

The Secrets of the Illuminates of Thanateros

Do you know, that there may be no Ultimate Truth?

The Illuminates of Thanateros

This book is dedicated to the Great Work of Magic
and to all those interested in practical magical work.



The Book of the Pact represents the most recent record of how we arrange ourselves and our activities in this group. As a living Work in progress, it is most probable that it will evolve.

To those who had a helping hand in the creation of the book – many thanks.

Area of Application

The rules and procedures described in this Book are valid on a global level throughout all Sections. All Sections are otherwise autonomous. Every Section may add rules and procedures as are considered necessary by the Section. Section rules which contradict the rules defined in this document are void.

In rare cases the Council of Magi may approve a slight change to the application of a rule within a Section on a temporary basis. Such exceptions should be made apparent to the Pact as a whole, and should be reviewed by the Council of Magi regularly.

The Book may be translated into any language to allow for easier understanding. The English language version will be used as the basic standard reference (as this is the lingua franca of the Pact at present).

The Book is accepted by all Sections and all Pact members as valid.

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The Magical Pact of the Illuminates of Thanateros

The Magical Pact of the Illuminates of Thanateros is a community of individuals, who practise magic individually and in groups, and support, inspire and encourage one another to explore the vast field of magic. In short form this entity is referred to as “The Pact” or “IOT” where the former evolved from the latter.

“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 psycho-historic force in the battle for the Aeon.”
(Peter Carroll 1992)

In traditional secular as well as in mystical organizations we find the form of the pyramid, at the top of which there is a leader or Guru or similar person. The position of the Guru is above all other members and above all criticism. The Guru teaches, commands and criticizes those who hold a lower degree.

The structure of the Pact with its degree system has the form of a pyramid as well. At the top, however, there is not one person, a sole master, but the Council of the Magi, similar to what is known in traditional societies as the Council of the Elders.

The strongest demand a member can make of another member, is “The Request”. No one, regardless of degree or post, may command another member of the Pact.

Criticism in the Pact flows from the bottom to the top. Those in higher degrees must refrain from critical remarks towards members with lower degrees, unless it is necessary for the execution of their function.

Every Magister Templi, Section Head, Adept and Magus is assigned an Insubordinate as personal assistant. This assistance consists of providing feedback to the recipient of the insubordination on their actions. The office of the Insubordinate ensures that criticism flows from the bottom to the top. The Insubordinate acts independently from the Pact hierarchy.

The Pact is a self-perpetuating oligarchy and it is structured (mostly geographically) in Sections and Satrapies. A Section needs to have at least one Adept and must be sponsored by a Magus. A list of the current Sections etc., with their contact details, is included at the end of The Book. Within the Sections, groups of members who meet regularly are referred to as Temples.

Every member should be stimulated through temple work to propose ideas, concepts, methods and techniques, which serve to realize magical works and discussions. The degree structure is orientated towards organizational responsibility and competence in the art of magic.

The structure of the Pact and the responsibilities of its degrees and posts are laid open in this book. There are no secret oaths and no secret inner circles.

The Pact is a non-profit community. We do not charge any mentorship, initiation or membership fees. The costs for collectively used resources are distributed fairly among the actual users. An example for this is that we charge attendance fees for large Pact meetings to finance accommodation, food and workspace.

A brief history of the Illuminates of Thanateros

The Forerunners and Early Years of the IOT

In all editions of Liber Null there is a chart showing the streams of ideas and traditions that culminate in the IOT. These are, if you like, the ancestors of the IOT and of Chaos Magic. However, the immediate precursor of the IOT was the Stoke Newington Sorcerers group, mentioned in the Pete Carroll Interview, Chaos International #17. Occultists of various backgrounds and subsequent directions worked in this loose multidisciplinary group in the mid 70's, including Charles Brewster.

The first announcement of the formation of the IOT was in The New Equinox (TNE), Ray Sherwin's eclectic occult magazine that ran from about 1976 to 1979. Pete Carroll was a regular contributor, often writing in from his travels in the Far East, and sometimes writing under the auspices of the Psychonaut Institute. The articles from this time include The Death Posture, Daring, Will, Gnosis, Keeping Silence, Gurus, The Way of the Siddhis and Ego.

The formation of the IOT was advertised in The New Equinox in 1976/77.

“Spiritual heirs to the Zos Kia Cultus, the Illuminates of Thanateros are the drinkers of the dual ecstasies of the sex- and death-gnosis. The IOT represents a fusion of Thelemic Magic, Tantra, the sorceries of Zos and Tao.

The non-mysteries of symbolic systems have been discarded in favour of mastery of technique. Studies may be accomplished in a minimum period of 6 months and consist of a series of techniques to be mastered by lone effort. Students will then be tested. Having shown themselves acceptable, initiates will be put in contact with other members of the order and more complex instruction will be given.

Applicants should write c/o Box 333, Morton Press, enclosing a blank £1 postal order for the complete studentship curriculum and instructions.”

It is interesting to note that there is no mention of Chaos Magic. This term did not appear even in the first (white cover) edition of Liber Null, by Morton Press (Ray Sherwin's publishing venture) in 1978. The second (red cover) edition of 1981 (also published under the Morton Press imprint) had different appendices, including the introduction of the Chaosphere.

