



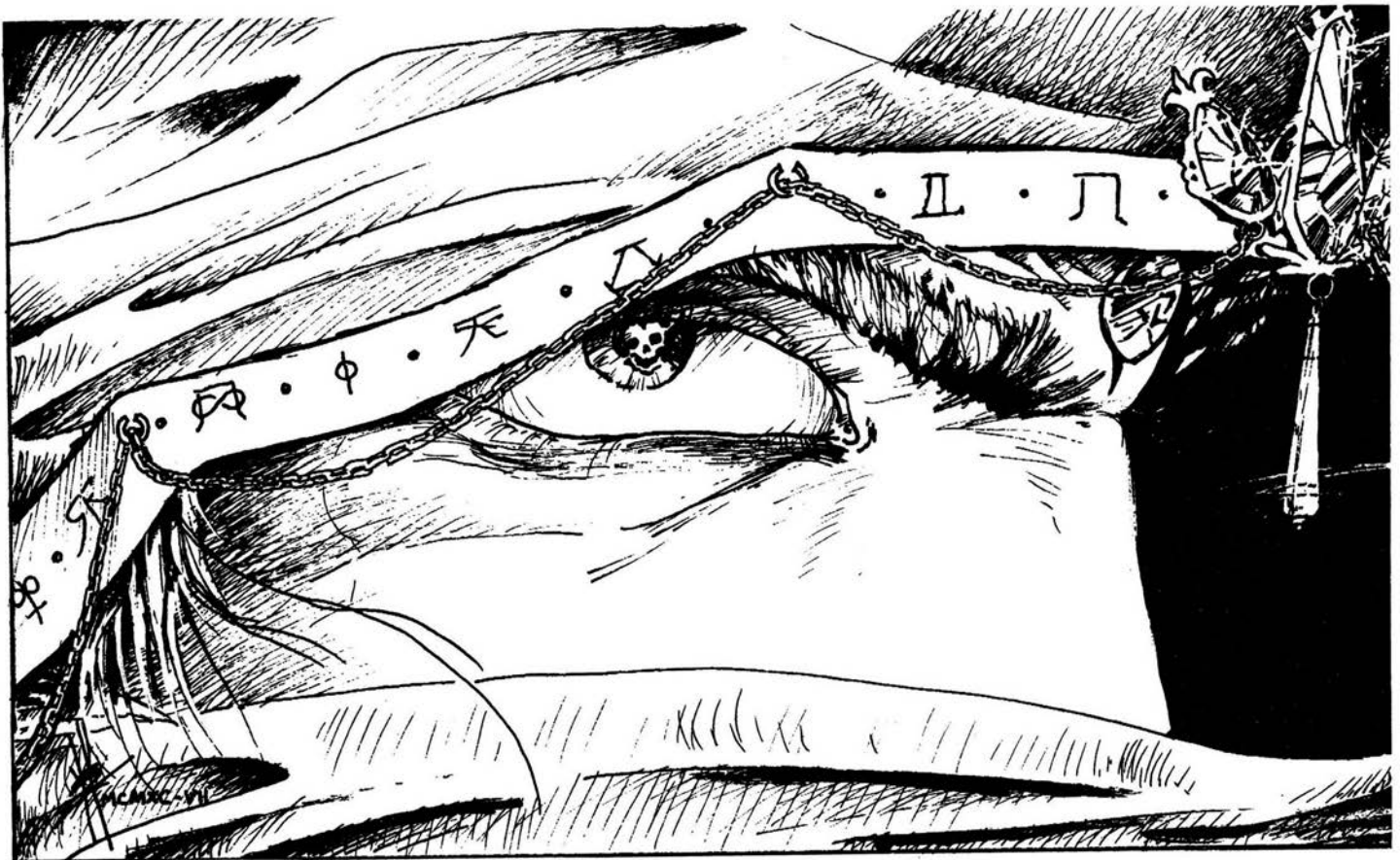
by Jonathan Tweet

Lion Rampant

LR1020

The Order of Hermes

A Complete Society of Wizards in a
Medieval Setting



By Jonathan Tweet



Lion Rampant

Dedicated to Mark Rein•Hagen,
whose Chaos made
my Cosmos beautiful.

