



EPISODE FIVE: CHINESE DIVINATION MOON BLOCKS

Empowering Your Moon Blocks

This handout is a supplement to Tinkering Bell Episode #5 on Chinese moon block divination. The following ritual instruction is for charging and empowering your divinatory tool, specifically your moon blocks, to be used for spirit communications. The instructions can be followed for either clam shells or tortoise shells.

Here's a summary of essential components:

- Full moon (and moon not void of course)
- Incense: frankincense (乳香, rǔ xiāng), sandalwood (檀香, tán xiāng), cedar wood (翠柏, cuì bǎi), amber (琥珀, hǔ pò), or camphor (樟腦, zhāngnǎo)
- Red candle
- Black ink
- The communication tool: moon blocks, clam shells, or tortoise shells

Empower your moon blocks, clam shells, or tortoise shells for divine communication during a full moon. Also opt for a time when the moon is not void of course.

Begin by burning incense. The above-listed incense are classic in esoteric Taoism and Buddhism, used to create a nexus between the spirit realms and the physical realm.

Begin by inscribing the power cross (✳) with black ink onto the red candle. Inscribe one to represent the Tao, Divinity, or the Heavenly Father. Inscribe three for the Three Treasures or Holy Trinity. Inscribe four for the four directions and four seasons to connect to Earth. Inscribe five for the five elements. Or opt for seven or eleven, both numbers corresponding metaphysically with the spirit realms. The number of crosses you inscribe onto the candle is up to you, depending on the symbolism you want to work with.

Start by placing one moon block (clam shell or tortoise shell) on either side of the candle, left and right equidistant from the candle.

Step back, clasp your hands in prayer, bow your head in respect, and call upon the spirit guardian of the East to grant the powers of the East and the spring equinox to you. *Note:* In the Taoist pantheon, the Grand Duke of the East would be called.

Then shift to face the south. Clasp hands in prayer, bow your head in respect, and call upon the spirit guardian of the South. Petition the guardian of the South to grant you the powers of the South and the summer solstice. *Note:* In the Taoist pantheon, Zhurong of the South would be called.

Shift once more to face the west. Clasp hands in prayer, bow your head in respect, and call upon the spirit guardian of the West. Petition the guardian of the West to grant you the powers of the West and the autumn equinox. *Note:* In the Taoist pantheon, the Empress Mother of the West would be called.

Then shift and face the north. Clasp your hands in prayer again, bow your head in respect, and call upon the spirit guardian of the North. Petition the guardian of the North to grant you the powers of the North and the winter solstice. *Note:* In the Taoist pantheon, if you're from northern China, Bei Di the God of the North would be called, and if you're from southern China, Xuan Wu, the Dark God of the North would be called.

The directions and the seasons together represent space-time. You're empowering the divinatory tools to anticipate all that is space-time, to reach all that is space-time, and provide you with any answer you seek, contact any spirit or entity from any realm.

Step forward into the center, pick up both moon blocks (or the pair of clam shells or pair of tortoise shells), hold them up high above your head toward the heavens, look upward, toward the heavens, then raise the candle flame so it is between you and the moon blocks, equidistant.

Call upon the great heavens (*Note:* Here, often a sky god or heavenly father figure would be called, such as Tai Yi, the Jade Emperor, Nu Wa, or your patron deity, etc.) to bless your divinatory tool. Then, blow out the candle flame, but in a way so the smoke from the flame will be blown by you toward and directly into your divinatory tool.

End with a closing recitation, such as *Ji ji ru lu ling* (Chinese Taoist equivalent to "So mote it be"), which essentially means "It is so ordered."

The moon blocks (clam shells or tortoise shells) are now charged and divinely blessed as a communication tool with the spirit realms.

Do not use the divination tool that night. Place it on your altar along with generous offerings to the deities and leave on the altar until morning. Some practitioners will let it sit on the altar and change offerings daily for three days before considering the empowerment ritual complete.