The IOT in its early years was 'rarely more than a loose correspondence network and a few people meeting for rituals in East Morton' (Peter Carroll). It is now 'the Chaos Magic Order', yet it was launched before the concept had been created.

Other Early Publications

Lionel Snell's first two books also acted as precursors of the IOT/Chaos Magic current. These were both published by The Mouse That Spins.

- SSOTBME, anonymous, 1974.
- Thundersqueak, Or, The Confession of a Right Wing Anarchist: Being the Suicide Writings of Liz Angerford and Ambrose Lea, 1979.

Ray Sherwin's two early books were instrumental in getting people interested in actual magical experiments without a rigid theoretical framework. The Book of Results (pub. Morton Press, 1979/80) is a treatise on practical sigil magic, and The Theatre of Magic (pub. Sorcerer's Apprentice) is built around group work, drawing on the experiences of the first IOT Group in East Morton.

The Church of Chaos

This 'IOT in style' group was formed in Sydney, Australia, by Pete Carroll and Frater Vegtan. It ran for about 6 months in 1980, leaving no succession.

The First UK IOT Group

Pete Carroll returned from his travels in late 1980, and moved house to East Morton, the village in Yorkshire where Ray Sherwin lived. Further members of the Group were recruited, in some instances through the Saturday 'coffee mornings' organized by the Sorcerer's Apprentice in Leeds. The Group held its first working on November 22nd 1980. The membership of the Group was unstable. 4 further rituals were worked over the next 18 months, the Group closing its active phase at a rite on 1st May 1982, when a pantacle for the future development of the IOT was buried in a wood.

The Bristol C.H.A.O.S. Temple

Also known as Cabal Heraclitus, this temple flourished under Fra. Stokastikos from late 1982 until his retirement in 1991.

The 'Circle of Chaos'

The Circle of Chaos was founded in 1984. Membership varied from 8 to 14 over the next 3 years, after which the group began to fragment.

The 'Circle' gave rise to some highly significant events, particularly:

- August 1986: Chaos International was launched
- April 1987: Chaos Symposium in Leeds

Chaired by Ray Sherwin, speakers were Pete Carroll, Lionel Snell, Freya Aswynn and Dave Lee. The hall was packed.

The Founding of the Pact:

The Year 0

Pete Carroll and Ralph Tegtmeier jointly ran the Exerzitium, a public seminar at Bonn-Ramersdorf (Germany) in a former cloister in the Rhineland over four days in October 1986.

Those who passed certain tests were invited to a Mass of Chaos in 'an abandoned ammunition dump dug deep into a mountain somewhere in the Rhineland' (Peter Carroll). This led to a decision to form 'a new magical order of some kind'.

The outcome was that the Magical Pact of the Illuminates of Thanateros was announced in a manifesto called The Pact/Liber Pactionis, published in Chaos International #3, in August 1987. The first World Pact Meeting was held at Raabs (Austria) in August that year, with a mass initiation of 25 new members.

Structure of the Pact

The traditional structure of the Pact comprises 4 standard degrees, and 1 special degree.

- Neophyte (4°)
- Initiate (3°)
- Adept (2°)
- Magus (1°)
- 0°=5° (5°=0°), often referred to as the 5°

In addition there are 5 posts:

- Section Head
- Magister Templi
- Archivist
- Insubordinate
- Priest/Priestess of Chaos

Degrees of the Pact

The Novice

Candidates for a membership in the Pact are called Novices. They are not Pact members until they have been formally recognized as Neophytes.

The Novice has the possibility to get to know the Pact from the outside. During a period of at least 6 months the Novice works on The Book of the Novice (see full text in the appendix). In addition they are assigned a mentor, whose task is to support the Novice during their work on The Book of the Novice and to establish and maintain the contact between Novice and Pact. During the period as a Novice the candidate must prove to be open-minded and show that they are independent and free of dogmatic beliefs.

The mentorship can be carried out by an Initiate or a member with a higher degree. Neophytes may, under certain circumstances, be allowed to mentor a Novice, but only with close supervision of an Initiate or higher degree.

After The Book of the Novice has been completed, the Novice and their work shall be reviewed by two or more other members of the Pact besides the mentor, who are preferably not known to the novice or at least not close to the novice to ensure an objective evaluation.

Neophyte

The degree of the Neophyte (4°) is the lowest degree in the Pact. Neophytes are given the opportunity to get to know the Pact from inside. They are free to become a member of a temple or to work individually by themselves. The Request applies to Neophytes, as well as all other degrees. They cannot be commanded to do anything, even what kind of magical work they are to do. During the time of bearing a 4°, the Neophyte shows that they are able to develop their magic without orders, and to proceed along their own path to do the Great Work of Magic. They are free to be inspired by the works of the Pact or to proceed via their own paths.

The Neophyte may at any time leave the Pact without giving any reasons, and they may be dismissed from the Pact, also without explanation.

Initiate

The Initiate has decided to become a permanent member of the order and to offer their magical abilities to the Pact. They are free to draw from the inexhaustible sources of Chaos or the field of power of the Pact.

Initiates form the main body of the Pact. The Initiate actively takes part in the Pact's business, both in magical and organisational activities. Internal issues of the Pact and temples are generally executed within a temple that has been opened in the degree of the Initiate. At the discretion of the MT, temple business may be handled within a temple that has been opened in the grade of Neophyte; at the discretion of the Section Head, Neophytes may be invited to participate in matters of the Section as a whole.

