

*“A cult on present-day Earth aids and abets Great Race visitors. In exchange, the visitors share technological and magical knowledge”. Call of Cthulhu, Edition 5.6*

## **The International Order Of Librarians**

### **Structure and Rationale**

The International Order Of Librarians (IOOL) is one of the less sinister organisations to be involved with the Mythos, but that's starting from a very low basis of comparison. The order is divided into two levels, plus an auxiliary body. The Outer Order (as the other groups call it) is all that 95% of the members ever see, or are even aware of. It is an international fraternal organisation, which, like most such organisations, exists to let librarians, archivists, curators, archaeologists and other such professionals hold an annual conference at which they dress up and eat large dinners, plus conduct occasional charitable activities and overseas trips.

The Inner Order, who also refer to themselves (against the objections of some female members, who prefer the original name of the Daughters of Hypatia) as the Pnakotic Brotherhood, exists to facilitate the visits of members of the Great Race of Yith. As well as places to stay, stipends, and other such material support, they assist individuals possessed by the Great Race in their quest for knowledge by providing unrestricted access to all the collections, libraries, galleries, museums, and other such institutions over which they have influence. The unparalleled knowledge of humanity's entire history that the Great Race can impart ensures that members of the Inner Order can excel in their academic careers.

The Inner Order's primary motive for being is an altruistic one. The Inner Order has learnt enough from previous Great Race visitations to know that biological humanity will end. However, through helping Great Race members experience and record as much of human culture as possible, they know that at least the history and culture of humanity can live on after the species itself is rendered extinct.

The Great Race have refused to give details of, or a time for, the extinction event. From their own knowledge (which, given that they have the world's libraries to draw on, is quite extensive) and details that Great Race members have let slip, the Inner Order has inferred that humanity will be destroyed by an uprising and/or invasion of alien creatures, in a similar way to the extermination of the former Great Race vessels by the Flying Polyps. From the increasing frequency of Great Race visits, they have also inferred that it may happen some time in the near future. Inner order members nervously scan the newspapers, keep their pantries well stocked, and often join UFO spotters groups.

Membership of the inner order draws upon members of the outer order and the wider professions who have shown exceptional dedication to the cause of uncovering and preserving knowledge, and/or those who have previously encountered the Great Race or other Mythos entities. Former victims of Yithian possession are often targeted for recruitment. Usually the relief of being among those who understand what they have been through, plus knowledge of the greater altruistic purpose of the Order, is enough to quash any lingering resentment towards the Great Race the former victim may have. The Order also works to help restore the memories of these victims, in order to better understand their erstwhile patrons. Requests to the Yithians that they should

cease wiping the memories of former victims have so far been met with refusal. In general, members are quite dedicated to the Order and their cause. However, since their cause is providing access to stores of knowledge, of which they are usually the custodians, they rarely have to employ violence or any illegal activity – with a few specific exceptions, listed below.

The Inner Order is headquartered in Perth, Western Australia, which is the major western metropolis closest to Pnakatos (the ancient city of the Great Race, located in the Great Sandy Desert). They also have members in Canberra, as they do in the capitals of most Western nations, where they hold positions in national libraries, museums, et al. At the world HQ in Perth, the Order hold the world's largest collection of various versions of the Pnakotic Manuscripts, with which all Inner Order members are expected to be familiar, and an extensive collection of ancient Greek and Egyptian texts (some believed lost by the rest of the world), including a Greek version of the Book of Eibon (unfortunately fire damaged – study of this manuscript has been discouraged by Great Race representatives, who do not wish their servants to inadvertently Summon Azathoth) plus a miscellany of other texts in which the Great Race have expressed an interest or are mentioned. A copy of The King in Yellow is also kept locked away, requiring special dispensation from the leaders of the order to be consulted. The Inner Order also possesses a few lightning guns, a memory wiping unit (sometimes used by the Dark Brotherhood against their enemies) and a temporal communicator, usually held by the President as a sign of office.

One reason the Order has relocated to Perth is that possessed victims usually make at least one journey to Pnakatos, consulting records there and ensuring that nothing has disturbed the stasis cubes in which the records are held against the Great Race's physical return. The Inner Order also monitors the area of Pnakatos for any signs of Polyp activity, often by sending representatives on mining or prospecting trips as consulting archaeologists or the like. There is general agreement that governments should be alerted and told the whole story if there is irrefutable proof of a Polyp rising, but until then everything Great Race or Polyp related should be kept out of the media.

The Inner Order is only tangentially aware of the other races, beings, etc, of the Mythos. Great Race representatives have exercised a mix of caution and chauvinism and assured the Order that the other intelligent alien races with an interest in earth (Cthulhu's Star Spawn, The Elder Things, The Mi-Go) were thoroughly defeated by the Great Race and driven off the planet many aeons ago.

The Dark Brotherhood (who have given themselves an intentionally melodramatic and sinister name) is the "action oriented" auxiliary wing of the Inner Order, consisting of those members who are young, fit, and not automatically repulsed by violence or covert activity. This tends to result in more members from the fieldwork oriented disciplines like Archaeology and Anthropology. Those who have had some experience with the Occult or the Mythos aside from the Great Race are also sought, as advisors if their physical or mental health does not allow active participation.

