

The Magical Pact of The Illuminates Of Thanateros

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Since the inception of the Chaos Magic current some individuals have elected to work alone whilst others have worked in concert in a loose configuration of allied groups. The Magical Order of the IOT has in practise functioned as a highly creative Disorder. This creative disorder has spawned, among other things, a structure known as "The Pact". The Pact is, in contradistinction to the usual implications of such a name, a friendly society for mutual support and encouragement in the field of magic. The Magical Pact of the IOT represents another phase of the current of Chaos Magic in which its practitioners elect to work as an integrated force. The Pact is a vehicle for the pursuit of the Great Work of magic and the pleasures and profits attendant upon this quest. The Pact also acts as a psychohistoric force in the battle for the Aeon.

Historically, all magical and mystical organisations have used the Hierarchical Gambit to create pressure for excellence on those working at all levels of the hierarchy. Yet, positions of mastery within these organisations have often depended more on questionable claims to authority from concealed sources than from technical accomplishments.

Inevitably, the calling of such bluffs has led to the undoing of these organisations. However this old mechanism is not without its merits. The Guru and Chela finally rebels both may gain greatly, although it can as easily end in disaster.

Now whereas most individuals are relatively sane and competent, most organisations act as though mad and stupid. This is because most organisations permit only positive feedback from below. Thus those at the top are condemned to bask in deceitful reflections of their own expectations and to issue ever more inappropriate directives. The structure of the Pact overcomes these traditional problems whilst retaining the invaluable pressure created by an hierarchical structure. Within the temples of the Pact all members are encouraged to volunteer techniques and concepts for experiment and appraisal, and the grade structure merely recognises technical magical competence and organisational responsibility.

Those in higher grades must refrain from commenting on the lifestyle, personal behaviour, tastes and morality of other members. Yet the structure of the Pact forces a constant stream of negative feedback to arise from below by institutionalising rebellion in the office of Insubordinate. Thus as soon as a fair mastery of technique and organisation is attained the Magister Templi, Adept or Magus

suddenly becomes subject to intense criticism as a teacher and individual, and this is counted as a great reward.

The Pact is constituted in four grades; Neophyte, Initiate, Adept and Magus, numbered respectively 4*, 3*, 2*, 1*. In addition there are five offices: the Priest or Priestess of Chaos may be taken as a side degree of the 3* or 2*. The office of Supreme Magus is held by the head of the Pact and is designated 0*.

The office of Magister Templi designates the coordinator of the activities of a particular temple and may be held by anyone of the 3* and above. The Archivist is responsible for the records of a temple. The office of Insubordinate may be held by anyone of the 4*. The Insubordinate is a personal assistant to another member of the Pact and acts as a goad, inspector and critic to that member.

The Pact is a self-perpetuating oligarchy. Advancement into a grade occurs at the invitation of those in that grade and in higher grades.

The Supreme Magus can only be replaced by unanimous action by all the membership of the 1*. The basic agreement implicit in membership of the Pact is that higher grades provide organisation, facilities, tuition and material, in return for which lower grades provide whatever mundane, financial or magical services may be reasonably demanded of them. Ultimate appeal may be made to the 0*.

The Temples of the Pact:

A temple of the Pact may only be founded by an Adept or Magus, or by an Initiate sponsored by an Adept or Magus, who will periodically inspect the work of the temple. A temple consists of an assembly of its members and may be convened in any enclosed or open space where privacy can be assured. The Magister Templi will keep a record of addresses through which members of his temple can be contacted. Such records must be kept in such a way that they reveal membership details to outsiders. The Magister Templi of a temple will also supply his superiors in the Pact with an address through which his temple can be contacted and they will keep it in like fashion.

Members may belong to more than one temple. For example an Initiate in a sponsored temple may need to join the temple of his sponsoring Adept or Magus to receive specialised teaching and advancement to the next grade. All temples adopt a characteristic name by which they are known within the Pact.

Sponsored Temples:

It may be that by some accident of geography a group of persons aspiring to membership of the Pact forms in an area remote from centres of pact activity. In this case one or more representatives of the group may, by arrangement, present themselves before an Adept or Magus of the Pact bearing from each member a handwritten or signed letter making the Neophyte assertions in full together with any other evidence that the sponsor may require. Then at the discretion of the Adept or Magus the representatives may be given the 4* and the 3* and empowered to open a temple and conduct work in these grades.

