

# AMBITION

SORCERERS STRIVE TO UNDERSTAND THE UNIVERSE  
THROUGH UNHOLY PACTS WITH THE LORDS AND  
DEMONS OF CHAOS.

NOW THEIR AMBITION GROWS.

THEIR RUNE MAGIC ALLOWS THEM TO CAST HIDEOUS SPELLS  
DIRECTLY UPON A LIVING BEING OR INANIMATE  
OBJECT, CURSING THE UNFORTUNATE WITH  
THE POWERS OF THE DAMNED.

THEY SPEAK WITH THE DEAD, CALLING FORTH ROTTED  
CADAVERS TO DO THEIR BIDDING AND TO DIVULGE  
SECRETS FROM BEYOND THE GRAVE.

NOW THESE SORCERERS SEARCH THROUGH ANCIENT TOMES  
FOR YET GREATER POWER, DISCOVERING NEW DEMON BREEDS  
AND NEW INFERNAL POWERS WITH WHICH TO IMBUE THEM.

FOOLS! THEY WILL BE THE END OF ALL.

MICHAEL MOORCOCK'S

# ELRIC!

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# The Bronze Grimoire

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Necromancy

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Tomes

**Magic and the Supernatural for *Elric!***





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## WHEN IS **BRONZE GRIMOIRE** SET?

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**T**HE EVENTS of this book are set one year before the situations described in the novel *Elric of Melniboné* by Michael Moorcock. The Chaosium publications *Sorcerers of Pan Tang*, *Melniboné*, *Perils of the Young Kingdoms*, *Sea Kings of the Purple Towns*, and *The Fate of Fools* feature backgrounds and adventures set within this prologue period. Look for *Atlas of the Young Kingdoms Vol. 1: The Northern Continent* and *Seas of Fate* to be released soon.

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Please do not phone in game questions: the quickest answer is often not the best answer.

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## - DEDICATION - To Kobe Isaacs

The author would like to thank James A. Estes for his encouragement and advice. Special thanks go out to Shannon Appel; Shannon provided the initial ideas for the Rune of Slumber, Beckoning Earth, Hell's Revivification, Hell's Strength, and Raise Dead. Of course, credit must be given to Lynn Willis for taking a shot on an unknown and untested author. Finally, my gratitude to Brian Sullivan for introducing me to the world of Elric, and to John Higgins, Jr. for introducing me to role-playing.



## To Begin . . .

**T**HE BRONZE GRIMOIRE adds to and extends the magic chapter in the *Elric!* rulesbook. Of the material in this book, gamemasters should feel free to apply as much or as little as they see fit to their games. This book represents rules, concepts, and magic integral to the game.

Owning this book is not necessary to play *Elric!*, but the material within gives gamemasters and players many more options during a session of play. Players should always check first with the gamemaster before giving their adventurers particular spells or abilities from this book.

Imagine these materials as being discovered over months or years of play. In particular, a sentient being like a demon deserves being roleplayed, not being retrofitted like a mechanical device. Summon new demons to take advantage of new abilities, don't paste new parts on ideas already in play.

Adventurers will in the course of their heroic lives have opportunities to learn new spells, discover new enchantments, and uncover new sorts of demons. This book furthers the gradual acquisition of such magic.

Runes in particular can powerfully influence the nature and conduct of adventurers. Gamemasters who admit the concept of runes into their games should introduce the concepts of rune placement, duration, and triggering into their game worlds before allowing adventurers to learn any runes. In themselves, runes are as powerful and as common as spells.

In creating this book, much attention was paid to magic as described in the *Elric* saga. The origins of many spells are inspired by magical effects portrayed in the saga.

The author hopes that throughout this work the feel of the saga has been maintained, and that the powers and effects contained herein fire the imagination and prove interesting and entertaining in play.

The concept of rune magic and the laws of rune placement are introduced. Dozens of sample runes and a few runic spells are given.

Necromancy is defined in a chapter which also presents necromantic spells, and discusses the Incantations After Death and those associated spells. Descriptions and statistics for seven sorts of undead occur.