The Order of Hermes

Credits

Concepts: Jonathan Tweet & Mark Rein•Hagen
Written By: Jonathan Tweet.
Development: Mark Rein•Hagen
Editing: Mark Rein•Hagen, John Brandt, Lisa Stevens
Layout: Nicole Lindroos
Cover Art: Richard Thomas
Title Logo: Richard Thomas
Interior Art: Josh Timbrook
House Logos: Richard Thomas
Hand Gestures: Charles Wright
Ars Magica Created by: Jonathan Tweet & Mark Rein•Hagen

Special thanks: to Kurt Hartwig, for House Tremere; to "Woody" Eblom, for Pendule; to Rich Rydberg for the Traditionalists and Transitionalists; to Nicole Lindroos, the first Praeco; and to Andreas Wichter, for details on Durenmar.

Thanks To: John Porter, Mike Halse & Lisa Stevens.

Etiam Agnus Gratias Amicis Nostris Magnis:

Eric Aasland, John Brandt, Marty Dennis, Darin Eblom, Glenn Elliott, Jim Flanders, Derek Greco, Matthew Gress, Deej Heath, Kristin Hagen, Mark Hagen, Kurt Hartwig, Peter Hentges, Nicole Lindroos, Dar Lund, John Nephew, Lisa Paulson, Victor Raymond, Rich Rydberg, Lisa Stevens, John Sunderland, Kirsten Swingle, Bruce Tarnopolski, Richard Thomas, Roser Trepat, Jonathan Tweet., Joel Wegner, Stewart Wieck, Kevin Weiner, and Charles Wright.

Special, special thanks to:

Mark "The only magus in House Diedre" **Rein•Hagen** for having the faith in Jonathan and giving up his "baby."

Jonathan "What do you mean the disk I sent you was blank" **Tweet** for putting together an excellent manuscript and finishing a product that was on the drawing board for two years.

John "What do you mean, you want to change filius, filia, filii" **Brandt** for his historical editing, Latin proficiency, and moral support for our production staff.

Bruce "The count is 1-0-6-6" **Tarnopolski** for his secret side bet with Mark (I hope you win, Bruce).

Josh "I'll get back to work as soon as this Japanese animation flick is over" **Timbrook** for jumping in and doing the artwork under pressing circumstances.

Nicole "No art!! How can I do layout without the art?" **Lindroos** for her enthusiasm in doing the layout and the great job she's doing with it.

Lisa "Look, I'll get to it after I'm through with Challenge and Origins, but before Tempest and GenCon, while I'm eating and talking on the phone.....!!!" **Stevens** for juggling several hundred projects at the same time and still managing to keep part of her sanity intact.

Richard "O.K., O.K.!! I'll get you the cover in 5 days!!" **Thomas** for his patience, hard work, and understanding in dealing with a young company.

Lion Rampant would like to make a special dedication of this supplement to Mickey Thomas, whose courage and perseverance in the face of adversity set a standard for us all to pattern our lives after. We'll miss you Mickey.

Editor's Note

In an attempt to avoid sexist language, "they" is used to replace "he or she" when referring to non-specific cases. Our apologies to Grandma Tweet, who taught English.

The words "Magus" and "Primus" are masculine words in the Latin language. In **Lion Rampant** campaigns, the feminine forms ("Maga" and "Prima") have been used as well as the masculine versions when referring to female characters.

All references to page numbers in **Ars Magica** are from the second edition.

More useful material on **The Order of Hermes** can be found in other **Lion Rampant** products, especially **Ars Magica**, **Covenants** and **Saga Pack**. For a closer examination of the fall of a covenant and the after-death experiences of magi, see **The Broken Covenant of Calebals**.

