.

The Tree Spirit Forest looks like the forest in the real world, but the colors are much more vivid, and gentle fresh breezes spread throughout. The details of the trees and plants of the Tree Spirit Forest are softer, and no matter what the weather, there is diffused light everywhere. When you look out past the edge of the forest, any details beyond half a mile are blurred and lost, but in the distance, a fiery glow is evident. It is said that in the days before the construction of the Wall of Fire there was no fiery glow.

Song Hwang Tung (Feat) (d20™)

Prerequisites: Koryo nationality, Wis 15+, good alignment, class: alchemist, bard, cleric, druid, monk, paladin, ranger, sorcerer, witch, or wizard.

Benefits: Once per week, you may make either a Diplomacy check or a Knowledge (religion) check at DC 20 to make one tree produce fruit and nuts enough to feed a single man (as described above). You may enter the Shin Liung Forest by making a Concentration check (DC 15) in any forest in Théah. While in the Forest, you cannot be seen or interact with the real world as described above. You may not check to enter the Shin Liung Forest more than once per day.

New Martial Skills

All warfare is based on deception.

— Zheng Ren, Bing Shu

Staff (7th Sea™)

Staves are more easily constructed than swords or polearms, and thus are erroneously perceived as less of a threat. While most of your practice in fighting with staves is focused on weapons like the quarterstaff of Avalon or the gwon of Cathay, even a long walking stick can be used as a weapon with this Skill. Staves require both hands to use.

BASIC KNACKS

Attack (Staff): Attack is simply the ability to hit your enemy.

Parry (Staff): Parrying is the act of putting your weapon between yourself and your enemies' strikes. This Knack can be used as your Defense Knack while you are wielding a staff.

ADVANCED KNACKS

Haymaker: A haymaker is an aggressive swing of the staff that leaves you open for a moment. When you declare a Haymaker, use this Knack for your attack. You roll two extra unkept dice (+2k0) for damage if your attack is successful. However, your TN to be hit drops to 5 for this Phase only, and you may not use any Active Defenses for the rest of this Phase.

Staff Striking Whirlwind Technique (Feat) (d20™)

Prerequisite: Dex 13+, Weapon Focus (quarterstaff).

A staff in the hands of one trained in its possibilities can deliver a devastating attack, as the Striking Whirlwind Technique shows. When attacking, you may declare that you are using this feat. If you do so, base damage is doubled (i.e. the roll is doubled before adding Strength modifiers or other bonuses). If you score a critical hit, increase the multiplier by 1. This technique, while powerful, focuses all of the student's energy on the attack, leaving him defenseless. For the rest of the round, you lose all dodge bonuses to AC.

Hard Martial Arts (7th Sea™)

There are two kinds of martial arts, based on a fundamental difference in philosophy: proactive hard styles that block an enemy's attacks and strike back in return, and reactive soft styles that prefer to deal with an enemy's attack by turning its kinetic energy and momentum back against him. You have studied one or more of the hard martial arts.

BASIC KNACKS

Attack (Hard Martial Arts): Attack is simply the ability to hit your enemy.

Balance: Balance is the Knack of not falling down, even under adverse conditions. This is used as the Defense Knack for those fighting aboard a ship at sea or in situations where the footing is uncertain. The GM will give you the TNs for performing certain actions on board a sailing vessel, or with other special circumstances.

Block (Hard Martial Arts): Blocking is the act of putting your arm or leg between yourself and your enemies' strikes. This Knack can be used as your Defense Knack while you are unarmed.

Footwork: Footwork is the art of putting yourself where your enemy's weapon is not. This Knack can be used as your Defense Knack even if you don't have a weapon.

Jab: When you use this Knack, you are making two quick barehanded attacks against your opponent, one right after the other. You must declare that you are Jabbing before you attack, and then roll the two Attacks using this Knack. The TN to hit your opponent is raised by 10 when you are using Jab.

ADVANCED KNACKS

Break Fall: Adventurers tend to do a lot of falling, but you've learned how to do it correctly. You know how to absorb impact with your shoulders and how to roll with the fall (which sadly will not help you if you fall into a spiked pit). With every Rank in this Knack, one less die of damage is taken when a fall is incurred (minimum 0).

Corps-à-Corps: Corps-à-corps is the art of close, or body to body, fighting. You declare that you are using this Knack instead of the Attack Knack. If your Attack gets through, you inflict a 0k1 barehanded attack and your opponent then falls down and becomes prone.

d20™ Mechanic: See *Swashbuckling Adventures™*, Chapter 4: Feats – Corps-à-Corps.

Kick: A Kick inflicts 2k1 damage, but raises the TN that you are trying to hit by 10. You must declare a Kick before rolling the attack, and use this Knack instead of your normal Attack Knack.

Knife Hand: A Knife Hand strike is a kind of bare-handed attack that does 1k1 damage, but raises the TN you are trying to hit by 5. You must declare a Knife Hand before rolling the attack, and use this Knack instead of your normal Attack Knack.

Leaping: You can jump higher and farther than most which often comes in handy when exploring dusty tombs or fleeing across rooftops. In addition, you use this Knack as your Defense Knack while leaping.

Throat Strike: Using this Knack, you strike your opponent squarely across the throat. You must declare that you are making a Throat Strike, and roll to attack using this Knack. The TN to hit your opponent is raised by 15 when using this Knack, but if it is successful (and not avoided with Active Defense) you inflict an automatic Dramatic Wound to your target rather than rolling for damage.

Hard Martial Arts Razor Hand Technique (Feat) (d20")

Prerequisites: Str 13+, base attack bonus of + 6 or higher, Improved Unarmed Strike.

The student is able to strike a powerful unarmed blow against their foe. They increase their critical threat range by 1 when making an unarmed strike.

Hard Martial Arts Storm of Ages Technique (Feat) (d20")

Prerequisite: Ambidexterity, Improved Unarmed Strike

The student is able to make an additional unarmed attack during the round, provided all attacks made this round are unarmed strikes. Each attack suffers a -2 on the attack roll.

Soft Martial Arts (7th Sea™)

There are two kinds of martial arts, based on a fundamental difference in philosophy: proactive hard styles that block an enemy's attacks and strike, and reactive soft styles that prefer to deal with an enemy's attack by turning its kinetic energy and momentum against him. You have studied one or more of the soft martial arts.

BASIC KNACKS

Balance: Balance is the Knack of not falling down, even under adverse conditions. This is used as the Defense Knack for those fighting aboard a ship at sea, or in situations where the footing is uncertain. The GM will give you the TNs for performing certain actions on board a sailing vessel, or with other special circumstances.

Block (Soft Martial Arts): Blocking is the act of putting your arm or leg between yourself and your enemies' strikes. This Knack can be used as your Defense Knack while you are unarmed.

Footwork: Footwork is the art of putting yourself where your enemy's weapons are not. This Knack can be used as your Defense Knack even if you do not have a weapon.

Grapple: A grapple is the basic move used by all wrestlers. They get in close and grab hold of their opponent, preventing him from acting. To use this attack, you declare that you are attempting to Grapple your opponent, then roll to attack using Finesse + Grapple against your opponent's TN to be Hit. If successful, you have momentarily Grappled him. While grappled, your opponent can only attempt to break your hold, Head Butt you, or perform an Action that requires very little motion, such as pulling the trigger on a pistol.

To try to break your hold, your opponent must spend one Action (remember the rules for Interrupt and Held Actions), and then make a Contested Roll with his Brawn + Grapple versus your Brawn + Grapple. If he wins, the hold is broken; otherwise, it holds out. You, on the other hand, may spend Action dice (again, remember the rules on Interrupt and Held Actions) to improve your hold. Each Action die you spend gives you one Free Raise from now on when your opponent tries to break your hold during this fight.

Yield: Rather than attacking your enemies, you prefer to make their attacks backfire on them. Instead of blocking an attack, you assist it in the direction it was already going, making sure you're out of the way. Your opponent's momentum and the fact that he does not encounter the resistance he was expecting will upset his balance. You may use Yield only

as a Defense Knack against melee attacks, and only as an Active Defense; It is not used to determine your Target Number to be Hit. You may choose to Yield to an attack that failed to meet your TN to be Hit.

If you succeed at your Wits + Yield Active Defense roll, the attack missed you and your opponent winds up prone, having landed on the other side of you from his starting position. If you make two Raises to your Yield roll, your opponent takes damage as if he had been hit with his own attack (you roll the damage). If this happens, any Raises he made for damage or a called shot are not included in the damage roll. However, you may make additional Raises to increase the damage, just as you would for a normal attack that you made against someone else.

ADVANCED KNACKS

Break Fall: Adventurers tend to do a lot of falling, but have learned how to do it correctly. You know how to absorb impact with your shoulders and how to roll with the fall, as noted above. With every Rank in this Knack, you take one less die of damage when you fall (minimum 0).

Disarm (Unarmed): You can only use this Knack after an opponent has just missed your Passive Defense. Spend an Action die to make a Contested Roll of your Brawn + Disarm versus his Brawn + Attack with the weapon he is wielding. If you win, the weapon is knocked out of his hand. If you perform the move with two Raises, you can wind up holding the weapon if you choose.

Escape: When you are attempting to break a Grapple that your opponent has placed on you, each Rank in this Knack negates one Free Raise your opponent has gained from improving his hold.

Joint Lock: A Joint Lock is a special kind of hold that can be used to subdue an opponent by applying pressure to one of his joints so that if he tries to escape, he risks injuring himself. To use this attack, declare that you are attempting to get a Joint Lock on your opponent and specify the type of joint lock you are trying to obtain. The roll to attack using Finesse + Joint Lock against your opponent's TN to be Hit, plus the Raises necessary to declare a called shot on the specific joint on which you are trying to put the lock. If successful, you have momentarily caught him in a Joint Lock. While held in this manner, your opponent can only attempt to break your hold or perform an Action that requires very little motion, such as pulling the trigger on a pistol. Unlike when you are using Grapple, your opponent does not have the option of using Head Butt against you.

To try to break your hold, your opponent must spend one Action (remember the rules for Interrupt and Held Actions), and then make a Contested Roll with his choice of his Finesse + Grapple or Finesse + Joint Lock versus your Finesse + Joint Lock. If he wins, the hold is broken; otherwise, it holds out. You, on the other hand, may spend Action dice (again, remember the rules on Interrupt and Held Actions) to improve your hold. Each Action die you spend gives you one Free Raise from now on when your opponent tries to break your hold. The Escape Knack helps in negating these Raises just as it does for the Grapple Knack.

When an opponent tries to break a joint lock and fails, he takes damage based on the kind of Joint Lock you have him held in, and you maintain your hold. If he succeeds in breaking the hold, he takes this damage and but is no longer held. If the opponent makes a number of Raises equal to the number of Raises you had to make to apply the joint lock, then he escapes the joint lock and takes no damage.

TABLE 3-19: JOINT LOCK DAMAGE

Joint	Raises	Damage (Use Opponent's Brawn)
Finger	1	0k2
Wrist	2	1k2
Elbow	3	3k2
Shoulder	4	4k2
Ankle	2	1k2
Knee	3	3k2

Leaping: You can jump higher and farther than most people. This can come in handy while exploring dusty tombs or fleeing across rooftops. In addition, you use this Knack as your Defense Knack while leaping.

Meditation: Your quest for inner peace has given you a sense of emotional balance and the ability to remain calm and rational. You may use this Knack to resist any Repartee Action made against you.

Side-step: Fighters who are very skilled often move into a better attack position even as they get out of the way of their enemy's sword. Whenever you use an Active Defense, successfully, you may lower your next upcoming Action die by your Rank in this Knack. You may not make the Action die lower than the current Phase.

Throws: Once you have grappled someone, you can choose to release them in a more dramatic method than by simply letting go of him. Instead, you may throw him away from you and onto the ground or into a wall or other such obstruction.

To throw someone, you must currently have him Grappled. Make a Finesse + Throws roll against a TN equal to 5 times your opponent's Brawn, plus 10. You may throw another person a number of yards equal to your Brawn. If they are Large, subtract one yard, and if they are Small, add one yard. You may increase the distance you throw someone by one yard for every Raise you make to do so. If you succeed, you throw the opponent to the ground and he takes damage as if he had fallen 5 feet times your Brawn, and lands prone.

You may attempt to target something other than the ground by making Raises to do so. Hitting a wall or other such structure (like a table) would require one Raise; throwing one person into another would require Raising the TN of the throw by the TN to be Hit of the person for whom you are aiming. Failing to meet the TN of your Finesse + Throws roll means that you have released your opponent, and he neither takes damage from the throw nor is he considered to be prone.

Soft Martial Arts Falling Star Strike (Feat) (d20™)

Prerequisites: Str 13+, Improved Unarmed Strike, Slip.

If you land a successful unarmed strike you may forego your actions for the rest of the round to throw your opponent. Your opponent must make a Fort save at DC (10+ 1/2 the attacker's level + Str bonus) or move 5 feet times your Strength bonus and fall prone. If they collide with a large solid object before they stop moving, they take 1d4 damage for every 5 feet of movement they were denied.

Soft Martial Arts Unmoving Hand of Peace Technique (Feat) (d20™)

Prerequisites: Base Attack Bonus +4, Improved Unarmed Strike.

You may use your opponents' strength against them. You may attack an opponent using this technique to immobilize or subdue them by catching them in a painful lock. See table X above for modifiers to hit. Your opponent, once seized in a lock, may only perform actions that require little movement or attempt to break the lock. Whenever your opponent has an opportunity to attack, they may elect to break the lock. To do so, they must succeed at a Ref save (DC 10 + 1/2 of your level + their own Str bonus, if positive) or suffer damage as outlined in table 3-19. Whenever you have the opportunity to attack, you may either voluntarily break the hold or forego your attack in order to increase your opponents Ref save DC by 1.

Lian Zi (Chain) (7th Sea™)

You have trained yourself in the use of chains and flail-like weapons, including the Seung Tjat Koen and Sa Tjat Koen.

BASIC KNACKS

Attack (Chain): Attack is simply the ability to hit your enemy.

ADVANCED KNACKS

Bind (Chain): A Bind is only usable against an opponent's fencing weapon. It locks the blade in your chain. To use this attack, you declare that you are attempting to Bind your opponent's weapon and then roll to attack using the Knack. If successful, you have momentarily wrapped your chain around his blade. While the two of you are in the Bind, neither of you can use your bound item.

To try to break your hold, your opponent spends 1 Action die (remembering the rules on Interrupt and Held Actions) and then rolls a Contested Roll of his Brawn + Parry (in the weapon you have bound) versus your Brawn + Bind. If he wins, the hold is broken; otherwise, it holds fast. You, on the other hand, may spend Action dice (remembering the rules on Interrupt and Held Actions) to improve your hold. Each Action die you spend gives you one free Raise from now on when your opponent tries to break your hold. If your opponent wishes, he may simply release his weapon, but that would leave it in your hands.

Entangle (Chain): Rather than try to inflict damage on your opponent, you can impede and confuse him by temporarily entangling his limbs. You declare that you are using an Entangle and then roll using this Knack to attack. If the attack is successful, it inflicts no damage, but forces your opponent to increase his next Action die by 2, plus 1 for every Raise you made. If this increases that Action die higher than 10, the Action die is discarded.

Grasping Arm (Feat) (d20™)

Prerequisites: Dex 13+, Weapon Finesse, base attack bonus of +4 or higher.

The student may attack an opponent with their chain at -6 to the to-hit roll in order to impede their opponent's movement. If they hit, they deal no damage but their opponent loses their next action. If they score a critical hit, the opponent loses the next action and falls prone.

Exotic Thrown Weapons (7th Sea™)

In Cathay, there are many strange throwing weapons that do not fit well into any other category, such as knives or improvised weapons, including the chakram and paku. You employ this Skill when using these missile weapons.

BASIC KNACKS

Throw (Exotic Thrown Weapons): When you throw an exotic thrown weapon, you must use this Knack as an Attack Knack. The Range of one of these weapons is determined by the kind of weapon thrown.

ADVANCED KNACKS

Trick Throwing: For each Rank of Trick Throwing, you subtract 5 from any penalties to your shot (range, cover, etc.). Trick Throwing cannot lower your TN below the base Target Number to be hit. For example, if a target has a TN to be hit of 15, plus 15 for modifiers, someone with Rank 5 Trick Throwing would negate the 15 points of modifiers, but would not lower the base TN of 15 to be hit.

Ricochet (Feat) (d20™)

Prerequisites: Dex 15+, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (chakram)

You may bounce a thrown chakram off up to two surfaces in order to strike an opponent who is in line of sight but obstructed. Each surface you bounce the chakram off of subtracts 2 from your roll to hit.

Exotic Paired Weapons (7th Sea™)

In Cathay, there are many strange weapons that are traditionally used together in pairs, and do not fit well into any other category, such as knives or fencing weapons. Examples include the Shuang Huan (Full Moon) and the Shuang Gao. You use this Skill when you are wielding these weapons, either as a pair or singly.

BASIC KNACKS

Attack (Exotic Paired Weapons): Attack is simply the ability to hit your enemy.

Parry (Exotic Paired Weapons): Parrying is the act of putting your weapon between yourself and your enemies' strikes. This Knack can be used as your Defense Knack while you are wielding an exotic paired weapon. You do not need to be wielding two weapons to use this Knack — one will suffice.

ADVANCED KNACKS

Double Parry (Exotic Paired Weapons): A double-parry is parrying with two weapons crossed before you. You may declare that you are using this Knack instead of an ordinary Parry as an Active Defense. You must then make two Raises on the attempt. Success grants one free Drama die, which can be used for a number of Phases equal to your Rank with this maneuver. In any event, if you do not use the Drama die by the end of the Round, you lose it.

Double Parry (Feat) (d20™)

Prerequisites: Two-Weapon Fighting, Parry

You may parry using both of your paired weapons at once. To do this, you must roll at least 4 higher than your opponent when attempting a parry. If you do so, you receive a +2 morale bonus on any one action or attack you take until the end of the next round.

Blowpipe (7th Sea™)

While the darts of blowpipes are not likely to cause a lot of damage in and of themselves, they are an effective means of introducing a poison into the body of the target. You are skilled at aiming and firing blowpipes.

BASIC KNACKS

Attack (Blowpipe): Attack is simply the ability to hit your enemy.

Fletcher (Darts): You know how to make and repair darts for a blowpipe. This knack is very useful on extended stretches with limited supplies of darts. After each battle in which you fired your blowpipe, make a Wits + Fletcher check. For every 15 points you roll, you retrieve one dart that you fired which is still in usable condition.

ADVANCED KNACKS

Trick Shooting (Blowpipe): For each Rank of this Knack, you subtract 5 from any penalties to your shot (range, cover, etc.). Trick Shooting cannot lower your TN below the base Target Number to be hit. For example, if a target has a TN to be hit of 15, plus 15 for modifiers, an archer with Rank 5 Trick Shooting would negate all 15 points of modifiers, but he would not lower the base TN to be hit (15).

Poison: When diplomacy fails and a military victory is impossible, an ounce of arsenic will sometimes suffice. This Knack lets you know what poison to use and how much to administer, as well as how to handle it safely. Your GM will have rules for this Knack in the *Game Masters' Guide™*.

New Poisons

Afyam (Opium)

Afyam is made by leaving the milky fluid of the poppy seed pod to dry in the sun. As it dries, it hardens and turns black. It is used as a medicinal painkiller in all of the seven kingdoms, but in Tashil and Tiakhar, it is also consumed recreationally because of the sense of euphoria that it can bring.

When a medicinal dose of afyam is taken, the patient loses all perspective with regards to pain. He ignores the effects of being Crippled, as well as any other pain-related penalties that may apply to him. He cannot feel pain, and the GM secretly keeps track of his wounds and makes his Wound Checks for him. The price of a medicinal dose of afyam is 30 Qian.

A recreational dose of afyam usually consists of roughly the material of two medicinal doses, and generates the same effects as a medicinal dose, plus a sense of euphoria that makes someone who eats it immune to the effects of Intimidation and Fear Ratings.

Afyam is highly addictive, and those who use it recreationally will usually find that they have become dependent upon it. The body of an addict quickly builds up a tolerance to the drug, and needs more of it to achieve the same level of euphoria. Withdrawal symptoms can be quite devastating, and include malnutrition, chills, sweating, nausea, and chronic pain. Many addicts continue to take doses of afyam to avoid pain rather than to feel euphoria. The mechanical effects of an afyam addict's withdrawal symptoms can be found in the description of the Afyam Addict Background.

The duration of the effects of a dose of afyam decreases with the level of tolerance that the person develops to it. Afyam's painkilling and euphoric effects will last for five hours, minus one hour per Rank that the consumer has in the Afyam Addict Background.

Another effect of the tolerance developed by addicts is the size of the recreational dose. For each Rank in the Afyam Addict Background that the consumer has, the size of the recreational dose increases by another medicinal dose.

It is impossible to have a Poison Immunity Advantage that protects you from the effects of afyam.

If a GM feels that a character who does not have the Afyam Addict Background is abusing afyam by taking recreational doses in a habitual manner, he should warn the player that his character is at risk to become addicted. If the character persists in using afyam, the GM may choose to spend a Drama Die to give that him one Rank of the Afyam Addict Background immediately.

Blistery Itch

Blistery Itch is a species of freshwater nettle plant, commonly found in Koryo, Lanna, Tiakhar, Xian Bei, and Han Hua. Contact with this plant causes a painful, blistered rash that itches relentlessly. At the end of each day he has this rash, the victim must make a Resolve roll against a TN of 5 plus 5 per day he has had the rash. If he makes this roll, resists the urge to scratch the rash. If he fails, he scratches the rash, which causes the blisters to burst and form open sores, causing one Dramatic Wound.

D20™ MECHANICS

The poison has a contact DC of 15. Initial damage is 1d8 hp. Secondary damage is 1d3 Con.

7TH SEA™ MECHANICS

Special / Once / 1 Week.

Cloudy Blossom

Cloudy Blossom is a kind of hypnotic and soporific, derived from the lotus. Because of the differences in freshness and potency in each flower, the exact duration of the effect can range anywhere from twenty minutes to four hours, at the GM's discretion.

D20™ MECHANICS

The blossom has an Inhalation DC of 13. Those who fail are affected as if by a hypnotism spell cast by a 3rd level wizard. The effects last for 1d6 x 10 minutes.

7TH SEA™ MECHANICS

–1 Resolve / Once / Varies.

Dart Juice

Dart Juice is a toxin derived from the Trembling Leaf plant. It is coated onto darts fired from blowpipes. While it is in the victim's bloodstream, it causes random muscular contractions, thus impeding action. While you are suffering from this poison, you are considered to be Crippled.

D20™ MECHANICS

The poison has an injury DC of 14. Initial damage is 1d6 hp plus a loss of 1d3 Dex. Secondary damage is 1d3 Dex.

7TH SEA™ MECHANICS

Special / Once / 1k1 Phases.

Dragon's Breath

Known in Théah as "Prophet's Breath," this is the perfect poison for those who want fast results. It is odorless, tasteless, and invisible once dissolved in liquid. It must be taken internally. It is almost as rare in Cathay as it is in Vodacce; perhaps thirty people in Cathay know how to make it, and it can cost up to 10,000 Qian for a single dose.

D20™ MECHANICS

Dragon's Breath has an Ingested DC of 20. Initial damage is death.

7TH SEA™ MECHANICS

Death / 1 Phase / 1 Phase.

Pillow Incense

Pillow Incense is a pleasant-smelling scent that can be added to incense. When burned, the fumes it gives off act as an aphrodisiac to those who inhale them. It is common practice in Lanna to give Pillow Incense as a wedding gift.

D20™ MECHANICS

Pillow Incense has an Inhaled DC of 15. Those affected suffer a loss of 3 to all Will checks involving attempts to resist seduction or similar attentions from the opposite sex. The effects last for 30 minutes, or as long as Pillow Incense is burning within fifteen feet of the affected target.

7TH SEA™ MECHANICS

–1k1 versus Seduction attempts / 5 Minutes / 30 minutes.

Premium Yellow Lotus

The Yellow Lotus that is occasionally exported from Cathay to the world beyond is always of the second-best quality. The people of Cathay keep the best stuff for themselves. Just like the Yellow Lotus that is known in Théah, this blossom enhances magical abilities in sorcerers for a short time, but also causes harm to whoever partakes of them. However, the Premium Yellow Lotus is not as damaging, and its effects last longer.

D20™ MECHANICS

Premium Yellow Lotus has an Ingested DC of 18, an interval of 20 minutes and a duration of 1hour. Initial damage is 1d6 Con, and secondary damage is 1d6 Con.

7TH SEA™ MECHANICS

2k1 dice of damage / 30 minutes / 2 hours

Notes: Anyone of sorcerous blood who eats the blossom of a premium yellow lotus increases his or her Sorcery Knacks by one Rank while the poison lingers in the blood (two hours). Two blossoms have a cumulative effect, increasing the Sorcery Knacks by two Ranks, but increase the injury to 4k2 damage. Each extra blossom eaten will add +2k1 damage, but will give no further bonus to the Sorcery Knacks.

If an Apprentice sorcerer (even half-blooded or twice-blooded) gains Rank 4 in four Sorcery Knacks temporarily as a result of eating premium yellow lotus, he may use Adept-level magic while the poison's effects linger. If he is not normally able to perform Adept magic, he suffers a -1 penalty to his Resolve that lasts for one day each time he uses Adept magic. Should his Resolve lower to 0, or this lowering of his Resolve cause his current number of Dramatic Wounds to be greater than twice his current Resolve Rank, he overextends himself and dies. Any Adept-level abilities that have lingering effects end as soon as the poison wears off.

If an Adept sorcerer gains Rank 5 in five Sorcery Knacks temporarily as a result of eating premium yellow lotus, he may use Master-level magic while the poison's effects linger. If an Adept uses Master level magic, he suffers a -1 penalty to his Resolve that lasts for two days each time he uses Master magic. Should his Resolve lower to 0, or this lowering of his Resolve cause his current number of Dramatic Wounds to be greater than twice his current Resolve Rank, he overextends himself and dies. Any Master-level abilities that have lingering effects end as soon as the poison wears off.

There is no beneficial effect on those without sorcerous blood.

Stomach's Bane

Stomach's Bane is a non-fatal poison that is most often used for political purposes. When this flavorless gray powder is consumed (usually hidden in their meal), they feel its effects within half an hour. The poison makes them feel terribly ill, acting as both an emetic and a laxative. The preferred use of Stomach's Bane is to add it to the breakfast of a political rival, who will then be forced to miss his appointments for the day.

D20™ MECHANICS

Stomach's Bane has an Ingested DC of 15. Its interval is 30 minutes, and its duration is 2d6 hours. Initial damage is 1d4 Str and secondary damage is 1d4 Str (with attendant nausea-based unpleasantness).

7TH SEA™ MECHANICS

Special / 30 minutes / 9 Hours.

Tiakhar Pit Viper Venom Extract

The venom of the green tree viper is a hemotoxin that is usually not fatal, but does cause pain and local tissue damage. Some people in Tiakhar milk the snake for venom, which they then perform chemical processes on in order to create this extract, which is stronger but not as long lasting as the natural venom. This extract must be introduced into the bloodstream of the victim to take effect. It is most commonly used as a torture technique, used to break the will of uncooperative captives.

D20™ MECHANICS

The poison has an Injury DC of 12. Initial damage is 1d6 hp and secondary damage is 1d3 Con.

7TH SEA™ MECHANICS

3k1 dice of damage / 10 minutes / 1 hour

Trembling Leaf

Trembling Leaf is a jungle plant that grows in Tashil, Lanna, and Han Hua. It has developed an unusual defense mechanism: any animal that touches its leaves is paralyzed for a short time. During this period, the victim is completely unable to move or speak, but is able to breathe and remains aware of his surroundings.



D20™ MECHANICS

The poison has a Contact DC of 13. Those who fail are paralyzed for 1d6 minutes.

7TH SEA™ MECHANICS

Special / 1 Phase / 5 Rounds

New Swordsman Schools (7th Sea™)

Be loyal to your country, your commanders and your brothers on the field.

Respect your ancestors and your teachers.

Always finish what you start.

— The Song of the Warrior, trad. Han Hua

Note: None of the following are in the Swordsman's Guild, so they all get one Free Rank in one of their Swordsman Knacks unless otherwise specified.

Chin Te (Morning Hand)

Country of Origin: Lanna

Description: Chin Te, a peasant from Lanna who led his fellow field workers to overthrow a corrupt government official, taught his followers to use their flails as weapons. Today, the fighting style that bears his name uses the seurng tjat koen, a weapon descended from those flails. Chin Te knew that his forces were heavily outnumbered, so he developed techniques to allow his men to stand against multiple attackers.

Practitioners of the Chin Te style sometimes fight with a pair of seurng tjat koen, but normally they wield only one. The style is built around either keeping the weapon moving so that it will have momentum when it strikes or adopting one of several stances with the weapon held stationary but with a hand on each bar, allowing the wielder to use either hand for his next attack. The weakness of the style is its dependence upon a weapon that cannot be used to parry incoming attacks.

Basic Curriculum: Chain, Athlete

Swordsman Knacks: Exploit Weakness (*Chin Te*), Whirl, Disarm (*seurng tjat koen*), Feint (*seurng tjat koen*)

Apprentice: Apprentices learn to be equally comfortable wielding a seurng tjat koen with either hand, negating the off-hand penalty when using a single weapon. You also get a Free Raise when you make an Attack (Chain) roll using a seurng tjat koen.

Students of the Chin Te Swordsman School do not get free Membership in the Swordsman's Guild for studying this style. Instead, they gain an extra Rank in one of their Swordsman Knacks for no extra cost

Journeyman: A Journeyman has mastered a circular attack that allows him to make a second strike using the energy of the rebound from his first strike. To do this, roll and resolve your first attack as normal. Then, if that hit is successful, you may immediately spend another Action die, without regard to whether that Action die is currently "legal" to be used on the current Phase, to make your second attack, which also resolves normally.

Master: Masters learn that even a seurng tjat koen may be used to block weapons, although it does take special efforts. You may spend one of your Action Dice (either a Held or current one) in order to set your weapon into a spinning pattern. Roll your Wits + Attack (Chain). You may use this as your TN to be hit by any melee weapon, thrown weapon or unarmed attack until the next time you take an Action. Your TN to be hit by arrows, crossbow bolts, or other such missile weapons (not thrown ones) is unaffected, but anyone shooting a Firearm at you gets a Free Raise to hit you.

Chima Gongjian Shou (Horse Archery School)

Kingdom of Origin: Xian Bei

Description: Chima Gongjian Shou is the precision horse archery combat style of the steppes riders of Xian Bei. It is a derivative of the same school as the Vahiy School of the Atlar'-vahir tribe in the Empire of the Crescent Moon. Unlike Vahiy, Chima Gongjian Shou is not strategy based. Instead, it is more of a mob combat style where each horseman is free to attack whatever target he can find. His individual actions cannot disrupt his unit's formation, because it does not have one. Furthermore, this self-reliance allows the practitioner of this style to function at his maximum capacity even if he does not have an army with him.

The style, as with many styles of mounted combat, relies on the ability to move very quickly, harass the enemy, and withdraw with speed. Because he is trying to minimize his exposure to enemy fire, he must fire rapidly and accurately if he wants to maximize his combat effectiveness. Hastiness is the main weakness of this style.

Basic Curriculum: Archer, Rider

Swordsman Knacks: Exploit Weakness (*Chima Gongjian Shou*), Horse Archery, Charge (Bow), Arc

Apprentice: The Apprentice learns to make every shot he takes count. When you roll for damage from an arrow, you roll one extra die (+1k0) per Mastery Level (1 for Apprentice, 2 for Journeyman, 3 for Master). They also may use the Snapshot Knack while they are on horseback.

Students of Chima Gongjian Shou do not get free Membership in the Swordsman's Guild for taking this Swordsman School. Instead, they get one free Rank in the Snapshot Knack for no cost.

Journeyman: Journeymen have mastered the ability to draw and fire an arrow in the blink of an eye, even on horseback. When you make a Snapshot, your TN is simply your target's TN to be Hit.

Master: A Master of Chima Gongjian Shou is like a blur in combat, darting about and striking quickly. When you are on horseback, you may lower one of your Action Dice by your Rank in the Charge Knack (to a minimum of 1) just before Phase 1 of each Round of each combat, instead of just the first Round of combat.