The office of Magister Templi:

The activities of a temple are coordinated by a Magister Templi, either appointed by an Adept or Magus sponsoring the temple or chosen by those of the highest grade present. The Magister Templi ensures that only members of the appropriate grade or candidates for that grade are admitted to the temple's rituals. Visiting members of other temples must give the appropriate signs and words to the Magister Templi in private. The Magister Templi may delegate one or more assistant Magister Templi.

The office of Archivist:

The Archivist keeps a record of the activities of a temple. The records use only the formal magical names or numbers of those present. The records detail the time and place of temple activities, together with a brief description of whatever work was done, and what results were achieved. If it is not possible to avoid recording confidential information such information may be encoded but not enciphered by some means approved by the Magister Templi. The Archivist is personally responsible for the security of the records and will ensure that they will be rather destroyed than lost or stolen. The records of a temple may be inspected by any Initiate or higher grade of that temple. The records of a sponsored temple are open to their sponsor and a Magus may inspect the records of any temple.

The Grades and Grade Rituals:

Candidates for the Neophyte grade are accepted on the basis of interviews and briefings by members of the Pact arising from personal recommendation or petition to the Pact. No person can be admitted to any other of the Pact's rituals and activities without first having undergone the Neophyte Ritual. The Neophyte Ritual demands that the candidate exhibit some commitment by providing a robe and ring to specifications approved by the Pact, and that he reveal himself to be an open mind free from dogmatic belief. Most of the Pact's ordinary business and most of its magical work are conducted with the temple opened in the grade of Neophyte.

The Neophyte grade provides a period of assessment during which the Pact and the Neophyte test their commitment to each other. The Neophyte is at liberty to resign at any time and may be dismissed at any time. The Initiate Ritual marks the full acceptance of a candidate into the Pact. The Pact is not bound to accept the resignation of an Initiate. The confidential business and magical activities of a temple are conducted with the temple opened in the grade of Initiate. The Initiate seeks proficiency in all forms of magic and begins work on Liber KKK, and if desired, work leading to the side degree of Priest or Priestess of Chaos.

The Adept Ritual marks the candidate's proficiency in magic and his acceptance of the obligations to teach, to defend the Pact, and to administer its structure and traditions. It is not normally necessary to open a temple in this grade.

No ritual for the recognition of a Magus is presented here. This grade is conferred on those exhibiting outstanding magical ability and potential for leadership within the Pact.

The Insignia of the Pact:

The minimum furnishing of a temple whether convened in an open or closed space is the eight rayed star of Chaos prominently displayed. This may be presented in the form of a banner or altarcloth, a chaossphere, or by the star mounted on a staff. All grades wear a plain full robe with sleeves and hood. The robe is most commonly black but individual temples may elect to array their members in robes of some other hue. The ring of the order is silver and bears an eight rayed star of Chaos. It may be worn freely at any time but is not in itself proof of membership or grade. Members of the Pact choose a single word name and a number of three or four digits by which they shall be formally known in the Pact and by which their deeds and comments are recorded in the temple archives. Female

members are denoted Sor. (Soror or Sister), males as Fra. (Frater or Brother). Thus a full formal title might be Fra. Aleph 252, 3* IOT.

The Symbolism of the Grade Rituals:

The rituals presented here constitute the minimum requirements for opening and closing the temple and for recognising candidates in the grades of Neophyte, Initiate and Adept. Temples may elect to add additional material to the rituals.

The Neophyte Ritual is a marriage to the Pact, although, as in modern tradition, divorce is permitted at any time. The candidate is asked to assert the four qualities of the so-called Witches Pyramid: To Know, To Will, To Dare and To Keep Silent. The candidate is welcomed with raucous cheering and applause as befits such a bold and romantic gesture.

The Initiate Ritual marks a total commitment to the Pact and the candidate offers to the Pact what powers he has in the four magical virtues of Will, Perception, Imagination and Concentration. The seriousness of the undertaking is marked by some moments of utter silence which conclude the ritual.

The Adept Ritual marks the candidate's acceptance of executive powers and responsibilities within the Pact. The ritual resumes the symbolism of the four elemental weapons of Pentacle, Cup, Sword and Wand. The new Adept is welcomed with laughter to lighten the burdens assumed.

The Signs and Words of the Grades:

The signs and words of the grades protect the Pact against infiltration and imposture. They consists of words and gestures sufficiently discreet to be exchanged in casual social intercourse without their being revealed as marks of recognition to outsiders. The signs and words are periodically changed by the 1*.

Notes on the Rituals of the Pact:

Although the rituals are presented as being led by the Magister Templi they may be led by any deputy of appropriate grade that the Magister Templi appoints. It is customary for the Magister Templi to frequently delegate in this way to provide other members of the

temple with practice in ritual leadership. (Usually the following rituals have an additional surprising element incorporated.)