ATLAS
GAMES

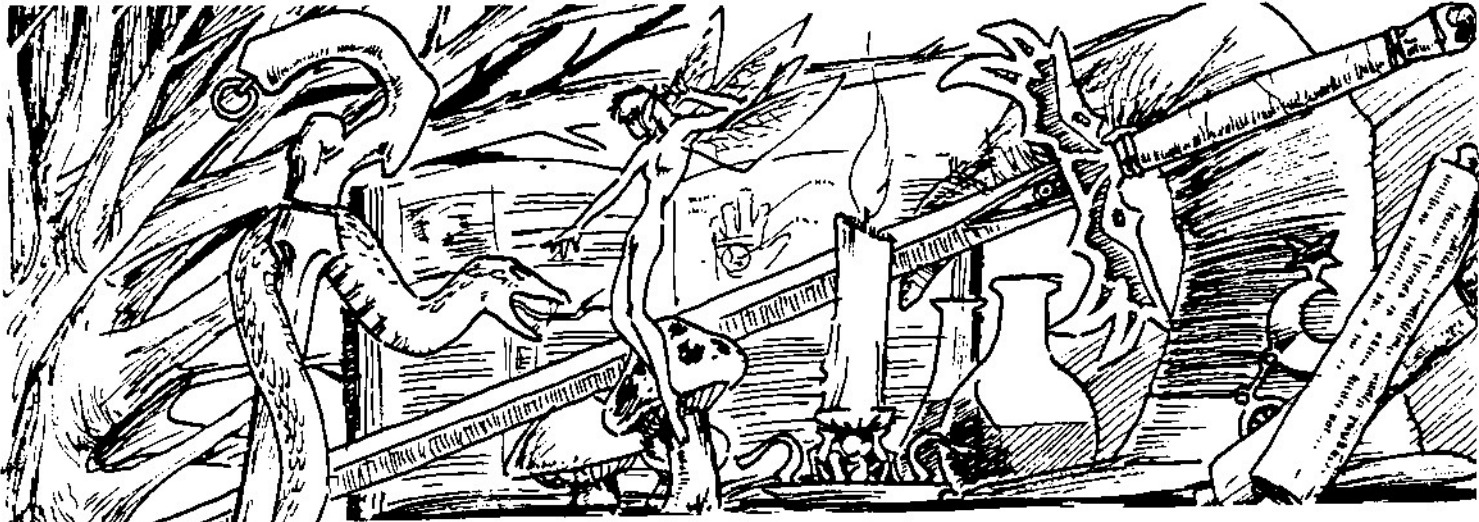
WWW.ATLAS-GAMES.COM

Digital Edition Version 1.0

Copyright 2016 Trident, Inc. d/b/a Atlas Games. All rights reserved. Reproduction of this work by any means without written permission from the publisher, except short excerpts for the purpose of reviews, is expressly prohibited. **Ars Magica**, **Mythic Europe**, and **Charting New Realms of Imagination** are trademarks of Trident, Inc. **Order of Hermes**, **Tremere**, and **Doissetep** are trademarks or registered trademarks of CCP hf in the United States and other jurisdictions, and are used with permission.