Hua Shao Ren Te (Flashy Blade Style)

Country of Origin: Han Hua

Description: Hua Shao Ren Te combines a variety of sword attacks for offense with soft martial arts moves for defense. The sword used by this School is the jian, a straight double-bladed weapon of great flexibility, associated with nobles and scholars. Students practice their moves in slow

motion, observing their positions carefully to weed out imperfections in their technique. In fact, the only full-speed experience many practitioners get in using their style comes during actual combat, so some have trouble adjusting to the quickened tempo.

Basic Curriculum: Fencing, Soft Martial Arts.

Swordsman Knacks: Feint (Fencing), Lunge (Fencing), Tagging (Fencing), Exploit Weakness (Hua Shao Ren Te).

Apprentice: The Apprentice learns the stances and steps that will protect him from harm. You get a Free Raise to Active Defense rolls when you use your Footwork Knack.

Students of this Swordsman School do not automatically gain Membership in the Swordsman's Guild. Instead, you get one extra Rank in one of your Swordsman Knacks for no extra cost.

Journeyman: Journeymen have mastered a new stance, the Mi Jian (Secret Sword Hand) in which you extend your free hand to hide the point of your blade. Your Rank in the Feint Knack is increased by 1 for no extra cost. It is possible to improve this Knack's Rank to a 6 in this manner. If your Feint Rank does not increase to 6 at this time, you may later increase it from 5 to 6 by spending 25 XP.

Master: Masters have perfected the She Yan Shi (Shooting Wild Geese) stance, in which the swordsman hold the jian at a specific position and angle reminiscent of an arrow being aimed at flying birds. This allows him to lunge and place his entire body's weight behind the blade. When you make a Lunge, you keep the 2 extra dice of damage, increasing the damage bonus for a lunge from +2k0 to +2k2.

Jasni School

Country of Origin: Tiakhar

Description: The pirates of Tiakhar are the most feared slavers in all of Cathay. Their vessels attack unwary ships at sea, and very few of their victims are ever heard from again. Through the generations, they have refined the procedure for boarding a vessel and capturing its crew and passengers into a streamlined routine, which allows them to complete their cruel and dangerous task with as little difficulty as possible.

The Jasni family of Tiakhar codified this method into an art and runs a training center where they teach young sailors who wish to impress their captains. This school instructs its students in seamanship and swordsmanship. Since the main focus of the school is to capture the enemy instead of dueling or slaying him (or her,) students of this style do not learn any especially damaging attacks. This "soft" philosophy is the main weakness of the style.

Basic Curriculum: Sailor, Fencing

Swordsman Knacks: Corps-à-Corps, Disarm (Fencing), Boarding, Exploit Weakness (Jasni)

Apprentice: Apprentices of the Jasni School first learn to compensate for the rolling motion of the sea while fighting. You may use your Balance Knack in place of a Parry Knack.

Students also learn to lead a boarding party that makes short work of taking captives. When your vessel performs a boarding action against another vessel, you may choose to take part in the boarding. If you do so, consider any of the defender's losses as captives taken rather than as casualties. These captives are quickly sent below decks of your own vessel during the course of the boarding action.

Students of the Jasni School do not gain Membership in the Swordsman's Guild for free. Instead, they get free Membership in the Tiakhar Volunteer Navy.

Journeyman: Journeymen of the Jasni School almost never lose their balance. You also may roll and keep an extra die (+1k1) whenever you make a roll with your Balance Knack, including but not limited to Active Defense rolls.

Their success at leading boarding parties is also phenomenal. When you roll on the boarding action table, you may re-roll the result, but you must take the new result. If you are using the optional rule of playing out the boarding as an ordinary combat, then each Rank of your Ship's Crew is considered to be a Brute Squad that is one Threat Rating higher than normal. In most cases, this means that your ship's boarders will be Threat Rating 3 Brute Squads.

Master: Your fearsome reputation as a pirate increases your Fear Rating by 1. If you did not have a Fear Rating, you now have a Fear Rating of 1. Furthermore, when you roll on the boarding action table, you may spend a Drama Die to allow your dice to explode. If you are fighting out the boarding instead of rolling on the table, each of your Brute Squads fights so hard for you that you may consider them to consist of 9 Brutes instead of 6.

Ki Kwanji (Kick Fight)

Kingdom of Origin: Lanna

Description: Ki Kwanji is a young martial art, barely fifty years old. Unlike other martial arts, which are intended for self-defense or spiritual exercise, this style has sprung up as a sport. There are organized tournaments in Lanna where two men trade kicks and punches until one of them can no longer stand, and this style has grown out of these brutal competitions. This is an extremely aggressive fighting style, but one with a limited array of moves, which makes it somewhat predictable, although still challenging to face and entertaining for those who enjoy this sort of thing.

Basic Curriculum: Hard Martial Arts, Pugilism

Swordsman Knacks: Exploit Weakness (Ki Kwanji), Kick, Snap Kick, Uppercut

Apprentice: The Apprentice's hands move like lightning. Your Attack (Pugilism) and Attack (Hard Martial Arts) are considered to be one and the same Knack: Attack (Ki Kwanji). This means that, since your Basic Curriculum includes Hard Martial Arts and Pugilism, you start the game with Attack (Ki Kwanji) at Rank 2, before spending any extra HP on this Knack.

Practitioners of Ki Kwanji do not get free Membership in the Swordsman's Guild for taking this School. Instead, all of their Pugilism, Hard Martial Arts, and Ki Kwanji attacks, including kicks, get one Free Raise.

Journeyman: The Journeyman attacks his enemy in preparation, countering the enemy's attack before he throws it. You get one free Rank of the Snap Kick Knack. This will increase a 5 in Snap Kick to a 6. If you do not yet have a Snap Kick Rank of 5, you may later increase it from 5 to 6 by spending 25 XP.

Master: The Master makes low kicks by hopping upward, then landing with his shin upon the shin of his opponent. You may make such a kick. To do so, make an ordinary Kick attack, but you may not try to make a called shot with this kick. If you succeed, your opponent takes one automatic Dramatic Wound, and then you roll damage from the kick as normal.

Shaktishaalee ("Mighty")

Kingdom of Origin: Tashil

Description: Shaktishaalee teaches the use of the tulwar, the national sword of Tashil. The tulwar is a curved cavalry combat weapon suited for cutting and slashing. Students of this Swordsman School attack with great ferocity, cutting down any who try to stop them. The disadvantage of this school is that its techniques are based on fighting in melee from horseback, so moves that are not usually used against a mounted combatant may take one of these swordsmen by surprise.

Basic Curriculum: Fencing, Rider

Swordsman Knacks: Exploit Weakness (Shaktishaalee), Cavalry Attack, Charge (Fencing Weapon), Whirl

Apprentice: An Apprentice of Shaktishaalee uses the same attacking motions when on foot as he does on his horse. You can use your Cavalry Attack Knack even when on foot, instead of your Attack (Fencing Weapon) Knack.

Students of this Swordsman School do not get free Membership in the Swordsman's Guild. Instead, they get an extra Rank of the Cavalry Attack Knack.

Journeyman: The Shaktishaalee journeyman can show why his style is credited with producing the finest cavalry swordsmen in the world. You get a free Rank of the Cavalry Attack Knack. It is possible to increase your Rank in this Knack to 6 in this fashion. If you do not increase your Cavalry Attack Rank to 6 at this time, you may later increase it from 5 to 6 by spending 25 XP.

Master: A Shaktishaalee master demonstrates why the style's name means "Mighty." When you roll damage from a Cavalry Attack, you can re-roll the damage roll result once and pick which of the two totals to keep as your final result.

For instance, if you have a Brawn of 4 and made 3 Raises for damage on your roll, you would roll $4k0$ (Brawn) + $3k0$ (Raises for Damage) + $2k2$ (base damage from a tulwar) = $9k2$ damage. The first time you rolled, your dice come up 1, 4, 5, 6, 6, 7, 9, 16, and 23; keeping 2 dice gives you a damage roll of 39. On your second damage roll, your dice come up 2, 4, 7, 7, 7, 12, 18, and 19; keeping 2 dice gives you a damage roll of 37. You decide that you would rather inflict 39 Wounds on your enemy than 37, so he takes 39 Wounds.

Shan Dian Dao Te (Lightning Sword)

Country of Origin: Han Hua

Description: Shan Dian Dao Te is a fast and forceful style using the single-edged dao. The dao is the standard weapon of the Imperial infantry of Han Hua and this is the fighting style of the army's elite swordsmen. Swordsmen of this School use speed and strength to force their opponents' weapons out of attack position as they strike with deadly precision. The main weakness of this style is its military origin, which leads to predictable moves.

Basic Curriculum: Heavy Weapon, Athlete

Swordsman Knacks: Exploit Weakness (Shan Dian Dao Te), Beat (Dao), Corps-à-corps, Feint (Dao)

Apprentice: Apprentices of the Shan Dian Dao Te School learn to strike with amazing precision. When you make an Attack roll with a dao, you roll one extra unkept die (+1k0).

Students of the Shan Dian Dao Te School do not get free Membership in the Swordsman's Guild for joining this School. Instead, their dedication to improving their speed gives them the Combat Reflexes Advantage for free.

Journeyman: The Journeyman's devotion to rapid action grows to new heights. When you roll for initiative, you roll one extra Action die, then use your Combat Reflexes ability to re-roll one of your Action dice before you select which one to discard. For example, if you have a Panache of 4, you would roll five Action dice, re-roll one of your choice, and then decide which four of the five dice you wish to keep as your Action dice for that Round of combat.

Master: The Master of Shan Dian Dao Te moves so quickly that it is difficult to see his actions. You get +10 to your Initiative total and roll and keep one extra Action Die.

Tie Xiong Kung (Iron Bear Attack)

Country of Origin: Koryo

Description: Tie Xiong Kung is a hard-striking martial art that focuses on inflicting as much damage as possible to neutralize the enemy's threat quickly and efficiently. student. The style has been taught for over seventeen centuries, originating among warrior-heroes in what is now the kingdom of Koryo, and is named after its legendary founder Tie Xiong, an amazing man of enormous strength and courage.

This style teaches students to keep their opponents at the edge of their arms' reach, where they can be struck readily with powerful kicks and hand attacks, and incoming attacks can be met with blocks that are so forceful that they can also cause injury. The major weakness of the style is its dependence upon a specific distance that must be maintained. An enemy who comes in too close will disrupt the tactic, at which point the student must retreat or force his opponent back into the proper range.

Basic Curriculum: Hard Martial Arts, Athlete

Swordsman Knacks: Exploit Weakness (Tie Xiong Kung), Kick, Knife Hand, Power Block (use as an active Defense; if successful, it does hand-to-hand damage to an unarmed opponent.)

Apprentice: Apprentices of Tie Xiong Kung are taught to strike as hard as they can with every attack they make. Your Knife Hand attacks now do 1K2 damage.

Students of Tie Xiong Kung do not gain membership in the Swordsman's Guild for free when they take this Swordsman School. Instead, they get one extra Rank of one of the style's Swordsman Knacks at no extra cost.

Journeyman: Journeymen are taught in Tie Xiong Kung that weapons are merely extensions of an enemy's arm, and should be broken, just as the arm should be. You may attempt to use a knife hand attack to break weapons. To try to hit the weapon, roll Finesse + Knife Hand against a TN equal to the opponent's TN to be Hit, plus two Raises for a called shot on the weapon. If you hit, make a Damage Roll against the weapon. To break it, your damage must meet a TN based on the kind of item you wish to destroy. This attack may not be parried with the weapon that is being attacked, and attempting to do so automatically allows the weapon to be hit. You may make additional Raises for extra damage as normal.

TABLE 3-20: XIONG KUNG WEAPON DURABILITY

Weapon Type	TN
Fencing Weapon	25
Heavy Weapon, Polearm	35
Knife, Dagger	25
Shield, Buckler	30
Other Weapons	As GM allows; recommend a minimum TN of 40.

The following modifiers may adjust these TNs:

- +5 for a quality weapon
- 5 for an inferior weapon
- +10 for a Dracheneisen item

Master: Years of exercise and practice have made the legs of a Te Shaoan Kung Master strong enough to kick like a horse. When you Kick, your opponent treats the damage as if it was taken from a Firearm instead of a normal attack, causing an extra Dramatic Wound for every 10 points he misses on the TN of his Wound Check instead of every 20.

Wu Tsain (“No Trouble”)

If your opponent is of choleric temper, seek to irritate him. Pretend to be weak, that he may grow arrogant.

—Zheng Ren, Bing Shu

Country of Origin: Khimal

Description: To say that Wu Tsain is a soft martial art is a serious understatement. Not only does it teach the use of the soft, circular defenses, it also completely non-violent. The student thwarts his opponent by confusing and disorienting them with sudden attacks that stop just short of making contact.

This is a relatively new martial, barely seventy years old. Its founder was a Feng Shui Shi who wanted to combine his need to protect himself with the philosophy of his religion. Every stance and motion in the style is analogous to one of the rules of geomancy. Hence, the practitioner prefers to turn his enemy’s energy back upon himself rather than to taint himself with the negative energies of an actual attack. The weakness of this style is this same pacifism. If an enemy knows his target will not truly struck back, he will attack without fear of reprisal.

Basic Curriculum: Soft Martial Arts, Feng shui Shi

Swordsman Knacks: Exploit Weakness (Wu Tsain), Escape, Leaping, Tagging (Unarmed)

Apprentice: Apprentices practice remaining calm in the face of an enemy’s attacks. You gain a Free Raise when you use Yield as an Active Defense.

Students of the Wu Tsain style do not get Membership in the Swordsman’s Guild for free from studying this Swordsman School. Instead, they learn how to make false attacks that disrupt their enemies’ chi. When you make a Tagging attack, you may choose to forego the usual option of discarding one of the victim’s Drama Dice or gaining a temporary Drama Die. If you do so, you may increase your adversary’s next Action Die by 1, plus the number of Raises you make to the Tagging roll. If this Action Die is increased past 10, then the Action Die is discarded.

Journeyman: Journeymen have become even more adept at defending themselves. You may now keep one extra die (+0k1) when you are using Yield as an Active Defense. In addition to that, you no longer need to forego the usual effects of a Tagging attack in order to use it to increase your enemy’s next Action Die. In other words, when you make a

Tagging attack, you increase your adversary’s next Action Die as described in your Apprentice Technique, and you still may either gain a temporary Drama Die or cause your opponent to discard one of his Drama Dice.

Master: Masters of Wu Tsain bend like reeds in the face of an attack. Your Rank in the Yield Knack is increased by 1. It is possible to increase your Rank in this Knack to a 6 in this fashion. If this does not increase your Yield Rank to 6, you may later increase it from 5 to 6 by spending 25 XP. Furthermore, you no longer have any choices to make when you make a successful Tagging attack. You now increase the next Action Die of you opponent, force him to lose a Drama Die, and gain a temporary Drama Die yourself if you succeed.

Ying Sun Wo (Hawk’s Grasp)

Kingdom of Origin: Tashil - Tiakhar

Description: Ying Sun Wo is a dangerous martial art, based on the attacks of hawks and other wild predators. It does not limit its moves to those considered sporting or even honorable in most societies but rather focuses on directly attacking an opponent’s vulnerable areas and pressure points. Over time, teachers of Ying Sun Wo have migrated to Tiakhar where it is now the predominant martial art among noblemen and land-based military.

The originators of this style spent much of their time in the mountains of Tashil observing wild animals to find new moves to mimic. They developed variations on a brutal short and long attack rhythm that can be extremely effective. However, if an opponent can detect the pattern in a practitioner’s style, he can anticipate the moves.

Basic Curriculum: Hard Martial Arts, Dirty Fighting.

Swordsman Knacks: Claw Hand, Eye-gouge, Throat Strike, Exploit Weakness (Ying Sun Wo).

Apprentice: The first thing an Apprentice learns is to fend off blows. You get a Free Raise when you try to use Block as an Active Defense.

As an Apprentice, you spent a significant amount of time in the forests of Tashil or Tiakhar observing predators in their natural surroundings. Students of Ying Sun Wo do not gain free Membership in the Swordsman’s Guild when they take this School. Instead, the time you have spent in the wilderness earns you the Hunter Skill for free.

Journeyman: The Masters teach that an adversary is like a serpent that must be dealt with the way a falcon defeats an opponent, by closing its talons quickly and firmly around the snake’s neck.

You have learned the Sheh Ji Bai Sho “Snake Defeating Hand” attack, a Claw Hand strike to the throat of your enemy. To make this attack, you must spend two Action Dice (only one of which needs to be “legal” for making an attack on this Phase). You then roll Finesse + Claw Hand or Finesse + Throat Strike, whichever Knack has the higher Rank. The TN for this roll is the target’s TN to be Hit + 20. If this attack succeeds, you automatically inflict one Dramatic Wound, reduce the target’s TN to be hit by 5, and then roll for damage from a barehanded attack as normal. You may make Raises on the roll to hit in order to roll extra dice for damage as normal.

Master: Masters of Ying Sun Wo have become incredibly adept at performing the Sheh Ji Bai Shou attack, and often use it in conjunction with an extra strike from their foot or free hand. Performing the strike no longer requires you to spend 2 Actions, and the TN is now equal to the victim’s TN to be Hit + 10. If you wish, you may Raise the TN of the Sheh Ji Bai



Shou by 10. If you do so and successfully hit with the attack, you may spend another Action die (which need not be currently legal) to allow you to make an attack with the Kick, Attack (Hard Martial Arts) or Attack (Dirty Fighting) Knacks on the target immediately.

Zheng Yi Quan (Ancient Righteous Fist) (7th Sea™)

Country of Origin: Han Hua

Zheng Yi Quan is the oldest martial arts style in all of Cathay, with a documented history that spans over 2000 years. It began among an order of holy men who lived in seclusion in a secret mountain shrine. In the many centuries since then, the monks were forced from their temple to make their way throughout the land, teaching their fighting method to peasants to help them defend themselves against bandits.

It is one of the few martial arts to embrace both hard linear motions and softer circular techniques in one discipline. The style focuses on mobility and defense, especially against the arrows that bandits and highwaymen use. Its main strength is its broad array of attacks and defenses but this is also its main weakness; with so many options to choose from, the student may hesitate while selecting and thus present his enemy with a split second of vulnerability that may be exploited.

Basic Curriculum: Hard Martial Arts, Soft Martial Arts. Swordsman Knacks: Leaping, Missile Defense, Snap Kick, Exploit Weakness (Zheng Yi Quan).

Apprentice: The Apprentice learns that the only use of Zheng Yi Quan is self-defense. You may add your Mastery Level in Zheng Yi Quan to your TN to be Hit.

Students of Zheng Yi Quan do not gain membership in the Swordsman's Guild for free when they take this Swordsman School. Instead, they get one extra Rank of one of the style's Swordsman Knacks, without extra cost.

Journeyman: Journeymen practice avoiding danger by leaping away from it. In fact, many of them can leap straight up over an enemy's head to avoid his attack. You get one Rank of the Leaping Knack for no extra cost. If your Leaping Rank is already 5, it increases to 6; otherwise, you may later increase it from 5 to 6 by spending 25 Experience Points.

Master: Masters of Zheng Yi Quan have learned the terrible secret of the Lung Shiji ("Dragon Strike"), an act that builds up and focuses the martial artist's qi into one mighty and accurate strike. On Phase 10 of a Round of combat, you may spend all your remaining Held and current Action Dice to make an attack using any of the following Knacks: Attack (Hard Martial Arts), Kick, Throat Strike, Knife Hand, Corps-à-corps, Grapple, or Joint Lock. Each Action Die you spend on this attack gives you an extra kept die (+1k1) for your attack roll.

New Swordsman Knacks (7th Sea™)

Attack him where he is unprepared, appear where you are not expected.

— Zheng Ren, Bing Shu

Arc: You have spent months learning the fine art of arcing a shot to hit distant targets. For each Rank in this Knack, the archer increases the range of his bow by 5.

Boarding: When your vessel is engaged in a boarding action (see the Advanced Naval Combat Rules in *Pirate Nations™*), you gain a bonus to all rolls in that boarding action equal to your Rank in this Knack. If you are rolling out the combat instead of merely using the Boarding Action Table, the Brute Squads that represent your Crew gain this bonus to all of their rolls, and to their TN to be Hit.

Cavalry Attack: This replaces the Attack (Fencing) Knack when using a fencing weapon from horseback. This is an Advanced Knack for the Fencing Skill, but swordsmen from the Gustavo School (see *Los Vagos™*, and *Shaktishaalee* above) treat this as a Basic Knack.

Charge: You try to hit early and often, then withdraw to a place of safety. You may lower one of your Action Dice by your Rank in this Knack (to a minimum of 1) just before Phase 1 of the first Round of each combat.

Claw Hand: A claw hand is a special barehanded attack that uses your fingers to apply pressure deep within the tissues of your enemy's body. While this results in a momentary grapple, the hold is released as quickly as it is achieved. To make such an attack, roll Finesse + Claw Hand against the TN to be Hit of your enemy, plus 10. The damage from a claw hand is the same as from an ordinary bare-handed attack, but since you are attacking your enemy's pressure points, he will be stunned as well as injured, and loses his next Action die, if he has any remaining this Round.

Escape: When you are attempting to break a Grapple that you have been placed in, each Rank in this Knack negates one Free Raise your opponent has gained from improving his hold. This is the same as the Escape Knack found in the *Players' Guide*, but it counts as a Basic Knack for students of the Wu Tsain School.

Horse Archery: This replaces the Attack (Bow) Knack when firing a bow from horseback. It is the same as the Horse Archery Knack in the *7th Sea Players' Guide™*, but it is considered a Basic Knack for students of the Buslayevich, Vahiy, and Chima Gongjian Shou schools.

Joint Lock: This is the same as the Joint Lock Knack described in the Soft Martial Arts Skill. It is not considered a Basic Knack for students of the Ba Wo style because their Basic Curriculum does not include the Soft Martial Arts Skill.

Kick: A Kick inflicts 2k1 damage, but raises the TN that you are trying to hit by 10. You must declare a Kick before rolling the attack, and use this Knack instead of your normal Attack Knack. This is the same as the Kick Knack found in the *7th Sea Players' Guide™*, but it is considered a Basic Knack for students of the Tie Xiong Kung and Ki Kwanji Schools.

Knife Hand: A Knife Hand strike is a kind of bare-handed attack that does 1k1 damage, but raises the TN you are trying to hit by 5. You must declare a Knife Hand before rolling the attack, and use this Knack instead of your normal Attack Knack. This is the same as the Knife Hand Knack found in the Hard Martial Arts Skill, but it is considered to be a Basic Knack for students of the Te Xiong Kung School.

Leaping: You can jump higher and farther than most people. This can often come in handy when exploring dusty tombs or fleeing across rooftops. In addition, you use this Knack as your Defense Knack while leaping. This is the same as the Leaping Knack found in the *7th Sea Players' Guide™*, but it is considered a Basic Knack for students of the Gu Yi Quan and Wu Tsain Schools.

Missile Defense: You have learned how to deflect arrows and other missiles that are fired your direction without being injured by them. You may use this as your Defense Knack when defending yourself against thrown weapons, arrows, stones from slings, and crossbow bolts, but not against firearms, melee attacks, or cannons. If you choose to use this

Knack for an Active Defense, you may make two Raises to the Wits + Missile Defense roll to catch the missile rather than deflecting it. If you succeed in catching the missile, you gain a Drama Die that will disappear at the end of the current Round if it has not been used by then (and obviously, it never gets to become an Experience Point).

Power Block: As described elsewhere, blocking is the act of putting your arm or leg between yourself and your enemies' strikes. Power blocking is the act of hitting your enemy's arm or leg as you block his unarmed attack against you, so that even your defenses become attacks. While Power Block may not be used to determine your TN to be Hit, you may use it as a Defense Knack to make an Active Defense against any bare-handed attack, such as Attack (Dirty Fighting), Attack (Pugilism), Grapple, Kick, and so on. If you succeed at the Active Defense, you have blocked the attack as normal. If you Raise the TN of your Active Defense, you inflict 1k1 worth of damage to your attacker (you do not add your Brawn to this damage). You may make additional Raises to increase the damage as if this was an ordinary attack, but you may not make a called shot.

Snap Kick: A snap kick is a counterattack made with no thought to your own defense. It is a quick kick made at an oncoming opponent at the moment when he is attempting to attack you, in the hopes that your foot will stop him from continuing his attack. When an opponent attacks you, you may spend a Held or current action (not an Interrupt Action) to perform a snap kick. To do so, roll Wits + Snap Kick as an Attack Roll against the attacking opponent. If you hit, you deal 2k2 Wounds to him (you do not add your Brawn to this damage roll). If this causes a Dramatic Wound to your opponent, then the attack he was about to make is canceled without effect. You may declare Raises to increase the damage or to make a called shot if you wish.

Throat Strike: Using this Knack, you strike your opponent squarely across the throat. You declare that you are making a Throat Strike, and roll to attack using this Knack. The TN to hit your opponent is raised by 15 when using this Knack, but if it's successful (and not avoided with Active Defense) you inflict an automatic Dramatic Wound to your target, rather than rolling for damage. This is the same as the Throat Strike Knack found in the *Players' Guide*, but it is considered to be a Basic Knack for students of the Ba Wo School.

Uppercut: An uppercut is an aggressive bare-handed attack that leaves you open for a moment. When you declare an Uppercut, use this Knack to attack. You roll two extra unkept dice (+2k0) for damage if your attack is successful. However, your TN to be hit drops to 5 for this Phase only, and you may not use any Active Defenses for the rest of this Phase. This is the same as the Uppercut Knack in the *7th Sea Players' Guide™*, but it is considered to be a Basic Knack for students of the Ki Kwanji School.

Whirl: Whirl is a spinning attack designed to take out multiple unskilled enemies at once. For each Rank you have in this Knack, you may add 2 to your Attack Roll when attacking Brutes. Thus, a Hero with a Rank 3 in Whirl would increase a roll of 19 to 25 when attacking Brutes.

New Prestige Classes

Chin Te (Morning Hand) (d20™)

This fighting style from Lanna descended from a time when the peasants rose up, flails in hand, to overthrow corrupt government officials. Fortunately, the people love their King and Queen, so there is little chance that it will be used other than to defend the kingdom.

Requirements

To qualify as a student of Chin Te, a character must fulfill the following criteria:

Base Attack Bonus: +6.

Nationality: Lanna.

Feats: Proficiency with the chain, spiked chain, or some sort of chain-based weapon, or with some sort of flail; Improved Disarm.

Game Rule Information

Alignment: Any non-evil.

Hit Dice: d8.

TABLE 3-21: THE CHIN TE SWORDSMAN

	Base	Fort	Ref	Will	
Level	Attack	Save	Save	Save	Special
1	+1	+2	+2	+0	Two-Handed
2	+2	+3	+3	+0	Disarm
3	+3	+3	+3	+1	Two Weapons
4	+4	+4	+4	+1	Armor of Insight
5	+5	+4	+4	+1	Wall of Strength

Class Skills

The Chin Te practitioner's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Balance (Dex), Bluff (Cha), Craft (Int), Disguise (Cha), Escape Artist (Dex), Hide (Dex), Jump (Str), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Profession (Wis), Spot (Wis), Swim (Str), and Tumble (Dex). See Chapter 4 in *Player's Handbook™* for skill descriptions.

Skill Points at Each Additional Level: 4 + Int modifier.

Class Features

The following are class features of Chin Te:

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: A Chin Te practitioner is proficient with all simple and martial weapons. He gains no proficiency with armor or shields.

Two-Handed: Starting at 1st level, a Chin Te practitioner gains the benefits of Ambidexterity and Two Weapon Fighting when he is wielding a flail or chain-based weapon (or double weapon) in both hands. He also gets a +2 competence bonus to his attack rolls when using the appropriate weapons.

Disarm: Starting at 2nd level, a Chin Te practitioner ignores weapon size penalties when attempting to disarm an opponent. He also ignores penalties when his opponent uses a two-handed weapon, and gains a +2 bonus on all Disarm attempts.

Two Weapons: Starting at 3rd level, when taking a full attack, a Chin Te practitioner receives the Feat: Improved Two Weapon Fighting, but only when fighting with a chain or double weapon.

Armor of Insight: At 4th level, a Chin Te practitioner gains his Wisdom modifier (if positive) as a bonus to his AC. However, he loses this bonus whenever he loses his Dexterity bonus to his AC.

Wall of Strength: Starting at 5th level, when taking a total defense action, a Chin Te practitioner gains a deflection bonus to his AC equal to 1/2 his highest attack bonus.

Chima Gongjian Shou (Morning Hand) (d20™)

The Steppes riders of Xian Bei are known throughout Cathay for their remarkable ability to conduct warfare from horseback. There are many stories throughout the ages of opponents who were completely convinced that rider and horse were one entity with limitless endurance and inhuman cunning. See Chapter 4 in *Player's Handbook™* for skill descriptions.

Requirements

To qualify as a student of the Chima Gongjian Shou School, a character must fulfill the following criteria:

Base Attack Bonus: +5.

Feats: Mounted Combat, Weapon Focus (short bow).

Skills: Ride 10 ranks.

Nationality: Xian Bei.

Game Rule Information

Alignment: Any.

Hit Dice: d10.

TABLE 3-22: CHIMA GONGJIAN SHOU HORSEMAN

	Base	Fort	Ref	Will	
Level	Attack	Save	Save	Save	Special
1	+1	+2	+2	+0	Apprentice
2	+2	+3	+3	+1	Rapid Fire
3	+3	+3	+3	+1	Mounted Fury
4	+4	+4	+4	+1	Break Charge
5	+5	+4	+4	+2	Speed of Thought

Class Skills

The Chima Gongjian Shou practitioner's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Animal Empathy (Cha), Balance (Dex), Bluff (Cha), Craft (Int), Handle Animal (Cha), Jump (Str), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Profession (Wis), Ride (Dex), Spot (Wis), Swim (Str), and Tumble (Dex). See Chapter 4 in *Player's Handbook™* for skill descriptions.

Skill Points at Each Additional Level: 4 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the Chima Gongjian Shou School:

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: A Chima Gongjian Shou practitioner is proficient with all simple and martial weapons. He is proficient with light and medium armor, but not with shields.

Efficient Bow: Starting at 1st level, a Chima Gongjian Shou practitioner makes every shot count. Whenever he fires an arrow, he rolls extra dice for damage. As an Apprentice, he rolls 1 extra die; as a Journeyman, 2 extra dice; and as a Master, 3 extra dice. The highest roll is used for damage. For example, a 5th level Chima Gongjian Shou practitioner (a journeyman) fires a composite longbow at his foe. He rolls 3d8 (1d8 as the

base damage, and 2d8 because he is a journeyman) and scores a 2, a 4, and an 8. The 8 would be used as the weapon's damage.

Rapid Fire: Starting at 2nd level, a Chima Gongjian Shou practitioner can make a full attack action and take a full move in any given round. He can only use this ability if he is mounted and attacking using a bow.

Mounted Fury: Starting at 3rd level, a Chima Gongjian Shou practitioner is like a blur during combat. When he is mounted and wielding a bow, he gains his Cha modifier (if positive) as a bonus to his initiative. Further, in any round in which he moves at least 5 feet, he gains his Cha modifier (if positive) as a bonus to his AC.

Break Charge: Starting at 4th level, a Chima Gongjian Shou practitioner can attack an opponent who charges him. Whenever a Chima Gongjian Shou practitioner is charged, he may make an attack of opportunity against the charging foe. The attacker must make a Concentration check (DC 10 + half the Chima Gongjian Shou practitioner class level + damage dealt). If unsuccessful, the charger must stop where he is. The charge ends and he is left with a standard action for the round. The Chima Gongjian Shou practitioner cannot use this ability if he is flat-footed or does not have his bow readied.

Speed of Thought: Starting at 5th level, a Chima Gongjian Shou practitioner can draw, nock, and fire an arrow in the blink of an eye. Whenever he makes a full attack action (using a bow), he may make one additional attack at his highest attack bonus. If he has the Rapid Shot feat, he may make a total of 2 additional attacks (one for this ability, and one for the Rapid Shot feat), but if he chooses to do this, all of his attacks for the round suffer a -2 penalty.

Break Charge: Starting at 4th level, a Chima Gongjian Shou practitioner can attack an opponent who charges him. Whenever a Chima Gongjian Shou practitioner is charged, he may make an attack of opportunity against the charging foe. The attacker must make a Concentration check (DC 10 + half the Chima Gongjian Shou practitioner class level + damage dealt). If unsuccessful, the charger must stop where he is. The charge ends and he is left with a standard action for the round. The Chima Gongjian Shou practitioner cannot use this ability if he is flat-footed or does not have his bow readied.

Mounted Fury: Starting at 5th level, a Chima Gongjian Shou practitioner is like a blur during combat. When he is mounted and wielding a bow, he gains his Cha modifier (if positive) as a bonus to his initiative. Further, in any round in which he moves at least 5 feet, he gains his Cha modifier (if positive) as a bonus to his AC.