The Initiate strives to intensify and refine their knowledge of magic in all fields. The post of the Priest/Priestess of Chaos may be accomplished from here on. They may commence work on approved work leading to recognition as an Adept.

In general, the resignation of the Initiate from the Pact is not provided for, yet, during the development of every individual a change of inclinations and points of view may occur. The precondition for a release from the oaths would take the form of an explanation of the reasons. Initiates and higher degrees may be expelled from the Pact only through excommunication, which requires an explanation on the part of the Pact.

Adept

The requirement to the bearer of the degree of the Adept is to inspire others as well as to organize and to lead. They are free to set up a temple or to support Initiates in setting up a temple and leading it. Adepts are actively involved in the business of the Pact. The degree indicates competence in the realm of magic. Their task is to act as magical weapons for the Pact: to defend and protect the Pact, to inspire others, as well as to cultivate the structure and traditions of the Pact.

Magus

The degree of the Magus is granted to Adepts who have shown extraordinary magical competence and the ability to lead. Their task is to coordinate the Pact internationally and to support and sponsor Adepts and other degrees. Upon achieving the highly demanding grade of Magus, the wise magician encourages their Section's Adepts to gain experience in international involvement, so that there is no lack of candidates for the Magi of the future. The degree of Magus should be regarded as a position that is held throughout a period of time.

The Council of the Magi (CoM)

The Council of the Magi is the circle of the active bearers of the 1°. The sole responsibilities of the CoM are: to make changes to The Book of the Pact, to perform grade raisings to the 1°, and to co-ordinate international event organization.

Apart from these ordinary responsibilities, a Section (or members thereof) may, extraordinarily, delegate matters concerning their Section's autonomous decisions to the CoM, if this is considered necessary. This escalation of internal Section business to the CoM should be regarded as a last resort. In such matters, the CoM is considered as the highest authority.

The 0°=5° (5°=0°), often referred to as the 5°, and Elder

The 0°=5° (5°=0°) is granted by the Council of the Magi to a Magus or an Adept, if the latter no longer wants to perform the tasks of the accomplished degree. The 0°=5° (5°=0°) corresponds to the status of the Initiate, yet, the 0°=5° (5°=0°) may be consulted by the Council of the Magi to give their opinion in specific matters. The 0°=5° (5°=0°) participates actively in the business of the Pact.

If a 0°=5° (5°=0°) is willing to resume the responsibilities of their former degree, they may return to this degree if the Council of the Magi agrees in the case of a Magus, or the Magus of their Section agree in the case of an Adept.

The status of an Elder is granted by the Council of the Magi to a Magus or an Adept, if the latter no longer wants to perform the tasks of the accomplished degree and retires from active Pact business. In case an Elder is willing to resume active membership in the Pact, the Section in which the Elder used to be active, decides under which conditions the Elder may return into the grade of 0°=5° (5°=0°). In cases of conflict the CoM may be consulted for advice or decision.

In the spirit of Chaos, some sections also use the term “Elder” as an honorary for members with particularly long and distinguished histories in the Pact.

Degree Raising

Rising within the antiarchy and magical recognition system is based on actual magical and organizational achievements.

A degree raising may occur with the consent of a candidate and at the proposal of the bearers of the according degree and higher degrees. For carrying out a degree raising the presence of at least one bearer of a higher degree is necessary (eg: 3° to initiate a 4°, 2° to raise a 3°, 1° to raise a 2°). 2° grade raisings preferably take place at the AGM. Unless extreme circumstance warrants otherwise and is agreed upon by the CoM, raisings to the 1° may only take place during the international Annual General Meetings (AGMs).

Due to geographical and national factors, it may be necessary for candidates who aspire to become members of the Pact, to form a group in a region which is far away from already existing Pact activities.

In a case where the journey to the place of initiation would mean extreme hardship to the candidate(s), the Section Head or the Magus of the sponsoring Section may research and prepare any necessary way of enabling this journey.

If need be one or several members with the appropriate degree may travel to the respective region in order to realize the initiation. If technology allows more members to attend such a meeting via remote contact, it should be used as an adjunct rather than a replacement for actual physical contact in such circumstances. In exceptional circumstances the requirement for physical contact may be waived by the consent of the Magi of the Section in question, or by the consensus of the Council of Magi when the raising in question is to the level of Adept or Magus.

Excommunication

Excommunication is the expulsion of a Pact member. An excommunication can only be executed by a temple or Section with the full knowledge and approval of the Section Head and their Insubordinate.

Posts of the Pact

Besides the degree structure the Pact has several posts. The Pact strives for a rotation of posts if possible, in order to avoid the burden of responsibility staying too long with any one member. More importantly, this change of facilitator also ensures diversity.

Section Head

Attaching the letter “s” to the degree number marks the Section Head. The Section Head (SH) holds at least a 2°. The Section Head coordinates the activities of the Section. They keep contact with the members and temples of the Section and ensure that national and international information reaches all members and that national meetings take place. Upon achieving the highly demanding post of Section Head, the holder should make it a priority to identify potential successors and assist them with any further personal development necessary. This allows for leadership skills to develop faster, and more members to share in the deep joy of serving the Pact, rather than one person standing in the spotlight for too long. The recommended period for holding this position is about five years.