Table of Contents

Preface	4	Hibernian Tribunal	47
Introduction	7	Iberian Tribunal	47
Life of a Magus	9	Tribunal of the Levant	48
Before Apprenticeship	9	Loch Leglean Tribunal	48
Apprenticeship	10	Normandy Tribunal	48
Peculiarities of the Gift	13	Novgorod Tribunal	48
Becoming a Magus	14	Provençal Tribunal	49
Life as a Magus	15	Rhine Tribunal	49
Covenant Relations	16	Roman Tribunal	49
House Relations	17	Treaty of the Roman Tribunal	51
Friendship	17	Stonehenge Tribunal	51
Titles of Honor	19	Tribunal of Thebes	51
Wizard's Twilight	23	Transylvanian Tribunal	51
Wizard's Twilight	27	Covenants of Hibernia	52-53
History of the Order	28	The Thirteen Tribunals	54
Ancient Origins	28	Outside Relations	56
Legend of the Old Ones	30-31	Relations with Society	56
The First Tribunal	31	Non-Hermetic Magi	57
Hermetic Magic	32	Relations with Faeries	58
The Seekers	32	Demons	59
The Early Days	33	Houses of Hermes	60
The Schism War	34	House Format	61
Magic of Pendule	34	House Bjornaer	62
Legends of the Order	36	The Magical Hand Gestures	67
Politics	37	House Bonisagus	68
The Code of Hermes	37	Classic Puzzles in Magic Theory	69
The Code of Hermes	38	House Crlamon	72
The Peripheral Code	39	Riddles and Markings	76
Crime and Punishment	41	House Díedne	78
High Crimes	41	House Ex Miscellanea	79
Low Crimes	41	House Flambeau	83
Wizard's War	42	House Jerbiton	87
Tribunals	42	House Mercere	91
Customs of the Tribunals	42	House Merinita	96
The Leader of the Tribunal	43	House Quaesitor	101
Voting	44	The Quaesitoris as Judges	102
The Quaesitor	44	House Tremere	106
Topics of Debate	44	House Tylalus	112
The Grand Tribunal	45	The Runes Of Verditiis	116
The Thirteen Tribunals	46	House Verditiis	117
Tribunal of the Greater Alps	46	Timeline of the Order	122-123
		Number of Living Magi, 1199 A. D.	123
		Hermetic Glossary	124-125



Preface

In the long distant days of old, before the dawn of industry and science, there existed a simpler and more natural world, a world which had a different conception of life and cosmos than we do today. It was the medieval world and it was filled with pageantry, mystery, grace, honor, love and great, unspeakable terrors.

The people of this world spoke of themselves through song and poetry, and the beauty of this art remains with us still. We have all heard of the bravery of Lancelot, the ferocity of faerie stags, the terror of mighty dragons, and the foreboding power that true love, destiny and curses had over people's lives. Roland and Saint George were heroes of a different breed than we have today, and were revered as men imbued with divine blessings which allowed them to complete their tasks. It was indeed a different world.

The people of these "dark times" believed in the supernatural, and treated it as a more integral part of life than our scientific and secular society does today. They believed in it and took it seriously in a way we cannot fathom. In this book we assume that they were correct, and that the supernatural does indeed exist, and that faeries, dragons and wizards do indeed roam the world.

Our intention at Lion Rampant is to provide you, the roleplayer, with an opportunity to experience the wonder and drama of the medieval world. Within our *Ars Magica* product line, everything is set within this "Mythic Europe" setting. The Order of Hermes is our latest attempt to incorporate this mystical version of the Middle Ages into an intriguing and exciting roleplaying setting. Describing the organization, politics, history and current status of an entire secret society of wizards, we hope and believe this supplement will be useful to any who wish to adventure in an environment of magic and fantasy.

While the background of this arcane Order is set in a mythical version of Medieval Europe, it can be used with only moderate changes with any fantasy world. This supplement describes and explains the Order as vividly as possible, giving you the opportunity to bring a wealth of detail about wizards to your Saga or campaign. Though this Order is, of course, only a figment of our collective imaginations, we hope you will find it as intriguing and complex a subject as you have recently encountered. Our ambition was to make it as realistic and complete as possible.

As you read this book, treat it as if you were taking a journey as a young wizard who has only known your master's laboratory and is now being introduced to the vast and complicated world of magic. It will not be an easy journey, but it will be easily worth the effort, for what you will learn shall stand you in good stead later on. Open the pages of this tome carefully, for you are about to delve into a world of arcane mystery and unparalleled wonder.

How to Use This Supplement

This book describes the Order of Hermes on all levels, from the lives of individual magi, to the Order's history, to its current political composition. The purpose of the supplement is two-fold: first, to help players develop magus characters with interesting backgrounds and possibilities for personal development; second, to provide the information necessary to run a Saga in which Hermetic politics play a significant role. Though the background provided can be modified for any fantasy world, it was designed to bring out the flavor of the Middle Ages and is most fully utilized to this end.

