

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 What's in the Set?

Disco Stu's Kindred of the East set includes 490 cards. These cards deal with the world of the Kuei-Jin... vampires of the Oriental World of Darkness that are physically and spiritually different from the Kindred of the West, who are the typical focus of a Vampire: the Masquerade and Vampire: the Eternal Struggle game.

Because of their different origins, Kuei-Jin cannot possess or use normal vampiric Disciplines, and as such it was important to me to treat them as a new type of minion to avoid confusion. Kuei-Jin have their own set of Disciplines with their own unique flavour, and I felt that it was necessary to put all the cards requiring Disciplines into a separate file so that players could gauge, at a glance, the strengths and weaknesses of each new Discipline.

The set includes

- 110 Crypt cards, split over 5 Dharmas (analogous to Clans).

Library Cards requiring a specific trait:

- 45 cards that specifically require a Dharma to use.
- 15 cards that require a specific Direction to use, split over 5 Directions (Direction is a secondary clan-like trait that all KJ possess).
- 170 cards requiring a Discipline, split over twenty Disciplines with four to ten cards each.

Library Cards that do not require a specific trait:

- 56 Master cards
- 22 Action cards
- 8 Action Modifiers
- 8 Allies
- 8 Combat cards
- 13 Equipment cards
- 2 Events
- 15 Political Actions
- 14 Reactions
- 2 Retainers

2. CRYPT

2.1 Minion Types

In previous sets, two forms of minion existed in Vampire: the Eternal Struggle. The first, Vampires, are the core focus of the game, and were kept in a separate deck known as the Crypt. The second type of minion, Allies, represent a catch-all term to describe peripheral participants in the Jyhad. Allies are, of course, brought into play via the Library deck rather than the Crypt.

Kuei-Jin (KJ) represent a third minion type. Like a Vampire minion, Kuei-Jin are located in the Crypt rather than Library. Other general rules that target vampires (such as torpor, controlled vs. uncontrolled region, etc.), target Kuei-Jin. To prevent confusion and rules-tweaking, a facedown minion in the crypt or uncontrolled region is always considered to be a vampire. It is only when a minion is successfully transferred to the controlled region that the distinction between Vampire and Kuei-Jin becomes relevant.

Example 1: transfers in the influence phase allow counters to be moved from a Methuselah's blood pool to a Kuei-Jin in her uncontrolled region

Example 2: A Methuselah may play Brainwash on any minion in a Methuselah's uncontrolled region, regardless of whether it is actually a Kuei-Jin.

Example 3: Haakon Mortensen, an 8-capacity Gangrel *antitribu*, is in combat with Kolitha, a 6-capacity Kuei-Jin. Haakon cannot play Alpha Glint, as the text of Alpha Glint refers to “an ally or younger vampire”, when the opposing minion is neither.

2.1.1 The “Younger / Older” rule

The “Younger / Older” rule, as represented in Example 3 above, gives a slight advantage to the Kuei-Jin in certain situations, and is included to give them an inherent power to make up for their slightly fiddly nature (see 2.3, Chi, below) and the fact that they start behind the power curve at present.

If this rubs you the wrong way, feel free to do a ‘virtual errata’ on any card that refers to a “younger / older vampire” to change the text to a “younger / older minion”. This then enables Kuei-Jin to be equally affected by cards such as Seduction and Alpha Glint.

2.2 Vampires and Kindred of the East – RPG vs. CCG

All existing vampires in *Vampire: the Eternal Struggle* descend from Caine, the first vampire. Cainite vampires possess a trait called Generation, which defines how far removed they are from Caine and the Antediluvians. Cainites procreate by Embracing (draining the blood from a mortal and replacing it with vampiric blood), and may create ghouls by feeding vampiric blood to a still-living creature.

Kuei-Jin are souls of the dead who have returned from Hell, which they call Yomi. While they feed by drinking blood and possess supernatural powers that can be similar to the Cainite Disciplines, they cannot Embrace and cannot create ghouls. They also have no Generation, and instead measure their relative power levels by their level of spiritual enlightenment.

2.3 Chi

Kuei-Jin understand that the blood they drink to sustain their existence is a form of Chi, or life-energy, which is found in all aspects of existence. Enlightened Kuei-Jin gain greater powers of manipulation over this Chi energy, and can use the Chi of themselves and others in increasingly exotic fashions.

In *VtES* game terms, Kuei-Jin use Chi instead of Blood. Chi is replaceable with Blood in almost every way; the difference in terminology is primarily for stylistic reasons.

The sole difference between Blood and Chi is that Chi can come in two ‘flavours’. Yin Chi represents passive life energies, while Yang Chi represents active life energies. Yin Chi is generally used for effects that hide the user, avoid conflict, dull emotions or generate decay. Yang Chi is generally used for effects that draw attention to the user, create action or movement, create positive or energetic moods, or generate life.

