The Foundational Accords of the Order of Marzod

Statement of Purpose

Our sacred charge is the tireless pursuit of Knowledge in all its manifold and wondrous forms, and above all, the earnest seeking of understanding concerning the great Mysteries of the Universe. In the service of this divine charge, let there be naught forbidden, save that which brings forth harm surpassing the value of its end.

Core Principle

The Mysteries of the Universe being most elusive to all pursuers, and the human race being prone to adhere to tradition rather than reliance upon their own intellect and experience, no culture may be relied upon in full regarding its interpretation of those Mysteries, though they have been touched by all peoples. Therefore, only by careful study of the common elements of various traditions, through a lens of logical and scientific understanding, may entire comprehension of those Mysteries be attained.

The Laws of Governance

The Prime Law is as thus: That no member of the Order shall, in any dealing, cause discomfort, nor inconvenience, nor any manner of pain unto others, save where such may not, with due care, be avoided.

The Secondary Law is as thus: That due care shall be taken in all matters of revelation, and the individual responsible shall be held accountable for events unfolding as a result of any information revealed. Whilst secrecy is oft esteemed among societies of like kind, the Order lays no such yoke upon its members in general, for our holy purpose is the illumination of the world. Yet in matters wherein the sacred function of the Order might be undone, secrecy shall be paramount. Such compromised knowledge shall be reckoned as that which pertains unto the Marzodian Runes, any weaknesses which may be found in the security or process of the Order, or any knowledge which transgresses the Prime Law, for as knowledge may bring harm unto others, secrecy is oft enforced indirectly through the Prime Law.

The Third Law is as thus: That the Chief Keeper shall be sovereign over his Collective, and answerable only unto the Marzodian Council, under circumstances named hereafter. Let the Council make no law that binds a Collective in its particular affairs, but only such decrees as are most necessary and most widely applicable unto the public good. The Chief shall make those decrees over his Collective which seem unto himself most fit and righteous, and though he may not expel a member from the Order, as that privilege is reserved unto the Council, the Chief may cast forth a member from within his own ranks upon his commandment. And except it be for cause of inaptitude or corruption, or for transgression of the Prime or Secondary Laws, or for unlawful meddling in the governance of another Collective, his decrees shall be beyond the reach of the Council, nor may any, save himself, revoke them.

The Degrees and Dignities of the Order

1. The Marzodian Council

The Marzodian Council is the chief body of the Order, the final authority in the interpretation of doctrine, and shall be comprised of the three Keepers possessing the greatest number of Specialties and Refinements. Should one fit to serve choose not to do so, the mantle of leadership shall pass to the next in succession. A seat upon the Council may not be revoked, save by death, voluntary resignation, or by the will of the other two members. In all matters brought before the Council, the decision of the majority shall prevail, and such a ruling may not be revisited for the period of one year, save by the Council’s own unanimous decree. A gathering of the Council shall be called upon the following occasions to render a decision, and no decree thus made may be reversed within the states period of one year, except by the formal declaration of no less than nine tenths of all Chief Keepers, or unanimous decree of the Council.

1.1. Specialties and Refinements

A Specialty is attained through the submission of a treatise, composed by a Keeper, containing no fewer than seven pages on a singular subject. Acceptable subject matter shall generally encompass fields such as physics, chemistry, alchemy, mathematics, natural history, psychology, mythology, religion, ancient cultures, philosophy, mysticism or the occult, and other matters which advance knowledge of the nature of the universe or ancient peoples, from whom much insight into mysterious forces may be gleaned. This treatise shall be presented before the Council, who shall judge it according to its merit in truth, insight, and distinction from the Keeper's other Specialties, which is to say, whether it sufficiently broadens the Keeper's knowledge to merit further accreditation. Should the work fail in this last, but otherwise be of good quality, it shall be considered a Refinement of a Specialty, or a deepening of existing knowledge. By their judgment, the Council may approve or reject such a work.

1.2. Collectives

A Collective is the local manifestation of the Order, a sanctuary of knowledge, a place of learning for its students, and a gathering ground for its members. It is incumbent upon all members of the Order to be attached to a Collective, most often the one nearest their home, though this is not of necessity. Service to the Collective is commanded by the Chief Keeper and is the shared duty of all its members. Should a Keeper desire to head a Collective, they may do so by decree of the Council, dedicating their time to the recruitment and instruction of students. If any Keeper desires to found a Collective, or lay claim to one established, let the matter be presented to the Council, who shall bestow the position upon the Keeper most suited, choosing by the number of Specialties and Refinements they possess and the greatest need among the regions of the Earth. Yet, as with the Council itself, no Keeper is bound to accept such a charge, but may refuse it if they so wish.