Magister Templi

The Magister Templi (MT) coordinates the activities of the temple. The holder of this office is elected by all members or appointed by the sponsoring Adept or Magus. It is the responsibility of the MT that only those members who bear the adequate degree take part in temple rituals.

Archivist

Any Neophyte or higher may take the office of the Temple Archivist. The archivist keeps records of the temple activities. The place and time of meetings will be recorded in the temple diary, the present members will only be named by their official names and/or numbers followed by a short summary of the accomplished works and results.

In case that it is unavoidable that confidential information has to be written down, it must be transcribed with a method which has been agreed upon beforehand with the MT; it may, however, not be enciphered. The Archivist ensures the security of the records and makes sure that they are destroyed rather than lost or stolen.

Section Archivists must be Initiates or higher.

Insubordinate

Criticism within the Pact flows from the bottom to the top. To this end every Magister Templi, Adept, Magus, and Section Head, is assigned an Insubordinate. The office of the Insubordinate may be executed by an Initiate, or a Neophyte who has been a member of the Pact for some time. Insubordinates for Adepts and Magi are chosen by a process determined by the body of Initiates (which can include 0°=5°) and Neophytes; and an Insubordinate is never to be chosen by the recipient of insubordination themselves. This is to ensure that other members of the Section have a say in who holds the offices of Insubordination, and to guard against potential cronyism.

Every MT is assigned a personal Insubordinate. Within a temple they are elected by all members of the temple – except the MT; every member may hold the office of the Insubordinate.

It is the task of the Insubordinate to ensure that the Magister Templi, Section Head, Adept or Magus does not neglect their personal magical progress and that they carry out their tasks well. There are different ways to fulfill the duties of the Insubordinate. They may convey criticism with the loudness of the Jester, making everything appear ridiculous, or inquire with the Fool's naivety about issues that are unclear. Taking the role of Chaplain, the Insubordinate may point out personal weaknesses and blind spots of the recipient of the insubordination, acting as Confessor they may receive reports on personal developments, as Inquisitor they may raise an objection to decisions.

These five roles of the Insubordinate consist of the following tasks.

- Ensure that all explanations, speeches and teachings are clear to everyone and criticize those, which are not, and demand their clarification. Thus, the Fool's task is to simulate ignorance where others pretend understanding.
- Convey criticism with a certain easiness and impertinence. Thus the duty of the Jester is to make something appear ridiculous which others would like to diplomatically overlook.
- Point out personal weaknesses and blind spots. Thus it is the responsibility of the Chaplain to handle personal issues in an impartial manner.
- Receive reports on personal magical development without commenting on them. Thus it is the task of the Confessor to offer protection from laziness and self-satisfaction.
- Hold the right to veto any instruction and to inform a Magus, the Section Head or the Council of the Magi about its exercise. Thus it is the Inquisitor's duty to prevent the abuse of position.

The Insubordinate may choose a two-word title to characterize their own role. This title may be chosen freely, combining Fool, Jester, Chaplain, Confessor or Inquisitor. One role denotes the role which is closest to the candidate's temperament, the other which they favour least. Thus the Insubordinate may choose to be titled Fool-Inquisitor, Jester-Confessor etc.

The post of an Insubordinate expires whenever another Insubordinate is assigned to fill the post or when the Insubordinate becomes recognized as an Adept. Each temple is free to decide how long the post should be held. It can be rotated at every temple meeting or it may be held for a longer term. In this case the Insubordinate Ritual may be executed. In the first case the noose – the symbol for the office of the Insubordinate – may be passed on to the new holder of the office at every temple meeting.

Predominantly the Insubordinate will conduct their official business with the Recipient of their insubordination in private. It may be advisable for the Recipient to inform their Insubordinate about any controversial events beforehand in order to prevent the exercise of a veto in public.

Priest/Priestess of Chaos

The post of Priest/Priestess of Chaos is recognized as a voluntary, deeply vocational calling, of some members of the 3^o, 2^o or 1^o. There is an 'outreach' element to the role, in relation to a social or magical group or community beyond the Pact. The Priest/Priestess of Chaos must, like any other Priest or Priestess, be able to:

- act effectively in life's extremities and in magical emergencies
- enter a state of gnosis at will
- be effective at divination and counselling
- act as an ambassador for genuine magic in general and the Pact in particular by impressing people with their grasp of human and magical realities
- be capable of constructing and performing celebratory rites to mark important rites of passage at significant life moments

Any Adept or Magus should be capable of taking on the role of a Chaos Priest/Priestess.

Temples of the Pact

A temple of the Pact can only be founded by an Adept or a Magus, or by an Initiate who is sponsored by an Adept or a Magus. In the latter case the sponsor regularly inspects the work of the temple.

Every temple chooses a characterizing name, under which it shall be known within the Pact. A temple consists of meetings of its members and may be held in any open or enclosed space in which undisturbed work is possible.

The Magister Templi keeps a record of the temple members' contact details. Such records may neither be kept nor held in any manner which could reveal clues or details about membership of the Pact to outsiders. Within the Pact, the Magister Templi informs the Section Head and the sponsor, how the temple may be contacted, which is also treated confidentially. Any Pact member may be a member of several temples.