The initial amount of Yin Chi and Yang Chi that a Kuei-Jin possesses is determined by that KJ’s Methuselah. When a Kuei-Jin moves from the uncontrolled region to the controlled region, the controlling Methuselah designates any number of that minion’s Blood counters to be Yin Chi. The remainder are designated as Yang Chi.

Whenever a Kuei-Jin gains or loses Chi, the KJ’s Methuselah determines whether Yin or Yang Chi is gained or lost.

Effects that would move Blood or Life from a vampire, ally or retainer to a Kuei-Jin convert the moved counters to either Yin or Yang Chi at the discretion of the Methuselah controlling the Kuei-Jin.

Outside of a specific card effect, a point of Yin Chi cannot become a point of Yang Chi, and vice versa.

Certain cards or effects specifically add or deplete Yang Chi, Yin Chi, or either sort of Chi. In the attached card lists, Chi expenditure is listed as [# / # / #]. The first numeral refers to Yin Chi, the second to Any Chi, and the third to Yang Chi.

Example: A card with a cost [2/0/0] requires two Yin Chi to play, while a card with a cost [0/3/0] requires three Chi to play, any amount of which could be Yin or Yang Chi.

Please note that, at present, a card requires either Yin Chi or Yang Chi or any mixture of both. No card requires a specific amount of Yin and Yang Chi to play. I.e., while cards may exist that cost [0/3/0], no cards exist that cost [1/0/2] or [2/0/1].

2.3.1 Removing the Chi Rule

For those players who find the Chi Rule too complicated or off-putting, simply remove it by converting all references to Chi in the card text to Blood.

Be aware many cards have been designed with the Chi Rule in mind. If this rule is removed, some card costs may have to be reworked for game balance purposes. As an example, see cards such as Black Cycle, Darkness Beyond Reckoning, The Flame Within and Scarlet Cycle

2.4 Dharma

As they are not descended from Caine and the Antediluvians, Kuei-Jin do not possess clans. Instead, Kuei-Jin adopt one of five philosophical paths known as Dharmas.

Howl of the Devil-Tiger: Known as *Devil-Tigers* (DT), followers of this path consider themselves to be chosen by Heaven to be vengeful sinners and punishers of the wicked. While they embrace their darker natures, Devil-Tigers are not Infernalists and are scornful of those that would sell their souls for temporal power.

Way of the Resplendent Crane: The Resplendent Cranes (RC) consider themselves to be the guardians of Kuei-Jin traditions. Viewing other Dharmas as morally weak, the Cranes attempt to maintain control over themselves, society and the Wheel of Ages itself. Resplendent Cranes tend to be haughty and reserved magistrates, but when scripture fails, they possess the martial skills to back up their beliefs.

Song of the Shadow: More commonly called *Shadow Songs* (SS), these Kuei-Jin devote themselves to the mysteries of Yin energy. Courtiers and assassins alike make their way into the ranks of this Dharma. Shadow Songs are more likely to be knowledgeable advisors to the ruling elite rather than the power on the throne itself.

Path of the Thousand Whispers: *Thousand Whispers* (TW) are enigmatic Kuei-Jin that believe they must experience existence from countless points of view before they can become truly enlightened. Masters of disguise and puzzles, Thousand Whispers exist at all ends of the social spectrum, and each one has a diverse range of powers to call upon.

Dance of the Thrashing Dragon: *Thrashing Dragons* (TD) are often seen as the polar opposite to Shadow Songs, as they revere the life-energy of Yang. Thrashing Dragons can be both humane and animalistic, and reflect the best and worst of both vampirism and humanity. They tend to have dynamic and spontaneous natures.

Kuei-Jin cannot be part of a clan, and vampires join a Dharma without specific card text to that effect.

2.5 Direction

Kindred of the East communities place an emphasis not just on the philosophy that a Kuei-Jin holds to, but also to the societal role that that Kuei-Jin has.

Direction is a new trait that, like Dharma, is roughly analogous to Clan in game terms. Every Kuei-Jin possesses both a Dharma and a Direction.

There are five Directions in the game, each of which has certain cards attached to it.

North [N] – North-facing Kuei-Jin tend to be lawgivers and judges. Many Resplendent Cranes are North-facing. North-specific cards often give modifiers to bleeds.

South [S] – South-facing Kuei-Jin tend to be rebels and iconoclasts. Many Devil-Tigers are South-facing. South-specific cards often allow a minion to burn cards in play.

East [E] – East-facing Kuei-Jin tend to be surround themselves with mortals and have some level of influence over human society. Many Thrashing Dragons are East-facing. East-specific cards tend to relate to recruiting allies or employing retainers.

West [W] – West-facing Kuei-Jin turn their back on mortal society to learn the secrets of the ghost world. West-facing Kuei-Jin are commonly found among the ranks of the Shadow Songs. West-specific cards often grant intercept.

