***Korúnkoi hiQiyór***

Ritual sorcery – especially the evocation of spirits, monsters, and demons from the Planes Beyond – is conducted in five vital and demanding “stages”. Traditions may differ in their interpretation of or actions within these stages, or in how stages are arranged in relation to one another, but over time underlying principles have remained extremely consistent (having been thus ever since the Wrath of the Gods period of latter Bednálljan history).

The art, however, has suffered since the fall of Kolméktio Mrìdleneláni. Because ritual sorcery was involved, somehow, in that cataclysm, and also because during the chaos which has followed the destruction of the Golden Age supremely powerful sorcerer-kings have oppressed the land, the knowledge and art and subtle skill of high magic has been destroyed, declared anathema, and made the object of insensate fear by its very many victims. Learned tomes, such as Chnéshaq khyChnéshayalu, have been declared “Proscribed” and burned.

The purpose of this work, therefore, is to preserve the basics of what I believe is a much maligned and essentially honourable science and art—that of ritual sorcery.

**The Five Stages**

*1. Preparation:*

The sorcerer readies himself, the ritual’s subject, and the location where the ritual will take place. This includes things like drawing or painting glyphs or patterns upon the walls and floor; ritually cleansing the area with abrasives, liquids, or unguents; anointing participants with special oils or ritual powders; and meditation and prayer. The Temple of Dlamélish often uses music, dancing, and sex acts to raise the energy of its sorcerers, but most adepts eschew such ignobility in favour of purposeful concentration.

The ritualist must also prepare the working area with procedures protecting participants from harmful forces and, of course, enhancing nearby nexus points. This latter might be accomplished by using, as one’s workspace, the altar stone of a now ruined but anciently powerful temple (one that saw so much magic-use that its very blocks are soaked in inter-planar power); an example might be the Pyramid Temple and Tomb of the Lost King, in the ruins of Old Purdánim.

The magician must, lastly, time his operations to coordinate with astrological conjunctions and, if possible, resonant dates in the sorcerous tradition within which the magic-user operates. Sorcery manipulating the element of Fire, for example, is best planned for a time when the moon Káshi is high in the sky.

*2. Reaching Through:*

The sorcerer taps into necessary other-planar forces and entities. This process often begins during the preparation stage but continues beyond it – the chanting or ritual activity is repeated throughout all follow-on phases. During this “Reaching Through” process, the secret names of any and all involved beings from the Planes Beyond will be spoken, and symbolic and material components brought to bear.

*3. Shaping the Essences:*

The magician mentally directs or shapes the effects to be accomplished. This can be a simple direct imperative (“destroy this enemy”), or something more complicated, such as linking the symbol of an effect with the ritual’s target; e.g., during a harmful ritual, the sorcerer destroys or damages a simulacrum representing his enemy; during its healing rituals, the Temple of Avánthe uses ritual baths, symbolizing the cleansing of maledictions. Reaching Through, as stated above, continues while Shaping the Essences advances via symbolism, sympathies and mummery.

*4. Balancing the Substances:*

Ultimately, all sorcerers must offer satisfaction to the beings of the Planes Beyond, must repay energies drawn from between dimensions, and must establish negating conditions. This can be a sacrifice, a gift of gold or devices of the Ancients (which may be consumed in a variety of ways), or something less tangible, ranging from a binding geas of servitude to a simple prayer of thanks to the entity concerned.

Spells and incantations having a permanent effect – for reasons known only to the Gods themselves – *must* be given a “negating condition” when cast. This condition is always something that a mortal adept can accomplish through ordinary attainment, and is never so secret that no opponent could ever deduce the negating requirements through investigation, research or augury.

If balancing is ignored, there can be a warping or tainting of the sorcerer’s soul, and this – if left unchecked – can even cause the sorcerer’s physical body to warp and taint. Without a doubt, the chief example, the chief cautionary tale, of a sorcerer who succumbed to a doom thanks to his own refusal to balance the substances is Nyélmu.

*5. Dismissal/Dissipation:*

The sorcerer concludes the ritual with the dismissal or dissipation of all evoked powers. Other planar beings are banished; excess accumulated energies or planar echoes are safely neutralized. This is never straightforward because magicians always deal with hostile entities that resist being expelled (and grow dangerous), or at minimum juggle vast and unstable forces. This is a crucial component of *harmful* rituals especially, for the sorcerer must take steps to shield himself and his clients from the effects of his deeds.

**Time, Space, and Ceremony**

Three fundamentals combine to alter realty for the ritual sorcerer: time, space, and essence. The wise man requires actual time to conduct ceremony, ritual space attuned to the beings and forces involved, and material and symbolic representations of the essence (or idea, intent, form) at issue. Magicworking is an involved process, and these things act as a matrix for the magician’s power, making it possible to achieve results. In the right quality or quantity, suitable ritual fundamentals might even trigger greater effects, but never limitlessly. One is reminded of the story of the sage Di'ishób of Fársha, who maintained a magic ceremony for an entire year only to discover at its end that its target (an erstwhile lover) had died in the interim.

The material accoutrements needful for attaining real alterations within the sorcerer’s plane of existence include pendants of semiprecious stone worked slowly to enable the containment of interplanar energy, the storage of spells, and the grant of resistances or boons; golems serving as target simulacrum or as adjuncts, called scions, to the sorcerer’s own spellcasting; various devices improving perception; and staves which serve as a kind of lightning rod that improves the quality of the interplanar energies in a radius around the spell-caster.

At the highest pinnacles of sorcerous power the above fundamentals can be serially discarded. The likes of Thómar the Ever-Living, Metállja the Muscian, and Súbadim the Sorcerer are reported in fable to have cast spells without hours spent preparing themselves and their sacred spaces, without having ceremonial participants to coordinate, and without power or spell stones, subject simulacra, awareness enhancers, or even wizardly staffs (although all of these men certainly did employ such adjuncts whenever circumstances allowed), and without consuming costly material components in order to cast their spells.

Tékumel abounds with devices surviving from the ancient and glorious days of high technology. Many scholars view these apparatus as essential aides in advancing one’s power and mastery of the Powers and the Ways. It is this sage’s opinion, however, that such items are crutches to be avoided by the truly powerful. They are unstable and treacherous to use; they also encourage the use of shortcuts and stand-ins.

**Initial Terms**

***Balásh*** – completing a difficult ritual

***Fayézakh*** – target of a ritual

***Telírin Bálashikh*** – defensive spell

***Dlachánikh*** – sapient

***Dhichútlin Bálashikh*** – missile spell

***Kardétha*** – abort a ritual

***Qurnúngikh*** – interplanar power

***Shátun*** – magic

***Tsahlán*** – to research