The Dark Brotherhood exist to combat The King in Yellow and his cult, the Secret Senate, who poison the art and culture of humanity in the service of Hastur. The Great Race have emphatically indicated that they have no interest in learning, preserving, or

even being exposed to any human knowledge or cultural activity that bears the taint of the King. Such poisoning of the wells of human culture is therefore a source of intense anger and shame to members of the Order, who do what they can to combat it. In most cases this is merely an intensification of the petty rivalries, jealousies, backstabbing and Old Guard versus Art Nouveau confrontations that permeate the world of art, literature and culture. Grant applications are denied, gallery space is unavailable, and other such obstacles are thrown up. This phase of the struggle tends to involve all members of the Inner Order, as they are often well placed to throw such spanners in the works. In some cases, however, particularly when the play of *The King In Yellow* itself is somehow involved, the Dark Brotherhood takes direct action to destroy the work and ruin, mindwipe or even kill the artist behind it. When conducting a “critique”, The Dark Brotherhood usually pose as a Hastur worshipping cult themselves, in order to point any investigators in the direction of their enemies. Brotherhood members are often trained in hypnosis or psychoanalysis in an effort to combat any influence the King may try to exert over their psyches.

The Dark Brotherhood are utterly convinced of the rightness of their cause. Having glimpsed the activities of the Mythos through their exposure to Hastur’s malignity, some members of the Dark Brotherhood have inferred that the King is behind the expected extinction of the human race and become thoroughly homicidal in their efforts to stop him. Although they do try to minimise collateral damage or harm to bystanders (or other works of art in the same gallery, etc), when the survival of humanity’s heritage is at stake sometimes one must cut corners. Or throats.

Owing to the ancient connections between librarians and cats, the order as a whole is also occasionally watched over by the Elder God Bast, Goddess of Cats, although most members are unaware of this. Some records indicate that Hypatia herself was a priestess of the goddess. Several members of the Dark Brotherhood swear that a cat has alerted them to the unexpected return of a Secret Senate member or given some other such timely warning or indication.

## ***History of the Order***

Like many fraternal orders, the International Order Of Librarians claims a history stretching back to antiquity and even to ancient Egypt, but most records date no further than the 17<sup>th</sup> century. In their case, their legends are largely correct.

## **Ancient History**

The Order was founded by Hypatia of Alexandria in 391 AD, although some historians of the order propose an earlier founder, Callimachus of Alexandria, a senior librarian of the Library of Alexandria circa 270 BC. One argument is the similarity in title between Callimachus’ lost master work *Pinakes* and the Pnakotic manuscripts. It is suggested that Callimachus may have collaborated with the Yithian possessing Theodotides, a minor official of the Greco-Bactrian Kingdom (most of which is within modern Afghanistan) known to have visited the library. Others have argued for a secret founding by Emperor Julian the Apostate.

However, Hypatia is the best-authenticated founding figure. Hypatia was an exceptionally gifted and strong willed woman who had the dubious fortune to be possessed by a member of the Great Race during her youth. Her will was sufficient to overcome the amnesia enforced by the Great Race. Rather than being repulsed by her

experience, she was inspired by the sexless race who devoted themselves to knowledge. She compared their lives favourably to the ignorance and loveless marriages forced upon many women of her time, and resolved to become a philosopher and continue the quest for knowledge that she had already pursued as a possessee. Her grounding in Neo-platonic philosophy, which included the doctrine of transmigration of souls, may also have helped her overcome the mental shock inherent in her condition.

In the year 391, the library of Alexandria, which encompassed the nearby Temples of the Muses and of Serapis, was destroyed by a Christian mob as part of a campaign by the Emperor Theodosius I to wipe out all remnants of paganism. Hypatia, whose father Theon had taught mathematics at the museum, was still a young woman, but was already beginning to make a name for herself as a philosopher. She was outraged by the destruction and fearful of the consequences when the next member of the Great Race should visit and find the library destroyed. Gathering her family and friends and hiring bodyguards, she rescued many of the most precious manuscripts from the buildings before they could be put to the torch. With these, she established a secret collection and tradition of knowledge preservation. Those of her students who showed similar dedication and a belief in the philosophy of transmigration were told of her experience with the Great Race and urged to watch for the next visit by one of these Muses. Such a visit evidently occurred at some point, for the cult survived, though Hypatia herself would be burned by another Christian mob in 415 AD.

Originally opposed to Christianity, Hypatia's heirs eventually came to believe that there was no future in continuing paganism in the face of imperial persecution. The increasing adoption of Platonist and other Greek philosophy by the Church as it became the dominant spiritual and intellectual power of the ancient world also helped to reconcile the Hypatians. Within a few hundred years, the church was somewhat embarrassed by the memory of their persecution of Hypatia and the other philosophers, and the cult of the (fictional) St Catherine of Alexandria was created to try to obscure Hypatia's memory. The Daughters of Hypatia changed their name to the Pnakotic Brotherhood to hide their origins and infiltrated this sub-cult of the Church. The doctrine of transmigration of the soul of a muse became one of possession by one of God's angels, sent to ensure that humanity stayed true to the learning delivered by God. However, as the Dark Ages passed with only one recorded visit by the Great Race, to a Florentine who promptly went insane, the Brotherhood dwindled into a largely purposeless mystery cult within the Church, venerating old knowledge and scorning all new learning or change. A Yithian visit to Cromwellian England was completely missed until the recovered victim, James Woodville, published an account of his experience, which was promptly condemned as heresy.

## **The Enlightenment**

The Brotherhood was reorganised, galvanised and effectively refounded by another great philosopher possessed by a member of the Great Race at a young age: Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz. Although his memory of the experience was not as clear as Hypatia's, Leibniz retained the memory of an ideal society organised around the accumulation and ordering of knowledge, in which psychic ability rather than physical energy or violence was the dominant talent of the great. This vision would inform his idealist philosophy of monadology and the elementary nature of souls, as well as his dedication to founding learned societies and organising libraries. For their

part, the surviving remnants of the Pnakotic Brotherhood, who were facing dissolution and irrelevance in the face of the Reformation, recognised Leibniz as the one prophesised in their hidden doctrines and pledged themselves to his service. (According to some records, a breakaway faction refused to accept that Leibniz had been the vessel of the “Angel of Yith” and attempted to use magic to contact a true angel themselves. This group is believed to have been destroyed by what they called, which may have been a Hound of Tindalos). This greatly appealed to Leibniz’ ego as well as his vision of a Church reunited by knowledge, since the Brotherhood were still nominally Catholic while he himself was a Lutheran.