For the Player

As a player, you can use this information to build a complete and engaging magus character. First you should read through the book, getting an idea of what the Order is like. Then you should choose a House for your magus and use the information found in the Houses section as a guide to creating the character. Your House determines much about the master you had, and because your master had almost complete control over your personal and magical development during your apprenticeship, your House has already had a great deal of influence on who you are by the time you start play. Like any young magus, you might have little knowledge of other Houses or of Hermetic politics when you begin, but this information will come to you during play, as your character learns and grows.

The "Life of a Magus" chapter also provides important ideas that you can use in developing your magus. You can best use these ideas by looking them over before you create the character, because decisions you make about your character's background and ambitions are important to your character conception.

If you already have a magus, choose the House that best fits the character conception. Don't worry about finding a House that you fit perfectly, because individual magi within each House always vary to some extent from the norm. You may want to rethink some details about your character based on the information here. You should go through the "Life of a Magus" chapter as well to fill in details about your character.

Even if you do not play *Ars Magica*, you will find that this book can provide some very interesting ideas for your wizard character. If your gamemaster will agree, you can include the Order of Hermes in your campaign, allowing you to fully flesh out your character in the garb of a member of the Order.

For the Storyguide

As a storyguide, the background information will allow you to develop the Hermetic environment in which the Saga takes place. Who are the other magi nearby? What attitudes and motivations drive them? What power do they have over the player-characters, and what power can the player-characters exert over local politics? What major crises or concerns have developed in the Saga's locale, and what are the options currently being considered for dealing with these issues? All these questions and more will be for you to determine, using this supplement to provide the raw material and the structure to your creation. Familiarize yourself in general with the entire book, and then pick those topics that excite you the most. You might, for instance, be particularly intrigued by a certain House, by Wizard's Twilight, by an event in Hermetic history, or by a conflict currently involving the Order. Read about that topic in detail, provide your own embellishments, and expand into other areas as the Saga progresses.

If you are not currently a member of an *Ars Magica* troupe, the ideas found in *The Order of Hermes* can be a strong basis for any organization of magic-users. Based in a magical setting where the powers of religion, the sword and the spell can conflict or all be threatened by outside menaces, this supplement can provide you with many ideas concerning the unity, divisions and interactions among wizards in a far flung, complex society.

A General Background

In order to help you use this supplement, we have provided a general explanation of the background of the Order. If you have read other Lion Rampant products, this will help refresh your memory about some of the basic concepts of the Order of Hermes and its place in the world. If you have bought this supplement as a resource for your own campaign, it will give you a general overview of the Order. Everything described below is discussed in far greater detail in later chapters.

Covenants

Some magi, concerned that rivals might steal their hard-won secrets, live alone and in secrecy. The vast majority, however, live together in small communities bonded by vows of friendship and cooperation. A covenant is a self-sufficient collegium of magical learning where magi gather for protection and to share resources. Usually it is located in a magical area, where magical forces are more easily controlled and gathered. While covenants can be of any size, most have fewer than a dozen members. Some magi, however, live in huge covenants where the centralization of power and lore make them formidable, but where complex hierarchies limit the individual magus' freedoms.

The Order of Hermes

Besides the wizard members of the covenant, there are many others who live there, including guards, cooks, servants, scholars, scribes, artisans, adventurers, and often an assortment of friends and companions. The magi support these individuals and, in return, they are served by them. As a community, a covenant is usually self sufficient and its inhabitants are often highly loyal to their arcane leaders. Though not actually a part of feudal society, most folk relate to the magi in the same manner as they would relate to a liege lord.

The politics within a covenant are entirely dependent on the attitudes and behaviors of its members. Some covenants have a rigid structure, while others are loose collections of individuals, cooperating only occasionally. Some are rife with internal schemes and attempts by individuals or factions to gain power over the others. Most wizard characters belong to a covenant, but it is not entirely unusual for a magi to return to their home only occasionally, spending much of their time travelling. A covenant is what a magus makes of it, so they can vary wildly.