Other Temple Forms

Another form of temple is the Cyber Temple, mostly employed for international co-operation of Pact members. The Travelling Temple is a further form, which also acts on a cross-sectional level. These temple forms also need to be founded or sponsored by an Adept or a Magus.

All members are free to carry out magical work on a regional, national or international level in working groups at any time.

Insignia of the Pact

The basic equipment of an IOT temple is the eight-rayed star of Chaos, which should be displayed prominently in the meeting space. A banner or altar cloth may bear the star of Chaos, a chaosphere may be installed in the room or be attached to a staff.

The members of all degrees wear what they consider as plain full robes. The chaos ring displays the eight-rayed star of Chaos. It may be worn at any occasion but does not in itself prove membership or degree in the Pact.

Every Pact member chooses a magical name and a number, preceded by the term Soror, Frater or a combination of both (e.g. Sator, Sorter). They are known by this identity in the Pact, and all their deeds and comments will be recorded in the archives under this identity only.

Signs and Passwords of the Pact

The signs and passwords of every degree help ensure the inner and outer security of the Pact and are also used ceremonially. Signs and passwords are determined anew at every international Annual General Meeting (AGM).

Ourano-Barbarian

Early in its life, the Pact began to develop a magical language for use in rituals. Known as Ouranian-Barbaric, groups of Pact magicians continue its creation. Avoiding the use of tenses, and as far as possible avoiding the verb construction 'to be', Ouranian-Barbaric aims to free the magician from the linear thought processes of past-present-future, and the illusory nature of pure existence, when constructing ritual proclamations or SOIs. One theory is that by using non-understandable language in ritual situations, this type of language occupies the verbal parts of consciousness, allowing a certain amount of Freedom of Belief to arise in the rest of the brain. Some Pact words can be found at our online dictionary website: <http://chaosmagick.org/barbdict/>

Rituals of the Pact

The Opening Ritual and the Closing Ritual

The Magister Templi calls the temple to order and may lead with an appropriate banishing before opening the temple. This may be done with the signs and passwords of the temple or degree.

A closing ritual is often performed after the last ritual of a temple meeting, usually culminating in the tried and tested method, Banish with Laughter (or some other technique to re-enter normality, as appropriate).

Degree Rituals

The basic structures of the rituals may be modified individually and according to the requirements.

Normally the rituals described here are led by the Magister Templi. They may also delegate to a representative with the appropriate degree, who can execute these tasks. This provides other members with the possibility of gaining experience in leading these rituals. The rituals of the Neophyte, Initiate, Adept and Insubordinate quote brief passages of “Liber Kaos”, which was written by Peter J. Carroll and published by Samuel Weiser in 1992.

The Neophyte Ritual

The Neophyte Ritual requires the Novice to bring a robe and a ring.

If there are no objections against the candidate, they run through a procedure to test their will and abilities to be a member of the Pact. At the end the candidate has to proclaim the neophyte assertions and oaths, that they

- know that there may be no ultimate truth
- are willing to practise the philosophy and techniques of magic
- will keep silent about the Pact’s private business, signs, passwords and identities of its members.
- will bear their robe and ring as marks of their will to be a magician.

The candidate gives their magical name and number and is recognized as Neophyte, receives robe, ring, and the sign and password of the Neophyte.

The Initiate Ritual

The candidate provides themselves with a token of initiate status and reaffirms the Neophyte assertions and oaths.

The candidate runs through a procedure to test their will and abilities to be an Initiate. If they pass the test, they disrobe and lie flat on the ground to take the oath of an Initiate.

- They offer the Pact such powers of will, imagination, perception and concentration, as they possess.
- They bind themselves to the services of the Pact.
- Should they ever break its trust, then they shall be stripped of all protection.

The candidate is recognized as an Initiate and receives the sign and password of the Initiate.

The Adept Ritual

The candidate provides themselves with an object to mark adepthood and reaffirms their Neophyte assertions and oaths and Initiate oaths. Again, the candidate runs through a test and makes the obligations of an Adept.

The candidate offers themselves to the Pact as

- a shield for the defence of the Pact
- a vessel through which the Pact may pour out teachings of magic
- a sword to smite and confound its enemies
- a staff which will uphold the Pact.

The candidate is recognized as an Adept and receives the sign and password of the Adept.

The Magus Ritual

The candidate takes on the responsibility to serve the Pact as Magus. Then, the candidate is recognized as a Magus and receives the sign and password of the Magus.

The Insubordinate Ritual

The recipient of insubordination brings along a noose and kneels down before the candidate on both knees. Then the recipient wraps the closed end around their neck, pulls it tight and hands over the open end to the candidate. Next the recipient asks the candidate the following five questions, beginning each with “Will you test me as my ...” and the candidate responds to each with “Yes, I will.”

- “Fool, so that all may understand?”
- “Jester, if no one else will criticize?”
- “Chaplain, that no fault lie unremedied?”
- “Confessor, lest I neglect my own progress?”
- “Inquisitor, if I exceed my authority?”

This dialog concludes with the conversation on the nature of this insubordination, where the candidate states which one of these five aspects most strongly reflects their implementation of the office followed by the one which reflects it the least.

Recipient: “Then how shall you be known?”

Candidate: “I am your _____.”

Recipient: “Then take this noose my _____ to remind us of your duties.”

Finally, the recipient hands over the noose to the Insubordinate and the temple casts a brief barrage of gloating upon the recipient.