Hua Shao Ren Te (Flashy Blade Style) (d20™)

Using the *jian* (straight double-bladed weapon), the Hua Shao Ren Te School teaches the graceful fusion of sword attacks for offense and soft martial arts moves for defense. Extensive practice on "slow work" enables students to perfect each position and weed out imperfections in their technique.

Requirements

To qualify as a student of the Hua Shao Ren Te, a character must fulfill the following criteria:

Feats: Weapon Finesse (any sword), Weapon Focus (any sword).

Skills: Bluff 9 ranks.

Nationality: Any Cathayan.

Game Rule Information

Alignment: Any.

Hit Dice: d10.

TABLE 3-23: THE HUA SHAO REN TE SWORDSMAN

Level	Base Attack	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+1	+2	+2	+0	AC Bonus
2	+2	+3	+3	+1	Lunge
3	+3	+3	+3	+1	Flashing Hands
4	+4	+4	+4	+1	Tagging
5	+5	+4	+4	+2	Strike the Heart

Class Skills

The Hua Shao Ren Te practitioner's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Balance (Dex), Bluff (Cha), Craft (Int), Jump (Str), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Profession (Wis), Ride (Dex), Spot (Wis), Swim (Str), Tumble (Dex). See *Chapter 4 in Player's Handbook™* for skill descriptions.

Skill Points at Each Additional Level: 4 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the Hua Shao Ren Te School:

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: A Hua Shao Ren Te practitioner is proficient with all simple and martial weapons, as well as light and medium armor, and bucklers.

AC Bonus: Starting at 1st level, a Hua Shao Ren Te student gains one-half of his class level as a bonus to his AC. When he takes a Full Defense, he gains one half of his base attack bonus as a bonus to his AC.

Lunge: Starting at 2nd level, the student of Hua Shao Ren Te can make a lunge attack if he is no farther than 5 feet away from his opponent. When making a lunge attack, he can only make one attack, which is made at his highest attack bonus. When making a lunge attack, he gains double his Strength modifier as a bonus to attack and damage. If the Hua Shao Ren Te student is using Weapon Finesse with his weapon, he gains double his Strength modifier in addition to his Dexterity modifier.

Flashing Hands: Starting at 3rd level, a Hua Shao Ren Te practitioner can confuse his opponents, defeating some of their defense. Once per round, and once per opponent per battle, he may make a Bluff check. His opponent must make a Sense Motive check (DC equal to the Hua Shao Ren Te practitioner's Bluff check). If the Sense Motive check is unsuccessful, the opponent is considered flat-footed until his action on the following round.

Tagging: Starting at 4th level, a Hua Shao Ren Te practitioner gains the Tagging feat as a bonus feat.

Strike the Heart: Starting at 5th level, a Hua Shao Ren Te practitioner makes particularly devastating lunge attacks. When lunging, the threat range of his weapon is doubled (this stacks with other things that increase the weapon's critical threat range) and the critical modifier is increased by 2.

Jasni (d20™)

This is the Swordsman School favored by the pirates of Tiakhar, the most feared slavers in the Qi Guo. This School enables the Tiakhari "Volunteer" Navy to board a vessel and capture its crew and passengers in a highly efficient manner.

Requirements

To qualify as a student of the Jasni School, a character must fulfill the following criteria:

Feats: Weapon Finesse (any), Weapon Focus (any), Improved Disarm, Corps-a-Corps.

Skills: Profession: Sailor 10 ranks.

Nationality: Any.

Game Rule Information

Alignment: Any.

Hit Dice: d8.

TABLE 3-24: THE JASNI SWORDSMAN

Level	Base Attack	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+1	+2	+2	+0	Bridge the Gap
2	+2	+3	+3	+1	Close Combat
3	+3	+3	+3	+1	Sure Feet
4	+4	+4	+4	+1	Boarding Maneuvers
5	+5	+4	+4	+2	Shatter the Blade

Class Skills

The Jasni practitioner's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Balance (Dex), Bluff (Cha), Craft (Int), Disguise (Cha), Gather Information (Cha), Hide (Dex), Jump (Str), Knowledge (Seamanship) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Profession (Wis), Ride (Dex), Search (Int), Spot (Wis), Swim (Str), Tumble (Dex). See Chapter 4 in *Player's Handbook*™ for skill descriptions.

Skill Points at Each Additional Level: 4 + Int modifier.

Class Features

The following are class features of a Jasni practitioner:

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: A Jasni practitioner is proficient with all simple and martial weapons, medium and light armor, and shields.

Bridge the Gap: Starting at 1st level, when a Jasni practitioner is on board a ship, he may, once per round, avoid an attack by making a Balance check (DC equal to the attacker's total attack roll.) Further, when your vessel performs a boarding action against another vessel, you may choose to take part in the boarding. If you do so, consider any of the defender's losses as captives taken rather than as casualties. These captives are quickly "escorted" below decks of your own vessel during the course of the boarding action.

Close Combat: At 2nd level, a Jasni practitioner gains a +4 bonus to attack and damage rolls whenever he is in close combat (i.e., within 5 ft.) with an opponent. To gain this benefit, he must use a smaller weapon than his opponent who cannot be wielding a weapon larger than medium-sized.

Sure Feet: Starting at 3rd level, a Jasni practitioner gains a competence bonus equal to his class level whenever he makes Balance checks.

Boarding Maneuvers: Starting at 4th level, a Jasni practitioner who leads a boarding party grants a morale bonus equal to one-half his class level to all members of the boarding party. This bonus applies to all attack and damage rolls.

Shatter the Blade: Starting at 5th level, a Jasni practitioner deals direct damage to an opponent's weapon whenever he tries to disarm him. Whenever he makes a Disarm attempt (on his own action), he first makes an attack roll against his opponent's weapon, dealing damage as normal. Then, he makes a Disarm check, adding the damage dealt to

the result of his Disarm check. Note that the attack counts as part of the Disarm attempt.

Ki Kwanji (Kick Fight) (d20™)

Founded as a physical and spiritual exercise, over the past 50 years Ki Kwanji has become an extremely popular sport, much to Lanna's religious leaders. The King enjoys these competitions, so there is not much they can do to discourage it.

Requirements

To qualify as a student of the Ki Kwanji School, a character must fulfill the following criteria:

Feats: Improved Unarmed Strike, Weapon Focus (Unarmed Strike).

Base Attack Bonus: +4.

Game Rule Information

Alignment: Any.

Hit Dice: d8.

TABLE 3-25: THE KI KWANJI MARTIAL ARTIST

Level	Base Attack	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+1	+2	+2	+2	Extra Attack
2	+2	+3	+3	+3	Kick Attack
3	+3	+3	+3	+3	Mighty Kick
4	+4	+4	+4	+4	Flying Kick
5	+5	+4	+4	+4	Leaping Kick

Class Skills

The Ki Kwanji practitioner's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Balance (Dex), Bluff (Cha), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Disguise (Cha), Gather Information (Cha), Hide (Dex), Jump (Str), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Profession (Wis), Ride (Dex), Search (Int), Spot (Wis), Swim (Str), Tumble (Dex). See Chapter 4 in *Player's Handbook*™ for skill descriptions.

Skill Points at Each Additional Level: 4 + Int modifier.

Class Features

The following are class features of a Ki Kwanji practitioner:

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: A Ki Kwanji student gains no proficiency with weapons or armor.

Extra Attack: Starting at 1st level, a Ki Kwanji student gains one additional attack at his highest attack bonus when taking a full attack action. When using the ability, all of his attacks for the round suffer a –2 penalty. This ability stacks with similar abilities.

Kick Attack: Starting at 2nd level, a Ki Kwanji student can, once per round and once per day per 2 class levels, make a devastating kick attack. When making this attack, which must be part of a full attack action, he forgoes half of his attacks for the round. If the attack is successful, the Kick Attack deals triple damage.

Mighty Kick: Starting at 3rd level, when the Ki Kwanji practitioner makes a critical hit, the target takes quadruple (×4) damage. When using this ability, all of the Ki Kwanji fighter's attacks for the round suffer a –2 penalty. This ability stacks with similar abilities.

Flying Kick: Flying Kick: Starting at 4th level, a Ki Kwanji practitioner can make a flying kick attack as part of a charge action. If the attack is successful, he automatically scores a critical hit.

Leaping Kick: Starting at 5th level, a Ki Kwanji practitioner can, once per fight, make a devastating leaping kick against his foe. He makes a single attack as a full attack action. If this attack is successful, the attack deals quadruple (×4) damage. If the attack is a critical hit, the attack deals six times (×6) as much damage as normal.

Shaktishaalee ("Mighty") (d20™)

The national weapon of Tashil is the tulwar, a deadly curved cavalry combat weapon suited for cutting and slashing. Shaktishaalee swordsmen attack with great ferocity, cutting down anyone who tries to stop them.

Requirements

To qualify as a student of the Shaktishaalee School, a character must fulfill the following criteria:

- Base Attack Bonus:** +5.
- Skills:** Ride 10 ranks.
- Nationality:** Tashil.

Game Rule Information

Alignment: Any.
Hit Die: d8.

TABLE 3-26: THE SHAKTISHAALEE SWORDSMAN

Level	Base Attack	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+1	+1	+2	+1	Mounted Combat
2	+2	+2	+3	+2	Ride-By Attack
3	+3	+3	+3	+3	Extra Attack
4	+4	+4	+4	+4	Exploit Weakness
5	+5	+4	+4	+4	Cavalry Charge

Class Skills

The Shaktishaalee practitioner's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Animal Empathy (Cha), Balance (Dex), Handle Animal (Cha), Heal (Wis), Jump (Str), Ride (Dex), Tumble (Dex). See Chapter 4 in *Player's Handbook™* for skill descriptions.

Skill Points at Each Additional Level: 4 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are the class features of the Shaktishaalee School:

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: A student of this school is proficient with all non-exotic curved weapons and light and medium armor.

Mounted Combat: At 1st level, a Shaktishaalee Apprentice gains the Feat: Mounted Combat. In addition, they receive +2 to their checks for Animal Empathy, Handle Animal, and Ride.

Ride-By Attack: At 2nd level a student at this school receives the bonus Feat: Ride-By Attack even if he lacks the prerequisites.

Extra Attack: Starting at 3rd level, a Shaktishaalee practitioner gains two additional attacks at his highest attack bonus when taking a full attack action. When using this ability, all of his attacks for the round suffer a –4 penalty. This ability stacks with similar abilities.

Exploit Weakness: At 4th level, a Shaktishaalee practitioner can exploit weaknesses in his opponents' defenses. Once per round (and once per opponent per battle) he may make a Will saving throw (DC equal to the opponent's AC). If this save is successful, for the remainder of the battle, he may ignore half of the opponent's armor bonus.

Master: At 5th level, a Shaktishaalee master is brilliantly adept at a cavalry charge, able to keep control of his horse and maintain formation. When engaged in a cavalry charge, he deals double maximum damage with his tulwar. However, since a charge uses a great deal of energy, he suffers a –2 penalty to his AC for 1 round.

Shan Dian Dao Te (Lightning Sword) (d20™)

The dao is the standard weapon of the Imperial infantry of Han Hua and Shan Dian Dao Te is the fighting style of the army's elite swordsmen who use speed and strength as they strike with deadly precision.

Requirements

To qualify as a student of Shan Dian Dao Te, a character must fulfill the following criteria:

- Base Attack Bonus:** +6.
- Ability:** Dex 13+.
- Feats:** Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative.
- Nationality:** Han Hua.

Game Rule Information

Alignment: Any lawful.
Hit Die: d10.

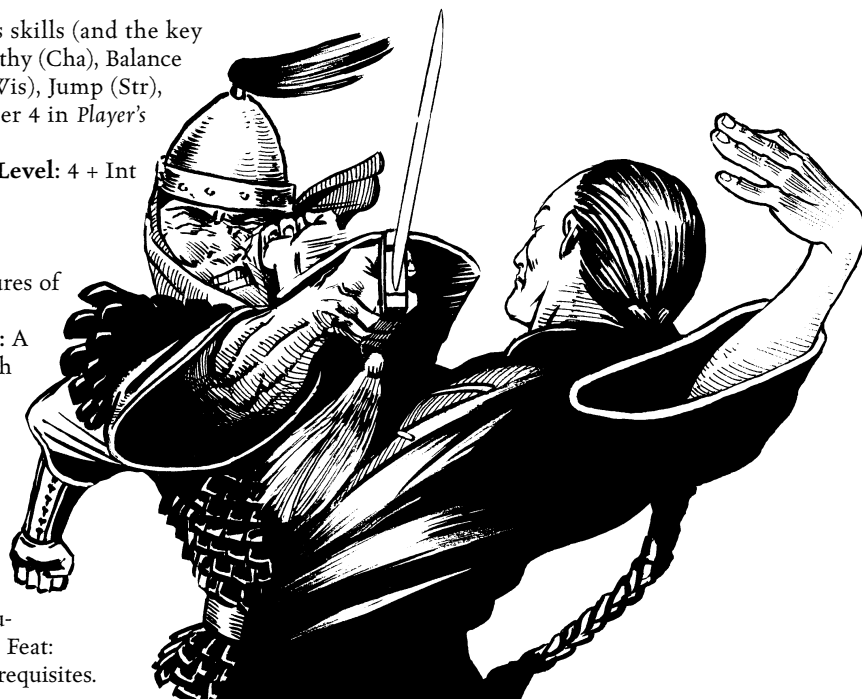


TABLE 3-27: THE SHAN DIAN DAO TE SWORDSMAN

Level	Base Attack	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+2	+1	+2	+1	Bonus Feats
2	+3	+2	+3	+2	Improved Swordsman
3	+4	+3	+4	+3	Improved Initiative
4	+5	+4	+4	+4	Lightning Attack
5	+6	+4	+5	+4	Bonus Feats

Class Skills

The Shan Dian Dao Te practitioner's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Balance (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Listen (Wis), Sense Motive (Wis), and Tumble (Dex). See Chapter 4 in *Player's Handbook™* for skill descriptions.

Skill Points at Each Additional Level: 4 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are the class features of the Shan Dian Dao Te:

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: A student of Shan Dian Dao Te is proficient with all dao, as well as light and medium armor. This school does not permit use of shields.

Bonus Feats: At 1st level, Shan Dian Dao Te Apprentices receive the bonus Feats: Dodge and Mobility even if they lack the prerequisites.

Improved Swordsman (Shan Dian Dao): At 2nd level, Shan Dian Dao Te students receive the bonus Feat: Exotic Weapon Proficiency (dao).

Improved Initiative: At 3rd level, the practitioner can add a bonus up +4 to his Initiative if he takes an equal penalty to his Attack.

Lightning Attack: At 4th level, on the first round of a combat, the shan dian dao swordsman gains the Feat: Spring Attack even if he lacks the prerequisites.

Bonus Feats: At 5th level, when inflicting damage, the Shan Dian Dao Te Master gains the Feats: Whirlwind Attack even if he lacks the prerequisites and may make Whirlwind Attack as standard action instead of full round attack.

Tie Xiong Kung (Iron Bear Attack) (a20™)

Originating among warrior-heroes in what is now the peaceful kingdom of Koryo, the ancient school of Tie Xiong Kung is a hard-striking martial art designed to inflict as much damage as possible while neutralizing the enemy's threat quickly and efficiently.

Requirements

To qualify as a student of Tie Xiong Kung School, a character must fulfill the following criteria:

Base Attack Bonus: +5.

Feat: Combat Reflexes.

Nationality: Koryo.

Game Rule Information

Alignment: Any lawful.

Hit Die: d10.

TABLE 3-28: THE TIE XIONG KUNG MARTIAL ARTIST

Level	Base Attack	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+2	+1	+2	+1	Bonus Feats
2	+3	+2	+3	+2	Improved Swordsman
3	+4	+3	+4	+3	Improved Initiative
4	+5	+4	+4	+4	Lightning Attack
5	+6	+4	+5	+4	Bonus Feats

Class Skills

The Tie Xiong Kung practitioner's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Balance (Dex), Climb (Str), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Move Silently (Dex), Tumble (Dex), and Wilderness Lore (Wis). See Chapter 4 in *Player's Handbook™* for skill descriptions.

Skill Points at Each Additional Level: 4 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are the class features of the Tie Xiong Kung:

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: A student of this school receives no weapons or armor proficiencies.

Apprentice: At 1st level, the Tie Xiong Kung Apprentice receives the bonus feats: Unarmed Strike and gains an additional +1 at every other level Improved Initiative.

Improved Initiative: Starting at 2nd level, the student receives the bonus feats: Improved Initiative even if he lacks the prerequisites.

Improved Trip: Starting at 3rd level the Tie Xiong Kung practitioner gains the bonus feat: Improved Trip even if he lacks the prerequisites.

Fist of Oak: At 4th level, the Tie Xiong Kung practitioner gains the feat: Fist of Oak (Stunning Fist), even if he lacks the prerequisites.

Tree Force: At 5th level, once per battle, a Tie Xiong Kung Master can call upon Tree Force by making a Will saving throw (DC 20) to deliver a single blow that does triple damage. He may not make any additional attacks on the same round he delivers this blow.

Wu Tsain ("No Trouble") (a20™)

Living high in the mountains in relative solitude, the people of Khimal have no need of aggressively offense martial skills. Hence, they have developed the Wu Tsain in which, the practitioner prefers to turn his enemy's energy back upon him rather than to taint himself with the negative energies of an actual attack.

Requirements

To qualify as a student of the Wu Tsain School, a character must fulfill the following criteria:

Base Attack Bonus: +5.

Feats: Combat Reflexes, Lightning Reflexes

Nationality: Khimal.

Game Rule Information

Alignment: Lawful only.

Hit Die: d6.

TABLE 3-29: THE WU TSAIN MARTIAL ARTIST

Level	Base Attack	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+2	+1	+3	+2	Side-Step
2	+3	+2	+4	+3	Calm
3	+4	+3	+5	+4	Bonus Feats
4	+5	+4	+5	+4	Fleet-Footed
5	+6	+4	+6	+5	Always Alert

Class Skills

The Wu Tsain practitioner's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Balance (Dex), Climb (Str), Escape Artist (Dex), Hide (Dex), Jump (Str), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), and Tumble (Dex). See Chapter 4 in *Player's Handbook™* for skill descriptions.

Skill Points at Each Additional Level: 4 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are the class features of the Wu Tsain school:

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: A student of this school receives no weapon or armor proficiencies.

Side-Step: At 1st level, the Wu Tsain Apprentice learns Side-Step, the ability to avoid attack (even magical or unusual) with incredible agility. He must make a successful Reflex saving throw against an attack that normally deals half-damage on a successful save to avoid taking damage. He also gains the bonus Feat: Dodge and receives an additional +1 at every other level.

Calm: At 2nd level, the Wu Tsain practitioner learns Calm and gains a +2 competence bonus versus saves against fear. This bonus increases to +4 at 4th level. All Intimidation checks against him automatically fail.

Bonus Feats: At 3rd level, the Wu Tsain student learns the bonus Feats: Tagging and Improved Trip even if he lacks the prerequisites.

Fleet-Footed: At 4th level, the Wu Tsain practitioner knows how to prepare for the chase even before it happens. If his Dex is 13+, he can increase his Base Speed by 5. He also gains the bonus Feat: Run even if he lacks the prerequisites.

Always Alert: At 5th level, the Wu Tsain Master rarely finds himself caught unawares. He is never considered flat-footed, and always retains his Dex bonus, unless he is immobilized. He can haste himself twice per day, as if he were a 5th level sorcerer.

Ying Sun Wo (Hawk's Grasp) (d20™)

This strange and deadly martial arts style reveals its origins in nature, as practitioners become human mimics of predatory animals. Their strike is swift, brutal and deadly – all elements that appeal to the warriors of Tiakhar.

Requirements

To qualify as a student of Ying Sun Wo, a character must fulfill the following criteria:

Base Attack Bonus: +5.

Feats: Combat Reflexes.

Nationality: Tashil, Tiakhar.

Game Rule Information

Alignment: Any non-lawful.

Hit Die: d8.

TABLE 3-30: THE YING SUN WO MARTIAL ARTIST

Level	Base Attack	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+3	+1	+3	+2	Bonus Feats
2	+4	+2	+4	+3	Claw Hand (Stunning Fist)
3	+5	+3	+5	+4	Insightful Blows
4	+5	+4	+5	+4	Flashing Talons (Whirlwind Attack)
5	+6	+4	+6	+5	Bonus Feat

Class Skills

The Ying Sun Wo practitioner's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Balance (Dex), Bluff (Cha), Climb (Str), Escape Artist (Dex), Hide (Dex), Jump (Str), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Sense Motive (Wis), Spot (Wis), and Tumble (Dex). See Chapter 4 in *Player's Handbook™* for skill descriptions.

Skill Points at Each Additional Level: 4 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are the class features of Ying Shan Te:

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: A student of this school receives no weapon or armor proficiencies.

At 1st level, a Ying Shan Te Apprentice receives the bonus feats: Combat Reflexes and Track even if he lacks the prerequisites.

Improved Initiative: At 2nd level, the student receives the bonus feat: Claw Hand (Stunning Fist) even if he lacks the prerequisites.

Insightful Blows: At 3rd level, Ying Shan Te students have become quick and agile. When rolling to hit, they add their Wis modifier to their damage roll instead of their Str modifier. The student also gains a +1 competence bonus on all Dex rolls, including attack rolls) and all Dex-related skill checks. However, this bonus does not apply to Reflex saves.

Flashing Talons: At 4th level, the Ying Shan Te practitioner receives the bonus feat: Flashing Talons (Whirlwind Attack) even if he lacks the prerequisites.

Bonus Feat At 5th level, the Ying Shan Te Master gains the bonus feat: Power Attack even if he lacks the prerequisites.

Zheng Yi Quan (Ancient Righteous Fist) (d20™)

The most ancient form of martial arts in the Qi Guo, Zheng Yi Quan fuses hard linear motions with softer circular techniques into one highly effective discipline that focuses on mobility and defense.

Requirements

To qualify as a student of the Zheng Yi Quan School, a character must fulfill the following criteria:

Base Attack Bonus: +7.

Nationality: Any Cathayan.

Feats: Improved Unarmed Strike, Improved Grapple, Improved Disarm.

Skills: Jump 8 ranks.

Game Rule Information

Alignment: Any. Lawful

Hit Dice: d8.

TABLE 3-31: THE ZHENG YI QUAN MARTIAL ARTIST

Level	Base Attack	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+1	+2	+2	+2	Fear No Harm
2	+2	+3	+3	+3	Leap
3	+3	+3	+3	+3	Mystic Leap
4	+4	+4	+4	+4	Superb Defense
5	+5	+4	+4	+4	Dragon Strike

Class Skills

The Zheng Yi Quan practitioner's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Balance (Dex), Bluff (Cha), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Disguise (Cha), Gather Information (Cha), Hide (Dex), Jump (Str), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Profession (Wis), Ride (Dex), Search (Int), Spot (Wis), Swim (Str), Tumble (Dex).

Skill Points at Each Additional Level: 4 + Int modifier.

Class Features

The following are class features of Zheng Yi Quan:

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: A Zheng Yi Quan practitioner gains no proficiency with weapons or armor.

Fear No Harm: Starting at 1st level, a Zheng Yi Quan practitioner gets one-half of his class level as an insight bonus to his AC. Whenever he takes a Total Defense action, he gains his class level (instead of half his class level) as an insight bonus to his AC.

Leap: Starting at 2nd level, a Zheng Yi Quan student's jump distance is no longer limited by his height. Further, he gets a circumstance bonus to his jump checks equal to his class level.

Mystic Leap: Starting at 3rd level, a Zheng Yi Quan practitioner can leap over his attackers as a form of defense. He may make a Jump check (DC 10 + the attacker's highest attack bonus) when one foe attacks him. If the check is successful, he can leap over his attacker's head and lands just outside of his reach. Since this is a reaction to an attack, the attacker's attacks are wasted unless he has another viable target within his reach. Using this ability counts as making an attack of opportunity.

Superb Defense: Starting at 4th level, a Zheng Yi Quan practitioner gains his class level as a bonus to his AC. When he takes a Total Defense action, he gains double his class level as a bonus to his AC. Whenever he loses his Dexterity modifier, he loses this bonus too.

Dragon Strike: Starting at 5th level, a Zheng Yi Quan practitioner may make devastating attacks using the feared "Dragon Strike." Once per day, a Zheng Yi Quan practitioner can use this ability. If he chooses to go last in the round and foregoes all of his attacks, he may make a single devastating attack, which has two effects. First, if the attack is successful, it automatically counts as a critical hit. Second, the opponent struck must make a Fortitude saving throw (DC 10 + 1/2 damage dealt) or be immediately reduced to 0 hit points. The practitioner must be of a higher level than the target, the strike only functions against human or humanoid foes.

New Weapons

Weapon Quality

High-quality versions of these weapons are available for double the cost. These weapons are resistant to rust and other forms of corrosion. They will hold their edges longer and are harder to break (+5 to the TN of the breaking roll) by those who have Techniques that break weapons. Note: kastanes are always high quality weapons.

On the opposite end of the spectrum there are shoddy weapons. These weapons are easier to break (–5 to the TN of the breaking roll), and cost half as much.

TABLE 3-32: WEAPON COSTS

Weapon	Cost (qian)
Chakram	4
Chu-ko-nu	30
Da Dao	18
Dao	12
Darn Dao	16
Shuang Huan	11
Gwon	2
Ji Huan Dao	18
Jian	22
Niu Er Jian Dao	9
Jiu JieBien	16
Kan Dao	15
Kastane	150
Mei Far Chen	22
Metal Fans	13
Paku	1/2
Rocket	60
Sa Tjat Koen	14
Seurrg Tjat Koen	8
Shua Pian Yue Ya Chan	18
Shua Tou Quiang	20
Shuang Gao	21
Tiger Trident	14
Tulwar	20
Standard bow	16
Buckler	12
Knife	12
Musket	220
Pistol	100
Standard heavy weapon	18
Standard polearm	20

TABLE 3-33: WEAPON ACCESSORIES

Accessory	Cost (qian)
Arrows, normal, 20	4/5
Arrows, whistling, 5	4
Belt scabbard	5
Bolts, chu-ko-nu, 12	3/5
Bullet mold	3
Extra flint	3/5
Gunpowder (for 10 shots)	3
Lead (for 10 shots)	1
Powder Flask (holds 10 shots)	3
Powder Measure	3
Quiver (holds 20 arrows)	2
Sheath, ornamented	8+
Sheath, plain	1
Rocket launching stand (holds 24)	30
Darts, mei far chan, 5	2

New Armor

Armor Quality

High-quality and shoddy versions of these pieces of armor are available; the effects of wearing armor of superior or inferior quality are noted in the section detailing the rules for wearing armor. Quality armor costs three times as much, and is custom-fitted to the wearer. Inferior quality armor costs two-thirds the price of armor of normal quality.

TABLE 3-34: MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

Item	Cost (qian)
10 ft. pole	1/50
Backpack	1/5
Bandages (3)	2
Bedroll	3/2
Blanket	3/2
Climbing gloves	4
Climbing pick	5
Compass	3+
1 Ching sticks (bundle of 6)	1
Grappling hook	5
Hatchet	1
Lamp Oil, 1 hour	1/5
Lantern	1+
Lock (TN 10)	12
+5 to lock TN (max 30)	4
Map or scroll tube	3
Mess kit	3
Pavilion (10-person; suitable for field/campaign use)	60
Pillow	1
Chopsticks, plain (pair)	1/5
Chopsticks, fancy (pair)	2+
Rope (50 ft.), hemp	2
Rope (50 ft.), silk	5
Soap	6
Splint set	4/5
Spike, iron (5)	2
Spike, wooden (12)	3/2
Tent (2-man)	15
Torch (6)	1
Whistle (metal)	3/2
Kite, plain (paper & bamboo)	2
Kite, fancy	10+

TABLE 3-35: FOOD AND LODGING

Item	Cost (qian)
Salted provisions, 1 week	2
Tea (1 lb.)	4
Banquet (feeds 4-10)	10+
Beer (small keg)	1
Brandy (bottle)	10
Cider (jar)	1/25
Dinner (feeds 4)	2
Fruit, local (5)	1/5
Fruit, Théan, fresh (1)	1
Fruit, citrus (5)	3/5
Jerky (for 1 week)	2
Liquor (jigger)	1/5
Lodging, good (weekly)	2+
Mead (bottle)	1/2
Pork (1 lb.)	3/5

Rum (bottle)	1/2
Wine, average (bottle)	1/5
Wine, fine (bottle)	2
Wine, excellent (bottle)	10+
Spices, local (1 lb.)	6
Spices, Crescent (1 lb.)	varies
Spices, Cathayan (1 lb.)	varies

TABLE 3-36: TOOLS

Item	Cost (qian)
Chisel	1
Crowbar	2
Hammer	3/2
Lockpicks	25
Mallet	1
Mattock	4
Pick	3/2
Shovel	3
Anvil	40
Bellows	2/5
Block and tackle	16
Chain (1 foot)	2
File	3/5
Grindstone	80
Knife blades (5)	12
Ladder	4
Loom	200
Nails (10 lb. worth)	8
Needles, sewing	2/5
Pliers	6
Razor	3
Saw	6
Scissors	6
String/Twine (50 ft.)	1/5
Thread (10 ft.)	1/5
Tongs	4
Whetstone	2
Wire, iron (1 foot)	1/10

TABLE 3-37: SCHOLARLY ITEMS

Item	Cost (qian)
Balance and weights	30
Basket, wicker	1/2
Book, blank, 100 pages	2
Book, scholarly	12-20
Brazier	50
Candle, sealing wax (5 seals)	1
Chalk (12 pieces)	2
Crucible	10
Dipper	2
Flask	1
Funnel	3/2
Hourglass	12
Ink (5 bottles)	4
Lens (concave or convex)	30
Abacus	3
Measuring tools	6
Mirror, full length	50+
Mirror, small	18
Mortar and pestle	5
Writing Brush	2-30
Prism	32
Surgical Kit	190
Tweezers	1/5
Vial	1/5

New Sorceries (7th Sea™)

Fu

In ancient times, the gods showed the people how to tap into the magic of the world around them and channel its power by employing simple combinations of broken and unbroken lines inscribed into Talismans. No Bargain was involved — the gods gave this knowledge freely to humans to protect them from older supernatural races like the Sidhe.

Talismanic magic is based on the principles of feng shui and sorcerers must have the appropriate elements present when making Talismans. The Huo Qiang is, of course, the ultimate example of this power. Although students come from all over Cathay, most of the schools of Fu sorcery are located in Han Hua, with the largest located in Jing Du. No school will admit a non-Cathayan, however.

Any object that is going to be turned into a Talisman must be freshly crafted because used objects are not strong enough to take on such power. Any inanimate object is suitable as long as it will not be destroyed when the lines of a Trigram are scratched, etched and/or inscribed into it. There are specific rules for use of body parts and dead animals, as noted below. The important thing is not that the player is a master at any practical art, but simply can demonstrate competence at fashioning something. This requirement may also be handled as a role-playing element rather than an actual statistic. Suggested professions include Blacksmith, Calligrapher, Carpenter, Ceramics, Cobbler, Cooper, Fletcher, Glassblower, Jeweler, Knotwork, Mason, Paper Maker, Sail Maker, Sculptor, Shipwright, Spinner, or Tailor.

It is not necessary to be a Feng Shu Shi to become a Fu sorcerer. It is expected that those who are will treat their teach-

ers with great respect, regardless of their own level of knowledge or ability as a Geomancer.

Although the potential ability to make talismans does not necessarily pass along bloodlines there are varying degrees of aptitude among Fu sorcerers. Taking this Sorcery does not give you a discounted price on the Noble Advantage. Fu sorcery may be taken at a cost of either 20 HP (Some Aptitude) or 40 HP (Full Aptitude). You may not be Double-Blooded in this and any other Sorcery. The rules for creating a Sorcerer with Some Aptitude or Full Aptitude are the same as creating Sorcerers with Half-Blooded or Full-Blooded Sorcery, respectively.

The Paths of Fu Sorcery

Fu sorcery works differently from any other in Théah. It contains eight Basic Knacks, which are equal to each other and correspond to elements in nature. As a student pursues his education, he may find that he is more adept at a particular aspect and thus may choose to focus his attention on developing Talismans in that area. The Basic Knacks are *Ch'ien* (Creative/Heaven), *K'un* (Receptive/Earth), *Chen* (Arousing/Thunder), *Sun* (Wind/Wood), *Kan* (Abyss/Water), *Li* (Fire), *Ken* (Stillness/Mountain) and *Tui* (Joy/Lake).