Unfortunately, the calculus dispute with Newton resulted in Leibniz’ influence being confined to the margins of the Enlightenment, and the Brotherhood remained a hidden order rather than becoming the dominant order of learning as they had hoped. The crown passed to Newton’s Royal Society and the International Order of Librarians lurked in the shadows, administering the library of the House of Brunswick and Leibniz’ philosophical journal *Acta Eruditorum* (now a strictly in-house publication). To this day, the IOOL’s influence is far stronger in continental Europe than in the English speaking world, except for Australia.

## **The Modern Era**

The IOOL sat through WW II without getting involved. Although they had strong Germanic roots, they found the Nazi’s anti-intellectual attitude and destruction of books repulsive. The looting of various museums, galleries and archives by greedy high-ranking Nazis also ensured that few IOOL members would consider siding with the Axis or collaborating with the Karotechia. Professor Hans Utrecht of the Inner Order was forcibly recruited by the latter due to his knowledge of ancient mystical writings, and spent his time attempting to sabotage the Nazi occult research effort from within. He was executed for disloyalty in the closing months of the war. He is revered as a hero by the Inner Order, who have struck a medal in his honour. This is awarded to members of the Dark Brotherhood who display exceptional heroism in the struggle against Hastur. It is rare for the award to be other than posthumous. Sadly, Professor Utrecht’s heroism was counterbalanced by the actions of the young Klaus Scholz, who used his new connections to obtain some of the Nazi’s cultural loot for himself in the aftermath of the war.

In the twentieth century, the Order has severed its ties with the church and become a largely secular organization. St Catherine remains the patron saint of the order, although the Dark Brotherhood campaigns to replace her with Indiana Jones or Doctor Who. The Order has been disturbed by the rise in visits from the Great Race, the increasing number of King in Yellow related incidents, and humanity’s own increasing obsession with occult knowledge and conspiracy. The order fears that the end times are approaching, and if they act openly to prevent or delay this then they may become the object of some tabloid journalism frenzy, a la the Da Vinci code. Oblique hints about the order were in fact published recently in a prominent historical novel.

The Dark Brotherhood itself was almost exposed recently when they assassinated a potential Nobel Prize for Literature winner who had produced “a postmodern interpretation of *The King in Yellow*”. In order to combat the possibility of exposure, some of the younger Dark Brotherhood members have recently taken the unusual step

of publishing a humorous fictionalised account of the order, in the form of a comic book called *Rex Libris*. While many of the older Inner Order members think this a rash step, they accept that they are part of an artistic and cultural organization that ultimately exists to preserve humanity's creativity, and appreciate the value of protective camouflage.

### ***Friendlies and Enemies***

The IOOL is largely unaware of the other agencies and powers of the Mythos. This is partly due to a narrowness of vision. The IOOL tends to assume that they know "The" truth, and that other accounts of ancient alien races visiting the earth and/or monstrous gods corrupting humanity are simply distorted renditions of the Great Race and/or Hastur. Apart from some of the most jaded members of the Secret Order, they are blind to the true breadth of horror encompassed by the Mythos.

The Secret Senate and the Dark Brotherhood are certainly aware of each other, but due to the Brotherhood's disinformation campaign, the Senate believes that the Brotherhood are another Outer God or Great Old One cult, serving a rival aspect of Hastur or possibly Nyarlathotep.

One of the Inner Order's permanent rivals is Miskatonic University. Due to a series of miscommunications occurring during and after Professor Dyer's possession, the Order is convinced that Miskatonic is entirely controlled by a cult of Hastur, while the Mythos scholars of Miskatonic believe that the IOOL serves the Mi-Go/Elder Things/Great Race, and through them Nyarlathotep (the staff of Miskatonic tend to lump "sinister alien races described in the Necronomicon" into the one basket marked "do not open"). Miskatonic has used its limited influence in the world of academia to bar known members of the IOOL (most of whom are entirely innocent) from some academic and related cultural institutional positions in the USA. This is one reason the Order's influence in the New World remains limited.

Some members of the Inner Order are also members of UFO spotters groups associated with Saucerwatch. The relative scepticism and care with which Saucerwatch and its allies investigate alien related activity appeals to the academic mindset of most IOOL members. They are also interested in the research Saucerwatch has done into the hypnotic recovery of repressed memories, as enabling former Great Race victims to recover their memories and thus learn more of their patrons is a priority of the order. However, there has been no direct or official contact at an organisational level between the IOOL and any of these groups.

The IOOL and MJ-12, Delta Green, Pisces, etc remain mutually ignorant of each others' existence; they just don't move in the same social circles.

The Dark Brotherhood has occasionally clashed with agents of the United Nations taskforce Resolution Zero. Resolution Zero's primary interest is in the Elder Things, but remnants of 500 million year old alien races are not easy to tell apart after all this time. Usually the DB have yielded the field to Resolution Zero's superior firepower. RZ has written the group off as "more crazy occultists – leave it to Pisces". As both RZ and the Inner Order operate from Australia, they would probably clash at a policy level if circumstances ever forced one or both to go public.

## **Creating a member of the Order**

Outer Order Member:

Any of the templates for an Antiquarian, Author, Artist, Dilettante, Missionary, Parapsychologist or Professor is appropriate. Members should have a high EDU and a good Library Use skill.