Center [C] – Center-facing Kuei-Jin are often the teachers and mystics of Kuei-Jin society. Thousand Whispers frequently face the Center direction. Center-specific cards frequently manipulate cards in libraries, ash heaps and a Methuselah's hand.

2.5.1 The usefulness of the Direction rule

When designing this set, I was in two minds whether to keep Direction. Ultimately, it stayed in because it was such an important concept in Kindred of the East society. Furthermore, in VtES terms it adds an extra dimension to crypts. Decks in VtES are often designed along Clan or Discipline lines. Kindred of the East decks can instead be designed along Dharma, Discipline or Direction lines.

2.6 Sect

Previous sets have introduced the sects of Camarilla, Independent, Sabbat, and most recently Laibon. This set introduces a fifth sect, named Unaligned. Every Kuei-Jin is Unaligned.

2.6.1 Changing Sects

At present, no effects exist to allow a Kindred of the East to move to another sect, or for a Camarilla, Independent, Sabbat or Laibon vampire to become Unaligned.

2.7 Titles

The Unaligned sect has no named titles (such as Prince, Primogen, etc.). Titled Unaligned Kuei-Jin are marked by the number of votes they have, in an identical fashion to Independent vampires, e.g. Eight Thunders Sage has 2 votes (titled).

2.8 Advancement

Kuei-Jin can and do have Advanced versions. This rule functions identically to standard VtES.

2.8.1 Why Advance Kuei-Jin?

A high proportion of Kuei-Jin are Advanced. With the high number of new Disciplines, I felt that a large number of Advanced Kuei-Jin would lend itself to focused crypt and deck designs in what could be an otherwise unfocused set.

2.9 Grouping

Like Vampires, Kuei-Jin have Groups. Just as in standard VtES, a Crypt must consist of a maximum of two Groups, which must be adjacent to one another.

2.9.1 Why bother with Grouping?

Good question! I felt that it was necessary to institute this at an early stage, and spread each Dharma fairly evenly across Groups 2, 3 and 4. Doing otherwise would both limit the possibilities of combining this set with all current sets, and also limit my own future work on the set.

3. LIBRARY

3.1 Card types

All existing card types remain in the Kindred of the East set, and the rules for these remain unchanged. Kuei-Jin can take actions to recruit allies, employ retainers and equip as any ally or vampire can, for example.

3.2 Tenet

This set introduces a new card type, called Tenet. Tenet cards reflect a Kuei-Jin becoming more enlightened as he acts in a manner that complement the beliefs of his Dharma. As such, Tenet cards always require a Dharma.

Tenet cards may be played by both tapped and untapped Kuei-Jin, and may be played as a combat card, reaction or action modifier depending on the circumstances. The new Reflex card type (to be introduced in Legacies of Blood) closely approximates this rule.

3.3 Existing Keywords

All existing keywords 'affect' Kindred of the East as best they can. For example, Kuei-Jin can have and use Havens (if allowed by the rules), but like vampires can only have a single haven. Kuei-Jin can also be Grappled in combat, if all card requirements are met as normal. Frenzy cards can theoretically affect Kuei-Jin, however the majority of existing Frenzy cards specify 'vampire' rather than 'minion'. See Section 2.1 for further clarification.

3.4 New Keywords

Several new keywords are introduced in this set. Like the vast majority of keywords in VtES, these are 'passive' keywords rather than 'active' keywords.

Taking a leaf out of Decipher's definitions, passive keywords are those that have no rules attached, but may have certain cards that reference it. Anarch, Seraph and Grapple are all passive keywords. Active keywords, on the other hand, have particular rules attached to them. Infernal, Sterile and Slave are all active keywords.

Omen is a passive keyword, frequently found on Dharma-specific cards. Omens represent occurrences that focus a Kuei-Jin's mind on his Dharma.

P'o, the Kuei-Jin term for their inner demon or dark nature, is a passive keyword found on a number of Action cards. Several cards reference adding or removing counters from P'o cards.

Wu is a term used to describe a social group of Kuei-Jin, who are connected together with supernatural bonds of loyalty. Wu is a passive keyword on a small number of Master and Action cards.

Faction is a passive keyword used to denote a political grouping within Kuei-Jin society. While these groups can be powerful and wide reaching, they do not have the internal cohesion and influence of a Sect.

Realm is a passive keyword that refers to a region of the hellish supernatural world that Kuei-Jin call Yomi.

3.4.1 Why so many keywords?

Keywords add flavour, and so it was important to me to bring a number of roleplaying terms into the card game to give the Kindred of the East a suitably exotic and distinct feel.

At present, the Wu, Faction and Realm keywords are underused and underdeveloped. I felt that this set wouldn't have been the right time to introduce these *en masse*, however I also wanted to give the reader a taste for what I had in mind for future expansions.