Trigrams

Fu Xi, the first of the San Huang or Three Noble Emperors, was a god with great power and understanding. Through his study of the secrets of life, he determined that everything in the universe was governed by a basic set of laws. After seeing markings on a yellow dragon that emerged from the Huang He, he developed the eight Trigrams or sets of three lines that represent the basic elements that affect changes in nature.

TABLE 3-38: THE TRIGRAMS

Name	Meaning	Trigram	Attribute	Animal	Body Part	Direction
Ch'ien	Creative	_____	Persistent Strength, Creativity	Horse	Head	South
K'un	Receptive, Earth	____ _	Docile, Receptivity	Ox	Belly	North
Chen	Arousing, Thunder	____ _	Spring, Rain, Movement, Initiative, Action, Royalty — admonishes against greed	Dragon	Foot	Northeast
Sun	Wind, Wood, the Gentle	____ _	Regeneration, Following	Rooster	Thigh	Southwest
Kan	Water, Abyss	____ _	Moving water, moon, rain, difficulty, peril	Boar (more auspicious than Pig)	Ear	West
Li	Fire	____ _	Fire, sun, lightening, brightness, elegance	Pheasant	Eye	East
Ken	Mountain	____ _	Stillness, Stopping, Resting	Dog	Hand	Northwest
Tui	Marsh, Lake, the Joyous	____ _	Pleasure, Joy, Attraction, Sacrifice	Sheep/Goat	Mouth	Southeast

Apprentice Degree: Creating Talismans with Trigrams

As an Apprentice, you may pick one of the eight Trigrams below as the focus of your studies. To make a Talisman for that Trigram, you spend a Drama Die and roll your Wits + the Knack for the effect you are trying to produce (TN noted below.)

The Talismans an Apprentice creates keep their magic abilities for as long as he lives (or as long as the Talisman or created object exists). Talismans lose their magical abilities the instant the sorcerer dies.

At this level of your studies, you must create the Talisman marked (1) first.

Adept Degree: Creating Talismans with Hexagrams

When you became an Adept, you choose one of the eight Trigrams. You now know how to use the powers of that Trigram, in addition to the one you learned as an Apprentice. If you desire, you may choose the same Trigram again, and get 2 Free Raises whenever you roll to use one of that Trigram's abilities.

At this level of mastery, you may create a Talisman that has any two of the abilities of the Trigrams. To make a Hexagram Talisman, you must spend a Drama Die and make two rolls to use the Trigram enchantments that combine to make the Hexagram. Roll your Wits + Knack for the first Trigram effect involved, then again for the second Trigram effect. The TNs for these rolls are the same as they would be if you were simply created a Trigram effect, except that the TN for the second roll is Raised twice. If you fail either roll, the Talisman is ruined.

To make a Hexagram Talisman, you must spend a Drama Die and make two rolls to create the Trigram enchantments that combine to make the Hexagram by rolling your Wits + Knack once for the first Trigram effect involved and again for the second Trigram effect. The TNs for these rolls are the same as they would be if you were simply created a Trigram effect, except that the TN for the second roll is Raised twice. If you fail the either roll, the Talisman is ruined.

A Trigram Talisman that an Adept creates keeps its magic power for as long as the item exists. Any Hexagram Talisman an Adept creates keeps its magic as long as its creator lives, and loses all of its magical abilities as soon as he perishes.

Master Degree: Creating Talismans for Harmonious Efforts

Upon becoming a Fu Master, you once more select one of the eight Trigrams. You now know how to use the powers of that Trigram in addition to the one(s) you learned as an Apprentice and Adept. If you desire, you may choose one of your previous Trigrams a second time, gaining 2 Free Raises whenever you roll to use one of that Trigram's abilities.

If you wish to specialize and have already picked the same Trigram twice, you may select it once again. Although this does not give you any further Free Raises to make your rolls, it does give you one special benefit. Whenever you spend a Drama Die to make a Talisman that uses only the powers of that Trigram (even if it uses the Trigram twice for a Hexagram enchantment, but not to enhance your roll), roll the Drama Die. If the result is even, you may keep the Drama Die; otherwise, you must lose it as normal.

A Talisman created by a Master retains its magic abilities for as long as the item exists, regardless of whether it is a Trigram or Hexagram Talisman.

At this level of mastery, you may work other Masters to create Talismans that bear more than one Hexagram. Each Master may contribute a single Trigram or Hexagram's abilities to the Talisman. To do so, each Master must spend two Drama Dice: one to create his Trigram or Hexagram's effect, and one more to join its power with the power of the other Master's magic. The Master then rolls his Resolve against a TN of 25 to concentrate on the effort. Failure by any participant to concentrate will ruin the Talisman. If all the participants maintain their concentration, each must then roll to create the effect of the one Hexagram or Trigram, as described under the rules for the Adept and Apprentice Degrees above. More than one participating Master may contribute the same Hexagram or Trigram to a Talisman, but each Master must contribute a different effect from that Hexagram.

The Hexagrams

Through further study, Emperor Fu Xi determined that there were subtleties and cycles to the changes. By combining two sets of trigrams, he created 64 hexagrams he called I Ching or Changes. His careful research led him to develop the philosophy of feng shui, which enables humans to live in harmony with nature. Based on the principle of balance in nature (yin and yang), feng shui studies the affects and interactions of the five elements: wood, fire, earth, metal, and water. (See Appendix: The Hexagrams)

The Trigrams and Their Attributes

CH'YEN (THE CREATIVE)

Attribute: Creativity

Physical component: any inanimate object that will not be destroyed with inscription.

- (1) You imbue a good luck charm for creating Inventions. The user gets to roll and keep one extra die (+1k1) on Invention rolls (TN 30).
- (2) The Talisman that inspires its user to devise creative strategies. The user may modify his Personal Results roll (+1/-1) during Mass Combat situations (TN 35).

Animal: Horse

Physical component: representation of a horse in any medium, including drawing or painting.

- (1) The Talisman turns into a full sized living horse. If it is slain, the talisman will be destroyed and vice versa. You must specify the kind of horse when you make the Talisman (TN 35). Note: the Talisman may not become a Steppes pony.
- (2) The Talisman allows its user to control horses. The user must make a Resolve roll against a TN of 5 + 5 for every horse he wishes to command (TN 25).

Body Part: Head

Physical component: representation of a human head in any medium including a drawing. (A severed human head may not be used.)

- (1) The Talisman protects the user's head, doubling the number of Raises that must be called to hit him there (TN 30).
- (2) The Talisman grants one spark of inspiration per Story. Treat this as if he had the Creative Virtue (TN 45).

Direction: South

Physical component: an arrow in any three-dimensional medium except paper.

- (1) On command, the Talisman points due south. (TN 20).
- (2) With the Talisman, you may enchant a ranged weapon (the weapon must be present) that can double its Range whenever it fires within ten degrees of arc from true south (TN 30).

K'UN (THE RECEPTIVE)

Attribute: Receptive

Physical component: actual seed, stem, stalk or other part of the item to be grown.

- (1) The Talisman allow its user to grow crops in even the most unfertile or rocky soil, as if it was the best land on earth (TN 25).
- (2) The Talisman allows its user to learn more quickly by example. At the end of each Story, the user gets one extra Experience Point that may be used to learn or improve any Knack or Skill that he saw used by someone else during that Story (TN 35).

Animal: Ox

Physical component: representation of an Ox in any medium including a drawing or painting. Horns or hooves by themselves may also be used.

- (1) The Talisman turns into a full sized, living Ox. When the animal is slain, the talisman will be destroyed and vice versa (TN 30).
- (2) The Talisman allows its user to control oxen. The user must make a Resolve roll against a TN of 5 + 5 for every Ox he wishes to command.

Body Part: Belly

Physical component: A rice bowl made of any material. (Human entrails may not be used.)

- (1) The Talisman creates enough food to fill its user's belly three times per day (TN 30).
- (2) The Talisman renders its user immune to any ingested poison, including alcohol and afyam (TN 40). This Talisman may not be used to counteract afyam addiction.

Direction: North

Physical component: an arrow in any three-dimensional medium except paper.

- (1) On command, the Talisman points due north. (TN 20).
- (2) With the Talisman, you may enchant a ranged weapon (the weapon must be present) that can double its Range whenever it fires within 20 degrees of arc from true north (TN 30).

CHEN (THE AROUSING)

Attribute: Movement

Physical component: any inanimate object that will survive inscription.

- (1) The Talisman will, once per Act, allow its user to roll and keep one extra Action Die (TN 40).
- (2) The Talisman gives a bonus of one extra Kept die (+1k1) to any rolls its user makes in any Chases.

Animal: Dragon

Physical component: representation of a dragon in any medium including a drawing or painting.

- (1) The Talisman turns into a full sized "living" statue of a dragon. If it is destroyed, the Talisman will be destroyed and vice versa. You must specify what kind of dragon when you make the Talisman (TN 55). (See Dragon Dreams.) The dragon may make small movements like flapping its wings, but not may not move from its place.
- (2) The Talisman protects its wielder from dragons plaguing his dreams. When the wielder uses this talisman, he may roll his Panache against a TN equal to ten times his Dragon Dreams Background Rank. If he succeeds, he does not have any Dragon Dreams that night (TN 30).

Body Part: Foot

Physical component: representation of a human foot in any medium including a drawing or painting. A severed human foot may not be used.

- (1) The Talisman gives its user +0k1 to all Footwork, Sprinting, Side-Step, or Kick rolls (TN 25).
- (2) The Talisman gives its user a +5 to his TN to be Hit while using Footwork as a Defense (TN 35).

Direction: Northeast

Physical component: an arrow in any three-dimensional medium except paper.

- (1) On command, the Talisman points due northeast. (TN 20).
- (2) With the Talisman, you may enchant a ranged weapon (the weapon must be present) that can double its Range whenever it fires within 20 degrees of arc from true northeast (TN 30).

SUN (THE GENTLE)

Attribute: Regeneration

Physical component: any inanimate object that will survive inscription.

- (1) The Talisman will, once per Scene per person, remove all of the user's Flesh Wounds (TN 30).
- (2) The Talisman will, once per Story, remove all poison and disease from the user's body. *Note:* The third time you make this Talisman, it can restore a severed external body part. (TN 60).

Animal: Rooster

Physical component: representation of a rooster in any medium including a drawing or painting. A dead rooster may be used as long as it has been slaughtered within the past hour. A rooster lacking a head may not be used.

- (1) The Talisman turns into a full sized, living rooster. If the animal is slain, the talisman will be destroyed and vice versa (TN 20).
- (2) The Talisman allows its user to control roosters. The user must make a Resolve roll against a TN of 5 + 5 for every rooster he wishes to command.

Body Part: Thigh

Physical component: representation of the human leg in any medium including a drawing or painting. A severed human leg may not be used. However, a jiang (ginger) or ren shen (ginseng) root may be used as long as it has five extensions.

- (1) The Talisman gives its user a bonus of +0k1 to any Long Distance Running, Lifting, or Leaping rolls he makes (TN 20).
- (2) The Talisman will, once per day, allow its user to take only one Dramatic Wound when he fails a Wound Check, regardless of the amount by which he failed the roll (TN 40).

Direction: Southwest

Physical component: an arrow in any three-dimensional medium except paper.

- (1) On command, the Talisman points due southwest. (TN 20).
- (2) With the Talisman, you may enchant a ranged weapon (the weapon must be present) that can double its Range whenever it fires within 20 degrees of arc from true southwest (TN 30).

KAN (THE ABYSS)

Attribute: Water

Physical component: any inanimate object that will survive inscription.

- (1) The Talisman allows you to breathe underwater (TN 25).
- (2) Once per day, the Talisman creates enough water for one person to drink in 24 hours (TN 20).

Animal: Boar

Physical component: representation of a boar in any medium including a drawing or painting. A roasted boar may not be used for this purpose; however, a boar slaughtered within the past hour may be used. A boar's head may also be used, but not a body lacking a head.

- (1) The Talisman turns into a full sized living boar. If the animal is slain, the Talisman will be destroyed and vice versa (TN 35).
- (2) The Talisman allows its user to control boars. The user must make a Resolve roll against a TN of 5 + 5 for every boar he wishes to command (TN 25).

Body Part: Ear

Physical component: representation of a human ear in any medium including a drawing or painting. A severed human ear may not be used.

- (1) The Talisman gives its user a bonus of +2k0 to any Perception Checks involving hearing (TN 25).
- (2) The Talisman acts as an ear, allowing the user to hear through it. Although distance is not a factor, per se, the place where the user wants to hear must be familiar or specific (i.e., around a corner, through a door.) If the area has been magically damped, the user cannot hear.

Direction: West

Physical component: an arrow in any three-dimensional medium except paper.

- (1) On command, the Talisman points due west. (TN 20).
- (2) With the Talisman, you may enchant a ranged weapon (the weapon must be present) that can double its Range whenever it fires within 20 degrees of arc from true west (TN 30).

LI (FIRE)

Attribute: Fire

Physical component: any inanimate object that will survive inscription.

- (1) The Talisman can be commanded to set any object touching it on fire, doing 1k1 damage (TN 30).
- (2) The Talisman makes its user completely immune to natural fire (TN 40).

Animal: Pheasant

Physical component: representation of a pheasant in any medium including a drawing or painting. A cooked pheasant may not be used; however, a bird that has been slaughtered within the past hour may be used as long its head is still attached.

- (1) The Talisman turns into a full sized living pheasant. If the animal is slain, the Talisman will be destroyed and vice versa. (TN 20).
- (2) The Talisman allows its user to control pheasants. The user must make a Resolve roll against a TN of 5 + 5 for every pheasant he wishes to command (TN 15).

Body Part: Eye

Physical component: representation of a human eye in any medium including a drawing or painting, or a semi-precious stone such as agate that appears to have an "eye." A preserved eye (human or otherwise) may be used.

- (1) The Talisman gives its user a bonus equal to the Keen Sight Advantage (TN 25).
- (2) The Talisman acts as an eye for its user, allowing him to see through it as if it were his own eye (TN 35) unless the area that has been magically darkened.

Direction: East

Physical component: representation of an arrow in any medium except paper.

- (1) On command, the Talisman points due east. (TN 20).
- (2) With the Talisman, you may enchant a ranged weapon (the weapon must be present) that can double its Range whenever it fires within 20 degrees of arc from true east (TN 30).

KEN (MOUNTAIN)

Attribute: Stillness

Physical component: any inanimate object that will survive inscription.

- (1) The Talisman allows its user to sleep comfortably, no matter how hard the bed or ground on which he lies (TN 20).
- (2) The Talisman allows its user to freeze one person or thing in its current place for 1k1 Phases, once per Story. The frozen entity cannot move or be moved nor can it be damaged in any way. The target must be within line of sight of the user. Note: the user may use this effect upon himself (TN 45).

Animal: Dog

Physical component: representation of a dog in any medium including a drawing or painting. The Talisman may not be used to bring back a pet who has died.

- (1) The Talisman turns into a full sized living dog of a breed specified at the time of creation (see New Beasts). If the dog dies, the Talisman will be destroyed and vice versa. (TN 35)
- (2) The Talisman allows its user to control dogs. The user must make a Resolve roll against a TN of 5 + 5 for every dog he wishes to command (TN 25).

Body Part: Hand

Physical component: representation of a human hand in any medium including a drawing or painting. A severed human hand may not be used. However, a *jiang* (ginger) or *ren shen* (ginseng) root may be used as long as it has five extensions.)

- (1) The Talisman will aid the user's hand when gripping things. While this Talisman's power is active, its user is considered to have the Firm Grip Advantage (see *Swordsmen's Guild™*) (TN 30).
- (2) The Talisman can hold things for the user, keeping as firm a grip as their owner would if he had the Firm Grip Advantage (TN 20).

Direction: Northwest

Physical component: representation of an arrow in any medium except paper.

- (1) On command, the Talisman points due northwest. (TN 20).
- (2) With the Talisman, you may enchant a ranged weapon (the weapon must be present) that can double its Range whenever it fires within 20 degrees of arc from true northwest (TN 30).

TUI (THE JOYOUS)

Attribute: Pleasure

Physical component: any inanimate object that will survive inscription.

- (1) The Talisman enables its wearer to exude happiness and contentment, and gain a bonus of +1k0 to Charm rolls (TN 20).
- (2) The Talisman causes the house it is in to be full of joy. Everyone in that house gets +1k1 to Charm rolls (TN 35).

Animal: Sheep

Physical component: representation of a sheep or yak in any medium including a drawing or painting. A cooked sheep or yak may not be used for this purpose; however, a sheep or yak slaughtered within the past hour may be used as long as its head is still attached.

- (1) The Talisman transforms itself into a full-sized living sheep. If the sorcerer or user is a Xian Bei, it may become a yak. When the animal dies, the Talisman will be destroyed and vice versa. However, the user may gather wool from the animal or milk it without harming the Talisman (TN 30).
- (2) The Talisman allows its user to control sheep. The user must make a Resolve roll against a TN of 5 + 5 for every sheep he wishes to command (TN 15).

Body Part: Mouth

Physical component: representation of a human mouth in any medium including a drawing or painting. A severed human tongue may not be used.

- (1) This Talisman amplifies the volume of the user's voice, allowing it to carry as far as a mile (anyone within that mile will be able to hear it, whether the user wants them to or not) (TN 20).
- (2) The Talisman acts as a "surrogate" mouth for its owner, allowing him to speak from it from any distance (limitation determined by the GM) (TN 30).

Direction: Southeast

Physical component: representation of an ox in any medium except paper.

- (1) On command, the Talisman points due southeast. (TN 20).
- (2) With the Talisman, you may enchant a ranged weapon (the weapon must be present) that can double its Range whenever it fires within 20 degrees of arc from true southeast (TN 30).



Curses on Talismans

Because Talismans are so powerful, their creators often put curses on them to keep them from being used by the wrong people. Cursed Talismans are considered to bear the Cursed Background. The Rank of the Cursed Background may vary from 1 to 4, although it hardly ever exceeds 3. You may not create a Talisman whose Cursed Background Rank is greater than your Mastery Level plus 1. Hence, an Apprentice may create a Talisman that has Cursed (1) or Cursed (2), an Adept can create Talismans that have Cursed (3), but only Masters can create talismans that have Cursed (4).

To imbue a Talisman with a Curse, spend one Drama Die per Rank of Cursed Background you are giving it, and roll Resolve + Curses against a TN of 5 + 10 per Rank of Cursed you are imbuing the talisman with. If you succeed, the Talisman gains the Rank of Cursed you wanted to give it. If you fail, you gain a Cursed Background with a Rank equal to the Rank of the Curse you were trying to give the object.

New Character Class

Fu Sorcerer (d20™)

Those who are able to create magical Talismans and imbue them with power are called Fu sorcerers.

Requirements

To become a Fu sorcerer, a character must fulfill the following criteria:

Special: Cathayan (any kingdom) nationality.

Skills: Craft (Int).

Game Rule Information

Alignment: Any. (Note: While officially recognized schools teach Fu sorcery with the intention to do good, there are always those who use Talisman creation for darker purposes.)

Hit Dice: d6.

TABLE 3-37: THE FU SORCERER

Level	Base Attack	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+0	+0	+0	+2	Apprentice (Trigram #1); Creativity Attribute
2	+1	+0	+0	+3	Animal Attribute
3	+1	+0	+0	+3	Body Part Attribute
4	+2	+1	+1	+4	Direction Attribute
5	+2	+1	+1	+5	Adept (Trigram #2); Creativity Attribute
6	+3	+1	+1	+6	Animal Attribute
7	+3	+2	+2	+7	Body Part Attribute
8	+4	+2	+2	+8	Direction Attribute

9	+5	+3	+3	+9	Master (Trigram #3); Creativity Attribute
10	+6	+3	+3	+10	Animal Attribute
11	+7	+4	+4	+10	Body Part Attribute
12	+8	+4	+4	+11	Direction Attribute
13	+9	+4	+4	+12	Collaboration: 2 Creativity Attributes
14	+10	+5	+5	+12	Collaboration: 2 Animal Attribute
15	+11	+5	+5	+12	Collaboration: 2 Body Part Attribute
16	+12	+5	+5	+12	Collaboration: 2 Direction Attribute
17	+13	+6	+6	+12	Collaboration; 2 Creativity Attributes
18	+14	+6	+6	+12	Collaboration; 2 Animal Attributes
19	+15	+6	+6	+12	Collaboration; 2 Body Part Attributes
20	+15	+6	+6	+12	Collaboration; 2 Direction Attributes

Class Skills

The Fu sorcerer's skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Knowledge (Arcana or Nature) (Int), Profession (Wis), Sense Motive (Wis), Spellcraft (Int), Spot (Wis). (See Chapter 4: Skills in the *Player's Handbook™* for skill descriptions.)

Skill Points at Each Additional Level: 4 + Int modifier.

Class Features

The following are class features of the Fu sorcerer:

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: No martial arts are associated with Fu sorcery. A Fu sorcerer may have various levels of martial arts proficiencies but these would be skills he learned separately from his sorcerous training.

Apprentice: As an Apprentice, you may pick any one of the eight Trigrams as the focus of your studies. You know how to use the powers of that Trigram, and only that Trigram. At this level of mastery, you may create a Talisman that has any one of the abilities pertaining to the Trigram you selected.

To make a Trigram Talisman, you make a Craft roll (DC noted for each aspect below). Talismans you create as an Apprentice keep their magic abilities for as long as you are alive.

Your first task as an Apprentice is to select a Trigram and learn one of its Creativity aspects. At level 2, you learn one of the Animal aspects of the Trigram you selected. At level 3, you select a Body Part and at Level 4, a Direction aspect.

When you became an Adept, you choose another of the eight Trigrams and learn one of its Creativity aspects. You now know how to use the powers of that Trigram, in addition to the one you learned as an Apprentice. If you desire, you may choose the same Trigram again and select the other Creativity aspect.

At this level of mastery, you may create a Trigram Talisman that has both of a Trigram's abilities or you may make a Hexagram Talisman, which combines aspects from two Trigrams. To create either, you make a Craft roll (DC as noted below). If you fail, the Talisman is ruined.

A Trigram Talisman that you create keeps its magic power as long as the item exists. Any Hexagram Talisman you create keeps its magic as long as you are alive.

As before, at level 6, you learn one of the Animal aspects of the Trigram you selected. At level 7, you learn one of the Body Part aspects and at level 8, one of the Direction aspects.

Upon becoming a Master, you may select a Trigram you do not know and learn both of its Creativity aspects or select two alternate Creativity aspects from two Trigrams you already know. These are in addition to any powers of those Trigrams you learned as an Apprentice and Adept. If you wish to specialize and have already picked the same Trigram twice, you may select it a third time, which enables you to create the Talisman automatically without having to make a check.

A Talisman you create as a Master retains its magic abilities for as long as the item exists, regardless of whether it is a Trigram or Hexagram Talisman, or whether you are alive.

At level 10, you learn two of the Animal aspects of the Trigram you selected, or one from each of two other Trigrams for a total of two. At level 11, you learn two of the Body Part aspects of the Trigram you selected or one from each of two other Trigrams for a total of two.

At level 12, you learn two of the Direction aspects of the Trigram you selected or one from each of two other Trigrams for a total of two.

At the Collaboration level of mastery, you may work with other Fu Masters to create Talismans that bear more than one Hexagram. Each Master contributes a Trigram to the Talisman. You must first make a Concentration check (DC 15). Failure by any participant to concentrate will ruin the Talisman. If all the participants maintain their concentration, each must then roll a Craft check (DC noted below) to create the effect of their Trigram or Hexagram, as described under the rules for the Adept and Apprentice degrees above. More than one participating Master may contribute the same Hexagram or Trigram to a Talisman, but each Master must contribute a different effect from that Hexagram. Masters at varying levels may collaborate.

At level 14, you learn two of the Animal aspects of the Trigram you selected or one from each of two other Trigrams for a total of two. At level 15, you learn two of the Body Part aspects of the Trigram you selected or one from each of two other Trigrams for a total of two. At level 16, you learn two of the Direction aspects of the Trigram you selected or one from each of two other Trigrams for a total of two.

At level 17, in addition to learning two previously unknown Creativity aspects of a Trigram(s), you may contribute either a Trigram or a Hexagram to a collaborative effort with other Fu sorcerers. At level 18, in addition to learning two previously unknown Animal aspects of a Trigram(s), you may contribute either a Trigram or a Hexagram to a collaborative effort with other Fu sorcerers.

At level 19, in addition to learning two previously unknown Body Part aspects of a Trigram(s), you may contribute either a Trigram or a Hexagram to a collaborative effort with other Fu sorcerers.

Finally, at level 20, in addition to learning two previously unknown Direction aspects of a Trigram(s), you may contribute either a Trigram or a Hexagram to a collaborative effort with other Fu sorcerers.

The Trigrams and their Attributes

CH'YEN (THE CREATIVE)

Attribute: Creativity

- (1) The Talisman adds 10 to any Invention checks the bearer makes (see *Swashbuckling Arcana*™, Chapter 3: Shamanism — Invention.) (DC 20); or
 - (2) The Talisman allows the wearer's unit to have its base attack bonus considered to be 2 higher in Mass Combat (See *Swashbuckling Adventures*™, Chapter 7: Advanced Rules.) (DC 25).
- Animal:** Horse (Physical component: representation of a horse in any medium, including drawing or painting.)
- (1) The Talisman will transform a full-sized living horse into a War Horse, Riding Horse or Pack Horse (specified at time of creation). (DC 25). If the Talisman is destroyed the horse dies and vice versa; or
 - (2) The Talisman allows its wearer to command any horses (Cha check, DC 10 plus 3 for each additional horse beyond the first). You cannot command them to do anything a normal horse cannot or will not normally do. (DC 20).

Body Part: Head (Physical component: representation of a human head in any medium including a drawing. A severed human head may not be used for this purpose.)

- (1) The Talisman ensures that the wearer can never suffer from any called shots to the eye, head or throat (See *Swashbuckling Adventures*™, Chapter 7: Advanced Rules.) (DC 20); or
- (2) The Talisman gives its wearer the Creative Feat once per adventure, at a time of the GM's choosing. (DC 30).

Direction: South (Physical component: an arrow in any three-dimensional medium except paper.)

- (1) An object enchanted with this Talisman will always point South. (DC 15); or
- (2) The Talisman allows the bearer to double the range of any arrows fired from it within ten degrees of South. (DC 20).

K'UN (THE RECEPTIVE)

Attribute: Receptivity

- (1) The Talisman allows the wearer to grow viable crops in any soil. (DC 15) (Physical component: actual seed, stem, stalk or other part of the item to be grown); or
- (2) The Talisman gives the user an extra Skill point in any Skill he sees someone with a higher rank in that skill use when the user gains a level (note: this does not count towards the user's allocation of Skill Points on gaining a level). (DC 30).

Animal: Ox (Physical component: representation of an ox in any medium including a drawing or painting. Horns or hooves by themselves may also be used.)

- (1) The Talisman will turn into an Ox, which will be slain if the Talisman is destroyed and vice versa. (DC 20); or

- (2) The Talisman allows its wearer to command any Oxen (Cha check, DC 10 plus 3 for each additional Ox beyond the first). You cannot command them to do anything a normal Ox cannot or will not normally do. (DC 20).

Body Part: *Belly* (Physical component: A rice bowl made of any material. Human entrails may not be used for this purpose.)

- (1) The Talisman insures that its wearer never goes hungry. (DC 25); or
- (2) The Talisman grants its wearer immunity to all ingested poison, including alcohol and afyam. (DC 35) Note that this Talisman may not be used to counteract afyam addiction.

Direction: *North* (Physical component: representation of an arrow in any medium except paper.)

- (1) The Talisman will always point true North. (DC 15); or
- (2) The Talisman allows the bearer to double the range of any arrows fired from it within ten degrees of North. (DC 20).

CHEN (THE AROUSING)

Attribute: *Movement*

- (1) The Talisman allows its user one extra attack at his highest attack bonus once per combat. (DC 30); or
- (2) The Talisman doubles the running distance of the user or any mount during a chase. (DC 25).

Animal: *Dragon* (Physical component: representation of a dragon in any medium including a drawing or painting.)

The Talisman turns into a shi lung (stone dragon). (DC 35) (See *Monster Manual*™, Gargoyle for medium-sized magical beast. GMs should adjust the stats accordingly for larger beasts. Remember — dragons are NOT real creatures in Cathay.) If the dragon is destroyed, the Talisman will be destroyed and vice versa.

- (1) The Talisman protects its wearer from the influence of any Dream Dragons that disturb him. He may roll a Will save (DC 20) in order to free himself from Dragon Dreams on any given night. (DC 25) However, it should be noted that if Dream Dragons sense that the dreamer does not wish their presence, they will be loathe to visit ever again.

Body Part: *Foot* (Physical component: representation of a human foot in any medium including a drawing or painting. A severed human foot may not be used for this purpose.)

- (1) The Talisman gives its user a +4 competence bonus on any Balance, Jump, Run or Tumble checks he makes. (DC 20); or
- (2) The Talisman gives its user a +1 Dodge Bonus to AC that stacks with other Dodge bonuses. (DC 20).

Direction: *Northeast* (Physical component: representation of an arrow in any medium except paper.)

- (1) The Talisman will always point Northeast. (DC 15); or
- (2) The Talisman allows the bearer to double the range of any arrows fired from it within ten degrees of Northeast. (DC 20).

SUN (THE GENTLE)

Attribute: *Regeneration*

- (1) The Talisman allows its bearer to cast Cure Serious Wounds once per week as a cleric of the same level. (DC 20); or
- (2) The Talisman allows its bearer to cast Heal once per adventure. This version of Heal restores lost external body parts. (DC 50)

Shi Lung (Stone Dragon) – Villain (7th Sea™)

TN to be Hit: 25

Brawn: 6, Finesse: 4, Wits: 1, Resolve: 5, Panache: 4.

Skills: Footwork 4

Attack Rolls: Bite 4k4, Claw 5k4

Damage Rolls: Bite 6k2, Claw 6k1

Special Abilities: Takes only 1 Dramatic Wound when it fails a Wound Check, and is considered to have the Large Advantage. The statue is immune to Fear Ratings and Repartee Actions.

Animal: *Rooster* (Physical component: representation of a rooster in any medium including a drawing or painting. A dead rooster may be used as long as it has been slaughtered within the past hour. A rooster lacking a head may not be used.)

- (1) The Talisman will turn into a Rooster. (DC 15). If the rooster is killed, the Talisman will be destroyed, and vice versa; or
- (2) The Talisman allows its wearer to command any Roosters (Cha check, DC 10 plus 3 for each additional Rooster beyond the first). You cannot command them to do anything a normal Rooster cannot or will not normally do (like lay an egg.) (DC 20).

Body Part: *Thigh* (Physical component: representation of the human leg in any medium including a drawing or painting. A severed human leg may not be used for this purpose. However, a jiang (ginger) or ren shen (ginseng) root may be used as long as it has five extensions.)

- (1) The Talisman gives its bearer a +4 competence bonus to any Jump or Run rolls he makes. (DC 15); or
- (2) The Talisman allows its bearer once per day to suffer no more than 10 points of damage from any single attack. (DC 20).

Direction: *Southwest* (Physical component: representation of an arrow in any medium except paper.)

- (1) The Talisman will always point Southwest. (DC 15); or
- (2) The Talisman allows the bearer to double the range of any arrows fired from it within ten degrees of Southwest. (DC 20).

KAN (THE ABYSS)

Attribute: *Water*

- (1) The Talisman allows its bearer to breathe water. (DC 20); or
- (2) The Talisman can create enough water for one person to sustain him or herself for 24 hours once per day. (DC 15).

Animal: *Boar* (Physical component: representation of a boar in any medium including a drawing or painting. A roasted boar may not be used for this purpose; however, a boar slaughtered within the past hour may be used. A boar's head may also be used, but not a body lacking a head.)

- (1) The Talisman will turn into a full sized living Boar (DC 25). If the animal is slain, the Talisman will be destroyed, and vice versa; or
- (2) The Talisman allows the wearer to command any Boars (Cha check, DC 10 plus 3 for each additional Boar beyond the first). You cannot command the animal to do anything a Boar cannot or will not normally do. (DC 20).

Body Part: *Ear* (Physical component: representation of a human ear in any medium including a drawing or painting. A severed human ear may not be used for this purpose.)

- (1) The Talisman gives its user a +6 competence bonus to any Listen checks they make. (DC 20); or
- (2) The Talisman allows its user to hear anything said in its presence. (DC 25).

