

Voodoo practitioners have a practical relationship with their gods. They expect favors and assistance from the Loa in both the material and spiritual worlds, and in exchange they will help sustain the Loa with belief, service, and sacrifice. Despite their spiritual nature, the Loa grow hungry and need sustenance. To determine what is needful, Voodoo practitioners and the Loa themselves turn to those who have chosen (or have *been* chosen) to act as emissaries between the two worlds: hougans and mambos. Hougans are male priests, and mambos female. Despite their gender distinctive titles, they serve the Loa in the same capacity. All Voodoo practitioners are said to serve the Loa, but hougans and mambos have “taken the *asson*”. They arrange the regular ceremonies at their *peristyle* in which they celebrate the Loa and make offerings to them. These offerings are frequently grain and other foods, but on special occasions chickens, goats, and bulls may be sacrificed. There are dark sects that sacrifice human beings, but most followers of the Loa would never consider such a vile act.

On occasion, the Loa like to stretch their limbs and walk around in a physical body. One of the more infamous aspects of Voodoo is the “possession” that occurs when a Loa displaces the *gros-bon-ange* of a follower (or ceremony bystander) and “rides” them. The Loa often refer to their servants as “horses” though this isn’t meant as an insult. It comes more from the common understanding that a Loa “rides the head” of an individual they’ve possessed. A person ridden by a Loa becomes capable of remarkable, even impossible, feats. No one ridden by the Loa remembers what occurred while they were possessed. Their *gros-bon-ange* is completely displaced during the period of possession; they are effectively “missing.” While hougans can talk to Loa that they’ve called into a *govi*, they frequently take the time when Loa are “in the flesh” to discuss problems with them and barter for future favors. Note that the Loa seldom have set preferences for the horses they choose to ride, and gender is meaningless to them. Ogun may ride an old woman as readily as a powerful young warrior. If the Loa have any reason for why they choose particular horses, they don’t make it known. Sometimes, a Loa will favor a specific individual. When this occurs, the Loa is the “master of their head.” The Loa take great interest in their favored horses, frequently coming to their assistance but also making their life difficult.

The Loa are said to live “in guinea” when they are not roaming the world, guinea being the spiritual reflection of the continent of Africa. The many “families” of Loa reflect their origins. They are frequently named for the region from which they came, or the tribe that worshipped them originally, before they were brought to the New World. There are literally countless Loa, and their numbers change constantly. A selection of the most powerful and influential Loa is detailed in the next section. For the purposes of the *Skull & Bones* setting, there are four major groupings of Loa: Old World, New World, Djib, and the exceptions.

The Golden Age of Piracy is a dark and wondrous time for the Servants of the Loa. They frequently have to meet in secret, concealing their beliefs from the “civilized” people around them. Slaves, escaped and otherwise, the natives of the Caribbean and the rare white followers of the Mysteries are all working together to form a new religion. It is time in which many voices are crying out for vengeance and for justice, but most of all, for freedom. It is a time of great deeds and bitter sacrifices. It is a time of mighty horses.

## BOKOR ARCANE WANGA

The wanga available to bokor in the *Skull & Bones* setting are listed on the Table 9-2 on the next page. The effects of these wanga are identical to the spells of the same name.

## HOUGAN DIVINE SPELLS

The spells available to hougans in the *Skull & Bones* setting, are listed on Table 9-3 on page 80. The effects of these spells are identical to those listed in the core rules.

Whenever a divine spell calls for a holy symbol, a hogan uses his *asson*. When a material component is required, substitute the following components instead, based on the spell’s school.

TABLE 9-1: HOUGAN MATERIAL COMPONENTS

Spell School	Appropriate Material Components
Abjuration	Mineral salts, quicksilver, whale oil, sandalwood ash
Conjuration	Tobacco, gold dust, rum
Divination	Eggs from a speckled hen, lodestones
Enchantment	Bat nut, buckeye nuts, cinnamon, sage, mint
Evocation	Angelica root, five finger grass, whale penis bone
Illusion	Powdered glass, fool’s gold, parrot feathers
Necromancy	Blood from a black-furred animal, graveyard dust
Transmutation	Rattlesnake skin and rattles, insect cocoons



## VOODOO LEXICON (CONTINUED)

**Mystere:** One of the many names for the Loa.

**Olorun:** One of the many names for the being who created the universe. All the Loa are, in theory, its servants.

**Peristyle:** A roofed, open-sided court in which most ceremonies and dances celebrating the Loa take place.

**Poteau-mitan:** The brightly colored center post of a peristyle. It is supposedly the “road” through which the Loa enter a hounfour. Considered sacred to Legba.

**Ti-bon-ange:** The “spirit” of an individual. It is the seat of morality and consciousness, and cannot lie.

**Verver:** A sacred design formed by carefully pouring wheat or corn meal onto the floor of a peristyle before a ceremony. The design is a symbolic representation of the Loa it is meant to invoke, and every Loa has a unique *verver* associated with it. Multiple *ververs* may be created for a single ceremony.

**Wanga:** A magic spell.

**Zombi:** An individual whose *gros-bon-ange* has been stolen or destroyed, turning him into an undead servitor.