

The Tathlum
A Celtic Magical Weapon for AD&D, 2nd edition
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TSR chose to omit the description of the tathlum from the *AD&D Celts Campaign Sourcebook*, perhaps because of its grisly nature. It is a matter for the DM to decide whether to allow player characters to create tathlums in any campaign. These weapons, and the practise of head-taking, are historically-attested, but may not be suitable for all campaigns or all players. The following spell, therefore, is to be regarded as optional.

Create Tathlum (Enchantment, Invocation)

This is a 5th level Wizard spell, of the school of Enchantment/Charm.

Range: Touch

Components: V, S, M

Duration: until tathlum is thrown

Casting Time: 1 night

Area of Effect: 1 item

Saving Throw: None

The tathlum is a magical weapon made from the head of an enemy - or sometimes, from the brain alone. The head or brain is left to soak in lime until it is as hard as stone, and then, if cast at a relative of the head's owner it causes terrible damage.

This spell turns the tathlum from a severed head or brain into a deadly magical weapon. The head must be soaked in lime for 1d3 weeks to harden, and then the person who took the head must cast this spell over it, staying awake overnight to do so. The invocation for the spell must include the name of the head's owner. At dawn, the spell is completed and the weapon is ready to use.

The Feat of the Tathlum

The tathlum is cast by hand or from a sling, and a character must already be proficient in the use of the sling (*not* the staff-sling) in order to learn the feat of the tathlum.

Exceptionally, this feat is available to druids as well as to warriors; druids use 1 weapon proficiency slot, and warriors use 2, for this is a mystical weapon. Warriors with the birth-gift of *magical affinity* only pay 1 proficiency slot for the feat of the tathlum.

The attack roll for the tathlum is made in the normal way. If the tathlum strikes someone who is related by blood to the person from whose head it was made, it causes damage as a sling-stone, and drains 1d3 life energy levels. A character who is reduced to less than zero life energy levels is killed. Against any other creature, the tathlum causes damage as a sling-stone, with no energy drain.