Direction: *West* (Physical component: representation of an arrow in any medium except paper.)

- (1) The Talisman will always point West. (DC 15); or
- (2) The Talisman allows the bearer to double the range of any arrows fired from it within ten degrees of West. (DC 20).

LI (FIRE)

Attribute: *Fire*

- (1) The Talisman can be commanded to set any object touching it aflame. The flames deal 1d6 damage initially and will persist if they are on a flammable object. (DC 20); or
- (2) The Talisman renders its user immune to danger from normal (non-sorcerous) fire. (DC 30).

Animal: *Pheasant* (Physical component: representation of a pheasant in any medium including a drawing or painting. A cooked pheasant may not be used; however, a bird that has been slaughtered within the past hour may be used as long as its head is still attached.)

- (1) The Talisman will turn into a Pheasant. (DC 15). If the animal is slain, the Talisman will be destroyed and vice versa; or
- (2) The Talisman allows its wearer to command any Pheasants (Cha check, DC 10 plus 3 for each additional Pheasant beyond the first). You cannot command them to do anything a Pheasant cannot or will not normally do. (DC 20).

Body Part: *Eye* (Physical component: representation of a human eye in any medium including a drawing or painting, or a semi-precious stone such as agate that appears to have an "eye." A preserved eye (human or otherwise) may be used for this purpose.)

- (1) The Talisman bestows a +6 competence bonus to Spot Checks. (DC 20); or
- (2) The Talisman allows its user to see through it as if it were his own eye. (DC 25).

Direction: *East* (Physical component: representation of an arrow in any medium except paper.)

- (1) The Talisman will always point East. (DC 15); or
- (2) The Talisman allows the bearer to double the range of any arrows fired from it within ten degrees of East. (DC 20).

KEN (MOUNTAIN)

Attribute: *Stillness*

- (1) The Talisman allows its user to sleep comfortably on any terrain. (DC 15); or
- (2) The Talisman allows its user to freeze an entity in place for 1d6 rounds. This person cannot move, be moved, or be harmed. The target must be in line of sight of the user, and can be the user. (DC 35).

Animal: *Dog* (Physical component: representation of a dog in any medium including a drawing or painting. The Talisman may not be used to bring back a pet who has died.)

- (1) The Talisman will transform into a Dog of a breed specified at time of creation. (DC 25). If the dog dies, the Talisman is destroyed and vice versa; or
- (2) The Talisman allows its wearer to command any Dogs (Cha check, DC 10 plus 3 for each additional Dog beyond the first). You cannot command them to do anything a Dog cannot or will not normally do. (DC 20).

Body Part: *Hand* (Physical component: representation of a human hand in any medium including a drawing or painting. A severed human hand may not be used for this purpose. However, a jiang (ginger) or ren shen (ginseng) root may be used as long as it has five extensions.)

- (1) The Talisman bestows the Firm Grip feat on its user. (DC 25); or
- (2) The Talisman grips objects of its own accord at the user's command. It is counted as having the Firm Grip advantage. (DC 15).

Direction: *Northwest* (Physical component: representation of an arrow in any medium except paper.)

- (1) The Talisman will always point Northwest. (DC 15); or
- (2) The Talisman allows the bearer to double the range of any arrows fired from it within ten degrees of Northwest. (DC 20).

TUI (THE JOYOUS)

Attribute: *Pleasure*

- (1) The Talisman bestows a +2 bonus to any Bluff or Gather Information checks its user makes, and also adds a +1 to the user's Cha modifier. (DC 20); or
- (2) The Talisman adds +4 to any roll made to seduce or Bluff anyone in the house that the Talisman is currently in. (DC 25).

Animal: *Sheep* (Physical component: representation of a sheep or yak in any medium including a drawing or painting. A cooked sheep or yak may not be used for this purpose; however, a sheep or yak slaughtered within the past hour may be used as long as its head is still attached.)

- (1) The Talisman will turn into a Sheep (or a Yak, if the sorcerer or user is from Xian Bei and wishes to have that animal.) Wool and milk may be taken from it without destroying the Talisman. (DC 25). If the animal is slaughtered, the Talisman will be destroyed and vice versa; or
- (2) The Talisman allows its wearer to command any Sheep (or Yak for Xian Bei.) (Cha check, DC 10 plus 3 for each additional Sheep beyond the first). You cannot command them to do anything a Sheep cannot or will not normally do. (DC 10)

Body Part: *Mouth* (Physical component: representation of a human mouth in any medium including a drawing or painting. A severed human tongue may not be used for this purpose.)

- (1) The Talisman allows the user's voice to be heard clearly for a mile. (DC 15); or
- (2) The Talisman allows its user to use the item as a "surrogate" mouth and be heard from any distance (limitation determined by the GM.) (DC 20)

Direction: *Southeast* (Physical component: representation of an ox in any medium except paper.)

- (1) The Talisman will always point Southeast. (DC 15); or
- (2) The Talisman allows the bearer to double the range of any arrows fired from it within ten degrees of Southeast. (DC 20)



Talismanic Item (Varies, Cathay Only)

You have a Talismanic item (weapon, armor, etc.) with any one effect from a Trigram's enchantment on it. The cost of the Talisman is 1, plus one-fifth the TN of the Talisman's effect. The enchanted object can be an thing from a small coin up to a statue. For example, a jian that can be commanded to set any object touching it on fire, doing 1k1 damage, would have a TN of 30 and cost 7 HP.

New Weapons

Chakram

A chakram is a flat ring of steel with a sharp outer edge, used as a throwing weapon, most commonly in Tashil, where some men wear several of them on a pointed turban.

D20™ MECHANIC

Requires Exotic Weapons Proficiency (Chakram) to use. (See *Swashbuckling Adventures™* for weapon statistics.)

7TH SEA™ MECHANIC

Use Exotic Thrown Weapon Skill (1k2 damage; Range: 25 yards).

Chu-ko-nu

A chu-ko-nu is a repeating crossbow that looks like a Théan crossbow but with a wooden box resting on top of it, connected to the string. A lever arm is attached to this box with its fulcrum below the box on the stock. The box will hold a dozen crossbow bolts, stacked one atop the other. The bolts are knocked and the bow is cocked by pulling the lever back. The trigger is a small wooden peg on the bottom of the stock.

A Chu-ko-nu is a weaker crossbow than those used outside of Cathay, but it can fire its full box of bolts very quickly, if not always perfectly accurately, and can be reloaded without any extra complications while the archer is mounted.

Reload time for a Chu-ko-nu is zero, as long as the box is not empty. Once the box is empty, it takes 18 Actions to reload it completely. If you wish to do a partial reload, the time required is 6 Actions, plus 1 Action for each bolt you wish to load. The Reload (Crossbow) Knack may not be used to speed up this process, but the Reload (Chu-ko-nu) Knack may be used. (See New Knacks, Reload: Cho-ku-nu)

D20™ MECHANIC

Requires appropriate Exotic Weapons Proficiency to use. (See *Player's Handbook™*, Chapter 7: Equipment – Repeating Crossbow.)

7TH SEA™ MECHANIC

Use Crossbow Skill (1k2 damage; Range: 60 yards)

Dao (Cathayan Single-edge Broadsword)

The dao is curved and a bit heavier than the Théan broadsword, and needs two hands to use it properly. It is the primary infantry weapon of Han Hua's Imperial Army.

D20™ MECHANIC

1d12 damage. Requires Martial Weapon Proficiency to use. (See *Swashbuckling Adventures™*, Sword of Solomon.)

7TH SEA™ MECHANIC

Use Heavy Weapon Skill (3k2 damage)

Darn Dao

A darn dao is a smaller version of the dao. It is a curving sword with a silk sash in its pommel that is sometimes used in pairs.

D20™ MECHANIC

Requires Martial Weapon Proficiency to use. (See *Swashbuckling Adventures™*, Cutlass.)

7TH SEA™ MECHANIC
Use Fencing Skill (2k2 damage)

Gwon

A gwon is a wooden staff, just long enough that it reaches from the ground to the eye of its wielder. Used two-handed, anyone attempting to perform an Active Defense when parrying with a gwon gets a Free Raise for the attempt.

D20™ MECHANIC
Treat as a Quarterstaff (See *Player's Handbook™*, Chapter 7: Equipment.)

7TH SEA™ MECHANIC
Use Staff Skill (2k2 damage)

Hu Tsa (Tiger Trident)

A hu tsa is a three-pointed spear with a long, sharp central point and curving, crescent-shaped side blades used for hunting tigers.

D20™ MECHANIC
Requires Exotic Weapons Proficiency. 2d4 damage, ×2 Critical, Piercing. Add 1 to user's AC.

7TH SEA™ MECHANIC
Use Polearm Skill (4k2 damage).

Jiu Jie Bien

A jiu jie bien is a whip made of nine sections of steel linked by chains, with a handle and a spiked end.

D20™ MECHANIC
1d6 damage, range of 10 ft., 19-20 (×2) critical range.

7TH SEA™ MECHANIC
Use Chain Skill (3k3 damage)

Kan Dao

A kan dao is a heavy chopping weapon, used with either one or two hands. It has a curved single-edged chopping blade and a plain hilt that is long and unguarded, ending in a ring pommel.

D20™ MECHANIC
1d10 damage, 19-20 Crit (×2, ×3 if used 2 handed), slashing.

7TH SEA™ MECHANIC
Use Heavy Weapon Skill (3k2 damage)

Kastane

The kastane is the ornate national sword of Tiakhar. It has a slightly curved single-edged blade. The handle and pommel, as well as the ends of the quillions of these swords, are decorated with carvings in the shape of monsters' heads, and the entire hilt is often made of silver and gold, with jewels are frequently inlaid in the design as well. The scabbards are made of carved wood and are themselves richly decorated. Because of the expense of the weapon, it is illegal in Tiakhar to manufacture one that is not considered to be a "quality" weapon.

D20™ MECHANIC
1d8 damage, 18-20 (×2) Critical Range, Slashing. Always Masterwork weapons.

7TH SEA™ MECHANIC
Use Fencing Skill (2k3 damage)

Mei Far Chen (Plum Flower Needle)

The mei far chen is a small blowpipe that fits inside the wielder's mouth, where the tongue is used to manipulate and aim the tube. The "flower" can hold as many as five poisoned needles, each of which is shot separately. You get five Free Raises to conceal the blowpipe but you may not make Raises to your attack roll to increase the damage. If the mei far chen hits, the dart also injects one dose of its poison.

D20™ MECHANIC
Hits for 1 point of damage. +8 Circumstance bonus to conceal checks.

7TH SEA™ MECHANIC
Use Blowpipe Skill (1 point of damage per needle)

Niu Er Jian Dao (Bull's Ear Sword)

The niu er jian dao, called "butterfly knives" by the few Théans who have seen them, are broad, single-edged knives, nearly long enough to be considered shortwords. Traditionally used in pairs, they have thick hand guards, which usually feature a horn-like projection behind the blade. They may not be thrown, but the hand guards give a Free Raise when used to Parry as an Active Defense.

D20™ MECHANIC
Treat as Dagger (See *Player's Handbook™*, Chapter 7: Equipment). +2 Circumstance bonus to parry.

7TH SEA™ MECHANIC
Use Knife Skill (1k2 damage)

Paku

Paku are small metal throwing spikes, popular in Tiakhar. They do not do much damage but are easily hidden in the hand or clothing, giving three Free Raises to any attempt to Conceal them. You may throw up to three paku at once; each extra paku you throw after the first one counts as one Raise to your Throw roll. If you succeed, all the paku you threw hit your opponent, each doing 1k1 Damage. You do not add your Brawn to this damage, but you can still make Raises on your Throw roll to roll extra dice for damage, although these dice must be allocated at your discretion to the different paku. Make a Wound Check for each paku that hits.

For example, someone who throws three paku at his enemy and makes two Raises for damage could decide to put both Raises on one paku, or one Raise each on two of the Paku. He decides to put them both on one paku. He rolls 3k1 for that paku and 1k1 for each of the other two paku. He rolls 19 for the first one, and the target makes his Wound Check. The second paku does four Flesh Wounds, raising the total number of Flesh Wounds to 23, and the target fails this Wound Check, and takes a Dramatic Wound. The last paku does 3 Flesh Wounds, and the Wound Check succeeds, so the three paku inflict a Dramatic Wound and three Flesh Wounds.

D20™ MECHANIC
Requires Exotic Weapons Proficiency to use. 1d2 damage, ×2 Critical on 20, may throw up to three at once, subtracting 2 from your attack roll for each paku thrown after the first.

7TH SEA™ MECHANIC

Use Exotic Thrown Weapons Skill (see above for damage; Range: equal to thrower's Brawn.)

Rocket

One of the deadliest weapons in the arsenal of Cathay is the rocket. *7th Sea™ Mechanic*: A PC who is hit by rockets treats the attack as if he had been hit by a cannon, taking one Dramatic Wound, plus another Dramatic Wound per 5 points by which he fails his Wound Check, rounded down. On the good side, it is difficult to aim a rocket at anything because they do not fly straight. They are often fired en masse into a crowd or a building in combat, using launchers that hold up to twenty-four rockets. Multiple rockets can be fired from the launcher. For every extra rocket fired, you get one Free Raise to your Rocketry roll.

D20™ MECHANIC

Cost: Variable, depending on materials (in Cathay, 60 qian)

Damage: 3d8 within a radius of 20 ft.

Critical: × 4

Range Increment: 150 ft.

Crew: 2

Aim: 2 actions

Reload: N/A.

Move: 30 ft.

Make a to-hit roll (Profession: Rocketry), followed by a chance for deviation (Profession check at DC 25). If you fail, the rocket will deviate 3d6 feet clockwise, as determined by a d12. Two successive rolls of 1 mean that the rocket has exploded and you take 2 damage

Sa Tjat Koen

A sa tjat koen is similar to but less common than a seurng tjat koen. It consists of three clubs connected by two pieces of rope or chains. Wielded with the Chain Skill, the TN of all Attack (Chain) rolls with this weapon are Raised once.

D20™ MECHANIC

Requires Exotic Weapons Proficiency to use. Subtract 2 from all attack rolls. 1d10 damage, 19-20 Crit (×2), bludgeoning.

7TH SEA™ MECHANIC

Use Chain Skill (3k2 damage)

Seurng Tjat Koen

Derived from the agricultural flail, a seurng tjat koen is a peasant weapon consisting of two rods of wood connected by a cord tied or lashed around one end of each.

D20™ MECHANIC

1d6 damage, ×3 Critical, bludgeoning.

7TH SEA™ MECHANIC

Use Chain Skill (2k2 damage)

Shi Zi Jian ("Lion Head Sword")

The jian is a long, straight, flexible double-edged sword, usually wielded by nobles and scholars.

D20™ MECHANIC

Treat as a Longsword (See *Player's Handbook™*, Chapter 7: Equipment.)

7TH SEA™ MECHANIC

Use Fencing Skill (2k2 damage)

Shuang Gao

A shuang gao is a hooked sword-like weapon, used in pairs, with a sharp, crescent-shaped hand guard that is hooked so that it curves forward.

D20™ MECHANIC

Requires Exotic Weapons Proficiency to use. 1d6 damage, ×2 Critical, slashing. +2 circumstance bonus to disarm and parry attempts.

7TH SEA™ MECHANIC

Use Exotic Paired Skill (2k2 damage)

Shuang Huan (Full Moon)

A shuang huan is a Han Hua parrying weapon, consisting of a sharpened metal ring attached to a handle with two protruding curved blades. It is always wielded in pairs.

D20™ MECHANIC

Requires Exotic Weapons Proficiency. 1d4 damage, ×2 Critical, Slashing. +2 to all parrying attempts.

7TH SEA™ MECHANIC

Use Exotic Paired Weapon Skill (1k2 damage).

Shuang Pian Yue Ya Chan

A shuang pian yue ya chan is a polearm, six to seven feet long, with a sharpened shovel-shaped blade at one end and a broad crescent shaped blade at the other.

D20™ MECHANIC

Requires Exotic Weapons Proficiency to use. 1d8 damage, Critical × 3. Piercing/slashing.

7TH SEA™ MECHANIC

Use Polearm Skill (4k2 damage)

Shua Tou Quiang

A shua tou quiang is a spear with a spearhead on each end.

D20™ MECHANIC

1d8 damage, Critical 19–20 ×2. Piercing.

7TH SEA™ MECHANIC

Use Polearm Skill (4k2 damage)

Tieh Shan Gong (Metal War Fan)

Metal war fans are used to parry blow, but can also be employed as light clubs.

D20™ MECHANIC

1d4 damage, ×2 critical, bludgeoning. May be used to parry.

7TH SEA™ MECHANIC

Use Exotic Paired Weapon Skill (0k2 damage)

Tulwar

The tulwar is the national sword of Tashil. It is a curved cavalry saber with a disc-shaped pommel, similar to the Crescent

scimitar but with a slightly straighter blade. A tulwar may be drawn from its scabbard without requiring an Action or creating a penalty to the TN to hit your opponent.

D20™ MECHANIC

(See *Player's Handbook™*, Chapter 7: Equipment – Scimitar.)

7TH SEA™ MECHANIC

Use Fencing Skill (2k2 damage)

New Environmental Factor: Feng Shui Rating

Every location in Cathay (and, at the GM's option, anywhere else in the world) has a Feng Shui Rating between –3 and +3, with the average being 0. To randomly determine the Feng Shui Rating of a location, roll 2k2 (with no exploding dice) and consult the table below. If the location has a Feng Shui Rating that is lower than 0, the site is infested with negative energies, and if the Feng Shui Rating is above 0, the site is full of positive energies.

The Rank of a Feng Shui Rating is equal to its distance from 0 on a line chart, so a Feng Shui Rating of –3 has a Rank of 3, a Rating of 0 has a Rank of 0, and a Rating of +1 has a Rank of 1, and so forth.

TABLE 3-40: FENG SHUI RATING

Dice Roll	Feng Shui Rating
2	–3
3 – 4	–2
5 – 7	–1
8 – 14	0
15 – 17	+1
18 – 19	+2
20	+3

TABLE 3-41: NEW WEAPONS

Weapon	Damage	Range	Short Range	Long Range	Reload
Chakram	1k2	25	+5	–5	0
Chu-ko-nu	1k2	60	–5	–15	0 while box is loaded, 18 Actions to completely reload the box
Dao	3k2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Darn Dao	2k2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Gwon	2k2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Hu Tsa	4k2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Jiu Jie Bien	3k3	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Kan Dao	3k2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Kastane	2k2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Mei Far Chen	1 point, plus poison	7	–5	–15	1 until flower is empty, 3 Actions to refill flower
Niu Er Jian Dao	1k2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Paku	1k1	Brawn	0	–10	0
Rocket	5k4	200	–25	–35	24 Actions
Sa Tjat Koen	3k2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Seurng Tjat Koen	2k2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Shi Zi Jian	2k2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Shuang Gao	2k2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Shuang Huan	1k2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Shua Pian Yue Ya Chan	4k2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Shua Tou Quiang	4k2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Tieh Shan Gong	0k2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Tulwar	2k2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

In a location with positive energies, Heroes, Scoundrels, and their Henchmen and Brutes roll one more die (+1k0) per Rank of Feng Shui Rating, while Villains and their Henchmen and Brutes roll one less die (–1k0) per Rank of Feng Shui Rating. For instance, in a temple with a Feng Shui Rating of +2, all Heroes would get a +2k0 bonus and Villains would get a –2k0 penalty. These bonuses apply to any roll where the number of dice you keep is determined by one of your Traits. Therefore, it does not apply to Damage rolls because you keep a number of dice that is determined by the kind of attack instead of a Trait.

Conversely, in areas with negative energies, Heroes, Scoundrels, and their Henchmen and Brutes roll one less die (–1k0) per Rank of Feng Shui Rating, while Villains and their Henchmen and Brutes roll one more die (+1k0) per Rank of Feng Shui Rating. The same restrictions apply to these bonuses and penalties as apply to the modifiers in a positive Feng Shui Rating site.

D20™ MECHANICS:

In places with a positive aspect (+1 to +3), characters with Lawful alignment gain a +2 circumstance bonus to all skill checks, saving throws, and attack rolls for every point of Feng Shui, while Chaotic characters suffer a similar penalty. Reverse this bonus for areas with negative Feng Shui. Those with Neutral alignment are unaffected.

CHAPTER FOUR:
Di Si Shu
(The Fourth Book)

*Here, beside a clear lake,
You live accompanied by clouds
Soft through yonder pine the moon arrives
Your own pure-hearted friend.
You rest under a thatch in the shadow of your flowers
Your dewy herbs flourish in their bed of moss.
Let me leave the world. Let me alight, like you
On your western mountain of phoenixes and cranes.*

— Cen Can

Player's Section

Playing in Cathay — A Different Sensibility

Should you play a Western Théan going to Cathay or a Cathayan who has come to Western Théan, or should the entire party be Cathayans in Cathay? There are pros and cons in all three instances.

Western Théans, even those who hail from the Crescent Empire, are not welcome beyond the western seaports of the land they call Cathay. Does that mean they will be shot on sight? No. They will simply find it... difficult. Officials will delay permits, guides will charge exorbitant amounts, and guards will be more than usually attentive in their searches. While very few people will be overtly rude, there is little question everything would be better if the party got back on the boat and headed west.

There are, of course, people who will treat the Western Théans with courtesy and kindness, but the party should not expect a rollicking greeting nor any sort of hospitality.

The language barrier alone makes initial communication close to impossible. The people of the Qi Guo are generally reserved. While the nomads of Xian Bei are not as restrained as other Cathayans, they are extremely suspicious of strangers. Cathay is not the sort of place into which one announces his presence by leaping from the rigging of a ship into a cadre of Imperial guards or sliding down the roof tiles into a lady's chamber. The idea of "swashbuckling" in Cathay is quite different from that of Western Théah and some of the antics of Western Théans would be regarded as positively barbaric (or even illegal) in this part of the world.

To be fair, prowess in combat speaks a universal language so those who can display their skills with weapons will be received with enthusiasm. However, weapons used in this part of the world require more finesse, delicacy, and a certain lithe ability more common to the Crescent Empire than to Eisen.

As in Vodacce or the Crescent Empire, intrigue and politics are familiar inhabitants in the courts of the Seven Kingdoms; when you add the elements of courtesy and inferential behavior, the layers become more and more intricately interwoven. Factor in the strong admonition to behave with filial piety to the person who holds the tien ming, the Mandate of Heaven, and you have a political situation that would baffle even a Vodacce prince.

Should you choose to play a Cathayan-born character who has ventured West, you will face an entirely different set of challenges. You suddenly become the Exotic One, the Stranger, the object of intense scrutiny and observation. And, unless you are from Xian Bei, you will find the assault on your senses unbearable. The further west you travel, the less fastidious the people seem. By the time you reach Vestenmannavngar or Inismore, you will be reeling from the odor of too many human bodies, too many unwashed garments.

Ever since you left Cathay, the food has been practically inedible and the water will certainly make you ill for a while. The customs will be confusing, not to mention somewhat offensive in certain instances. You will not see children treating their parents with the kind of respect to which you are accustomed. People stand on street corners and speak openly against the ruler. You will experience frenetic movement, a cacophony of sounds, and a myriad of smells, not all of which you can find pleasing. Overall, there is a lack of delicacy and more importantly, a lack of courtesy.

The languages of Western Théah, except for Crescent, seem terribly limited. They are not particularly difficult to learn, once you realize that most words have only one meaning and one form of pronunciation. However, it will be difficult, if not impossible, to translate the concepts into your own dialect.

On the other hand, there is art and music, of a sort. There is entertainment, although some of it is barbaric, especially the bull baiting in Castille and the bear wrestling in Ussura. There are religious buildings throughout Théah, although they are for the most part quite cluttered, full of a cloying incense and smoke from many candles, while lacking a proper statuary for the gods.

What you will miss the most, however, is the sense of peace that you were able to achieve in your homeland. While there are certainly places of quiet natural beauty where you might go to meditate, the landscape is strange and not comforting. The person who leaves the Seven Kingdoms must be prepared for a cultural experience that will shake him to the core.

Perhaps one of the strangest things you will encounter are the various creatures, both real and imagined, that seem to have come to this part of Théah from a different place altogether. You know nothing of these “shee” or “sirneth,” nor of this strange “bar-gun” that was apparently struck centuries ago between the creatures and some men from a place called “noomah.” You may regard the stories as so much silliness until you encounter artifacts or ruins inhabited by these monsters. You may then find yourself asking why there is none of this in the Qi Guo, whether you should notify someone back home about this apparent threat to the world and how soon you can return home.

None of this is said to discourage you from playing a Cathayan-born character. It will be a fascinating challenge to try living in a culture so completely different from your own. You may wish to start by selecting someone from one of the Seven Kingdoms who travels to Han Hua or makes a pilgrimage to Khimal. While you will be dealing with some differences in language and custom, the basic sensibility is the same regardless of your kingdom of birth. You share common principles of behavior and an unspoken common code of behavior. You know who you are and your place in the scheme of things. Whatever prejudices there are between Kingdoms will not be unknown to you and you will undoubtedly sleep better at night.

Reputation Awards and Losses (7th Sea™)

Cathayans have a strong sense of honor and family loyalty, a reverence for history and the land, and a firm belief in the supernatural; player characters are no exception. They are accustomed to a strong social and familial hierarchy, they revere their ancestors and they are more comfortable with the concept of natural magic in their daily lives than other inhabitants of Théah.

Characters from Cathay do not come from the same culture as characters from Théah, and do not have the same mores either. Consequently, the list of actions for which Cathayans can gain or lose Reputation Points is slightly different from the list presented in the *Game Masters' Guide*™.

The difference between the two lists lies in the effects of chivalrous and unchivalrous behavior — or, to be more specific, within its requirements where Justice is concerned. Cathayans do not regard Justice the way that Théans do. They value all the aspects of Adherence — adherence to the law and to tradition, observance of one's position in the social strata, obedience to the family and respect for the memory of your ancestors.

This is not to say that Cathayans do not believe that justice should be done but it does mean that they are not inclined to let a wanted man go just because he happened to save a young girl recently. However, they might be inclined to speak for him as a character witness at his trial. Above all, the letter of the law is quite clear about crime and punishment.

Gaining Reputation (Cathay)

- Prowess in Combat (Battles)
- Artistic Excellence (Craftsmanship)
- Adherence/Proper Behavior (Justice)
- Social Standing (Marriage)
- Expressions of Love/Sacrifice for Love (Romance)
- Promise (Keeping Your Word)
- Heroic Behavior (Skill Success and Performance)
- Avenging Honor (Vendetta)

Losing Reputation (Cathay)

- Breaking a Vow
- Cowardice
- Abuse of Romance
- Unchivalrous Acts:
 - Betrayal
 - Deceit
 - Broken Vow
 - Dishonoring Ancestors
 - Traitor

(See *Swashbuckling Adventures*™, Chapter 7: Advanced Rules — Reputation)



GM's Section

Adding Cathay to Your Game

Do you have to add Cathay to your 7th Sea™ game? No. This book is here as much for a reference as anything else and can be used merely to add spice to your current Western Théan campaigns. Perhaps your players encounter an item of Cathayan origin or perhaps they have traveled as far as the Crescent Empire and encountered an envoy from the court of the Celestial Empress. With this book, you will be able to augment the adventure with information that will make the encounter more realistic.

Naturally, your game is yours to do with as you please and if you wish to use the information here in other ways, or fit Cathay into another game world entirely, that is your prerogative. There is no iron-clad rule except that you have fun with the material. This book offers some continuity for the overall world view of Théah and answers some questions that 7th Sea™ players have asked since the game was introduced. If nothing else, you will finally know WHY and HOW the Wall of Fire evolved!

The lands of the Qi Guo are designed to fit into the world of 7th Sea (both versions!) Should you wish to augment your scenarios in Cathay, you'll find a bibliography provided in the back of the book. However, there is no list of film references, partially because the subject of wuxia is handled quite differently in this world than in others in the role-playing genre. This was a conscious decision to focus on the physical aspects of the techniques rather than the magic behind this very popular fighting style. Obviously, "*Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*" has had a profound influence on everything that has come after it, but medieval Asia is much more than wire harnesses and tree-hopping. It is all the other things in this film and others like it — the story, the characters, the drama of having to make a decision between duty and desire, and especially the way fate figures in the lives of common men and women.

Keeping Secrets

There is a lot of material in this book that has been designed especially for GMs. The authors felt that, given the lengths to which the game designers have gone to keep Cathay a secret, it was only fair that GMs should have the upper hand when it came to introducing their players to the lands behind the Wall of Fire. With the opening of Cabora, some consider it inevitable that the next stop on the tour would be the Seven Kingdoms. Others are content to remain behind the borders, oblivious to changes occurring in other parts of the world. In the end, it is up to you as the master or mistress of the swashbuckling ceremonies.

The Barrier, the Bargain, and the Monsters

We are not hiding anything up our silken sleeves. There is absolutely no evidence of any Syrneath presence in the Seven Kingdoms. None. No secret enclave, no hidden maze, no nest of massive insects. There is no Barrier through which chthonic things are trying to claw holes. Whatever powers the gods of the Seven Kingdoms have apparently include the ability to keep the land safe from intruders from other dimensions.

Ships of Cathay

"We have traveled more than one hundred thousand li of the waters beyond our world and have beheld in the huge ocean waves like mountains rising sky high. We have set eyes on barbarian regions hidden in blue light while our sails, loftily unfurled like clouds day and night, drew us on our course as quickly as a star, as if we were treading a public thoroughfare."

— Admiral Hai Ping, 1432, prior to the departure of the 7th Voyage of the Bao Chuan into the Huo Zhi Zou Lang

The Bao Chuan

In the early years of the Fifteenth Century, the Kingdom of Han Hua sent forth a massive fleet of vessels to court the friendship of distant nations, to impress barbarian rulers, and to gather tribute from far-off realms such as would befit the Celestial Empress. Using shipbuilding techniques unknown to the nations of the distant West, the shipwrights of Xi Hai Long, Han Hua's primary naval docks, constructed vessels larger than any ever seen.

For over 20 years, the ships of the Bao Chuan (Treasure Fleet) traveled the seas of Théah. They brought with them wonders never before imagined. They created accurate maps, and made the name of the Empress known throughout the lands of the Crescent Empire and beyond. These massive vessels journeyed surprisingly far for such an insular Empire — one ship is reported in the Imperial records as breaking apart on rocks off the coast of an island which sounds distinctly like Avalon. The admiral who commanded this armada of leviathans is as much a legend as the ships themselves — Hai Ping, a peasant fisherman who journeyed to Jing Du and demanded an audience with the Empress.

Intrigued by the insolence of the peasant, the Empress forbade her guards to strike him down until he had spoken his piece. Hai Ping produced grubby charts, claiming that the admirals appointed by the Empress did not know the waters around their own coast, much less those of the world beyond the Huo Qiang. Hai Ping's charts showed waters further from the Empire than those ever traveled by the Imperial Navy, waters he had braved in his fragile sampan for no reason other than the desire to explore. The Empress spared Hai Ping's life on the condition that he serve her by taking command of the Bao Chuan.

From that day forth, it is said that the new Admiral never set foot on dry land again and that his family assumed he would not return. None can say how much tales such as these reflect truth, but his dedication to the fleet remained unswerving throughout each voyage.

The massive ships often encountered trouble at sea, but it was more often the commoner Admiral's ingenuity that saw them safely back to Han Hua rather than the might of the fleet itself. It can be said however that their strength dissuaded many a foolish or greedy lord from mounting an assault on the Bao Chuan, laden as it was with the awe-inspiring riches of far Cathay.

The first six voyages of the Bao Chuan fleet were unparalleled successes, bringing gushing praise and lavish tribute from the Empress from many far off lands. Hai Ping brought great renown to the Celestial Empress and found favor in her eyes. He sent lengthy missives from the deck of his great vessel while preparing inventories and plotting courses for the next voyage. It was to be Hai Ping's dedication, however, that was to be his undoing.

While his ability was unquestioned, his prominence in the ways of the Court hurt the pride of a cabal of officers whom history has now forgotten. When these officers spoke about Hai Ping, their words held nothing but glowing and false regard for the most famous Admiral and sailor in all of Han Hua. Surely if anyone could take a vessel through the Corridors of Flame, would it not be Hai Ping, they asked. The soft

whisper of poison against the renowned sailor grew into a murmur. The murmur became a boldly spoken question. The question came a roar. Why had the Bao Chuan never sailed the Huo Zhi Zou Lang and brought the culture of the great Empire to the unknown lands beyond the Huo Qiang?