Activities of Temples of the Pact

In the following a short overview will be given about the various temple activities in chronological order. The interests, needs and abilities of the active temple members determine content and activities.

Preliminaries

The Magister Templi is responsible for the undisturbed meeting of the temple. In case of the presence of guests they will have assured themselves of the appropriate degrees beforehand. The MT may announce any apologies for absence and provides any preliminary instructions.

The Opening

The temple is opened by the MT – or their assigned representative – in the appropriate degree or with an appropriate opening ritual.

Training and Practice

All members are encouraged, at the discretion of the MT, to present and lead exercises in various magical disciplines such as methods of gnosis and control of consciousness, exercises for the use of different magical instruments and techniques. Written works and speeches may be presented as well.

Magical Actions

In accordance with the members of the temples and the MT various magical works of enchantment and divination, rituals of evocation, invocation or illumination can be done in the service of the Pact, the temple or individuals. The Chaos Mass B may be carried out as a celebration as often as desired, on the occasion of the recognition of a new Priest/Priestess of Chaos, or for another purpose.

Rituals and Practical Works

Rituals of the Pact are rarely performed using written guidelines. A ritual which cannot be performed from memory should strongly be reconsidered for simplification. Generally, when an extensive work is being performed, the member who leads the main part of the ritual instructs all participants beforehand, giving cues during the work whenever necessary.

Discussions

Discussions about organizational issues, the exchange about shared experiences and the planning of future projects are conducted by the MT. Reports about individual work and research of various members may as well be a valuable part of the temple meeting. Other topics may be reports from other temples and publications. Also, nationally and internationally relevant information will be passed on within the temple.

Closing

The MT closes the temple with the closing ritual. If necessary, it may be reopened in a different degree with selected members. In general, the temple work is followed by some socializing.

Temple Archives

Old records (of temples which no longer exist) will be handed over to the Section Head to be archived. The temple diary may be examined by any Initiate or higher, the records of a sponsored temple may be inspected by the sponsor at any time. Section Heads may examine the records of all the temples of their Section. Magi may inspect the records of all temples.

Archives of Chaos

The Archives of Chaos shall be compiled by one or several members. The Council of the Magi and the Section Head ensure that these archives are kept in every Section and Satrapy. All Initiates and higher shall have access to the archives in the appropriate manner. On inquiry Neophytes may have access to specific topics in excerpts.

Material on untested works and experiments shall be marked as “untested”. Conducted works and tested techniques shall be accompanied by information on experiences and results.

Security

All members of the Pact are obliged to keep names and contact details of members in a manner that a membership cannot be concluded. Unless under the direct approval of a Magus (and usually only done in exceptional circumstances), degrees can only be assigned through personal contact.

Appendices

The Book of the Novice

The Novice

The minimum requirements for admission to the IOT are 6 months' daily recorded work on the following programme, and if geographically possible and if invited to, some work with an IOT Group or Temple. During this 6-month period, you are referred to as a Novice, and you have a Mentor, a contact within the IOT who supports you in your work.

In some instances, particularly with highly experienced Novices, the Novice and the Mentor may work out an individual training programme. The following programme will form the core of all training programmes.

The sections of the Work are as follows.

Mind Control / Meditation

Magic requires that we cultivate the ability to concentrate our attention to a condition of intense trance. The first stages of this training require motionlessness, breath awareness and regulation, and some ability to stop thoughts.

1 Asana / Stillness

Pick a posture which does not induce sleep and hold yourself still. Observe oneself passively whilst doing this.

OBJECTIVE: 15 minutes motionlessness, increasing to 30 minutes. Then proceed to breath control. Practise this on its own, and within other work. Record in magical diary, as with all subsequent exercises.

2 Pranayama / Breath Awareness and Control

In Asana, make the breath gradually deeper and slower. Breathe with full awareness of inhaling, holding, exhaling and holding out.

OBJECTIVE: 15 minutes' continuous awareness of breath, increasing to 30 minutes. Then proceed to thought vigilance.

Practise this in Asana, on its own, and within other work.

3 Thought Vigilance / Pratyahara / Not Thinking

Cultivate awareness of the stream of thought and attempt to stop it and achieve internal silence.

OBJECTIVE: Persistent awareness of thoughts arising. An experience of stopping the internal monologue, and awareness of how difficult this is.

Magical Trances

The second stage of the training develops intense concentration on arbitrary images and sounds as a preparation for magical concentration.

4 Object Concentration

Gaze intently at objects, e.g. a cup, a wall, clouds, fire.

OBJECTIVE: Unwavering, fixed gazing without distraction by thoughts or distortion of the object.

5 Sound/Voice Concentration

Concentration on imagined, ‘audialized’ sounds. Select a sound of one or a few syllables and repeat in the mind.

OBJECTIVE: Concentration to the point of exclusion of other thoughts.

6 Image Concentration

Visualize simple, still forms and hold the image steady. Progress to more complex and moving forms.

OBJECTIVE: Persistent ability to hold desired images in mind for as many minutes at a time as possible. No distortion of the image.

7 Metamorphosis / Habit Changing

Change some unimportant feature of your thought or behaviour. Select a minor habit and remove it from your behaviour. Adopt a new behaviour at the same time. The changes should not in themselves be significant and should be selected with assurance of success.