The Opening Ritual and the Closing Ritual:

The Magister Templi calls the temple to order. The M.T. then leads the temple in the Gnostic Banishing Ritual (GBR).

The M.T. then proclaims:

I open/close this temple in the grade of Neophyte/Initiate/Adept.

The M.T. then gives the appropriate signs and words and further proclaims: For the pursuit of the Great Work of Magic.

The Neophyte Ritual:

The M.T. calls the temple to order and asks: Does any person here object to this candidate? If there are no objections the M.T. leads the GBR. The M.T. then addresses the candidate:

Candidate, I call upon you to make the assertions of a Neophyte.
Candidate, do you Know that there may be no ultimate truths ?

C: I do.

Candidate, do you Dare to practice the philosophy and techniques of magic ?

C: I do.

Candidate, do you agree to Keep Silent about the signs and passwords of this Pact and its private business and not to reveal the identities of its members to outsiders without their consent ?

C: I do. (The candidate takes robe and ring.)

Candidate, by what name and number will you be known in this Pact ?

(The candidate gives his chosen name and number.)

Candidate, I recognise you as a Neophyte of this Pact and I open this temple in the grade of Neophyte with the signs and words of a Neophyte.

The M.T. gives the signs and words and proclaims: For the pursuit of the Great Work of Magic.

A few moments of raucous cheering and applause follows.

The Initiate Ritual:

The candidate will have provided himself with some token of Initiate status previously approved by the Pact. This may for example be a magical weapon, an amulet or some design to adorn a robe.

The M.T. calls the temple to order and leads the GBR. The M.T. then addresses the candidate:

Candidate, I call upon you to reaffirm your Neophyte assertions. The candidate repeats all four substituting "I" for "Do you" in each phrase.

Candidate, I call upon you to make your submission and to take the oath of an Initiate.

The candidate disrobes and lies flat on the ground. Weapons are held against vulnerable parts of the candidate's body. The candidate then proclaims:

I offer to this Pact such powers of Will, Imagination, Perception and Concentration as I possess. I bind myself to the service of this Pact. Should I ever break its trust, may I be stripped of all protection.

The M.T. then addresses the candidate: Candidate, arise and take up these marks of an Initiate. (The candidate re-robes and takes his mark.) Candidate, I recognise you as an Initiate of this Pact and I open this temple in the grade of an Initiate with the signs and words of an Initiate.

The M.T. gives signs and words and proclaims: For the pursuit of the Great Work of Magic.

A few moments of utter silence in which all members stand giving the sign of an Initiate follow.

The Adept Ritual:

The candidate will have provided himself with some object to mark his adepthood.

The M.T. calls the temple to order and leads the GBR. The M.T. then addresses the candidate:

Candidate, I call upon you to reaffirm your Neophyte assertions. (The candidate reaffirms them in full.)

Candidate, I call upon you to reaffirm your Initiate's oath. (The candidate reaffirms it in full.)

Candidate, I call upon you to make the obligations of an Adept.

The candidate holds aloft his mark of adepthood and proclaims: I offer myself as a shield for the defence of the Pact and its members.

I offer myself as a vessel through which the Pact may pour the teachings of magic.

I offer myself as a sword to the Pact, to smite and confound its enemies.

I offer myself as a staff which will uphold the Pact.

The M.T. then proclaims: Candidate, I recognise you as an Adept of the Pact and I open this temple in the grade of Adept with the signs and words of an Adept.

The M.T. gives signs and words and proclaims: For the pursuit of the Great Work of Magic.

A few moments of mindless unrestrained laughter follows.

The Office of Insubordinate:

Every Magister Templi is attended by a personal Insubordinate chosen by all members of the temple other than the M.T.. In addition, all actively teaching Adepts and Magi of the Pact are attended by personal Insubordinates chosen by their peers. Insubordinates may be of Initiate grade only, and have five duties as follows:

To ensure that all teachings and instructions are comprehensive and

to criticise or demand clarification of those that are not. This is the duty of the Fool, to display ignorance or pretend to ignorance where others pretend to understand.

To convey criticism with a certain levity. This is the duty of Jester, to poke fun at that which others find more politic to ignore.

To point out personal failings and blindspots. This is the duty of the Chaplain, to treat with personal matters impartially.

To receive personal accounts of some aspects of personal magical progress, though not necessarily to comment on them. This is the duty of the Confessor, whose existence is a safeguard against sloth or complacency.

To hold the right to veto any instruction and to notify the 0* or the 1* of its exercise. This is the duty of the Inquisitor, to circumvent abuses of position.