In 1432, the Empress found she had no choice but to order Hai Ping to pilot the fleet into the dreaded waters for the glory of the Empire. Among themselves, the sailors considered it a death sentence — no ship had ever returned from those treacherous waters. With fearful eyes, they looked to their admiral but Hai Ping was unperturbed. He swore that he would navigate the Corridors and bring them all home safe once more. Confident that Hai Ping would never endanger his crew, the Bao Chuan sailed into certain death with little more than a heartfelt prayer and a few tears.

The Real Bao Chuan

All of the ships detailed below are based on their real-world equivalents, including the Bao Chuan. A Bao Chuan vessel was almost five times the size of the Santa Maria. There is increasing evidence, for those who choose to believe it, the Chinese were in fact the first to reach America. There are many theories as to why the great fleet of 15th Century China was called back home and never achieved the same glory again but the only people who know for sure are long gone...

Vessels of the Fleet

Bao Chuan (Treasure Ship)

The greatest seafaring vessel ever to grace the seas of Théah, the Bao Chuan is nothing more than a sailor's tale whispered in barbarian lands. Constructed to the auspicious measurements of 444 chi (486 ft.) in length, and 44 Chi (49 ft.) wide with towers, artillery and nine great masts rising from the deck, the Bao Chuan was created to be, and is, awe-inspiring to the crew of any lesser vessel. Still in use today, the Bao Chuan patrol the coastal waters around Han Hua, waiting to catch any enemy in Imperial waters. Some admirals see this duty as a lesser one than the original purpose of the Bao Chuan — furthering the glory of the Empire — but they do not question the wisdom of their superiors, and thus the voice of those who would adventure across unknown seas is never heard in Court.

Bao Chuan (7th Sea™)

Brawn: 10, Finesse: 10, Resolve: 11, Wits: 11, Panache: 11
 Modifications: Extra Cargo Space, Reinforced Masts, Silk Sails,
 Sturdy Hull, Wide Rudder
 Flaws: None
 Draft: 11
 Crew: 10
 Cargo: 12

Bao Chuan (d20")

Length: 489 ft.
Width: 49 ft.
Draft: 5
Cannon: 80 guns
Masts: 9 (40)
Oars: 0
Movement Rate: 7
Cargo: 120 tons
Rudder: 3
Crew: 300
Armor Class: 11
Hull Hardness: 10
Hit Points: 11,000
Starting Feats: Masterful Construction

Lian Chuan (Supply Ship)

Little more than seagoing barges, the lian chuan of the Bao Chuan carried rations and hard supplies for the crew of the much larger ships, as well as the other vessels in these colossal flotillas. Despite the presence of these floating cargo ships, the fleet still had to make port on average every ten days in order to re-supply.

Lian Chuan (7th Sea™)

Brawn: 3, **Finesse:** 2, **Resolve:** 4, **Wits:** 4, **Panache:** 2
Modifications: Silk Sails
Flaws: None
Draft: 4
Crew: 3
Cargo: 4

Lian Chuan (d20")

Length: 49 ft.
Width: 15 ft.
Draft: 1
Cannon: 2 guns
Masts: 3 (20)
Oars: 0
Movement Rate: 3
Cargo: 10 tons.
Rudder: 2
Crew: 10
Armor Class: 11
Hull Hardness: 5
Hit Points: 500
Starting Feats: Silk Sails

Shui Chuan (Water Ship)

It was the task of these ships to procure and maintain a stock of fresh water for the entire fleet, a task they performed flawlessly. They stored water in a series of enormous barrels beneath the main deck of the ship, and ferried it between the vessels of the navy. None of these vessels have been built since the final voyage of Hai Ping's fleet, although the plans and documents that detail the method of their construction remain to this day in the archives at Xi Hai Long.

Shui Chuan (7th Sea™)

Brawn: 2, **Finesse:** 2, **Resolve:** 5, **Wits:** 3, **Panache:** 2
Modifications: Silk Sails, Sturdy Hull
Flaws: None
Draft: 5
Crew: 2
Cargo: 5

Shui Chuan (d20")

Length: 57 ft.
Width: 22 ft.
Draft: 2
Cannon: 4 guns
Masts: 3 (25)
Oars: 0
Movement Rate: 3
Cargo: 20 tons
Rudder: 3
Crew: 15
Armor Class: 10
Hull Hardness: 7
Hit Points: 600
Starting Feats: Reinforced Hull.

Ma Chuan (Horse Ship)

These ships were designed specifically to provide a workable environment in which to stable horses the Empire might deem fit to offer as gifts or those which were given to the Celestial Empress by grateful rulers of other Kingdoms or nations outside the Qi Guo. As the Empire has seen no need to transport large numbers of horses across the sea, it has constructed none of these ships for two hundred years.

Ma Chuan (7th Sea™)

Brawn: 1, **Finesse:** 5, **Resolve:** 3, **Wits:** 3, **Panache:** 3
Modifications: Silk Sails, Well-Trained Crew
Flaws: None
Draft: 3
Crew: 5
Cargo: 3

Ma Chuan (d20")

Length: 65 ft.
Width: 24 ft.
Draft: 1
Cannon: 0
Masts: 2 (30)
Oars: 0
Movement Rate: 4
Cargo: 15 tons
Rudder: 2
Crew: 24
Armor Class: 12
Hull Hardness: 6
Hit Points: 700
Starting Feats: Silk Sails

Shun Lo Chuan (Patrol Ship)

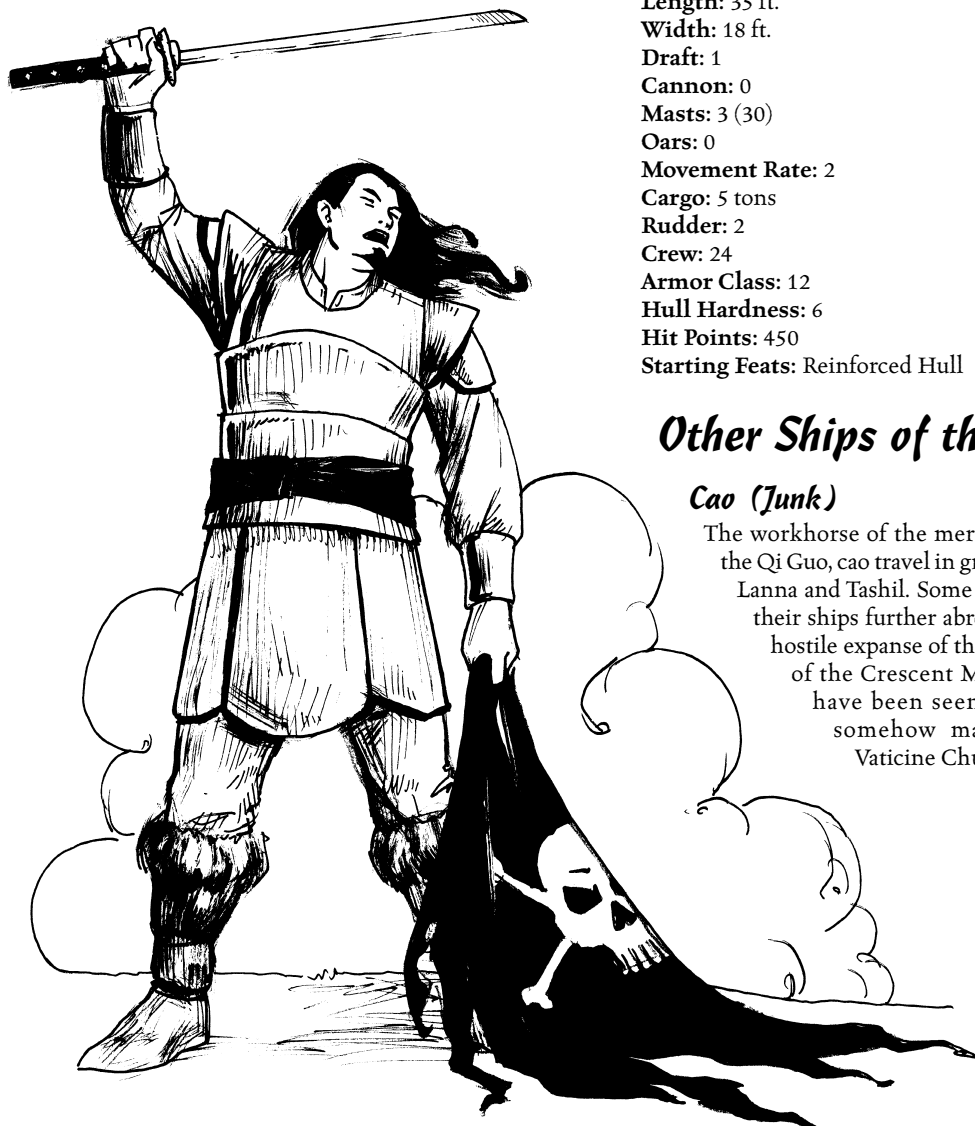
These ships were originally responsible both for patrolling the perimeter of the Fleet as well as the coastal waters of Han Hua, although currently they perform only the latter duty. Ships designed for war, the patrol ships of the Empire are fast and stable platforms, considered excellent prize vessels by the most daring pirates of Tiakhar.

***Shun Lo Chuan* (7th Sea™)**

Brawn: 6, Finesse: 4, Resolve: 4, Wits: 5, Panache: 5
 Modifications: Extended Keel, Overgunned, Silk Sails
 Flaws: Flimsy Masts
 Draft: 4
 Crew: 4
 Cargo: 4

***Shun Lo Chuan* (d20™)**

Length: 85 ft.
 Width: 16 ft.
 Draft: 2
 Cannon: 28 guns
 Masts: 3 (20)
 Oars: 0
 Movement Rate: 5
 Cargo: 10 tons
 Rudder: 2
 Crew: 55
 Armor Class: 12
 Hull Hardness: 7
 Hit Points: 1,000
 Starting Feats: Overgunned



***Yi Chuan* (Medical Ship)**

These ships now serve the Imperial Navy of Han Hua in the way they once they served the Bao Chuan, as transports for cao yao. These small floating hospitals typically have room for approximately fifty patients, though they can accommodate more upon the deck in fine weather. The staff consists of three cao yao and fifteen apprentices who learn their trade swiftly when their ship encounters Tiakhari pirates.

They are also used on exploratory missions to obtain stores of standard medicinal herbs and to find new ones. Not all of the medical ships are owned by the Imperial Navy; there are a number of such vessels that serve wealthy merchants interested in increasing their profits.

***Yi Chuan* (7th Sea™)**

Brawn: 1, Finesse: 3, Resolve: 2, Wits: 3, Panache: 2
 Modifications: Well-Equipped Sick Bay
 Flaws: Sluggish
 Draft: 2
 Crew: 3
 Cargo: 2

***Yi Chuan* (d20™)**

Length: 35 ft.
 Width: 18 ft.
 Draft: 1
 Cannon: 0
 Masts: 3 (30)
 Oars: 0
 Movement Rate: 2
 Cargo: 5 tons
 Rudder: 2
 Crew: 24
 Armor Class: 12
 Hull Hardness: 6
 Hit Points: 450
 Starting Feats: Reinforced Hull

Other Ships of the Qi Guo

***Cao* (Junk)**

The workhorse of the merchants along the coasts of the Qi Guo, cao travel in great fleets down the coast to Lanna and Tashil. Some ambitious merchants send their ships further abroad, traversing the flat and hostile expanse of the Mirror Sea to the Empire of the Crescent Moon. In recent years, cao have been seen as far afield as Dionna, somehow managing to pass by the Vaticine Church's blockade.

Cao (7th Sea™)

Brawn: 2, Finesse: 2, Resolve: 5, Wits: 4, Panache: 3
 Modifications: Extra Cargo Space
 Flaws: None
 Draft: 5
 Crew: 2
 Cargo: 6

Cao (d20™)

Length: 49 ft.
 Width: 27 ft.
 Draft: 1
 Cannon: 6 guns
 Masts: 2 (25)
 Oars: 0
 Movement Rate: 4
 Cargo: 25 tons
 Rudder: 2
 Crew: 20
 Armor Class: 11
 Hull Hardness: 6
 Hit Points: 1,500
 Starting Feats: Reinforced Hull

Ban (Sampan)

A simple and workmanlike ship, the ban has been the mainstay of the Empire's seagoing fishing fleet for as long as records have been kept. Single-masted and just as wide as it is long, it is possible (and indeed not unheard of) for fishermen and their families to live on their ban, sailing from shoal to shoal, putting their nets out until they have enough of a catch to return to land. The sails of the ban are almost universally made of matting, but this makes these small ships very simple to maintain in contrast to the extravagant silk sails of more expensive ships.

It is not uncommon at sunset in port cities to see clouds of smoke rising from braziers on board ban as families prepare their evening meal on their floating home.

Ban (7th Sea™)

Brawn: 1, Finesse: 1, Resolve: 2, Wits: 3, Panache: 3
 Modifications: None
 Flaws: None (Note that although a ban is eminently seaworthy, when tightly gathered in port, there is an increased risk of fire due to cramped conditions and sparks from on-board braziers.)
 Draft: 2
 Crew: 1
 Cargo: 2

Ban (d20™)

Length: 25 ft.
 Width: 18 ft.
 Draft: 0
 Cannon: 0
 Masts: 1 (20)
 Oars: 0
 Movement Rate: 3
 Cargo: 5 tons
 Rudder: 2
 Crew: 5
 Armor Class: 12
 Hull Hardness: 5
 Hit Points: 500
 Starting Feats: None

Ship Costs

Because there is no 1:1 exchange rate between the guilder and the qian, ship costs below are expressed in terms of the guilder so that adventurers can understand the relative size and power of Cathayan vessels:

TABLE 4-1: THE REAL BAO CHUAN

Ship	Base Cost	Cost/Additional Level
Bao Chuan	200,000 G	12,000 G
Shun Lo Chuan	45,000 G	6,000 G
Cao	40,000 G	3,700 G
Shui Chuan	20,000 G	1,400 G
Ma Chuan	20,000 G	1,400 G
Lian Chuan	15,000 G	1,000 G
Yi Chuan	5,000 G	400 G
Ban	2,000 G	60 G

Da Mou Xian (The Great Adventure)

The Legend of the White Silk Fleet

Zong zhi cheng cheng.

(Unity of will makes an impregnable fortress.)

— ancient Han Hua saying.

It began with the noblest of intentions.

Outmaneuvered politically, the sailor Hai Ping thought only to do what his Empress demanded of him. True, he would sail his fleet into the throes of peril, but he fully expected to emerge triumphant and unscathed. He was not arrogant nor was he overconfident in abilities. He had simply managed to bring his crew home safely from many dangers because they believed in him and he had never let them down. The journey into the Corridors of Flame would simply be a greater challenge but one at which he would undoubtedly succeed. He owed it to his family, his Empress and his crew. As his farewell to the Imperial Navy, he would map the lands beyond the Huo Zhi Zou Lang and return to see the Fleet off under a new Admiral.

As far as the official record was concerned, Hai Ping and his crew simply disappeared. The ships were never heard from again, crushing further ideas of foreign exploration with wild rumors of demons consuming the vessels.

As with the best of lies, these stories contained a grain of truth. A demon did consume and destroy the fleet, but it was a demon of entirely human creation, one of ambition and jealousy. Wuang Tie Xing, Hai Ping's first officer and second in command of the entire Bao Chuan, had been approached by the admirals who despised the commoner admiral. In exchange for sabotaging the journey, they promised Wuang whatever he wanted upon his return to Han Hua. Blinded by jealousy and greed, he did not realize that the admirals had no intention of letting him or the fleet return.

While Hai Ping spent many months gazing at the sheer walls of fire that spewed upwards from the sea and making careful notes, the ships ventured onward carefully through the mist that cloaked the entire region, with the forlorn calls of the patrol ships' lookouts echoing invisibly from ahead.

Even as he dreamt of becoming admiral, Wuang sowed seeds of mistrust against the renowned admiral almost as soon as the fleet entered the Corridors of Flame.

After a season of travel through the Huo Zhi Zou Lang the crews lost all concept of night and day, their every waking hour lit by the hellish glow of the sea. Although no vessel had as yet been destroyed, there were more than a few close calls. The crews grew restless and tense, and more than ready to turn around and head home, but they kept quiet out of loyalty to their admiral. By this point, Wuang was desperate to turn the crew against their leader.

One night, he set a fire in the stores of the Hai Ping's *chi* chiang or flagship. The fire was quickly brought under control, but several months' food was ruined beyond any hope of salvage. The mood was ugly as all eyes turned to the admiral. Wuang apologized for speaking but reluctantly asked how long it would be before the fleet emerged on the other side of the burning sea.

Hai Ping said he would not lie to his crew — it would be another season yet before they emerged safely on the other side. He would not venture to speed up, as it would increase the risk to the fleet. If there were no more questions, he said, the men should return to their stations.

Over the course of the next day, the entire fleet erupted into chaos. Ship turned against ship, and Hai Ping was forced to defend himself against the man who knew his thought process best. The ships of the great Bao Chuan turned their weapons on the lesser ships, mutineer and loyalist alike. Hai Ping attempted to stem the tide of mutiny while Wuang egged the mutineers on, calling upon all their reserves to drive them harder against their admiral. Lacking room to maneuver, ships were soon ablaze and the thick smoke of the battle made it impossible to see. One of the Bao Chuan, its crew fighting amongst themselves, lost control and plunged headlong into the wall of fire and was reduced to ash in an instant. In that very moment, Hai Ping saw what he had to do to save his fleet — he had to disappear. Gathering his most loyal men onto a few small vessels, Hai Ping retreated further into the Corridors of Flame, the notes from his voyage tucked safely against his chest.

When the smoke cleared and some semblance of visibility returned, Wuang Tie Xing assumed command of the remaining ships and ordered the fleet to head home. Assuming that the admiral had been killed or had drowned, he entered Hai Ping's cabin, only to find that the charts missing! Rather than reveal that he did not know the way back, Wuang gave orders for helmsmen to retrace their footsteps.

After three weeks and the destruction of two supply ships by a shifting column of flame, the exhausted crew turned against Wuang, tearing him limb from limb in their fury as the traitor died with a curse on his lips.

Without guidance or charts, the fleet wandered in the Corridors of Flame, lost. Days became weeks and weeks became months as the mutineers ran out of supplies. The light from the sea's perpetual fires seemed to bleach the auspicious red silk of their sails a ghostly white. Twisted and maddened by

the constant entrapment and stranded on board their dead ships, the mutineers were doomed to coast silently in the Huo Zhi Zou Lang, a skeletal crew destined never to see the beautiful lands of their homeland again.

To this day, the white sails of the lost fleet shine translucently in moonlight, dampening the roar of the fire that still issues from the sea. Their act of mutiny, born from greed, fear and jealousy, cursed them to wander the Corridors of Flame forever. Dying far from home and lacking a proper burial, the crew of the remaining Bao Chuan vessels have become Chiang Shih, mad and vicious vampires determined to take their revenge on the living.

From the towers of the *chi* chiang Wuang Tie Xing's spirit glares out across the burning sea that has become his prison. With a crew as feral as a school of frenzied sharks, all that motivates the ships is the traitor's anger. He alone remembers all that has gone before. Sometimes, he envies the savage brutes his crewmates transformed into. His grand fleet has become the White Silk Fleet, grim barges of death and decay, sickening parodies of the glorious ships they once were. No mortals tell tales of the White Silk Fleet, for none who have encountered them survive.

Today, the White Silk Fleet seeks out any living sailor brave enough to venture into the Corridors of Flame, desperate to drag the secret that would allow them to return to Han Hua. Only one mortal has ever triumphed over the Huo Zhi Zou Lang, but he sailed East to lands unknown over two centuries ago. Wherever Hai Ping went, that is the resting place of the only map that shows the patterns of the Corridors of Flame and the way back to Cathay.

Those few Bao Chuan that patrol the coastal waters of the Mirror, fearful of venturing too far afield lest the demons that consumed Hai Ping's fleet bear unto them the same fate. The Empire has become increasingly insular since their Fleet, the most potent symbol of their worldwide power, vanished without trace. If something does not change soon, it is likely the Empire will not build a seafaring vessel again.

Chiang Shi (Hopping Vampires)

In the lands behind the Huo Qiang, respect for one's departed ancestors is crucial. What may seem to an outsider like legend and superstition is regarded differently by the wise ones of Han Hua. If not properly buried, the dead can walk the earth, driven by a soul of pure evil to take feral revenge upon the living.

The Chiang Shih is one of the more infamous among these furious revenants. Called into being when a person who dies far from home is not accorded proper funerary rites, the Chiang Shih rises from the grave driven by the *P'o*, the base and evil part of the human soul. Desire for revenge drives the Chiang Shih to strike out against the living, and lends a ferocious strength to its actions.

The Chiang Shih appears much as it did shortly after death — a pallid, ghastly corpse clad in grave clothes or whatever it wore when it died. Its face, however, is twisted into a constant scowl of rage, and its movements are stiff and artificial; a side effect of the evil that suffuses the creature is that it lacks the grace of movement found among the living. Incapable of normal movement, the creature instead hops after its prey, arms outstretched. Were the creatures less vicious, it might appear comical. But the powerful arms of this vampire throttle the life from its victims, drawing sustenance from the last breaths of those it strangles.

In its almost feral state a Chiang Shih can shrug off all but the most powerful of blows. This monster, however, is not without its weaknesses. A properly prepared fu zou (prayer scroll) placed squarely on the Chiang Shih's forehead (7th Sea™: requires 4 Raises, deals no damage; d20™: +8 Called Shot, deals no damage) renders it immobile and forces it to obey the commands of the monk who penned the scroll. The vampire cannot approach a house surrounded by a ring of blessed rice. It is now blind, forcing it to rely on the ability to sense the breath of living creatures rather than seeing them. Anyone who holds his or her breath (subjecting themselves to the Drowning rules in doing so) is invisible to the vampire.

Do not be misled — destroying a Chiang Shih is no simple matter: Monks who deal with these dreadful creatures believe the only way it can truly be destroyed is to return it to a properly consecrated grave and give it a decent burial, which releases the p'o to depart and allows the deceased to rest in peace. Destroying a Chiang Shih with force, while the favored solution among the military, is frowned upon by the monks, as doing so is certain to give the individuals who destroy the beast bad karma for many futures. (Note: at the GM's option, slaying a Chiang Shih rather than returning it for a proper burial enables activation of an automatic fail on any roll the PC(s) make at any one time in the future.)

Chiang Shih (d20™)

Medium-size Undead

Hit Dice: 9d8 + 9.

Initiative: +0.

Speed: 20 ft.

AC: 15 (+5 natural).

Attacks: 1 Grapple + 8-10 melee.

Damage: Grapple, special.

Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.

Special Attacks: Strangulation, Strength Sapping.

Special Qualities: Breath Sense, undead, damage reduction

Saves: Fort + 6, Ref + 0, Will + 5

Abilities: Str 21, Dex 10, Con 18, Int 6, Wis 6, Cha 8.

Skills: Climb + 12, Intimidate + 12, Jump + 14

Feats: Endurance, Great Fortitude, Toughness (3)

Climate/Terrain: Any land

Organization: Solitary

Challenge Rating: 9

Treasure: None

Alignment: Always chaotic evil

Advancement: 9-12 HD

Special Attacks: When grappling an opponent, the Chiang Shih may, at any opportunity to cause damage, force a grappled opponent to make a Fortitude Save at DC 20. If the opponent fails the save, they lose 1d3 points of Strength. An opponent reduced to 0 strength by this attack is slain. Lost Strength returns at the rate of 1d4 points per week.

As the Chiang Shih gets older, it becomes more powerful as the evil in its soul strengthens its dead limbs. For an older Chiang Shih, give it an extra Hit Die, increase its damage reduction by 5, and increase its Strength to 22 (consequently giving it an extra +1 melee to hit and damage bonus). For a venerable Chiang Shih, increase its Hit Dice to 12, damage reduction to 15, and Strength to 23.

Chiang Shih – Villain (7th Sea™)

Brawn: 4, Finesse: 4, Resolve: 4, Wits: 1, Panache: 2

TN to be hit: 25 (5 if blinded)

Attack Roll: 9k4 Grapple

Damage Roll: Special

Skills: Bear Hug 4, Grapple 5

Special Abilities: A Chiang Shih never rolls for a Wound Check; it automatically passes all Wound Checks with TN 15 or less, but any Wound Check with a TN above 15 automatically causes it a Dramatic Wound. It does not take extra Dramatic Wounds for extra damage taken, and does not accumulate Flesh Wounds when it does not take a Dramatic Wound.

Special Attacks: Whenever a grappled victim of the Chiang Shih would normally take damage, he makes an opposed Resolve roll with the vampire. If the victim loses this roll, he loses one rank of Brawn. If he succeeds, he takes Bear Hug damage normally. Victims who are reduced to 0 Brawn lose consciousness and will die the next time the Chiang Shih damages them. Brawn lost in this fashion returns at the rate of one rank per week of rest.

The longer a vampire survives, the more powerful it becomes. The statistics above represent a newly risen Chiang Shih. An older Chiang Shih (30 years or so old) increases its Brawn to 5, and automatically passes any Wound Check with a TN 20 or less, instead of 15. A truly venerable Chiang Shih (older than 50) has a Brawn of 6 and passes any Wound Check with a TN of 25 or less.

More Adventures

“While our cultures are divided by fire, there is one thing we have in common with the Cathayans. We tell stories of heroes.”

—Arianna Flynt, Explorer

Now that you have had a chance to delve in to the secrets of the Seven Kingdoms, you may be wondering how to get your players involved. We have prepared adventure seeds for those of you wishing to integrate Cathay into an ongoing campaign set in Théah or another epic. We also have a classic swash-buckling story Cathay-style made entirely of Cathayan PCs entitled “Emerald Hearts.”

Lu Bao Shi zi Xin (Emerald Hearts)

(GM Note: We left the stats out to allow you to tailor this adventure to the strength, level(s) and taste of your players and their characters. Suggested levels follow in parentheses but these are recommended for new characters starting in Cathay.)

Once upon a time, in a land beyond the Wall of Flame, there were two young lovers. Like with many such couples, fate was determined to keep them apart. But where there is love, there is hope, there is courage, and there is adventure. Gather close, children, and listen to the tale that I tell...

Prologue: In the Courts of the Celestial Empress

The Wu family castle sits impressively overlooking a sea of grasses. The lands the Wu rule over are bountiful and beautifully maintained, the family prestigious and well regarded. Any time something happens in this family, the courts are filled with whispers and gossip because of their connection to the Celestial Empress herself.

The castle is especially festive these days. Uncle Wu Mu Xeng is marrying off one of his beautiful nieces and the castle is decorated for the upcoming wedding. Hopefully, her marriage will bring a strong leader to the family. They have desperately needed one since the death of the bride's father (Uncle Wu's brother) two years ago.

THERE ARE A VARIETY OF WAYS CHARACTERS BECOME INVOLVED WITH THE FESTIVITIES.

- A noble who has been invited to the wedding wishes to curry favor with the Empress by presenting the bride with a rare gift. The PCs are hired to find a suitable offering but it has to be very rare as well as from Tashil, which means there is an element of danger to be sure.
- Thieves target the party because of the rich and wealthy people who will be attending. Uncle Wu has hired the party as security but it is difficult to move surreptitiously amongst such a large staff without causing suspicion.
- Uncle Wu will spare no expense to entertain his noble guests which means that sorcerers and magicians will be hired to perform in celebration of the wedding.
- Even the large staff at the castle cannot handle all of the work needed to make the wedding happen so laborers of all sorts are needed for everything from kitchen staff to fireworks designers...

Chapter One: Midnight at Wu Castle

Wu Mu Xeng summons the characters to his chambers. The room is an amazing laboratory of science and magical research, which Wu dismisses as unimportant. The magician nervously tells them the story — that his youngest niece was betrothed, disobeyed, fell in love with a common soldier, and subsequently ran off. She does have a magical necklace he made for her with an emerald cut in half. Through magic, the halves glow brighter as they get closer together. As long as the person wearing the talisman is alive, light glows from it. The wealthy mage is willing to entrust the party with his half of the necklace but must be sure that they are trust worthy.

When he is certain of their honesty, he tells the party that his niece disappeared last night. Through his own hasty investigations, it seems that she is to be heading for the Bei Dao Lin, the Hundred Bandit Forest...

Suddenly, there is substantial commotion in the hallway — imperial guards! And they have come for Uncle Wu on charges of treason! A fight ensues through the darkened halls of the palace. The characters are able to get away, emerald intact... but it seems almost too easy.

Chapter Two: Bei Dao Lin — The Challenges

As the characters race through the forest, they are set upon by bandits! Combat is more difficult due to the thick dark forest. No matter how hard they fight, they end up being captured, although no one seems to have sustained more than a flesh wound.

Trussed up, they are "escorted" deeper into the woods where they come upon a makeshift bandit camp. The leader, who identifies himself as Karada, accuses them of being spies of Lord Trang, the ambassador from Lanna, and traitors to Han Hua. Things do not look good at all, when suddenly a quiet voice speaks on their behalf.

A young woman in bandit attire with a scarf around her face steps forward and identifies them as loyal supporters of the Celestial Empress. How does she know this? Ah, she is Princess Wu, in disguise!

Unwilling to take her word at face value, the leader of the bandits offers a compromise. Each character must undergo a test of his or her abilities, whether it is in the martial arts or perhaps with some magical skill. Once Karada is satisfied of their worthiness, he asks them to join in the plan to help Princess Wu.

Chapter Three: One Soldier in a War of Thousands

Once the party earns Karada's trust, they reveal the half of the emerald Uncle Wu gave them. Unfortunately, the princess gave her half to her beloved Liu Cheng Lung!

The emerald leads the party to Shi Yuan, the "Plains of Stone" near the fortified city of Wu Song where a fierce battle is raging. The party must find Liu and get him away from the battle. (Note: This can be a battle between Imperial forces and an advance guard of Lanna, incited by Lord Trang. The GM may wish to put the Plains of Stone elsewhere in Cathay, near a border between Han Hua and another nation.)

During the battle, Liu is mortally wounded. Princess Wu is devastated and begs the party to take her and her dying lover to Ga Fu Pu Bu (Widow's Falls). There she plans to travel with her beloved to the next life. Although the party may resist, Karada has made a pledge to the girl and insists (as strongly as necessary) on keeping it.

Chapter Four: Battle at Ga Fu Pu Bu

When the party arrives at the waterfall, they are stunned to discover Lord Trang waiting for them. He reveals that it was an assassin in the employ of the Celestial Empress and not a soldier who has been sent to kill Liu and restore the family's honor. He offers the party a chance to join his guard and escort him and his bride-to-be back to the castle.

Who should they believe? Princess Wu denies that the Celestial Empress would do such a thing, but Lord Trang's arguments are convincing and he seems genuinely distraught at losing the girl he so obviously adores. Karada does not trust the Lanna noble one bit but there are a lot of soldiers there and not so many of his own men.

Epilogue: Hearts Reunited (or Destroyed)

- If Liu dies and Trang is defeated, Karada professes his love for Princess Wu just as she prepares to kill herself. It is up to the PCs to convince her to try a life with the noble bandit. Karada will make a gruff but loyal ally in the courts of the Empress.