OBJECTIVES:

a) Success at habit changing. Success at small changes builds the skills for major self-transformation – ‘The Great Work of Magic’.

b) Two particular states of mind should be cultivated:

Laughter: Invoke it by ‘faking it till you make it’. It is the best antidote to emotional imbalance brought on by magical work.

Neither-neither: Austin Osman Spare’s Non-attachment / Non-disinterest is the state in which we can work ‘without lust of result’. We need to be intent on our aim, yet light in our touch.

Magic

This section is based on achieving some success at the foregoing sections first. Rituals, Sigils, Divination and Dreamwork are the training topics.

8 Banishing Rituals

Acquire a magical weapon and decide on a structure for your ritual. It should contain as minimum: a visualized barrier around yourself; a centering visualized image, like the imaginal form of the magical weapon or your own body-energy centers; power symbols drawn with the magical weapon; a brief but intense attempt to stop the internal monologue.

OBJECTIVE: Preparedness for magical concentration and work; marking the points of ‘leaving’ and ‘returning to’ consensus ‘reality’; protecting the magician against obsession or other uncontrolled mental processes; psychic self-defense.

Master a couple of off-the-peg banishing rituals, then maybe design your own.

9 Sigils and Mantras

Three stages of working with a sigil or mantra are: make up the glyph/sound, forget its conscious significance, and charge it. The form of the sigil / mantra and the original desire it encapsulates must be rigorously banished from normal waking consciousness. The sigil is charged when the mind is stilled through meditation or paralyzed by excitation, such as in intense emotion or sex. The sigil can also be charged when another strong desire arises, which is then sacrificed, the sigil being focused on instead.

OBJECTIVE: Objective results in consensus reality from working sigils. Take care to record your diary entries in a way which does not remind you of the purpose of the sigil.

10 Divination

Develop and record your divination attempts with at least 2 symbolic systems, e.g. rune staves, Tarot spreads, I Ching. Experiment also with scrying techniques such as gazing into a mirror, crystal or flames, and with kinesthetic techniques like dowsing.

OBJECTIVE: Objective knowledge of events and subjective guidance for your magic.

11 Dreamwork

Keep a record of your dreams, separate from your main magical diary. Record all dreams as soon as possible after waking. It is worth keeping a book and pen by the bed and recording anything that comes to mind when you wake in the night. Move on to selecting a topic to dream about, by intense visualization or the use of sigils. From mastery of this phase, move on to attempts at exteriorization of consciousness.

OBJECTIVE: Access to the dream plane, in the form of lucid dreams and ‘out of body’ experiences.

The Magical Record

All novitiate work is to be recorded DAILY in a diary, with your own comments. You may choose to keep your novitiate diary separate from your more personal records.

It is suggested that the first time you do new work – e.g. a Banishing rite – you write it up fully. Thereafter shorter comments can be used, e.g.: “Lesser Pentagram – getting more fluent now”

Mentor and Novice

We do not chase Novices up; we are only interested in highly self-motivating people. It is up to YOU to stay in regular contact with your Mentor. If we do not hear from you for a while, we assume you are not currently interested in being a Novice. This doesn’t mean that the door is closed, but it is up to you to make the effort and get back in touch.

References

The Novice will find very useful Peter J. Carroll’s original training scheme for the IOT “Liber MMM”. It is contained in Liber Null/Psychonaut, published by Weiser. Liber Null is the original manual of the IOT.

Contact

Illuminates of Thanateros Worldwide

These are the Section websites as of 2023:

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| IOT Austria | http://iotaustria.org (German, English, Italian) |
| IOT British Isles | https://iotbritishisles.com (English) |
| IOT Germany | https://iot-d.de (German, English) |
| IOT North America | https://iot-na.thanateros.org (English) |
| IOT South America | https://iot-sulamerica.com.br (Brazilian Portuguese, Spanish) |
| IOT Switzerland | https://iot-schweiz.ch (German, French, Italian) |

Through the Sections, the IOT also sponsors Satrapies and smaller working groups in other areas of the world. As of August 2023, the official IOT Satrapies (and their primary working languages) are as follows:

| | |
|--------------|--|
| IOT Bulgaria | https://bulgaria.iot-d.de (Bulgarian) |
| IOT Gallia | https://burgundi.thanateros.live (French) |
| IOT Iberia | (Spanish; contact through IOT British Isles) |
| IOT Nordic | (Danish, Finnish, Swedish, English; contact through IOT British Isles) |
| IOT Oceania | (English; contact through IOT British Isles) |
| IOT Poland | http://iotpl.thanateros.org (Polish) |

In addition to the regional languages used by the Sections and Satrapies, established working groups communicating in Czech, Greek, Italian also exist within the Illuminates of Thanateros, and a number of other languages are spoken by our members. A Greek language website for IOT contact also exists (<https://greece.iot-d.de>).