Sample member:

Adam Crossingham. Adam is an innocuous heritage professional, working in a minor museum in London. 2 years, 7 months, 19 days, 13 hours and 3 minutes from now, he will be possessed by a member of the Great Race. One day later, a meteorite bearing a Colour Out Of Space will destroy his house. These things happen. Should he survive, his future membership of the Inner Order is assured.

### **Creating an Inner Order Member:**

As Outer Order Member; Cthulhu Mythos skill is raised to 13% (12% from study of the Pnakotic Manuscripts + 1% awareness of the King in Yellow). SAN loss of 1d8+1d4. Greek, Occult and Hypnosis are added to the list of professional skills.

Inner Order Members have an Int\*2 chance of having learnt 1d3 spells from the Pnakotic Manuscripts.

Sample Inner Order Member: Melissa Belanta

*Coming soon...*

### **Creating a Dark Brotherhood Member**

Members of the Dark Brotherhood are expected to be physically as well as mentally active. At least two of STR, CON or DEX should be average or above. The typical Brother is a young academic or post-graduate student. Some financial support from the order for their dangerous service offers them the time and opportunities to learn Hide, Meditate, Sneak, Fast Talk, and a combat skill (usually Martial Arts or Handgun). Due to their recruiting grounds being the fieldwork oriented professions, Brotherhood members are likely to have such useful skills as Make Maps, Pilot, First Aid, or anything else that might come in handy on an archaeological dig or anthropological field trip. Members of the Dark Brotherhood are encouraged to train as reserves in their nations' armies. A few of these, located in Australia, have been trained in the use of Lightning Guns.

Although the Dark Brotherhood do not receive a regular salary, they are usually assured of jobs, grants and other patronage by Inner Order members. The Inner Order also maintains extensive life and health (including mental health) insurance coverage for members.

Many Dark Brotherhood members suffer from some form of neurosis as a result of their struggles with the Mythos, and take up odd hobbies like stamp collecting, comic book writing, train spotting or fantasy roleplaying games to compensate.

Raise Cthulhu Mythos to 15% (12% from the Pnakotic Manuscripts, + 3% familiarity with Hastur and the King in Yellow (first act only)). Decrease SAN by 2d8. Raise

POW by 1 (Dark Brotherhood members are trained to strengthen their wills against outside influences).

Dark Brotherhood Members have an Int\*2 chance of having learnt 1d3 spells from the Pnakotic Manuscripts. In addition, any member of the Dark Brotherhood who is capable of using magic will be taught Dismiss Hastur.

*Sample Dark Brother in training: James Haughton.*

Rakishly charming, devilishly brave, irresistible to women, incredibly quick witted and intelligent – these are just a few of the terms used to describe the heroes of the sci-fi and fantasy novels James reads constantly. Still, he gets by.

James is an anthropology student in Canberra, Australia. He first encountered the forces of the Mythos when a group of Tcho Tcho dropped by for lunch at the village in Laos he was studying, and brought their pet Byakhee with them. Luckily for him, he owned the only motorcycle in the village.

After several months gibbering in hospital in Australia, he recovered enough to start trying to figure out WTF happened. Hitting the archives searching for records of man-eating space monsters attracted the attention of a particular librarian, who happened to be a member of the Inner Order of the IOOF. The Order offered him a framework in which to explain his experience, counselling and the opportunity to act instead of being helpless.

James has now learnt a certain number of basic sabotage tactics and two spells: Hypatia's Ankh and Dismiss Hastur. Still, he worries that there isn't any mention of Tcho Tcho or Byakhees in the Pnakotic Manuscripts, and wonders if the IOOL really know what's going on.



## Keeper level Information

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### ***The Pnakotic Manuscripts***

The core text of the IOOL's version of the Pnakotic Manuscripts, *Pnakotos*, is written in 4<sup>th</sup> century (Hellenistic) Greek. An English translation is available but does not include the spells.

San loss 1d4/1d8; Cthulhu Mythos +12%; Occult +5%; Spell Multiplier \*2; Study Time 52 weeks.

Spells:

Augur; Baneful Dust of Hermes Trismegistus; Bring Haboob (Sandstorm); Contact Bast (There is no Call or Dismiss Bast spell. Have you ever tried to call or dismiss a cat?); Chant of Thoth; Conjure Glass of Mortlan (requires Enchant Brazier); Contact Great Race of Yith; Contact Winged Thing (Contact Elder Thing; believed to be of historical interest only); Contact Flying Polyp (best not); Contact Hound of Thionadelos (Tindalos) (ditto); Contact Sand-Dweller (likewise); Create Time Gate (very dangerous, as it is likely to attract a Hound); Dust of Suleiman; Enchant Brazier; Find Gate; Identify Spirit; Parting Sands; Create Hadean (Plutonian/Liao) Drug (the use of which also risks Hound attention); Powder of Ibn-Ghazi (useful against Polyyps); Hypatia's Ankh (Prinn's Crux Ansata); Seal of Isis (often cast on libraries); Sekhmenkenhemp's Words; Voice of Ra.

Note that Create Elder Sign is *not* available. The Great Race do not desire that their servants meddle with the Elder Things' technology.

New Spell: Contact Great Race of Yith: This spell costs 5 magic points and 1d3 SAN points. It creates a psychic "beacon" which will be sensed by any Great Race mentality within horizon distance (the beacon is blocked by the earth). It is up to the Great Race member to decide whether or not to respond. This spell only extends in space, but can be cast while under the influence of the Plutonian Drug, to extend in time. The cost of this combination is logarithmic: 1 POW grants a "radius" of 1 year, 2 gives 10 years, 3 100, and so on. This combination is often used when the Inner Order opens a new office, creating a semi-permanent beacon that will alert any Great Race visitors who happen to be passing that their allies are present.