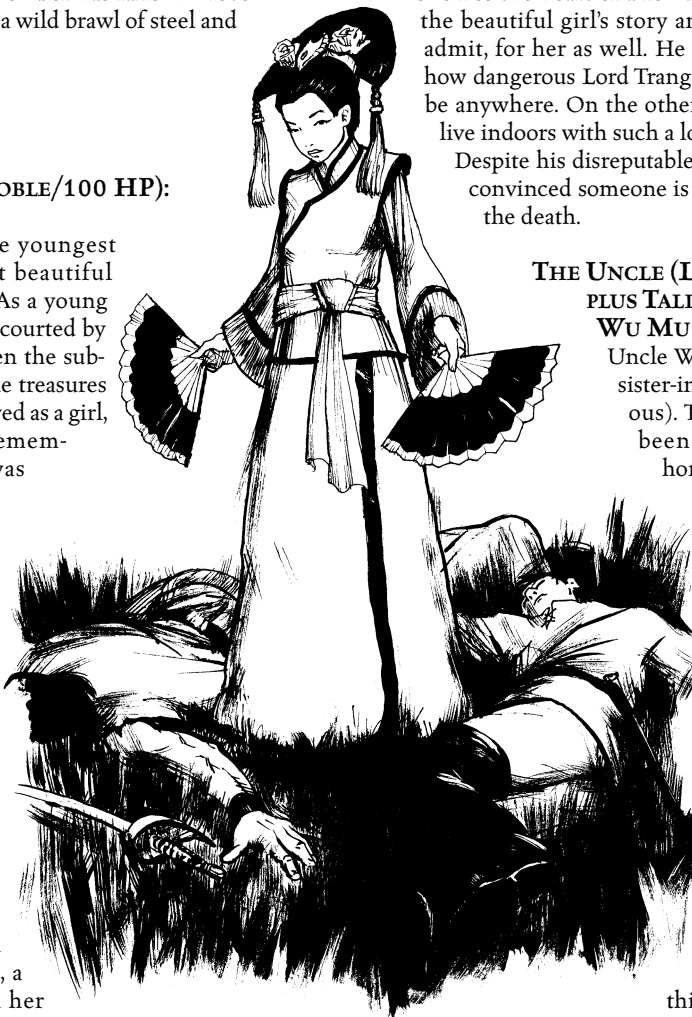
- If Trang wins, Karada will seem to turn into a coward and abandon them to die. The PCs are taken in disgrace by Lord Trang's men back to Wu Castle and the marriage will proceed as planned, despite the bride's tearful pleas to her uncle. When things seem their darkest, Karada will arrive with his men, help the PCs break out of the dungeon, crash the wedding and rescue the unwilling bride. While this probably will not gain them any awards in etiquette, at least they will keep Lord Trang from usurping a position in the noble Wu family.
- If Liu is somehow magically healed, he joins in the fight against Trang and helps turn the tide. Once the battle is over, Karada asks him for the honor of dueling for the hand of the Princess. The fight is intense but Liu's training wins him the hand of the Princess... and he offers Karada a position as his chief military advisor.
- For a wild, more interactive finish, the Princess falls for a member of the party. She makes this declaration after the duel is announced, and the finale should be a raucous triple threat match for the hand of the lady. If that is not enough for your group, suggest one of the other PCs falls for her (or a female party member has fallen in love with Karada...) and make it a wild brawl of steel and romance!

The Characters

THE PRINCESS (LEVEL 5 NOBLE/100 HP): PRINCESS WU YU REN

Princess Wu Yu Ren is the youngest daughter of one of the most beautiful women in all of the Qi Guo. As a young maiden, her mother had been courted by dozens of suitors and was often the subject of poems. Even though she treasures all the beautiful gifts she received as a girl, Princess Wu's mother also remembered how distressing it was when those suitors were fighting over her and the many angry discussions with her own parents always ending in tears, a raging headache, and broken vases.

Wishing to spare her beautiful daughter (and herself) such anguish, she quickly arranged for Yu Ren to be married to Lord Trang Muk, a close advisor to the Imperial Court from nearby Lanna. Unfortunately, while Princess Wu wanted to be a dutiful daughter and respect her parent's wishes, she has given her heart to Liu Cheng Lung, a young soldier who serves in her father's personal guard as a bodyguard to the family.



Preparations for the wedding proceed apace. The family is a wealthy and noble one, related to the Celestial Empress, so there is much to be done. Amid the frantic activity in the castle, Princess Yu Ren simply slips out of her chambers and disappears. Needless to say, the entire palace is in an uproar and Lord Trang is making accusations of broken promises, betrayal and even treason!

THE SOLDIER (LEVEL 3 FIGHTER/75 HP): LIU CHENG LUNG

Liu Cheng Lung is a brave young man who has served his Prince with complete devotion. Unfortunately for his career, while accompanying the family on a sojourn into the country, he lost his heart in an instant when the exquisite Princess Wu Yu Ren peeked out from behind the silk curtains of her palanquin and smiled upon him. He knew then that he would die for her. How can he, a simple soldier, ever hope to win the love of a noble Princess? He knows he has to battle impossible odds to see her again. But if love is not worth fighting for, what is?

THE BANDIT (LEVEL 5 ROGUE/100 HP): KARADA

Not all bandits are vicious. Under the cynical armor of this one lies the heart of a romantic. Karada has fallen for the beautiful girl's story and, as much as he hates to admit, for her as well. He is smart enough to realize how dangerous Lord Trang is and how his spies could be anywhere. On the other hand, it might be nice to live indoors with such a lovely Princess by one's side. Despite his disreputable profession, once Karada is convinced someone is loyal, he keeps his word to the death.

THE UNCLE (LEVEL 4 WIZARD/75 HP PLUS TALISMAN SCHOOL): WU MU ZENG

Uncle Wu is in a lot of trouble. His sister-in-law is hysterical (and furious). The Celestial Empress has been notified. The family's honor is damaged. The ambassador from Lanna is threatening dire action. But Princess Yu Ren was so heart-broken, a cascade of crystal tears ran down her beautiful face as she swore that her tender heart was broken. She even talked wildly about jumping off the topmost tower of the castle so what was he to do?

The kindly mage made the princess promise not to tell anyone about the talisman he was about to give her, just a little something so that he could keep an

eye on her. She hugged him and

seemed quite relieved. He never thought that

she would actually leave the castle!

Now the girl is lost, Lord Trang is threatening to kill him, and months of preparations have gone down the drain. Wu Mu Zeng needs to find someone to help him and fast!

THE NOBLE (LEVEL 7 COURTIER/ 125 PLUS FENCING SCHOOL): TRANG MUK

Everything was going along so well and looked like it would all fall into place. He would marry Princess Wu, thereby gaining admission to the royal circle, and then right after the wedding — a tragedy! His beautiful young bride would die. What a pity. So young, so... beautiful.

With the noble Wu family in mourning, he could begin to work his wiles and gain access to the funds he needed to raise a personal army. Then her stupid soft-hearted uncle ruined it all! He let the girl fall in love and then sent the boy away on a suicide mission. What did the old man think would happen?

Now the girl is gone and with her, a shot at all that power and money. Hm, maybe he could offer to send his “scouts” to find the star-crossed lovers and restore the family’s honor by ending this tawdry tale once and for all.

Attack of the Volunteers

“Either you volunteer to fight or you volunteer to die.”

—The Rat, Bosun of the *Pleasant Wave*

The episode begins in medias res. One of the Tiakhari Volunteer Navy ships is off the port bow. The battle is joined! Cannons roar, ships clash thus plenty of opportunity for heroic efforts arise. Some examples of these opportunities include:

- **Eel attack:** The Tiakhari captain sends men to attack the PC’s ship at the waterline.
- **Sniper in the Masts:** The PC must climb the rigging and defeat the sniper before the sniper shoots the captain and the pirates overrun the ship.
- **The Jeweled Swordsman:** The crews part and a Jasni swordsman challenges one of the PCs with an impressive display of fighting prowess. The swordsman wields a deadly weapon encrusted in rare jewels.

What happens next depends on how well the PCs survive the battle...

The PCs win: Victory! The enemy ship is seized! The hold is breached and the players discover the pirates were carrying an unusual cargo. The ship is full of beautiful women! While this may seem like a windfall, it does present an unusual problem for the PCs. These women were most likely to be sold as slaves. The sea life is tough and innocents like this have no place on board ship, especially if Razak sends reinforcements. Where should they go? Obviously they need to head west, but should they go due west to Kulkadir or seek refuge in the Cinada’ya, or should they try to sail up the west coast of Cathay? Who knows what sort of arrangements the ruler of Tiakhari has with other kingdoms in this strange land...

Draw or ships disengage: During the battle, an important NPC (or possibly one of the PCs who is Knocked Out) is taken aboard the enemy ship. Luckily, one of the important crew of the Volunteer vessel was also lost in battle but he left behind a clue as to where the Navy might be headed. On closer inspection it appears to be a treasure map! If the PCs

arrive first and discover the treasure, they might have something to ransom for the return of their friend.

The PCs lose: The PCs are stripped of their weapons and locked in chains. The ship returns to a hideout on a small island. As they are led to their cells, things go from bad to worse: Razak himself is expected in the next few days and the captain plans to offer the PCs’ lives as tribute! A jailbreak may be their best hope of rescue but it is also more than risky. Even assuming they can overcome their guards, they do not know when the Tiakhari ruler will appear and if their timing is wrong, the PCs will be treated to an up close and personal encounter with one of the most feared men of the seas.

At The Prince’s Behest

“In Vodacce, treachery is the sincerest form of flattery.”

—Bishop Arturo Medezzi

Adventurers with a taste for the exotic should be satisfied by this tale. An envoy of Prince Bernoulli approaches them with a tantalizing offer. They will be able to travel to the Crescent Empire and meet with a Cathayan to negotiate a treaty similar to the one the Prince has with the Crescents. While the trip to Erivan is somewhat uneventful, things definitely pick up once they arrive at the Cathayan’s lodgings. The envoy is dead and no sooner have the PCs made the discovery but some of the city’s guards break into the room, swinging swords without bothering to ask questions.

After a chaotic fight and a chase through the rooftops and winding streets of the Crescent city, the “envoys” should realize it was all a big setup. After a little investigating, one of these culprits becomes more obvious than others:

The Claws of the Black Dragon: Duchess Meng knows that outside interference, no matter how minute, could affect her agenda. Eliminating the ambassadors from both sides wraps everything up in a tidy and quite terminal package with fingers pointed every way but in her direction. Her minions of the Lung Yin are everywhere and this time she used a contact among the city officials for the frame-up.

Unfortunately, the corrupt official has two problems which he must address. He was sloppy in covering the trail that leads back to him and the Duchess has no qualms about giving him to the PCs to keep them from finding her connection to the plot.

The White Sand Society: Not everyone in the Crescent Empire enjoys the newfound attention the Empire has achieved, thanks to the raising of Cabora. After months of planning, the White Sands have decided to teach the Western Théans a lesson about the dangers of traipsing through their homeland uninvited.

In this scenario, Erivan is a harsh city where the PCs cannot locate an ally or manage a lucky break. Every ally should turn into a double cross and every chance to get away should end at the most inopportune time. Erivan is, of course, the largest slave market in the Crescent Empire... The PCs will not want to leave home for a while after this one.

The Game is Everywhere: It turns out that the envoy was not actually from Prince Bernoulli. The PCs have been caught up in the Great Game of Vodacce and everything they have been told up until now was a lie. There is no treaty, the envoy does not exist and the dead man they discovered was just a grisly coincidence. Are they victims of a faceless cabal? Perhaps an old enemy has called in a favor from one of the other Princes?

Blessings from the East

"I've never seen markings like this before. Regardless, I'm sure they don't bode well for the city."

—Gearalt Gilbertine, Eisen antiquarian

Strange markings are appearing all over the Eisen city of Freiberg. Even in a city known to be without questions, people are beginning to wonder. Some of the wachhunde whisper that the new store that just opened up at the end of a dark little alley might have something to do with it. It is rumored to have artifacts from all across the world. The store is called Blessings but never opens its doors.

Dreams of Eisen: Special markings show the delivery person where to deliver the afyam. This new drug has begun to take hold among the artists of the city. People smoke it to forget the horrors of the war. Natives might recognize a thickening in the ranks of the waisen. If the afyam takes hold here, it could spread to other parts of Eisen like wildfire. Blessings is the source of the drug and the headquarters of the burgeoning ring. Not only will the PCs need to trace the source of the blasted stuff, they will need to stop it from coming into the city, which means someone stands to lose a great deal of money...

Sickness of the Earth: Somehow, one of the 64 talismans has found its way inside the rubble of the Watchtower in the center of the city. The reaction to the strange building housing the talisman is causing Eisen to become a walking dream. Monster attacks are increasing, tempers are flaring, and the city is taking on a sinister bent. The little Cathayan merchant who runs Blessings is the town's only hope. Of course, the inscrutable wise man will ask for some strange favors in return. (Note to GM: The talisman in Freiburg is Hsu, the talisman of Waiting.)

Fear of the Unknown: The markings are a subtle campaign by the Inquisition to strike back at the Objectionists and other Théans who have strayed from the Church. People are unsettled by unfamiliar things. Soon, a few mysterious disappearances, a few attacks on "harmless" Vaticines, and wounds from the war will be reopened. No one suspects the small store as the domicile of the Inquisitors who were smart enough to leave their hoods at home.

The Impassable Mountains

"By the Prophets! It would be easier to climb Mad Jack's beard!"

—Korin Murphy, missionary

The mountains of Khimal have a menacing mystery behind them. More treacherous than anything in Théah, there are a few hardy souls who have attempted to scale Mt. Qomolangma, which by all accounts is the top of the world. One such expedition is a detachment of Explorers' led by Gaston de Martine. He had heard tales of a rare perfumed jewelry known as mo yao or myrrh made by the monks of Khimal. He wishes to bring some back to study.

Unfortunately, soon after the expedition begins, things go wrong. Supplies are lost. Guides are killed. Things look dire. What is going wrong?

Hunted by the Yeti: The creatures are unhappy with interlopers in their domain. They want to destroy the expedition and eat the survivors. The only way to make it out alive is to find the main tribal cave and destroy it. Luckily, the supplies of other lost expeditions are left behind and there are more than enough provisions to make it back to civilization. The question is should they seek refuge in Khimal or try to make it safely to the highlands of Koryo?

Test of Wisdom: Miraculously, the party reaches the lamasery at Potala but there seems to be a delay in obtaining an audience with the High Lama. The monks are genial enough but resistant. Word finally comes that they can have their audience but the next few days are not auspicious for such a meeting. Perhaps the adventurers would enjoy the monks' hospitality in the interim? While they wait, the party is genially coerced into what almost seems like a series of physical tests masquerading as a small informal martial arts tournament.

They have survived the mountain and the sparring with the monks (who were surprisingly adept at weapons skills.) The survivors are finally brought before the High Lama, an extremely old man, who explains that they must be found worthy before they receive such a gift as the sacred mo yao. Kunchen Choden asks them if they are ready to pass through the sacred Chambers. They agree, and work their way through a maze of traps, some humorous, some devious, but all requiring them to be clever and work as a team. Once they've outwitted the traps and been found worthy, the High Lama gives them a piece of mo yao and provides them with an escort down the mountain to the border of Koryo.

The Enemy Within: One of the members of the expedition is a member of die Kreutzritter. De Martine, a Porté sorcerer, has made many enemies among the Black Crosses. One by one, the expedition disappears until the Knight reveals him or herself and administers Last Rites to the survivors.

(Note: If this occurs within the lamasery, the High Lama is not unaware of the treachery. He allows the drama to play out until the Black Cross thinks that everyone has been eradicated. In truth, they have been hidden by the monks so that they might observe the price that must be paid for betraying one's comrades and go home enlightened by the experience.)

If this occurs outside of the monastery, the party must endure both the treachery and the challenge presented by the elements.)

The Damning Rain

"Every morning I look out over the city and see a hundred thousand souls crying out for salvation. One of them is mine."

— Reverend Alexander Kilpatrick

The city of Chandela on Tashil's western coast is, like most of the cities in this Kingdom, a dazzling array of the beautiful and the sordid. The architecture of Tashil is much older than that of Han Hua and speaks to an innate understanding of the principles of visual beauty. The marketplaces are full of wonderful items, including jewels, rare spices, and exquisite silk fabrics.

Being this close to Tiakhar is not without benefit and there is a price. The darker influences of that hedonistic kingdom have worked their way through the underground, and it is said that one can find whatever pleases one's fancy in Chandela, no matter how exotic the fancy might be.

One of the oddities of the city resides in a small hut outside the city, among the poor of Chandela. In any city in western Théah this man would go unnoticed, but in Cathay, the presence of outsiders is the subject of wonder and more than a little suspicion.

The man is Alexander Kilpatrick, an Objectionist missionary from the Highland Marches who sailed across the Mirror Sea in fishing boat to reach fabled Cathay and bring the word of Theus to the natives. He ended up a bit south of his goal and landed in Tashil rather than Han Hua. No matter though because he saw immediately that he had been brought here for a reason.

His humble kirk gained few converts, but many of the poor in this part of Chandela regard the Rev. Kilpatrick as a basically good, if somewhat peculiar man. He is amusing to watch when he tries to do the classic asanas and he is always kind to the children. His quiet devotion and respectful attitude has even gained him some respect among the Tashili authorities.

Last night, however, things changed. Kilpatrick had a meeting with a Court Official, one Sathish Mehul, concerning permission to build a church in the city itself. The meeting was in the small Firefly Garden on the outskirts of the city, a place of tranquility and meditation. Shortly after their meeting, the official's body was found in a corner of the garden, the obvious victim of murder; however, no murder weapon was found. Seeing as Kilpatrick and the official were the only ones present at the time, the quiet Highlander scholar is the only suspect. He dies tomorrow, unless the PCs can save him.

The PCs must work their way through Chandela in the oppressive heat and suffocating air as the sky rumbles, and thick clouds swollen with the monsoon rains hang low over their heads, threatening to burst at any second and wash the sins of Chandela into the gutters and out to sea.

(*Note to the GM:* During the investigations, it is best to leave several possible endings open. That way, the course their investigation takes will dictate the conclusion, rather than any railroading which may result from pre-scripted clues. So, who killed the official and why?)

The Bloody Hands of Ambition: Kilpatrick is innocent, of course, but he cannot prove it. There are no witnesses to support his protestations of innocence, and no one seems to have been anywhere nearby at the time.

The murder was apparently carried out even before Kilpatrick arrived, by the agent of a powerful lord determined to discredit anyone who deals with foreigners. The assassin also arranged for soldiers to pass by the garden shortly after the Highlander arrived. The garden is not on the regular patrol

route, but the PCs have no way of knowing this (unless of course an old soldier who talks too much when he is drunk tells them or a young woman of the streets happens to strike up a conversation...)

The assassin is, in reality, working for a sinister cult with ties to Tiakhar and would rather murder his employers — and his pursuers — than risk discovery. Perhaps he will double-cross his employer, leaving the murder weapon in the lord's chambers and leading the PCs toward that conclusion.

A Dangerous Past: Before he found his way to the Chuch, Kilpatrick made dangerous enemies back home. He had fallen in with a fairly bad lot and was making quite an unsavory name for himself that definitely did not bring honor to his family. Then he saw the error of his ways and changed his life. When he announced his decision to become a missionary in Cathay, all was forgiven and he was sent on his way.

However, such turns out not to be the case. His younger brother Dougal was secretly dispatched to Cathay to chase down and "take care" of Alexander, which actually fit in beautifully with the jealous sibling's own plans. Younger brothers must often find their own way in the world, and Dougal planned to kill Alexander and win favor with a smuggling cartel controlled by the renegade Prince Caligari.

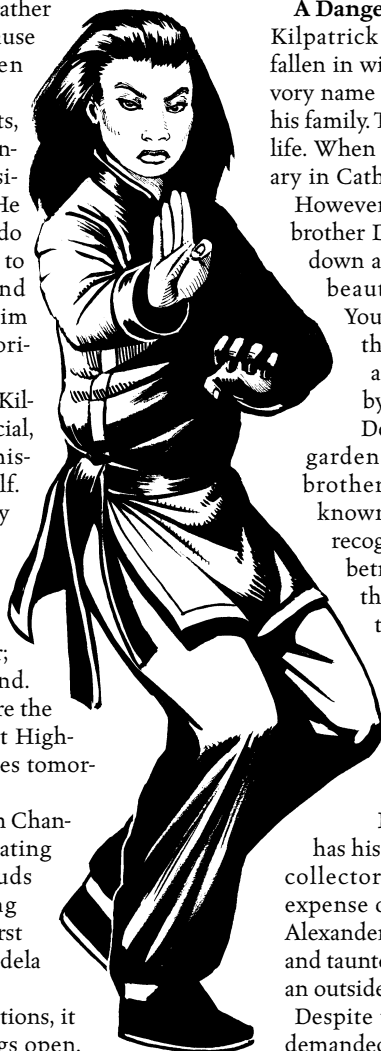
Dougal, dressed like a Tashili native, entered the garden that fateful night and threw the knife at his brother — only it hit the official by mistake. Unbeknownst to Dougal, Alexander actually saw him (and recognized him despite the disguise), but chose not to betray his brother. There was no murder weapon at the scene because Alexander had removed it from the deceased's body. The Objectionist would rather die than condemn his brother even though Dougal obviously does not share these feelings.

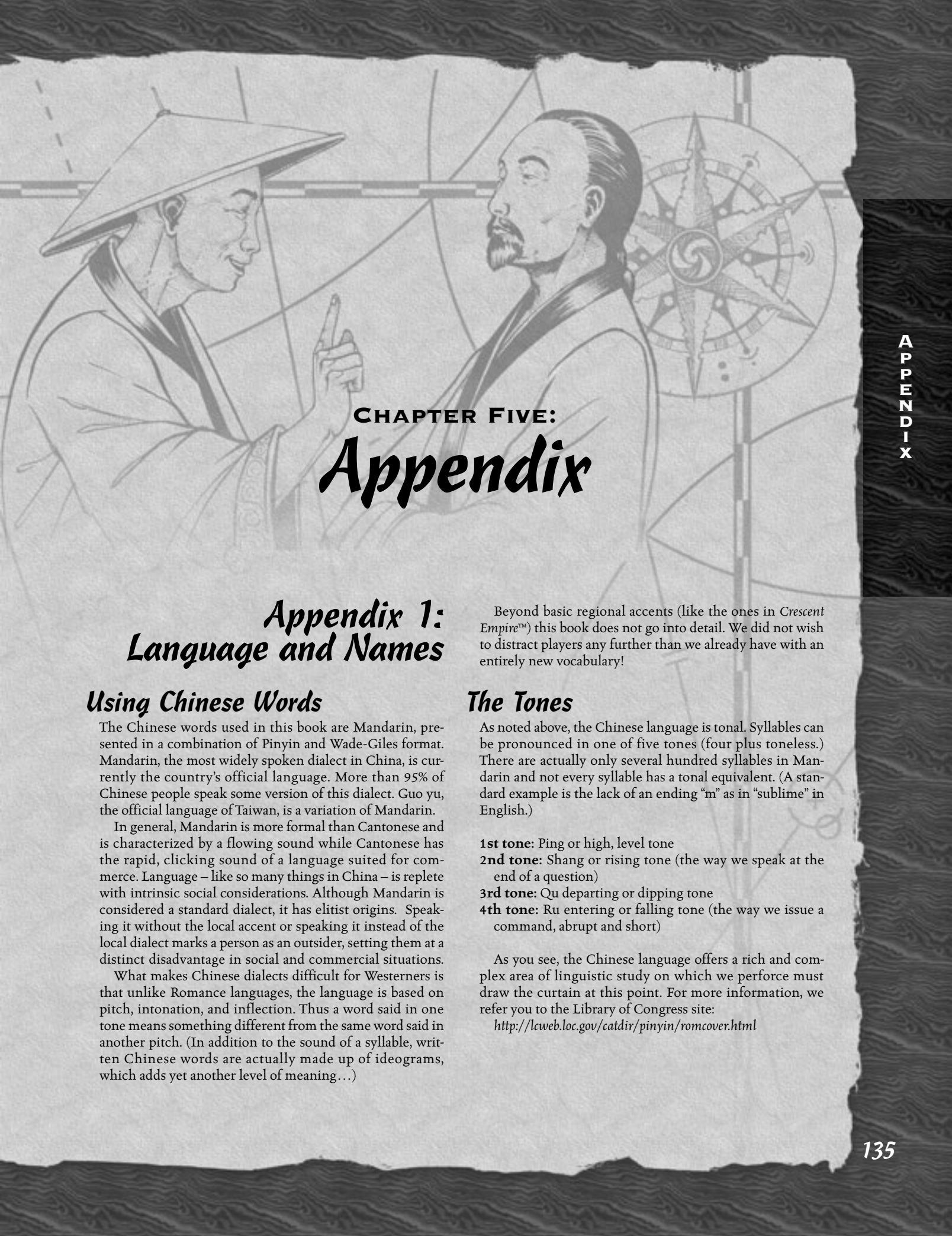
The PCs must find the murderer and convince him to step forward or prove his guilt themselves, and find out why Kilpatrick lied to authorities.

Desperate Measures: Kilpatrick is guilty, but he has his reasons. Sathish Mehul was actually a corrupt tax collector who had been lining his own pockets at the expense of those to whom Alexander ministered. When Alexander met with him, the man laughed at his allegations and taunted the priest, claiming that there was nothing that an outsider could do against him.

Despite the missionary's impassioned pleas, the official demanded a hefty bribe from him in exchange for permission to build his church. When it became clear that he was not going to get it, Mehul drew a knife and was killed in the struggle.

(*Note to GM:* Here, the missing weapon is the official's own bejeweled knife, which will have a similarly ostentatious scabbard in his belt. It is a well-known piece throughout the city and has something of a history. There are many merchants who would pay a pretty price to have such an item.)





CHAPTER FIVE: *Appendix*

Appendix 1: Language and Names

Using Chinese Words

The Chinese words used in this book are Mandarin, presented in a combination of Pinyin and Wade-Giles format. Mandarin, the most widely spoken dialect in China, is currently the country's official language. More than 95% of Chinese people speak some version of this dialect. Guo yu, the official language of Taiwan, is a variation of Mandarin.

In general, Mandarin is more formal than Cantonese and is characterized by a flowing sound while Cantonese has the rapid, clicking sound of a language suited for commerce. Language – like so many things in China – is replete with intrinsic social considerations. Although Mandarin is considered a standard dialect, it has elitist origins. Speaking it without the local accent or speaking it instead of the local dialect marks a person as an outsider, setting them at a distinct disadvantage in social and commercial situations.

What makes Chinese dialects difficult for Westerners is that unlike Romance languages, the language is based on pitch, intonation, and inflection. Thus a word said in one tone means something different from the same word said in another pitch. (In addition to the sound of a syllable, written Chinese words are actually made up of ideograms, which adds yet another level of meaning...)

Beyond basic regional accents (like the ones in *Crescent Empire™*) this book does not go into detail. We did not wish to distract players any further than we already have with an entirely new vocabulary!

The Tones

As noted above, the Chinese language is tonal. Syllables can be pronounced in one of five tones (four plus toneless.) There are actually only several hundred syllables in Mandarin and not every syllable has a tonal equivalent. (A standard example is the lack of an ending “m” as in “sublime” in English.)

1st tone: Ping or high, level tone

2nd tone: Shang or rising tone (the way we speak at the end of a question)

3rd tone: Qu departing or dipping tone

4th tone: Ru entering or falling tone (the way we issue a command, abrupt and short)

As you see, the Chinese language offers a rich and complex area of linguistic study on which we perforce must draw the curtain at this point. For more information, we refer you to the Library of Congress site:

<http://lcweb.loc.gov/catdir/pinyin/romcover.html>

The Glossary

There are several transliteration systems currently used for Chinese. We chose a combination of Wade-Giles and Pinyin ("spelling according to sounds") systems. The Pinyin system was approved in 1958 and subsequently adopted by the Chinese government, the Library of Congress, the American Library Association and ISO as the standard Romanization for modern Chinese. The Taiwanese government is in the process of adopting Pinyin. (Note: Pinyin is not an Anglicization; as a Romanization, it is equally applicable for transliteration into any language with a Roman alphabet.)

Pinyin uses the Roman alphabet so pronunciation is basically a standard exchange of sounds. However, several letters present a challenge, specifically X, Q, C and Z. Our sounds for X and Q do not exist in Chinese so Pinyin assigns other sounds:

- X = soft "sh" (as in "sharp")
- Q = soft "ch" (as in "chin")
- J = g (as in "giant")
- C = ts
- Z = s with a very slight d at the beginning

While you may not sound authentic to a native speaker, you (your character) will certainly sound exotic enough to those from other parts of Théah!

The Qi Guo (Seven Kingdoms)

- Han Hua = Hahn-WAH
- Khimal = Key-mahl
- Koryo = Co-RYE-oh
- Lanna = LAH-Nah
- Tashil = Tah-SHEEL
- Tiakhar = TEE-ah-car
- Xian Bei = ZHAHN-Bay
- Huo Qiang (Wall of Fire) = h'woe chee'ahng
- Qi Guo = chee g'woe

Choosing a Name

In Han Hua, Xian Bei, Lanna, Khimal and Koryo, a child receives a three-word name. The first word is the family name. In each family, a treasured possession is the Qa Pu or "family poem" which is maintained from the family's origin and augmented as needed. This poem is used to determine a child's given name. There are complicated rules for choosing a name varying from region to region and from family to family. In all cases, one is admonished to avoid using any characters in the name of the current Celestial Emperor or Empress. In addition, one does not name a child after a living member of the family.

Basically, each child is given a name consisting of the surname (usually one character, but sometimes more than one), a character from the Qa Pu that designates the generation in which he or she was born, and finally a third character as the given name. Names are registered at the local temple or shrine by a priest who serves the family as the keeper of their scroll. In small towns, one priest usually serves this function for all families. If a family is poor, they can obtain a name for their child by offering to do labor at the temple.

For example, in the case of Yu Ying Lei (which means Jade Shadow Thunder.) Yu is her family name, Ying indicates the generation in which she was born and Lei is her given name, which might commemorate a storm during her birth or indicate or might express her parents' hope that she become a person whose words will have the force of thunder.

TASHIL AND TIAKHAR NAMES

Linguistically, the real-world root languages for Tashil and Tiakhar differ from those of the other kingdoms in Cathay. For Tashil, you may also use Sanskrit, Hindi or Gujarati. For Tiakhar, you may use names as noted in the chart, or you may use Malaysian, Tamil, Hindi, or Mandarin.

Questions

What if I want to include the Syrne or the Sidhe in my adventure? Does this mean I can't go to Cathay?

Of course not! A good GM adjusts the game to suit the players. There are plenty of undiscovered places throughout the Seven Kingdoms where your adventurers might encounter the creatures they have come to know so well. If you decide to have a Barrier-free area in your game, of course, Cathay would be the place for you. If you decide to include Syrne, etc. and you need a "safe haven," Khimal would be the logical setting. If you want to have Syrne ruins, you might consider heading south to Tashil, and if you want an extremely dangerous adventure, send the party to Tiakhar!

The Fire Wall used to go all the way around Cathay, didn't it? When did that change and why?

Actually, there have been hints throughout the books that perhaps the Wall did not go all the way around. From time to time, people have traveled to and from Cathay (Solomon Antones, High Lord Cheung Yang Yue, and of course Koschei). In the Crescent Empire sourcebook, trade with Cathay is mentioned in the description of Erivan, so there would have to be at least some opening in the Wall.

The designer team decided that it would not be fair to the players (or practical) to have such a large and exciting part of the world be totally inaccessible, especially after everyone has waited so long to find out what's there. Hence, the partial lifting of the Barrier for you.

Glossary

A note about pronunciation: The phoneticized pronunciations below are designed to give the Western speaker an approximation of the correct sound without having to resort to the stereotypical "sing-song" often used to imitate Chinese language. These words enable players to add some flavor (and differentiation) to the game but should in no way be taken as formal instruction in Mandarin.