The spells chapter presents many new spells in standard format. There is also a comprehensive spell summary: it lists the new spells, all the rulesbook spells, and the main spells from the necromancy chapter. Four Lawful spells originally given in *Fate of Fools* are reprinted. The spells of *Incantations After Death* are not included in the summary table, as they are rare, powerful, and not suitable for everyday use.

This chapter presents two dozen new demon abilities, along with a table that summarizes the demon abilities from the *Elric* rules and this grimoire.

Additional demon breeds and a handful of individual demons appear, illustrated; their abilities combine the old and the new.

Many enchantments are outlined. A number of these are Lawful, or connected with the Elemental Rulers.

The last chapter discusses the tome, a class of book distinct from the grimoire, and presents a dozen examples. The Location entry for each tome includes a scenario hook for bringing the volume into play.

Adventurer attempts at finding the material in this book could be the subject of many sessions of play. Perhaps the adventurers are targets of a devious Pan Tangian necromancer. Perhaps they find a grimoire in ancient, crumbling ruins from the height of the Bright Empire. Perhaps, like Cran Liret, they break into a sorcerer's library to steal spells. If finding the magic in this supplement is interesting and difficult, then finding it in itself becomes the stuff of adventures.

I hope you enjoy the *Bronze Grimoire*.

— Ross A. Isaacs.





# Runes And Spell-Like Runes

A new class of magical effect, of substantial benefit to those capable of sorcery and a new source of anxiety and dread for those who are not.

**I**N THE ELRIC SAGA, sorcerers on several occasions employ **runes** as well as cast spells. When Elric summons Arioch for the **first** time, he covers the walls and floor of his room with **runes**. Yyrkoon **uses** runes to place Cymoril into a trancelike sleep, before he carries her off to Dhoz-Kam. He does it again when Elric returns for the Sack of Imnyr.

Runes tap the substrate of the universe by virtue of their shapes. They are shadow topologies, projections of infinitelydimensioned properties intrinsic to the Balance - properties or templates which shape all of time and space. Those cosmic Runes are the true unvarying Law, yet in their ceaseless recombination and repositioning they too are the fount of true Chaos, and in their harmony of action and form they are the true Balance. From their essence springs all.

Compared to the great Runes of the cosmos, the runes of the Young Kingdoms are insignificant shadows. Nonetheless, such shapes and glyphs are dangerous marvels to mortal men, who are god-like only in their dreams.

Rune magic is subtle. It has its own rules. No rune is truly permanent, since all things must some day end, but some runes may have lasted for centuries or millennia.

- Like spells, runec can be successfully learned or inscribed only by individuals of POW 16 or greater.
- For game purposes. speak of each rune in the singular. For one rune, many individual glyphs may need inscription.
- Some runes approximate existing spells and create effects equivalent to those spells and, like spells, most runes affect only one person or one thing.
- Multiples of some runes, inscribed so as to define an area, have uniform power across that area.
- Though thousands of runes exist, no one now knows how to discover a new rune. Mages experiment with existing runes, combining and blending them to create new effects.
- Runes that can be learned and activated are either Chaotic or Lawful. Balance runes do not exist, at least on this plane, and perhaps nowhere, for the magic of the

cosmic Runes is inherent in the creation and evolution of the Million Spheres. Coextant Tanelom seems to be the Balance's only intervention, but it too is original design primally shaped by the great Runes.

## ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES

Once triggered, a rune exercises its magical effect without regard to a sorcerer's DEX, presence, or even to his or her existence. Some runes allow the inscriber to lend one-use magic to those who cannot cast spells or inscribe runes. Employing runes methodically, a sorcerer can dedicate instant magical effects and extra magic points to power those effects.

In sum, though the ability to inscribe a particular rune counts against a sorcerer's m-limit to memory, a sorcerer may scatter as many active runes across the landscape as his or her will, time, energy, and magic points allow. An active rune is not deactivated if a sorcerer removes knowledge of it from from memory.

Every magical path has disadvantages. Foremost, the topological properties of runes make them difficult to

When he had meditated for more than five hours Elric took a brush and a jar of ink and began to paint both walls and floor with complicated symbols....

— Elric of Melniboné, II, 3.