The core text of the IOOL Pnakotic Manuscripts was written in Hellenistic (Koine) Greek by Hypatia herself, who recalled extremely accurately the libraries in which she studied while a resident of Pnakotos. It has been supplemented and revised by Great Race representatives or former victims who were willing to co-operate, in particular Leibniz, and also by comparison with apocryphal texts said to have descended from the Great Race in historical time. It also includes many of the texts Hypatia saved from the fire as appendices. These are mostly texts of Greek and

Egyptian mystical philosophy and Alchemy. In general, the spells it contains are those connected with Time, the Great Race, and Greco-Egyptian neo-platonic and alchemical mysticism.

### ***The Secret Order***

The Secret Order is a covert cult within the Inner Order. Less than 10% of the members of the Inner Order are members. However, it includes a disproportionate number of the formerly possessed. This gives it influence beyond its numbers, as society members tend to defer to the superior knowledge these members are assumed to possess. It was founded by a disgruntled former victim of possession who underwent hypnotic therapy to help recover his memories and discovered a previously unknown talent for Dreaming. Members still serve the cause of preserving knowledge for the Great Race – in fact, they are even more fanatical about it than Inner Order members – but for a very different reason.

Members of the Secret Order are all Dreamers of various degrees of skill. They know that the Dreamlands are ultimately created and rooted in the collective unconsciousness of humanity, and therefore, some time after humanity dies, the Dreamlands will die. However, they hope that if the Great Race preserves in its immortal minds and records a memory of the art and culture of the human race, then some quantum of the Dreamlands will also survive. The Secret Order intend to be the immortal lords of that quantum. In order to rapidly develop their capacities to dream so as to survive beyond death, they have formed a cult dedicated to the Other God Hypnos, Lord of Sleep. This service to a powerful being of the Mythos, even a relatively benign one such as Hypnos, gradually erodes their sanity and may lead members down even darker paths. The Secret Order are aware of Bast's continuing influence through their Dreamland connections, but consider it benign. Some of the saner members of the Secret Order have even turned to Bast worship to counterbalance the potentially corruptive influence of Hypnos.

Outwardly, Secret Order members are indistinguishable from Inner Order members, save for a few behavioural quirks. Members are reluctant to go on field trips to Pnakotos (in Australia, outside the major western metropolises, the Dreamlands are supplanted by the Australian Aboriginal Dreamtime which is still hostile to all non-Aborigines (see *Terror Australis*). Members of the Secret Order are particularly supportive of the Dark Brotherhood, as they do not wish anyone or anything save themselves to dominate humanity's collective unconsciousness. At a policy level, they urge Great Race members to investigate art and culture rather than factual records, or even consider physically preserving human cultural artefacts (e.g. the Mona Lisa) in their stasis cubes. This has so far met with mixed success, as the Great Race's aesthetic tastes do not tend to coincide with those of Hypnos, or humanity as a whole. The Secret Order is cultivating ties with the underworld trade in stolen art and artefacts against the day when they can persuade the Great Race otherwise or obtain a stasis cube themselves. As a result, they have in the past had some dealings with the Fate. Through this, Klaus Scholz (see below) has become aware of the existence of the Fate and its self-proclaimed "Lord of Sleep", Anton Merriweather. As this was a title he had planned to grant himself, he is considering doing something about this.

Creating a Secret Order Member

The Secret Order recruit from members of the Inner Order who have become disillusioned with their service to the Yithians. Many are former victims of possession by the Great Race. All are capable of spell use and of entering the Dreamlands.

Raise Cthulhu Mythos to 20%. Subtract 20 from SAN and add 2 to POW (wash, rinse and repeat if a more sinister Secret Order member is required). A typical Secret Order member has a Dreaming skill equal to his POW + 5 and a Dream Lore skill of 20%+. They are expert speakers of Hellenistic Greek, which is the language they use in meetings.

Members of the Secret Order will know 2d3 spells from the Pnakotic Manuscript, and 1d4 Dreamlands spells, plus Brew Dream Drug and Assess Significance. They will also know Contact Hypnos and Summon/Bind Nightgaunt OR Contact Bast and Charm Feline. They may have learned additional spells from Hypnos, Bast or the Book of Eibon.

### **Important Person: Professor Emeritus Klaus Scholz.**

Herr Doktor Professor Emeritus Klaus Scholz is a distinguished, elderly man, apparently in his late 70s (his actual age is almost 100) with white hair and a neatly trimmed white beard. He is still mobile but prefers to walk with a cane. He shows no signs of senile decay, and in fact has a piercing, almost mesmerising gaze. He speaks English with a strong Germanic accent. His hands are stained by chemical exposure during his career, and so he frequently wears gloves. He wears an ankh on a chain around his neck, usually hidden under his shirt. His clothes always have pockets; on particularly hot days, he will wear a photographer's vest (if asked, he says that at his age, if he puts small things down, he can never remember where they are). He currently resides in Perth, Western Australia, claiming (if anyone asks) that he chose to retire here from Berlin for "zer warmth and zun". In actuality, he moved here to become head of the Inner Order. He has now retired from actively running the order, but is still consulted about important decisions, and enjoys the title Chancellor Emeritus of the International Order Of Librarians. He is unmarried and has no children, but is regularly visited by his nieces and nephews and their children, who appreciate having an amiable elderly relative living close to an Australian beach.