1C. Corruption or Inaptitude

Should any member bring accusation of corruption or inaptitude against a Chief Keeper, the matter shall be presented to the Council, who shall convene to give it due consideration. Should such a charge concern a member of the Council, the final decision shall abide in the hands of the other two members.

2. Chief Keeper

As the sovereign of their Collective, a Chief Keeper may in all things follow their own counsel and govern the Collective according to their wisdom, provided they do not transgress the Prime nor Secondary Laws. However, if a Chief Keeper is unable or disinclined to resolve a matter, let him bring the matter before the Council for their judgment.

2. Keeper

Any Seeker, upon the acquisition of a Specialty, ascends to the station of Keeper, thereby gaining sufficient stature to guide a Collective or serve as an Overseer. Additional Specialties and Refinements may be obtained, augmenting and enhancing their station, and advancing their standing in appointment to Chief Keeper or to the Council.

3. Seeker

A Seeker is numbered among the Order, although not yet of such stature as may permit them into positions of leadership, which are generally reserved for the Keepers, though a Chief Keeper may assign certain duties to Seekers should no qualified Keeper be found to accept the role.

4. Disciple

A Disciple is one who has attained an advanced stage of study, in which they may begin to bear minor responsibilities of membership and perform in sacred rituals involving human spirits and deities.

5. Initiate

An Initiate is one who has but commenced the journey of knowledge, and is constrained to performance in rituals involving the spirits of Nature and the Elements.

6. Novice

A Novice is one who possesses the fervent desire to tread the path of knowledge and demonstrates understanding of the Order and the Books of Water, Metal, and Earth. Novices may not perform in rituals, but devote themselves to study of the foundational tenets of the Order and understanding of the Mysteries of the Universe.

Trials of Ascension

The Trials of Ascension are the means by which one may ascend in station. They may be administered by any Keeper, who, upon a student's request, is bound to honor it within seven days, or else seek another Keeper to act in their stead. The results of a Trial must be presented to the Council within seven days of completion. The full procedure of the Trials is set forth below.

1. Overseers

Overseers shall hold no station lower than that of Keeper, and it is their charge to conduct the Trials. An Overseer shall adhere scrupulously to all established forms of the Trials, and the word of the Overseer shall be deemed absolute, save in cases as specified in the following section, or by order of the Council.

2. Special Permissions

In the ensuing requirements, the Aspirant is invited to exercise their own judgement in the choosing of many of the particulars. In such matters, the Overseer may exercise their discretion regarding the validity of the Aspirant's choices, but must yield to any prior permissions granted by any Keeper. The Keeper or Keepers of import, at the time of the Trials, must readily answer the Overseer's inquiries, and, should their prior approval of the Aspirant's methods and selections be affirmed, the matter shall be considered settled, and the method or choice in question deemed valid. Nevertheless, all restrictions of the Trials shall remain in place, and may not be countermanded, save by decree of the Council. Should corruption or inaptitude on the part of a Keeper in such matters be suspected by the Overseer, the matter shall not be examined within the Trial, but must be presented to the Council. The results of the Trial may then be considered, and the Aspirant allowed to repeat or revise any portion found to be illegitimate.

3. Marzodian Runes

Fluency in the Runes is expected of all Seekers, and all material in attainment of the station of Keeper and any further Specialties or Refinements must be executed by hand using the Runes. The mysteries of the Runes are not to be revealed to any below the rank of Seeker, on pain of expulsion from the Order.

4. Journaling

The Aspirant shall keep a faithful journal, summarizing their knowledge. As a guide, every square inch of paper should bear two to three words. The journal is intended to serve as summary and aid to memory, rather than a detailed exposition. Therefore, it is advised to limit each subject to two hundred fifty words, occupying a single side of the majority of paper types, with an absolute constraint of five hundred words on any single subject counted toward the total. Each advancement of station shall impose a requisite page count, understood as a collection of five hundred words, and thus may be adjusted by the Overseer to more precisely reflect the number of words expected. The tally of pages shall encompass both old and new, with seven new pages prescribed for every rank.

5. Rituals

A ritual is to be understood as any spellwork, potion, invocation, or similar endeavor, monitored or led by one of worthy qualification. While success or failure of the ritual is immaterial, that condition being in many cases beyond the control of the Practitioner, the Aspirant must, by the discerning judgment of the ritual's leader or monitor, acquit themselves with skill in all tasks for which their station may be expected to have prepared them. The tally of rituals for each rank must not incorporate those in which the Aspirant has partaken for prior ranks, and shall consist solely of rituals befitting the Aspirant's current station.

6. Treatises

Treatises shall be composed prior to the Trials. There are no requirements concerning the number of words used, provided that the main particulars are clearly discerned and adequately explored, and the materials examined must be distinct from those of prior Trials.