3.5 Disciplines

In the Kindred of the East roleplaying game, Disciplines are divided into a number of categories or genres that are used to group together thematically similar Disciplines. For example, Yang Prana is a 'Chi Art', as its supernatural grace and speed come from a Kuei-Jin furthering their understanding of the nature of Chi itself. Black Wind, another Discipline that grants superhuman speed and agility, is considered a 'Demon Art' Discipline, as it is fuelled by unlocking the power of the Kuei-Jin's dark side.

The list of Disciplines in this set is as follows:

Beast Shintai	[besh]
Black Wind	[blw]
Blood Shintai	[blsh]
Bone Shintai	bosh]
Cultivation	[cul]
Demon Shintai	[dsh]
Dragon Tears	[drt]

Equilibrium	[equ]
Feng Shui	[feng]
Flesh Shintai	[flsh]
Ghost-Flame Shintai	[gfsh]
Internalize	[int]
Iron Mountain	[iron]
Jade Shintai	[jas]
Kiai	[kiai]
Mibasham	[mib]
Obligation	[obl]
Tapestry	[tap]
Yang Prana	[yap]
Yin Prana	[yip]

3.5.1 What happened to Chi'u Muh?

One of the more awkwardly named Disciplines in the game, Chi'u Muh was renamed Dragon Tears in this set for ease of play.

3.5.2 Clan/Dharma Disciplines

In VtES, as in its original source material Vampire: the Masquerade, a member of a certain clan has a disposition toward learning approximately three particular Disciplines. This predisposition was known in Vampire: the Masquerade as "Clan Disciplines". For example, a Brujah would have a hereditary disposition toward learning Celerity, Potence and Presence, while a Tzimisce would lean toward Animalism, Auspex and Vicissitude.

The concept of Clan Disciplines allows streamlining of VtES deck construction; when making a Toreador deck, you are most likely to use the Disciplines of Auspex, Celerity and Presence, for example.

In Kindred of the East, every Discipline is accessible to a Kuei-Jin. While particular Dharmas may encourage or discourage the use of particular Disciplines, this is a social phenomenon rather than any inbuilt bias.

After careful consultation of Kindred of the East sourcebooks written by White Wolf, I have attempted to tighten each Dharma's strategy by narrowing their range of available Disciplines.

- Devil-Tigers tend to possess Black Wind, Dragon Tears, Ghost-Flame Shintai and (to a lesser extent) Demon Shintai.
- Resplendent Cranes tend to possess Blood Shintai, Internalize, Obligation and (to a lesser extent) Demon Shintai.
- Shadow Songs tend to possess Bone Shintai and Yin Prana and (to a lesser extent) Black Wind, Cultivation and Mibashim.
- Thousand Whispers tend to possess Jade Shintai and (to a lesser extent) Equilibrium and Internalize.
- Thrashing Dragons tend to possess Flesh Shintai, Yang Prana and (to a lesser extent) Tapestry.

Alert readers will note that Shadow Songs have a larger range of core Disciplines than most, while Thousand Whispers have a smaller range. This is intentional, and reflects the number of 'non-core' Disciplines available to that Dharma. Just as several Group 1 and 2 Toreador possessed Dominate, and many Group 3 and Group 4 Giovanni possess Fortitude, non-core Disciplines can add new depths and tactics to an existing clan. Shadow Songs, by possessing a large set of core Disciplines, don't have as much cross-Dharma versatility as Thousand Whispers minions, who are more likely to be fitted into toolbox crypts and deck strategies.

4. FUTURE EXPANSIONS

Although White Wolf published only a small number of books for Kindred of the East, they introduced a rich and complex world that has only barely been touched upon in this set.

If I receive enough interest in my work here, or if I get the card-creating bug again, I aim to cover the following themes in future sets.

- Heretical Dharmas – Godlings, Scorpion Eaters, Rising Phoenixes, Tempests and the Cerulean Veils would all add new depth to the world of the Kuei-Jin.
- New Disciplines – Prayer-Eating, Storm Shintai and more...!
- *Akuma* – the Infernal Kuei-Jin
- Cainites in Asia – including Tokyo's Sabbat, Korean Nagaraja, the Giovanni envoy to the Beijing Blood Court, Hong Kong's expatriate Ventrue and an Advanced, Unaligned Oliver Thrace?
- The Kuei-Jin invasion of San Francisco and the Anarch Free States.
- The Turning of the Wheel (roughly equivalent to the vampiric Gehenna).
- Scarlet Screens (mortal gangs and organizations)
- A review of the Faction rule, to add more depth to Kuei-Jin politics

5. FEEDBACK

I am keen to receive feedback, both from VtES players and Kindred of the East fans. I can be contacted at wormwood@vampirethemasquerade.com.

Cheers,
Disco Stu