### **Background**

The 1920s and 30s were a turbulent time, for humanity and for the Mythos (see Chaosium's entire 1920s catalogue). Seeking to document as much as possible, the Great Race sent back not only the individual who possessed Professor Dyer of Miskatonic University, but another observer who possessed a penniless youth, living as a petty drug dealer, in turbulent post-war Germany named Klaus Scholz. When the Yithian left him, Klaus found himself in possession of a modest fortune and a secure job (provided by the IOOL) as a lecturer in Chemistry at the University of Berlin, but also entangled with the Thule Society and other sinister occult groups that the Yithian had been investigating. Klaus resented this "monstrous imposition" and found the IOOL's blind service of the Great Race inadequate justification for the danger in which he found himself. He was unexpectedly compensated, though in a way which placed him in even more danger, when the aftereffects of Yithian mind-transfer unlocked his capacity to Dream. With philosophies of racial destiny and consciousness very much in vogue at the time, Klaus made the connection between

the survival of human culture and the survival of the Dreamlands, and began seeking out other members of the Inner Order who might share his more self-interested mindset.

However, his plans to dominate the Dreamlands have hit a seemingly impassable snag. Klaus is simply not a great artist. He is more creative than the average person, and is supernaturally strong-willed, but comparing his imaginative talent to that of a true Dreamlands ruler like King Kuranos is like comparing August Derleth to Edgar Allan Poe. Aware of his inferiority, Klaus eventually came to the conclusion that where talent and finesse was lacking, raw power might suffice, and began to seek an entity that could provide him with that power. He found Hypnos.

## **Now**

Today the self-styled Herald of Hypnos is a skilled alchemist and Dreamer, a Professor Emeritus of Chemistry at the University of Berlin, the Chancellor Emeritus of the Inner Order and the head of the Secret Order. As the end of his natural life approaches, bringing with it the time he must move to the Dreamlands on a permanent basis, he has become increasingly obsessive, unscrupulous and desperate in his quest to ensure eternal immortality. He has lost patience with persuasion, and is planning to use his now considerable command of magic (including Imprison Mind, which would prevent the Yithian from escaping) to kidnap and torture the next visiting Yithian until it agrees to retrieve and turn over a Stasis Cube, in which he and the Secret Order can place their hoard of cultural treasures, ensuring their permanent survival.

Klaus' SAN is now quite low as the result of adherence to the more-or-less random demands of Hypnos (Although Hypnos is not actively malign in the manner of an Outer God or Great Old One, he is linked to the human unconsciousness and can thus make very strange demands of his worshippers – just ask Sigmund Freud). He has committed murder at least once as a human sacrifice to the God, an event he used to fashion his cane. His actions at the end of WW II, when he secured the foundations of his art collection from Nazi troves, also make him an accessory to war crimes and crimes against humanity. However, his high POW and air of age, dignity and learning helps him maintain self-control and present an acceptable face to his colleagues.

Because Klaus managed to disentangle himself from the Thule society before the outbreak of war, he is unaware of the existence of the Karotechia. Should he somehow become aware of the new Fourth Reich, he would certainly consider allying himself with them (and given his memories as a resident of Pnakotos plus his command of time magics, Klaus could plausibly be aware of anything the Keeper desires).

Klaus' Goals and Plans:

Complete his treatise on the ecology of time-travelling species.

Raise his POW as high as possible before dying.

Obtain more cultural treasures.

Obtain a Stasis Cube.

Ensure the Secret Order is in good hands after his death.

Kill Anton Merriweather.

Exterminate the Great Race (not really possible right now, but Klaus figures he'll have all eternity to work on it).

Buy icecream for his favourite grand-nephews and nieces.

Klaus' spells:

All those in the Pnakotic Manuscripts (below), plus Assess Significance (see below), Bless Blade, Cloud Memory, Create Dream Drug, Contact Hypnos, Dream Vision, Enchant Cane, Enchant Knife, Heal, Imprison Mind, Nightmare, Perfection, Summon/Bind Nightgaunt, and Vanish, plus various Dreamlands spells. Although he knows all the Pnakotic spells, there are many he has never seen the need to cast (e.g. Contact Hound of Tindalos), so his castings should not automatically succeed.

Assess Significance (new spell): This spell costs 1 MP and 1 SAN. If cast while holding an object, it enables the caster to assess the significance of the object to the collective unconsciousness of humanity, as represented by the Dreamlands. The result is a complex, synaesthesia-like experience of the work, which varies in intensity according to the object's significance. The spell requires a Dream Lore roll and a relevant skill roll to interpret the spell's result correctly (an Art History role if the spell was used upon a work of art, etc).

### **Notes on Klaus**

Klaus owes his longevity to repeated uses of the Heal and Perfection spells, plus a vegetarian diet and regular Yoga. Paranoid investigators might realise that the only circles in which yoga, vegetarianism and other Hindu concepts were popular in pre-war Germany were occult ones.

Klaus is never without his enchanted Cane (which drains POW from those it touches and grants Magic Points to Klaus on a one-to-one basis, as per the spell), a Hypatian Ankh, and a selection of alchemical powders (Suleiman, Ibn-Ghazi, etc). If he is expecting any unusual social interaction (e.g. being interviewed by the PCs) he will have cast Voice of Ra and Sekhmenkenhemp's Words on himself beforehand, which makes him very difficult to outwit or disagree with. Likewise if he is expecting any Mythos-related or violent incident, he will bring his enchanted Knife (made of silver and in the form of a switchblade (which are illegal to possess in Australia), it has both Bless Blade and Enchant Knife cast upon it) as well as his Cane. After possession by a Yithian and years of casting Augur and Dream Vision spells, Klaus is very good at expecting things. Still, he would prefer to avoid outright violence, and if physically threatened by the PCs would probably appear to give way, then later summon Nightgaunts to carry them off, rather than retaliate physically. If faced with antagonists with law-enforcement capacity, he would summon Nightgaunts to immobilise them, reduce their POW and hence magic resistance with his cane, and cast Cloud Memory to cause them to forget him. Less significant threats will be sent Nightmares until they desist.