The Code of Hermes

Central to the Order is its Code, which regulates the activities of magi, both among their peers and in society at large. Magi want protection from their neighbors and sufficient peace to carry out their arcane studies. They know that their lives are potentially hundreds of years long and that those who could most easily cut short this long life are other magi. Therefore, by living within the Order and avoiding mortal combat with each other, the magi assure themselves a broad degree of security. Additionally, there are other powers upon this earth, some with strength equal to or greater than a wizard's own; only with unity can outside challenges be successfully met.

Tribunals

The middle layer of organization between the Order of Hermes itself and its individual covenants consists of Tribunals. Tribunals are inter-covenant councils formed by representatives from each local covenant, one for each region of Europe. Each magus in the area covered by a Tribunal gets one vote, either directly or through proxy.

Magi may give another magus the power to represent them by giving the representative their "sigils," which are wands or other symbols given them by their masters upon completion of their apprenticeship. Magi also meet less formally in councils to decide less important matters. Covenants typically have council meetings to decide covenant actions, and sometimes magi from different covenants meet to discuss specific issues. The authority of these informal councils is completely dependent on what the participating covenants and magi choose to grant them.

Wizards and Society

The Order is a threat to the hierarchy of society since magi bow to neither Baron nor Bishop, but it is powerful enough to deter rulers from attacking it openly. The knight's courage and the priest's prayers have supernatural powers of their own, so members of the Order rarely attack their mundane foes in open warfare. Those who cause undue conflict between the Order and society are subject to punitive action.

Young magi often find the restraints caused by society annoying, and they sometimes skirmish with the powers of the mundane world. Older magi, however, usually find ways to pursue the art of magic despite the anti-magical sentiment of society, and scorn those who do not follow their example. Most magi are very wary of the outside world and will go to any length to maintain the shaky peace which has been held for so long.

Fanatic voices within the Order and within the Church have long called for an end to the long-standing truce and a final confrontation between the two to settle their differences. In the *Ars Magica* world of the thirteenth century, more reasonable voices have so far prevailed.

For their part, most magi realize that, while they wield great power, they have no defense against miracles. As long as they stay out of the Church's way, they are largely left alone, but were they to threaten society at large, they would no doubt suffer God's fury. Besides, many in the Order support the work of the Church and agree with many of its teachings. Misunderstanding and/or political intrigue are the bases of any conflict between them, not moral antipathy.

The Order of Hermes

"For long we have ignored these wizards, thinking them to be misguided spirits, but I have found them to be potent practitioners of the magical arts and to be feared.... These magi have the peculiar belief that they are somehow above other folk, that they have loftier thoughts and ideals and have access to knowledge beyond mortal ken. They are arrogant, haughty, and have clearly forgotten our Lord's words about such vanities. I urge you most strenuously, Reverend Father, keep a watchful eye."

Brother Reginald of Avignon
Year of Our Lord, 1182

The Tradition of Magic



This long awaited supplement, is not just another "background" book. Describing a fantastic society of wizards, it will add an amazing level of depth, realism, and charm to the wizards of your roleplaying campaign. The mysteries of apprenticeship, the ambitions of potent magicians, their views of "lesser" non-magical society, and the long, hard path from apprentice to Arch-Mage all come to life within these pages. This supplement gives magicians the broader scope and detail that such interesting characters deserve. You are given an inside (and rare) look into a most secretive institution and its members, the enigmatic Order of Hermes, making it an invaluable supplement for any roleplaying game. Herein is a complete and detailed description of an arcane society of wizards — your magus will never be the same.

Includes:

- A complete history of the Order
- Detailed descriptions of all 13 Houses
- An expansive Hermetic Glossary
- A copy of the entire Code of Hermes
- List and description of all 13 Tribunals
- Information on the clothing, greetings, and habits of the magi
- Scores of ideas, leads, and clues for stories and adventures



Lion Rampant
3264 Nature's Walk
Suwanee, GA 30174

LR1020