Holders of the office of Insubordinate are not styled as "Insubordinates" within the Pact but rather they chose a two word title to characterise their expression of the role. Such two word titles may be chosen from any combination of the words Fool, Jester, Chaplain, Confessor or Inquisitor. Traditionally one word is chosen to denote the funktion the candidate is most temperamentally inclined to exercise and one for the funktion least favoured. Thus the Insubordinate may choose to be styled Inquisitor-Jester or Chaplain-Fool and so on.

Any particular office of Insubordinate lapses whenever a fresh Insubordinate is appointed in place of an existing one or when an Initiate holding the office becomes recognised as an Adept. Some temples prefer to rotate the office of Insubordinate at each meeting either randomly or by turn. In other situations the post may be longer term and the parties involved may elect to mark the assumption of this relationship with the Insubordinate Ritual. Otherwise the noose which is the mark of office of Insubordinate and which is displayed when exercising the Insubordinate functions is simply passed to the new holder of the office.

The Insubordinate will normally conduct his official business with the Recipient may well choose to brief his Insubordinate beforehand about any controversial instructions he may intend to give to prevent the public exercise of a vote.

The Insubordinate Ritual:

The temple being already opened in the grade of Initiate or Neophyte. The candidate hands a previously prepared noose to the person who will be the Recipient of his insubordination. The Recipient places the noose about his or her neck, hands the free end to the candidate and kneeling before the candidate asks:

R.: Will you test me as my Fool, so that all may understand ?

C.: I will.

R.: Will you test me as my Jester, if none else will criticise ?

C.: I will.

R.: Will you test me as my Chaplain, that no fault lie unremedied ?

C.: I will.

R.: Will you test me as my Confessor, lest I neglect my own progress?

C.: I will.

R.: Will you test me as my Inquisitor, if I exceed my authority ?

C.: I will.

R.: Then how will you be known ?

C.: As your _____ .

R.: Then take this noose my _____ to remind us of our duties.

The R. then gives the noose to the C..

The ritual is concluded by a brief barrage of insulting and derisive noises directed by all at the Recipient.

Some Activities of the Temples of the Pact:

The activities of a temple will vary according to need and circumstances and according to the grades and accomplishments of those present. The following sections give some indication of

frequent temple activities in the sequence in which they are commonly performed.

The Preliminaries:

The Magister Templi will ensure that the privacy of the temple is assured and that any visitors are on an appropriate grade. The M.T. will announce any apologies for absence and give any preliminary briefings required.

The Opening:

The temple is opened either with a Grade Ritual or with the Opening Ritual.

Training and Practice:

Various members of the Pact will, at the discretion of the M.T., lead exercises in particular magical disciplines. These may include mind control exercises, practice with the techniques of gnosis and practice with magical instruments and techniques. Lectures and demonstrations may be given and papers read.

Magical Action:

At the discretion of the M.T. various spells and rituals of Evocation, Divination, Enchantment, Invocation and Illumination may be attempted in support of the needs of the Pact, the temple or individuals. The Mass of Chaos may be performed as a celebration or to ordain a Priest of Chaos or for some other purpose.

Discussion:

The M.T. chairs a discussion of various matters of administration, planning, personal progress and research. Individuals may report on their work with Liber KKK and other researches. Publications and communications from other temples of the Pact may be reviewed.

The Closing:

The temple is closed with the Closing Ritual and if necessary opened in another grade for special purposes with selected participants. It is customary for the work of a temple to be followed by some refreshment and socialisation.

Upon Various Matters of the Pact's Business:

Few rituals of the Pact are ever conducted using written cues.

! Any ritual that cannot be committed to memory prior to performance must be regarded as urgently in need of simplification !

In general, when a complex training exercise or ritual is being performed one member fully briefs the participants beforehand and then leads the main sequence giving instructions to other participants to deliver their own contributions at the appropriate points if necessary. The M.T. must obtain prior approval from a Magus of the Pact if a temple is to undertake paid magical work on behalf of outsiders or other institutions. Approval must also be obtained if a temple is to launch any form of magical attack although this may be waived in compelling circumstances.

Excommunication:

In the event of a Pact member exhibiting intolerable behaviour the members of a temple may force an excommunication from the Pact by simple majority, the M.T. having the casting vote. In the event that the candidate for excommunication is the M.T. then his Insubordinate has the casting vote. Excommunicants are barred from Pact activities till further notice and members will not discuss magical or Pact activities with them. Willful treachery may be rewarded with Excommunication with Extreme Prejudice, in which case the Pact may adopt a more active response towards the miscreant.