A pantry in Klaus' house has been converted into a refuge against Hounds of Tindalos. It is sealed (but not airtight) and well stocked with food and drink. He can escape to this room at any time by using his Vanish spell.

## ***Polyps and Hounds and Yithians, Oh My!***

An essay on trans-temporal ecology by Emeritus Professor Klaus Scholz (translated from the Greek by James Haughton).

I owe the inspiration for this ms. to many long discussions with my dear friend, Dr Nevil Kingston-Brown of the University of Melbourne. I regret deeply that the substance of much of these discussions is lost to me, and that the good Doctor will not be born for some 500 years and is thus unavailable for further correspondence.

We must realise that the universe contains many dimensions, of which modern science has only scratched the surface. Each of these, each set and combination, is inhabited by creatures for whom our three and a half dimensions would seem as bizarre and deadly as their home dimensions, of which the physicists tell us we see only a subatomic string, would be to us if translated there. Yet all dimensions influence each other, if only in subtle and subatomic ways, and the patterns of life, those self-organising systems of which my former colleagues Drs Von Neumann and Schrodinger wrote, are repeated in each combination of space, time and the other immeasurable depths. There are patterns that survive and/or reproduce, and each of these patterns requires energy. Many are capable of harvesting the ambient energy surrounding them, as our plants harvest sunlight. Yet many others find it easier to harvest the energy from these initial harvesters, and others will harvest from them, and so on in a great web spanning all the dimensions of the universe! Humanity is caught in a strand of that web, but in this paper, I mean to dissect a few of the spiders.

Upon earth, we have organisms that harvest ambient energy directly: plants. We have those which harvest the plants: herbivores, and those which harvest the herbivores: carnivores. This harvesting may take many and varied forms; while some consume the store of energy of the creature, as a man consumes the seeds of wheat or a tiger the flesh of a goat, others simply siphon from the flow of energy, as we draw upon the milk of cows or a flea sucks the blood. Of this latter case, we recognise two types: if the organism supplying the energy also gains some reciprocal benefit, we call it a symbiosis; if the organism gains no benefit but is simply leached from, we refer to it as parasitism.

It is not unreasonable to imagine that these relationships will occur in any ecosystem, no matter how fantastic its dimensional permutations; and I mean to examine how they occur within the dimension of time. Time is the most mysterious of the human dimensions: we can only move through it one way and at one speed, but we can only look the other. Yet, as I know from bitter experience, there are creatures which can move and look both ways, and doubtless there are those not restricted to the one-dimensional line we inhabit, but capable of moving sideways in time, above and below time, as easily as we might move sideways in space. Time, as the dimension in which we are least at home, is the one we share with those things we find most alien, though they find our everyday length, breadth and height most difficult to enter.

I shall begin with those most well known to us, who force themselves upon us: the Yithians. Is there any doubt that no matter how intelligent and sympathetic to human morality this species may be, its role in the time dimension is that of parasite? Yithians freely move through time to steal the time and energy of others. While their

raids upon the lives of homo sapiens are confined to a few isolated individuals such as myself, the Yithians freely admit to having parasitically colonised entire species, leaving the former minds of their hosts to perish in whatever struggle they were too cowardly to face themselves! Yet they maintain the bodies of those hosts, and bring up their young to share their parasitic habits in a sinister reversal of the cuckoo's egg. Furthermore, their society is regularly described as a kind of "socialism", a doctrine whose parasitic effects those who lived through last century can testify to themselves. *The fact of parasitism is the key to the entire riddle of the so-called "Great Race"*. Without this key, our efforts to understand and eventually overcome these monsters are doomed to founder upon the rocks of misapprehension.

Consider the facts. It is evident that the so-called "Greatness" of the Yithians in mastering time is still limited to acting in a one-dimensional line. The Yithians could not "sidestep" the extinction of their former hosts by the Flying Polyps, of which more anon, nor did their foreknowledge allow them to alter the event. Indeed, they accepted it with a sinister fatalism. Why should they care, when they could simply colonise another host? This fatalism and inability to act is what one might expect from the mind of a parasite, which relies upon others for its existence. What is most disturbing to contemplate is that by foreseeing the event, the Yithians may in fact have chosen it, limiting the path their time-line took across the rolling planes of the time-dimensions, to one in which their poor conical victims would be consumed by Polyps – *and one in which we ourselves will obligingly die and be replaced by their new host bodies, the beetles*. This is their true parasitism; they have doomed our future to consumption by Hastur and his puppet King by foreseeing it to be so. If there is to be any hope of averting this fate, we must attempt to go beyond the science of the Yithians, and move sideways.

Is there any hope for such a "knight's move"? Surely meddling with the time stream in such a fashion would attract the attention of the temporal carnivore: the Hound of Thionadelos [unformed or invisible brimstone or sulphur: translator's note] as wise Hypatia warned us? These carnivores indeed roam the time stream, and furthermore are clearly capable of the sideways movement of which I speak, as Hypatia did her best to warn us, given the infant state of science at the time, with her Euclidean references to the contrast between "angles" and "curves".

It has taken the arrival of Dr Einstein before we had even a vague idea of what she meant; that Hounds come from the places where his curved space-time breaks down and becomes discontinuous, where worm (or Doel?) holes and black holes are found and the other dimensions of which I spoke can intersect with our own; yet coming from such dimensions where our space means less than nothing, they cannot orient themselves within our space without a clear dimensional mapping with which to attune themselves, so that confusing the distinctions between the dimensions as in Hypatia's celebrated Spherical Chamber will repel them utterly. This is one limit of the Hound.