6A. Analysis of Mythology

A treatise dealing in analysis of mythology shall comprise a summary of a myth from any ancient culture, separating embellishments from facts, and finding what may be historical roots within.

7. Writings

Writings are composed by the sole aid of memory, in the presence of the Overseer. Corrections are permitted, provided the final result is legible, and a time limit shall not be imposed, save that it remains within reasonable limits. In recounting the particulars of rituals, it is perfectly acceptable for the rituals described and engaged in to share commonality, the only requirement being that the steps must be correctly defined and the true reasons for these steps discerned. As with Treatises, the materials presented must not emulate those in prior Trials.

7A. Letter and Reply

The Overseer shall compose a letter to the Aspirant, consisting of approximately seven hundred words regarding their standing and accomplishments since the most recent Trials, which the Aspirant shall read aloud. Afterward, the Aspirant shall compose a reply of no less than seventy words.

7B. Languages

The Aspirant must select a tongue of notable historical roots and compose a Writing concerning the alphabet of the language, naming all characters. It is unnecessary that the language itself be learned, only the writing system. Using this system, the Aspirant shall write the names of the deities attached to the planets and their metals in order of hierarchy, then the Circles of Nurture and Control and the Orders of Creation, Alignment, Path, and Numerology. The most common approved languages include Latin, Ancient Hebrew, Ancient Greek, Egyptian Demotic, Arabic, Elder Futhark, and Mayan hieroglyphs, though any language of similar age and standing may be employed. The language selected must not have been used in prior Trials.

The Trials

1. Novice

- Treatises

Book of Water

Book of Metal

Book of Earth

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- Privileges and Responsibilities of Station: The Novice is granted admission into a Collective on the conditions that they not disturb the peace, share equally in toils of the community, and perform in no rituals until advancing to the station of Initiate. Upon ascension to the rank of Novice, the student shall receive and study the Book of Fire, though the materials therein are not to be practiced by the Novice and are solely for the purpose of study.

2. Initiate

- Journal: Seven pages

- Treatises

Seven Analyses of Mythology

Book of Fire

- Writings

Letter and Reply

Languages

- Privileges and Responsibilities of Rank: In addition to the privileges granted as a Novice, the Initiate may now partake in rituals of the Book of Fire. However, they remain under the guidance of more experienced members and shall not yet assume leadership of any rituals involving more than one individual. At this time, the Initiate shall receive the Book of Air for purposes of study only.

3. Disciple

- Journal: Fourteen pages

- Rituals: Three

- Treatises

100 Medicinal and Ritual Herbs

Book of Air

- Writings

Letter and Reply

Languages

Three rituals

- Privileges and Responsibilities of Rank: In addition to the privileges of Initiate, the student may now engage in rituals suited to their new station and may lead rituals suited to the rank of Initiate. They are expected to further deepen their understanding of the Universe, Marzod, and ancient cultures, and may begin to act in some roles as full members. In order to prepare for the Trial to attain the rank of Seeker, the student shall receive and study the Book of Wood, though the Disciple is forbidden from practicing these advanced materials.

4. Seeker

All written materials composed for attainment of this station must be executed by hand using the Marzodian Runes.

- Journal: The fourteen pages requisite to attain the rank of Disciple must be written once more and perfected, with a treatise addressing misconceptions previously held and now corrected. Seven additional pages are to be written, for a total of twenty-one pages. All twenty-one pages shall be examined by the Overseer to discern lingering fallacies.

- Rituals: Four

- Treatises

Book of Wood

Pantheons of Four Disparate Cultures

Incorrect Items of Student Journal

- Writings

Letter and Reply

Languages

Four rituals

- Privileges and Responsibilities of Rank: Upon reaching the station of Seeker, the student has graduated to become a full member of the Order. The sole restriction remaining is that they may not govern their own Collective, but must serve under the authority of a Chief Keeper. It is also advised that Chief Keepers prioritize the appointment of Keepers to roles of authority within their Collectives before considering the appointment of Seekers, although this is not a binding law.

5. Keeper

While the preceding stations may be attained through Trials administered by any Keeper, the final station must be secured through a Trial overseen by the Council. As in the rank of Seeker, all written materials composed for attainment of this station must be executed by hand using the Marzodian Runes.

- Rituals: Seven

- Treatises

Seven Mythology Treatises

Seven pages upon a singular subject, to be the Keeper's Specialty

- Writings

Letter and Reply

Languages, consisting of new Writings in all three previous languages and one new language

Seven rituals

- Privileges and Responsibilities of Rank: By order of the Council, a Keeper may ascend to the position of Head of a Collective, granted upon the grounds of knowledge and need. In this station, the Keeper shall be expected to devote the greater part of their time to the recruitment and training of students.