Up to date lists of official IOT contact websites for Sections and Satrapies, websites for official IOT contact in other languages, languages being substantially used within the IOT, and a map and list of countries supporting active IOT members or groups can be found at the following URL:

<https://contacts.thanateros.org>

Timeline

| | Events | Publications |
|--|--|--|
| | 1 st announcement of IOT in The New Equinox | 1976/ 77 |
| | | 1978 1 st publication of <i>Liber Null</i> by Pete Carroll |
| | | 1979 1 st publication of Ray Sherwin's <i>Book of Results</i> |
| Formation of Church of Chaos, Sydney, Australia | | 1980 |
| Formation of 1 st UK IOT Group, Yorkshire | | |
| | Introduction of the Chaosphere | 1981 2 nd edition of <i>Liber Null</i> 1 st edition of <i>Psychonaut</i> by Pete Carroll |
| | End of 1 st UK IOT Group | 1982 |
| | Formation of the Circle of Chaos Group, Yorkshire | 1984 1 st publication of Ray Sherwin's <i>The Theatre of Magick</i> |
| | | 1985 1 st edition of <i>Anubis-Magazine</i> (Germany) |
| | The conception of the Pact | 1986 <i>Chaos International #1</i> published |
| | Chaos Symposium, Leeds | 1987 |
| 1 st International Pact Meeting (AGM), Austria | Formation of UK Section and a German-speaking Section, comprising Germany, Austria and Switzerland | Publication of <i>Liber Pactionis</i> (as forerunner of The Book) |
| | First UK Pact Temple formed in London | |
| | Circle of Chaos dissolved | |
| Caput Corvi (as chaos-infocenter) founded by Frater .717. | | |
| 1 st public Chaosmagick-Seminar in Austria | | |
| | 2 nd AGM, Austria | 1988 |
| Austria becomes independent Section | | |
| Formation of Australasian Section | | |
| | 3 rd AGM, Austria | 1989 1 st publication of the <i>Handbook of Chaosmagick</i> by Frater .717 |
| Switzerland becomes an independent Section | | |
| Formation of USA Section | | |
| | | 1989/ 90 Publication of Phil Hine's <i>Urban Shaman Trilogy</i> |
| | 4 th AGM, Austria | 1990 |
| The Ice War (See Chaos International #23) | | |
| | 5 th AGM, Austria | 1991 First edition of the <i>IOT-International Newsletter</i> First edition of <i>Liber Kaos/The Psychonomicon</i> by Pete Carroll Frater Choronzon's <i>Liber Cyber</i> published Phil Hine's <i>Chaos Servitors</i> published |
| UKAOS 1, a public day of Chaos Magick, London | | |

| | | |
|---|-------------|--|
| 6 th AGM, Austria UKAOS 2 | 1992 | Ramsey Dukes' <i>Blast Your Way to Megabucks</i> published Phil Hine's <i>Condensed Chaos</i> first published Nicholas Hall's <i>Chaos and Sorcery</i> published Nathaniel Xanthe's <i>Psychodenizens</i> published |
| 7 th AGM, Austria UKAOS 3 | 1993 | Phil Hine's <i>Prime Chaos</i> first published |
| 8 th AGM, Austria UKAOS 4 | 1994 | <i>Kaos Magick Journal 1</i> published by USA Section Phil Hine's <i>The Pseudonomicon</i> first published Dave Lee's <i>The Wealth Magic Workbook</i> published |
| 9 th AGM, UK Formation of the Bulgarian Satrapy | 1995 | |
| 10 th AGM, UK | 1996 | |
| 11 th AGM, Germany Formation of Brazilian Section Satrapies established in Denmark and Holland first Cyber-Temple CATSBLOXX (German-Austrian Temple) | 1997 | Last issue, #23, of <i>Chaos International</i> Last issue, #23, of <i>Anubis-Magazine</i> <i>Chaotopia!</i> by Dave Lee published first IOT website published |
| 12 th AGM, Germany | 1998 | |
| 13 th AGM, Austria | 1999 | <i>chaosmagick.org</i> website and databank (by Fra. Karlo and Fra. .717.) online <i>Barbaric Dictionary</i> online |
| 14 th AGM, Austria | 2000 | |
| 15 th AGM, North America | 2001 | |
| 16 th AGM, Germany | 2002 | 1 st Publication of <i>The Book Caput Corvi</i> website and service closed <i>717.info</i> website online |
| 17 th AGM, Austria | 2003 | |
| 18 th AGM, UK | 2004 | |
| 19 th AGM, Germany | 2005 | |
| 20 th AGM, Austria | 2006 | |
| 21 st AGM, North America | 2007 | |
| 22 nd AGM, British Isles | 2008 | 1 st Publication of the <i>Book of the Novice</i> |
| 23 rd AGM, Brazil | 2009 | |
| 24 th AGM, Germany | 2010 | |
| 25 th AGM, Austria | 2011 | |
| 26 th AGM, North America Polish satrapy established | 2012 | |

27th AGM, British Isles **2013**

28th AGM, Germany **2014** 2nd Edition of *The Book*

29th AGM, South America **2015**
Iberian satrapy established

30th AGM, Austria **2016**

31st AGM, British Isles **2017**

32nd AGM, North America **2018**

33th AGM, Germany **2019**

No AGM held due to pandemic **2020**

34th AGM, Austria **2021**
Gallia satrapy established

35th AGM, South America **2022**

36th AGM, British Isles **2023** 3rd Edition of *The Book*
Nordic and Oceania satrapies established

Acronyms and Abbreviations

AGM Annual General Meeting
CoM Council of Magi
Fra Frater
Insub Insubordinate
IOT Illuminates of Thanateros
MT Magister Templi
Sat Sator
SH Section Head
Sor Soror

CHOYOFIQUE

The Council of The Magi

2023