Another may be found in this question – why is there no record of a Yithian ever falling victim to the ravages of the Hound's burning sulphur? Our visitors have told us that this is because they only send their mentalities, rather than their material bodies, through time; yet in this as so much else they deceive, for use of the Hadean drug to achieve the same effect has seen the loss of more than one mental explorer of

the time stream to the Hounds' hunger. The Yithians are shielded in some other way from the hunting dogs of Chronos, and I believe that I have fathomed the secret of that shielding.

Is the shielding a super-science mastered by the Yithians, but beyond the reach of we primates? I think not. In this we must consider again the *parasitic* nature of the Yith. None of their artefacts obtained and examined by us show any signs of elements in common; the lightning gun, the temporal communicator, the fiendish mind-wiper and the still guarded stasis cubes all have totally different aesthetics, design principles and even seem to operate using completely different scientific principles. It is as if they were all designed by different civilisations. And this is, in all probability, because they were. Why should a race that can draw upon and sequester the knowledge of every other race in the universe within their inaccessible libraries bother to invent or design anything for themselves? Something in the archives would “do the trick” as the Australians say. There is no Yithian super-science; there are simply the scavengings from a thousand parasite-infested civilisations. Yet the Yithians must have been time-travelling *before* they gained this knowledge, else they could not have gained it; and to do so they must have been protected from the carnivores. The answer must be something simpler; something a race of parasites could devise on their own.

I propose that the answer to this riddle is found within another, which furthermore supplies the “missing link” in my temporal ecology: the curious riddle of the Yithian's relationship with the Flying Polyps. Consider: Why, if the “Great Race” could quickly develop (or steal) the technology to defeat the Polyps, namely the lightning guns, did they not exterminate the brutes? Why instead just drive them underground and then live *right on top of* the very creatures they must have suspected, and then known, would “rise up” and destroy them in turn, for *several hundred million years*? A sense of mercy? From genocidal parasites?

Let us consider what we know of the Flying Polyps. The name itself is suggestive, and we know it is an accurate translation of the Yithian term. Polyps, I am informed by my encyclopaedia, are extremely simple organisms which are unchanged in the fossil record for over half a billion years – a suggestive figure. They are usually anchored to one spot (as opposed to ours, which fly), possessing tentacles with which to sense and catch their prey as it drifts by. This prey is usually organisms so simple as to blur the distinction between plant and animal, but may also be more complex animals such as fish, which are seized and stung by the sensate tendrils. Furthermore, the polyp often forms a symbiotic relationship with some form of plant, enabling it to draw energy from photosynthesis more or less directly. Polyps also include the corals, which form *great colonies of stone-like growths* – like the pre-Pnakotic city of “windowless basalt towers” perhaps?

Yet our Polyps are rather different from these, even the amusingly named *rugosa* corals. They apparently originated from some other place, not Earth. They can become invisible. They can somehow cause winds to both “blow” and “suck” simultaneously. They can move about and warp their forms in a “plastic” fashion. These facts, particularly the xenoterrestriality, the invisibility and the “sucking wind”, suggest that the Polyps too are capable of distorting space-time and moving through it in ways of which we are currently incapable. Given the biological facts of the Polyp, it may be that the Flying Polyps are the ambient harvesters and herbivores of the



temporal ecology. The Yithians may have initially thought that by cutting them off from the sun, the great source of most ambient energy, the Polyps would quickly die away. However, they had a further, much more useful feature. As space-time bending polyps they would feed upon anything that triggered their grasping tendrils, which must have extended into the time-space around their “anchor” – and this would include *any Hound of Thionadelos which strayed into their feeding zone*. The Polyps indeed were probably too simple to sense the movement of pure mentality through time; but a Hound would **materialise** to strike and be promptly snared by the Polyp. The death of either or both would not concern the “Great”. Thus the Yithians could turn the Polyps into one more useful species to be parasitic upon, keeping them cultivated but limited underground, as a man turns a jungle into a garden, and hiding amid their tendrils from the Hound’s predation, even as the clownfish in that film my great-niece likes hides in an anemone.

How then did the Polyps, which were fearsome but simple organisms, manage to “revolt”? After all, the plants in our garden do not revolt against us. On this topic there is still further research to be done. However, I have a few hypotheses – what if the extinction of the Yith-possessed cones took place not 50 but 65 million years ago, when the great asteroid that destroyed the dinosaurs crashed to earth? Might the reverberations of that mighty event have ruptured whatever mechanisms the Yithians used to keep the Polyps sealed underground? Exposed to sunlight again after so long, the Polyp population may have boomed beyond Yithian capacity to control it, as an uncultivated garden returns to the wild.

A second possibility might be the effect of evolution. The Polyps were confined underground for more than 200 million years. Perhaps during that time they evolved to seek out new energy sources or evolved some new defence against the lightning gun. It is not the nature of a parasite to evolve unless its host does so, and the Yithians may have been caught off-guard by some such development. In that case, the training with our meagre stock of Lightning Guns, to which we have so patiently subjected our Dark Brothers, may be useless.

In the face of this danger, we must be direct. For too long we have tiptoed around the whims of our Yithian visitors. Our tendency as an organization to embrace the humanities rather than the sciences has left us incurious about these fundamental mysteries, in favour of the dribbles of history the Yithians dole out to us. But if our darkest fears are true and the moment of extinction approaches us, then we must know the truth about the Polyp’s rise, and any means are justified in extracting that truth.

***A Night at the Opera: Operation BURIED TREASURE***

*Coming soon...*