Word	Meaning	Pronunc.	Tone
Ai	Dirt (dust)	Aye	1
An	Peace	Ahn	1
An	Dark (or) hidden	Ahn	4
Ao	Old woman	Ow	3
Bai	White	Bye	2
Ban fu	Axe (broad axe)	Bahn foo	3 + 3
Bao	Treasure or Jewel	Bow	3
Bao fu	Ambition	Bow foo	4 + 4
Bao lan	Sapphire	Bow lahn	3 + 2
Bian sai	Frontier fortress	B'yan sigh	1 + 4
Bing leng	Ice-cold	Bing lehng	1 + 3
Bo yu	Bowl (alms)	Bo yoo	1 + 2
Cha	Tea	Chah	2
Chen	Dirt (earth, soil)	Chen	2
Chong ji	Under attack	Ts'ong gee	1 + 1
Chun tian	Spring (season)	Ts'un gee'ahn	1 + 1
Ci bei	Mercy	Tsee bay	2 + 1
Cong	Green onion (scallion)	Kong	1
Da pao	Artillery	Dah pow	4 + 4
Dan xin	Loyalty	Dahn shin	1 + 1
Deng long	Lantern	Deng long	1 + 2
Dong	Winter	Dong	1
Dou	Bean (or) Pea	Doo	4
Dou fu	Tofu/bean curd	Doo foo	4 + 5
E	Goose (domestic)	Ee	2
Fan wan	Rice bowl	Fahn wahn	4 + 3
Fang mian	Respect	Fahng mee-ahn	1 + 4
Fei	Fly (to)	Fay	1
Fei cui	Emerald	Fay qwee	3 + 4
Feng	Abundant	Feng	1
Feng bao	Storm	Feng bow	1 + 4
Fu	Snake (venomous)	Foo	4
Gao	Lamb	Gow	1
Ge	Iron cauldron	Gee	2
Gong	Archer	Gong	1 + 4 + 3
jian shou		gee'ahn shao	
Gong jue	Duke	Gong joo'way	1 + 2
Gong jue fu ren	Duchess	Gong joo'way foo ren	1 + 2 + 1 + 2
Gong zhu	Princess	Gong zhoo	1 + 3
Gou	Dog	Gow	3
Gu	Bone	Goo	2
Gu	Drum (musical instrument)	Goo	3
Gua	Trigram (I Ching)	Gwah	4
Guan	Hat	Gwahn	1
Guan mian	Crown	Gwahn mee'ahn	1 + 3
Guang	Light (source)	Gwahng	1
Hai	Ocean (or) Sea	High	3
Hai dao	Pirate	High dow	3 + 4
Hang xing	Navigate (fly across water)	Hong shing	2 + 2
He	Crane	Hee	4
He ping	Peace	Hay ping	2 + 2
He yue	Peace treaty	Hay yoo'way	2 + 1
Hei	Black	Hay	1
Hong	Red	Hong	2
Hong bao shi	Ruby	Hong bow shee	2 + 3 + 2
Hong Chou	Red silk	Hong chow	2 + 2
Hou	Monkey	How	2
Hu	Tiger	Hoo	3
Huang	Yellow	H'wong	2

Huang tong	Brass (yellow copper)	H'wong tong	2 + 2
Hui	Ashes	Hu'wee	1
Hui	Dirt (filth)	H'wee	4
Huo	Fire	H'woe	3
Huo li	Energy/vitality	H'wo lee	2 + 4
Ji	Chicken	Gee	1
Ji dan	Egg (chicken)	Gee don	1 + 4
Jiang	Ginger	Gee'ong	1
Jin	Metal, money, gold	Jin	1
Jin gong	Attack (noun)	Gin gong	4 + 1
Jing	Mirror	Jing	4
Jiu	Wine	Gee'oo	3
Ju	Chrysanthemum	Joo	2
Ka fei	Kaffe (coffee)	Kah fay	1 + 1
Kai	Armor	Ki (long "I")	3
Kao ya	Roast duck	Cow yah	3 + 1
Ku	Cave (hole)	Koo	1
Lan	Blue	Lahn	2
Lang	Weeds	Lang	2
Lei	Thunder	Lay	2
Leng	Cold	Lehng	3
Li	Carp	Lee	3
Lin	Forest, woods	Lin	2
Ling	Small bell	Ling	2
Ling hun	Soul (or) spirit	Ling hun	2 + 2
Lou	Star	Lu	2
Lu	Green	Loo	4
Lu cha	Green tea	Loo cha	4 + 2
Luan	Beautiful	Looahn	2
Lung (Long)	Dragon	Loong	2
Ma	Horse	Mah	3
Ma yi	Ant	Mah-ye	3
Mao	Cat	Mow	1
Mi	Honey	Mee	4
Mi	Rice	Mee	3
Mian	Noodles	Mee'ahn	4
Mian bao	Bread	Mee'ahn bow	4 + 1
Nai niu	Cow	Nigh ne'yu	3 + 2
Nan ren	Man	Nahn ren	2 + 2
Niu	Ox	Ne'yu	2
Niu nai	Cow's milk	Ne'yu nigh	2 + 3
Niu rou	Beef (meat)	Nee'oo roo	2 + 4
Nu ren	Woman	Noo ren	3 + 2
Pao	Leopard	Pow	2
Pao	Cannon, gun	Pow	4
Qa	Family	Tchee'ah	
Qi	Energy	Tchee	1
Qian	Coin (or) money	Tchee-en	2
Qiao	Bridge	Tchee-ow	2
Qing Chu	Clarity	Tching chu	2 + 3
Qiong	Beautiful	Tche'ong	2
Qiu tian	Autumn	Tchee'oo tee-ahan	1 + 1
Quan	Spring (water) or fountain	Tchu'ahn	2
Ran fang	Set off firecrackers	Rahn fahng	2 + 4
Ren	Human	Ren	2
Rou	Meat	Roo	4
Shan	Mountain	Shahn	1
She	Snake (serpent)	Sheh	2
Sheng dian	Temple	Sheng dee'ahn	4 + 4
Sheng huo	Light a fire	Sheng hu'oh	1 + 3
Shi	Warrior (or) knight	Shee	4
Shi wu	Food	Shee woo	2 + 4
Shi zi	Lion	Shee zeh	1 + 5
Shu	Rat	Shoo	3

Shui	Water	Shway	3
Shui guo	Fruit	Shway g'woe	3 + 3
Suan	Garlic	Soo'an	4
Sui	Death	Shee	4
Suo	Grass "raincape"	Soo'oh	1
Tai yang	The Sun	Tie yawng	4 + 2
Tan xian zhe	Explorer	Tahn shee'ahn zeh	4 + 3 + 3
Tang	Soup	Ton	1
Tian tang	Paradise	Chee'ahn dang	1 + 2
Tieh	Iron	T'yeh	3
Ting	Blade of grass	Ting	2
Ting huo	Cease-fire	Ting h'woe	2 + 3
Tong	Copper	Tong	2
Wan	Bowl (or) cup	Wahn	3
Wan	Gulf	Wan	1
Wang	King	Wong	2
Wang zi	Prince (son of the king)	Wong dzee	2 + 3
Wu mu	Ebony	Woo moo	1 + 4
Wu ya	Raven	Woo yah	1 + 1
Xi	Light of day	Shee	1
Xi ji	Make a surprise attack	Shee gee (soft "g")	2 + 1
Xia ma	Dismount (from a horse)	Shee'ah mah	4 + 3
Xia tian	Summer	Shee'ah tee'ahn	4 + 1
Xian	Immortal	Shee'ahn	1
Xiang	Elephant	Shee'ahng	4
Xin zang	Heart	Shin zohng	1 + 4
Xiong	Bear	Shi'ong	2
Xiu	Red lacquer	She'oo	1
Xiu	Cave (in mountain)	She'oo	4
Xue	Snow	Shoo'way	3
Xue	Blood	Shoo'way	4
Xue jia	Scholar	Shoo'way gee'ah	2 + 1
Xue ju	Live in a cave	Shoo'way joo	2 + 1
Xue sheng	Student	Shoo'way sheng	2 + 5
Ya	Duck	Yah	1
Yan	Wild goose	Yahn	4
Yan huo	Fireworks	Yahn h'woe	1 + 3
Yan wu	Smoke	Yahn woo	1 + 4
Yang	Foreign	Yang	2
Yao	Lines on a trigram	Yow	2
Yao mo	Demon	Yow mo	1 + 2
Yi	Wing	Yee	1
Yie	Night (vs. day)	Ye'a	4
Yin	Silver	Yin	2
Ying	Attack (verb)	Ying	1
Yong yuan	Eternal	Yung yu'ahn	3 + 3
Yu	Fish	Yu	2
Yu	Rain	Yu	3
Yu	Jade	Yu	4
Yue	Moon (or) month	Yu'way	4
Yue bing	Moon cake	Yu'way bing	4 + 3
Yue qiu	The Moon	Yu'way chee'oo	4 + 2
Yun	Cloud	Yoon	2
Zhan Gu	War drum	Zhahn goo	4 + 3
Zhang Fu	Battle axe	Zhahn foo	4 + 3
Zheng yi	Righteous	Zheng yee	4 + 4

Zhu	Bamboo	Zhoo	2
Zhu rou	Pork (meat)	Zhoo roo	1 + 4
Zi	Purple	Zee	3
Zuan	Diamond	Zoo'ahn	4
Fang	House	Fong	2
Cheng	Castle (walled city)	Cheng	2
Shi bing	Soldier	Shee bing	4 + 1
Xin Nian	New Year	Shin nee'ahn	1 + 2

NUMBERS

Word	Meaning	Pronunc.	Tone
Yi	One	Yee	1
Er	Two	Ur	4
San	Three	Sahn	1
Si	Four	See	1
Wu	Five	Woo	3
Liu	Six	Lee'oo	4
Qi	Seven	Chee	1
Ba	Eight	Bah	1
Jiu	Nine	Gee'yoo	3
Shi	Ten	Shee	2
Yi Bai	100	Yee buy	1 + 3
Yi Qian	1,000	Yi chee'ahn	1 + 1
Wan	10,000	Wahn	4

DIRECTIONS

Word	Meaning	Pronunc.	Tone
Bei	North	Bay	
Dong	East		
Nang	South	Nahng	
Xi	West	Shee	

* Note that pronunciations are approximate for Romanized versions of these words.

CONVERSATIONAL PHRASES

Cathayan	Meaning	Pronunciation
Xie xie	Thank you	Sheh-sheh
Duo xie	Many thanks	Dew'oh sheh
Ching	Please	Shing
Ni hao ma	Hello/How are you?	Knee-how-mah
Zao an	Good day	Zow-ahn
Wu an	Good afternoon	Woo-ahn
Wan an	Good night	Wahn-ahn
Wan shang hao	Good evening	Wahn shahng how
Tzai jian	See you again (good-bye)	Sai gee'ahn
Wo bu ming bai	I do not understand	Woe boo ming buy
Gong he fat choy	Wishing you happiness and prosperity (traditional New Year's greeting)	Gong hay fat choy

KHIMALI NAMES

Khimal	Meaning	Pronunciation
Choden	One who is devout, religious	CHÖ-den
Dorje	Indestructible; diamond; thunderbolt	DOR-jeh
Jampa	Loving-kindness	JAHM-pah
Jamyang	Gentle voice	JAHM-yahng

Kalsang	Good fortune	KEL-sahng
Karma	Action, deed	KAR-mah
Kunchen	All-knowing	KÜN-chen
Lobsang	Noble-minded	LO-sahng
Ngawang	Powerful speech	NGAH-wahng
Ngodup	Attainment, accomplishment	NGÖ-d(r)oop
Norbu	Jewel	NOR-boo
Palden	Glorious	PEL-den
Pema	Lotus	PEH-mah
Phuntsok	Excellence	PÜN-tsok
Rabten	Steadfast	RAHB-ten
Rinchen	Precious, gem (lit: great value)	RIN-chen
Samdup	Fulfillment of one's wishes	SAHM-d(r)oop
Sonam	Merit	SÖ-nahm
Tashi	Auspicious, fortunate	TAH-shee
Tenzin	Holder of the teachings	TEN-zin
Thokmay	Unobstructed, unhindered	TOK-meh
Tinley	Enlightened activity	T(R)IN-leh
Tsering	Long life	TSEH-ring
Tseten	Stable life	TSEH-ten
Wangchuk	Lord, mighty	WAHNG-chook
Yonten	Good qualities	YÖN-ten

* These are actually Tibetan names.

TASHILI AND TIAKHARI NAMES*

Male Names	Meaning	Pronunciation
Ajit	Victorious	AH-jeet
Aditya	Sun	Ah-DEET-ya
Akash	Sky	Ah-KASH
Bhanu	Sun	BAH-noo
Chandra	Garden	CHAN-dra
Durjaya	Difficult to conquer	Dure-JAI-ah
Harsha	Joy, delight	HAR-sha
Ishwar	Powerful	EESH-wahr
Jeevan	Life	JEE-vahn
Kamal	Lotus flower	Kah-MAHL
Lalit	Beautiful	Lah-LEET
Mehul	Rain	MAY-hoole
Mahdu	Honey	MAH-doo
Nartan	Dance	Nar-tan

Neelam	Emerald	NEE-lahm
Pavan	Wind	PAH-vahn
Pranet	Leader	PRAH-net
Raj	King	Rahj
Rohit	Red	ROW-heet
Samudra	Sea	Sah-MOO-dra
Shardul	Tiger	SHAR-dool
Tungar	High, lofty	TOON-gar
Uttam	Best	OO-tom
Vasu	Wealth	VAH-soo
Vimal	Pure	VEE-mahl

Female

Names	Meaning	Pronunciation
Ajala	Earth	Ah-JAH-lah
Asha	Hope	AH-sha
Charu	Beautiful	CHA-roo
Dayita	Beloved	Dai-EE-ta
Hamsa	Swan	HAM-sah
Induma	Moon	In-DOO-mah
Jaya	Victory	JAI-ya
Kalyani	Blissful, fortunate	Kahl-YAH-nee
Kusuma	Flower	Koo-SOO-mah
Lalana	Girl	Lah-LAH-nah
Manik	Jewel	Mah-NEEK
Meghana	Cloud	May-Gah-nah
Nalini	Lotus	Nah-LEE-nee
Nisha	Night	NEE-sha
Padma	Lotus	PAHD-mah
Priya	Loved one, darling	PREE-yah
Purnima	Full moon	Poor-NEE-mah
Rajata	Silver	Rah-JAH-tah
Rashmi	Ray of light	RAH-shmee
Rujata	Honesty	Roo-JAH-tah
Sarasa	Swan	Sah-RAH-sah
Savita	Sun	Sah-VEE-tah
Sona	Gold	SEW-nah
Tara	Star	TAH-rah
Usha	Dawn	OO-shah
Vajra	Diamond	VAHJ-rah
Vasanta	Spring	Vah-SAHN-tah
Vimala	Pure	Vee-MAH-lah
Yamini	Night	Yah-MEE-nee
Yashila	Famous	Yah-SHEE-lah

* These are Indian (Sanskrit) names.



Appendix 2: Hexagrams

HEXAGRAMS

Hexagram	Name	Meaning	Benefit
a	Ch'ien	The Creative: Ch'ien (Heaven) <i>Furthering through perseverance the superior man makes himself strong and untiring.</i>	d20™: You gain a +2 insight bonus to your AC. 7th Sea™: You add +5 to your TN to be hit.
w	P'i	Stagnation: Ch'ien (Heaven)/K'un (Earth) <i>The standstill serves to help the great man to attain success.</i>	d20™: You receive the Parry Feat for free. 7th Sea™: If you fail an Active Defense Roll, you may spend one Drama Die to reroll. You may only reroll once per attempt, and the second roll is binding, even if it fails.
i	Wu Wang	Innocence/Unexpected: Ch'ien (Heaven)/Chen (Thunder) <i>If someone is not as he should be, he has misfortune.</i>	d20™: You gain a +2 luck bonus to all Disguise rolls. 7th Sea™: You may roll one extra unkept die (+1k0) when making Disguise rolls.
b	Kou	Coming to Meet: Ch'ien (Heaven)/Sun (Wind) <i>Thus does the prince act when disseminating his commands.</i>	d20™: You gain a +2 circumstance bonus when making Diplomacy checks. 7th Sea™: You may roll one extra unkept die (+1k0) when making Etiquette Rolls.
m	Sung	Conflict: Ch'ien (Heaven)/Kan (Water) <i>To contend before him brings supreme good fortune.</i>	d20™: Once per game, you get a +2 circumstance bonus to any attack roll when engaged in a Boarding action. 7th Sea™: Once per game, you gain a Free Raise to any Attack Roll when engaged in a Boarding situation.
c	T'ung Jen	Fellowship with Men: Ch'ien (Heaven)/Li (Fire) <i>Thus the superior man organizes the clans and makes distinctions between things.</i>	d20™: You gain a +2 circumstance bonus when making a Sense Motive check. 7th Sea™: You gain a Free Raise to all Cold Read rolls.
h	Tun	Retreat: Ch'ien (Heaven)/Ken (Mountain) <i>Voluntary retreat brings good fortune to the superior man.</i>	d20™: You gain a +2 dodge bonus when being pursued. 7th Sea™: You gain a Free Raise to all Footwork rolls.
d	Lu	Treading: Ch'ien (Heaven)/Tui (Lake) <i>Treading upon the tail of the tiger, which does not bite the man</i>	d20™: You gain a +2 insight bonus to all Animal Empathy rolls. 7th Sea™: You get a Free Raise to all Animal Training rolls.
z	T'ai	Peace: K'un (Earth)/Ch'ien (Heaven) <i>He furthers and regulates the gifts of heaven and earth, and so aids the people.</i>	d20™: You get a +2 insight bonus to all Knowledge: Religions skill checks. 7th Sea™: You get a Free Raise to all Theology rolls.
@	K'un	The Receptive: K'un (Earth)/K'un (Earth) <i>Following gives guidance.</i>	d20™: There is no direct equivalent for Backgrounds. This should be role-played at the GM's discretion. 7th Sea™: You gain an Obligation (3) Background that reflects promises made to your mentor.
6	Fu	Turning Point: K'un (Earth)/Chen (Thunder) <i>Success going out and coming in without error.</i>	d20™: You get a +2 competence bonus to all Profession: Navigator skill checks. 7th Sea™: You gain a Free Raise to all Navigation rolls.
Z	Sheng	Pushing Upward: K'un (Earth)/Sun (Wind/Wood) <i>The superior man heaps up small things in order to achieve something high and great.</i>	d20™: Every month, you gain an extra 1d10 qian (roll at the beginning of each month). 7th Sea™: Every month, you gain an extra +2k1 qian of Income (roll at the beginning of each month).
7	Shih	The Army: K'un (Earth)/Kan (Water) <i>An army must set forth in proper order.</i>	d20™: You gain a +1 circumstance bonus to all attack rolls when engaged in a Mass Combat situation. 7th Sea™: You gain a Free Raise to any Attack Roll, as long as you are engaged in a Mass Combat situation.
U	Ming I	Darkening of the Light: K'un (Earth)/Li (Fire) <i>He veils his light, yet still shines.</i>	d20™: There is no direct equivalent for Backgrounds. This should be role-played at the GM's discretion. 7th Sea™: You gain a True Identity (3) Background at no cost.
8	Ch'ien	Modesty: K'un (Earth)/Ken (Mountain) <i>Moderation — reduce that which is too much, augment that which is too little.</i>	d20™: Once and only once during a character's lifetime, he may subtract 2 points from any Ability (Str, Dex, Con, Int, Wis OR Cha) and add both of them to any other single Ability which is lower than the one from which they were taken. (Adjust all stats accordingly.) 7th Sea™: Once and only once during a character's lifetime, he may subtract 1 point from any Trait (Brawn, Finesse, Wits, Resolve OR Panache) and add it to any other single Trait which is lower than the one from which it was taken. (Adjust all stats accordingly.)

Hexagram	Name	Meaning	Benefit
S	Lin	Approach: K'un (Earth)/Tui (Lake) <i>The superior man is without limits in his tolerance and protection of the people.</i>	d20™: You get a +2 insight bonus to all Diplomacy checks. 7th Sea™: You get a Free Raise to all Diplomacy rolls.
I	Ta Chuang	Power of the Great: Chen (Thunder)/Ch'ien (Heaven) <i>The superior man does not tread upon paths that do not accord with established order.</i>	d20/7th Sea™: Once per story, you may lower the Feng Shui Rating of your current location by 1. It returns to normal when you depart.
9	Yu	Enthusiasm: Chen (Thunder)/K'un (Earth) <i>It furthers one to install helpers and set armies marching.</i>	d20™: If you have the Leadership Feat, you automatically gain 1 additional cohort (servant only). 7th Sea™: You get 3 points of the Servants Advantage for free.
W	Chen	Arousing: Chen (Thunder)/Chen (Thunder) <i>Shock brings ruin and terrified gazing around.</i>	d20™: You get a +2 circumstance bonus to all Intimidate checks. 7th Sea™: Something about your mannerism can shock your opponents. You get a Free Raise to all Intimidation rolls.
K	Heng	Duration: Chen (Thunder)/Sun (Wind) <i>Thus the superior man stands firm and does not change his direction.</i>	d20™: There is no direct equivalent for Backgrounds. This should be role-played at the GM's discretion. 7th Sea™: You get a Vow (3) Background.
H	Hsieh	Deliverance: Chen (Thunder)/Kan (Water) <i>One kills three foxes in the field and receives a yellow arrow.</i>	d20™: When attacking with any type of Bow, you gain a +2 competence bonus to your attack rolls. 7th Sea™: You get a Free Raise to any Attack (Bow) rolls.
H	Feng	Abundance: Chen (Thunder)/Li (Flame) <i>The superior man decides lawsuits and carries out punishments</i>	d20™: You get a +2 insight bonus to Sense Motive checks. 7th Sea™: You get a Free Raise to all Cold Read rolls.
1	Hsiao Kuo	Preponderance of the Small: Chen (Thunder)/Ken (Mountain) <i>It is well to remain below.</i>	d20™: You get a +2 competence bonus to all Move Silently and Hide checks. 7th Sea™: You get a Free Raise to all Stealth rolls.
C	Kuei Mei	The Marrying Maiden: Chen (Thunder)/Tui (Lake) <i>The superior man understands the transitory in the light of the eternity at the end.</i>	d20™: You get a +2 competence bonus on all rolls on all Knowledge (arcana) rolls. 7th Sea™: You get a Free Raise to all Omens rolls.
e	Hsiao Ch'u	Taming Power of the Small: Sun (Wind)/Ch'ien (Heaven) <i>The rain comes, there is rest.</i>	d20™: You get a +2 insight bonus to all Bluff rolls. 7th Sea™: You get a Free Raise to all Charm rolls on the Repartee system.
Q	Kuan	Contemplation (View): Sun (Wind)/K'un (Earth) <i>Full of trust they look up to him.</i>	d20™: Once per game, you get one additional attack of opportunity. 7th Sea™: You get the Combat Reflexes Advantage for free.
R	I	Increase: Stillness (Mountain)/Chen (Thunder) <i>If the superior man sees good, he imitates it; if he has faults, he rids himself of them.</i>	d20™/7th Sea™: Once per game, you may clear any negative modifiers from one roll.
q	Sun	The Gentle: Sun (Gentle)/Sun (Gentle) <i>In life, the penetrating clarity of judgment thwarts all dark hidden motives.</i>	d20™: You get a +2 insight bonus to Gather Information checks. 7th Sea™: You gain a Free Raise to all Scheming rolls.
A	Huan	Dispersion/Dissolution: Sun (Wind)/Kan (Water) <i>He brings help with the strength of a horse.</i>	d20™: You get a +2 competence bonus to all Ride rolls. 7th Sea™: You get a Free Raise on all Ride rolls.
n	Chia Jen	Family (Clan): Sun (Wind)/Li (Fire) <i>The superior man has substance in his words and duration in his way of life.</i>	d20™: You gain a +2 competence bonus to all Diplomacy rolls. 7th Sea™: You get a Free Raise on all Oratory rolls.
D	Chien	Gradual Progress: Sun (Wind/Wood)/Ken (Mountain) <i>Thus the superior man abides in dignity and virtue, in order to improve the mores.</i>	d20™: You gain a +2 insight bonus to all Knowledge: (religion) rolls. 7th Sea™: You gain one Free Rank in your Theology knack.
j	Chung Fu	Inner Truth: Sun (Wind)/Tui (Lake) <i>Thus the superior man discusses criminal cases in order to delay executions.</i>	d20™: You gain a +2 competence bonus to all Profession: Lawyer or Profession: Advocate skill checks made to defend an accused person. 7th Sea™: You get one Free Raise to any Law roll when defending an accused person.

Hexagram	Name	Meaning	Benefit
p	Hsu	Waiting: Kan (Water)/Ch'ien (Heaven) <i>It furthers one to cross the great water.</i>	d20™: You get a +2 competence bonus in the Profession: Sailor skill. 7th Sea™: You get the Sailor Skill for free.
0	Pi	Holding Together (Union): Kan (Water)/ K'un (Earth) <i>Those who are uncertain gradually join.</i>	d20™: There is no direct equivalent for Backgrounds. This should be role-played at the GM's discretion. 7th Sea™: You gain a Romance (3) Background for no cost.
Y	Chun	Difficulty at the Beginning: Kan (Water)/Chen (Thunder) <i>Difficulty at the beginning works supreme success.</i>	d20™: Once per game session, you gain a +2 circumstance bonus to any attack or skill check. 7th Sea™: Once per story, on any one roll, you may call any number of Raises; however, you receive no additional effects. For every two Raises you earn a Chun Die. Chun Dice are used exactly like Drama Dice, except they cannot be turned into experience points.
N	Ching	The Well: Kan (Water)/ Sun (Wind/Wood) <i>They come and go and draw from the well.</i>	d20™/7th Sea™: Once per game, you may re-roll any roll.
3	K'an	Abysmal: Kan (Water)/Kan (Water) <i>The superior man walks in lasting virtue.</i>	d20™: Deduct 1 from any Leadership score decreases; may not go below 1. 7th Sea™: Reduce all Reputation Losses by 1 (minimum 1).
O	Chi Chi	After Completion: Kan (Water)/Li (Fire) <i>The superior man takes thought of misfortune and arms himself against it in advance.</i>	d20™: At the end of an adventure, you get a 5% experience bonus. 7th Sea™: At the end of each Story, you get 1 extra Experience Point.
4	Chien	Obstruction: Kan (Water)/ Ken (Mountain) <i>It furthers one to see the great man. The superior man turns his attention to himself and molds his character.</i>	d20™: You get a +2 circumstance bonus to all Bluff checks. 7th Sea™: You get a Free Raise to all Sincerity rolls.
F	Chieh	Limitation: Kan (Water)/Tui (Lake) <i>The superior man creates number and measure, and examines the nature of virtue and correct conduct.</i>	d20™: You get a +2 circumstance bonus to Bluff and Diplomacy checks made in large social settings. 7th Sea™: You get a Free Raise to all Etiquette rolls.
f	Ta Yu	Possession in Great Measure: Li (Fire)/ Ch'ien (Heaven) <i>Fire in the heaven above, superior man curbs evil and furthers good.</i>	d20™: Once per game session, you may shift the Feng Shui Rating by +1 until you leave the region. 7th Sea™: Once per Story, you may spend a Drama Die to shift the Feng Shui Rating by +1 until you leave the region. The GM gets this Drama Die as if it had been used to modify a roll.
X	Chin	Progress: Li (Fire)/Kun (Earth) <i>The powerful prince is honored with horses in large numbers.</i>	d20™: You get a Steppes Pony that acts like a Druid's animal companion. 7th Sea™: You get the Steppes Pony Advantage for no extra cost.
E	Shih Ho	Biting Through: Li (Fire)/ Chen (Thunder) <i>It furthers one to be mindful of difficulties and to be persevering.</i>	d20™: Whenever you have less than 75% of your total hit points, you receive a +2 morale bonus to all damage rolls. 7th Sea™: You get a Free Raise to damage on all attacks whenever you have taken at least one Dramatic Wound in the current battle.
W	Ting	Cauldron: Li (Fire)/Sun (Wood/Wind) <i>Supreme good fortune.</i>	d20™: Once per game session, you may re-roll one failed roll. 7th Sea™: Once per Story, you may spend a Drama Die to re-roll any one failed roll. The GM gains this Drama Die as if you had used it to add to the roll.
P	Wei Chi	Before Completion: Li (Fire)/Kan (Water) <i>The superior man is careful in the differentiation of things, so that each finds its place.</i>	d20™: You get a +2 competence bonus to Appraise checks. 7th Sea™: You get a Free Raise to any Appraising rolls.
r	Li	Clinging: Li (Fire)/Li (Fire) <i>Thus the great man, by perpetuating this brightness, illumines the four quarters of the world.</i>	d20™: You get a +2 competence bonus to all Profession: (Artist) and Profession: (Performer) checks. 7th Sea™: You get a Free Raise to any one Artist or Performer Knack of your choice.
I	Lu	The Wanderer: Li (Fire)/Ken (Mountain) <i>Success through smallness; the superior man is clear-minded and cautious in imposing penalties and protracts no lawsuits.</i>	d20™: You get a +2 competence bonus to all Profession: Lawyer and Profession: Advocate checks. 7th Sea™: You get a Free Raise to all Law rolls.
o	K'uei	Opposition: Li (Fire)/Tui (Lake) <i>Amid all fellowship, the superior man retains his individuality.</i>	d20™: You get a +2 morale bonus to all Will saves to avoid being taunted, becoming enraged, etc. 7th Sea™: You get a Free Raise to all rolls to resist being Taunted.

Hexagram	Name	Meaning	Benefit
k	Ta Ch'u	Taming Power of the Great: Ken (Mountain)/Ch'ien (Heaven) <i>When there is a great store of energy, everything depends upon the power of the personality.</i>	d20™: You get a +2 insight bonus to all skill checks used for seduction. 7th Sea™: You get a Free Raise to all Charm rolls.
!	Po	Splitting Apart: Ken (Mountain)/K'un (Earth) <i>The house of the inferior man is split apart.</i>	d20™: There is no direct equivalent for Backgrounds. This should be role-played at the GM's discretion. 7th Sea™: You gain a Lost Love (3) Background for no extra cost.
x	I	The Corners of the Mouth (Providing Nourishment): Ken (Mountain)/Chen (Thunder) <i>Pay heed to the providing of nourishment.</i>	d20™: You get a +2 circumstance bonus to all Profession: Cook or Profession: Chef checks. 7th Sea™: You gain a Free Raise to all Cooking rolls
G	Ku	Decay: Ken (Mountain)/Sun (Wind) <i>Work on what has been spoiled has supreme success.</i>	d20™: There is no direct equivalent for Backgrounds. This should be role-played at the GM's discretion. 7th Sea™: You have a broken family. You get the Lost Relative (3) Background for no cost.
T	Meng	Youthful Folly: Ken (Mountain)/Kan (Water) <i>Youthful folly has success.</i>	d20™: Once per session, you receive a +2 luck bonus to any one roll 7th Sea™: At the start of each Story, both you and the GM get one extra Drama Die.
B	Pi	Grace: Ken (Mountain)/Li (Fire) <i>Grace has success in small matters, but not in large ones.</i>	d20™: As long as you are not in a mass combat situation, you get a +2 insight bonus to all attack rolls. 7th Sea™: You gain a Free Raise to any Attack Roll, as long as you are not engaged in a Mass Combat situation.
V	Ken	Keeping Still (Mountain): Ken (Mountain)/Ken (Mountain) <i>Thus the superior man does not permit his thoughts to go beyond his situation.</i>	d20™: You get a +2 competence bonus to all concentration checks. 7th Sea™: You gain a Free Raise to Resolve checks when trying to maintain your concentration.
y	Sun	Decrease: Ken (Mountain)/Tui (Lake) <i>The superior man spreads his commands abroad and carries out his undertakings.</i>	d20™: You get a +2 insight bonus to your leadership score. 7th Sea™: You gain a Free Raise to any Leadership rolls.
g	Kuai	Resolute: Tui (Lake)/Ch'ien (Heaven) <i>The superior man dispenses riches downward and refrains from resting on his virtue.</i>	d20™: You start out with 90% of your starting wealth, but you get a +1 bonus to your leadership score. 7th Sea™: You start the game with +1k1 points of Reputation because you have been generous with your money. You start the game with only 90% of your usual starting Wealth.
2	Ts'ui	Gathering Together: Tui (Lake)/K'un (Earth) <i>Thus the superior man renews his weapons to meet the unforeseen.</i>	d20™: You get a +2 circumstance bonus to all spot or listen checks to avoid being surprised or ambushed. 7th Sea™: You get a Free Raise to any roll made to avoid being surprised or ambushed.
J	Sui	Following: Tui (Lake)/Chen (Thunder) <i>The superior man at nightfall goes indoors for rest and recuperation.</i>	d20™: When healing naturally, you heal twice as many hit points as normal. 7th Sea™: After a full night's sleep you may heal 1 Dramatic Wound.
v	Ta Kuo	Preponderance of the Great: Tui (Lake)/Sun (Wind/Wood) <i>Thus the superior man, when he stands alone, is unconcerned.</i>	d20™: When you are outnumbered in a fight, you gain a +1 circumstance bonus to attack rolls and AC. 7th Sea™: When you are outnumbered in a fight, you get a Free Raise to all Attack and Active Defense rolls.
M	K'un	Oppression (Exhaustion): Tui (Lake)/Kan (Water) <i>Thus the superior man stakes his life on following his will.</i>	d20™: You get the Iron Will Feat for free. 7th Sea™: You get the Indomitable Will Advantage for no extra cost.
u	Ko	Revolution (Molting): Tui (Lake)/Li (Fire) <i>Changing the form of government brings good fortune.</i>	d20™: You get a +2 circumstance bonus to all rolls made to anger or incite people to action or violence. 7th Sea™: You gain a Free Raise to all Incitation rolls.
L	Hsien	Influence (Wooing): Tui (Lake)/Ken (Mountain) <i>To take a maiden to wife brings good fortune.</i>	d20™: There is no direct equivalent for Backgrounds. This should be role-played at the GM's discretion. 7th Sea™: You gain a Betrothed (2) Background.
s	Tui	Joyous: Tui (Lake)/Tui (Lake) <i>The superior man joins with his friends for discussion and practice.</i>	d20™: You get a +2 circumstance bonus to all skill checks made in social situations. 7th Sea™: You get a Free Raise to all Socialization rolls.

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