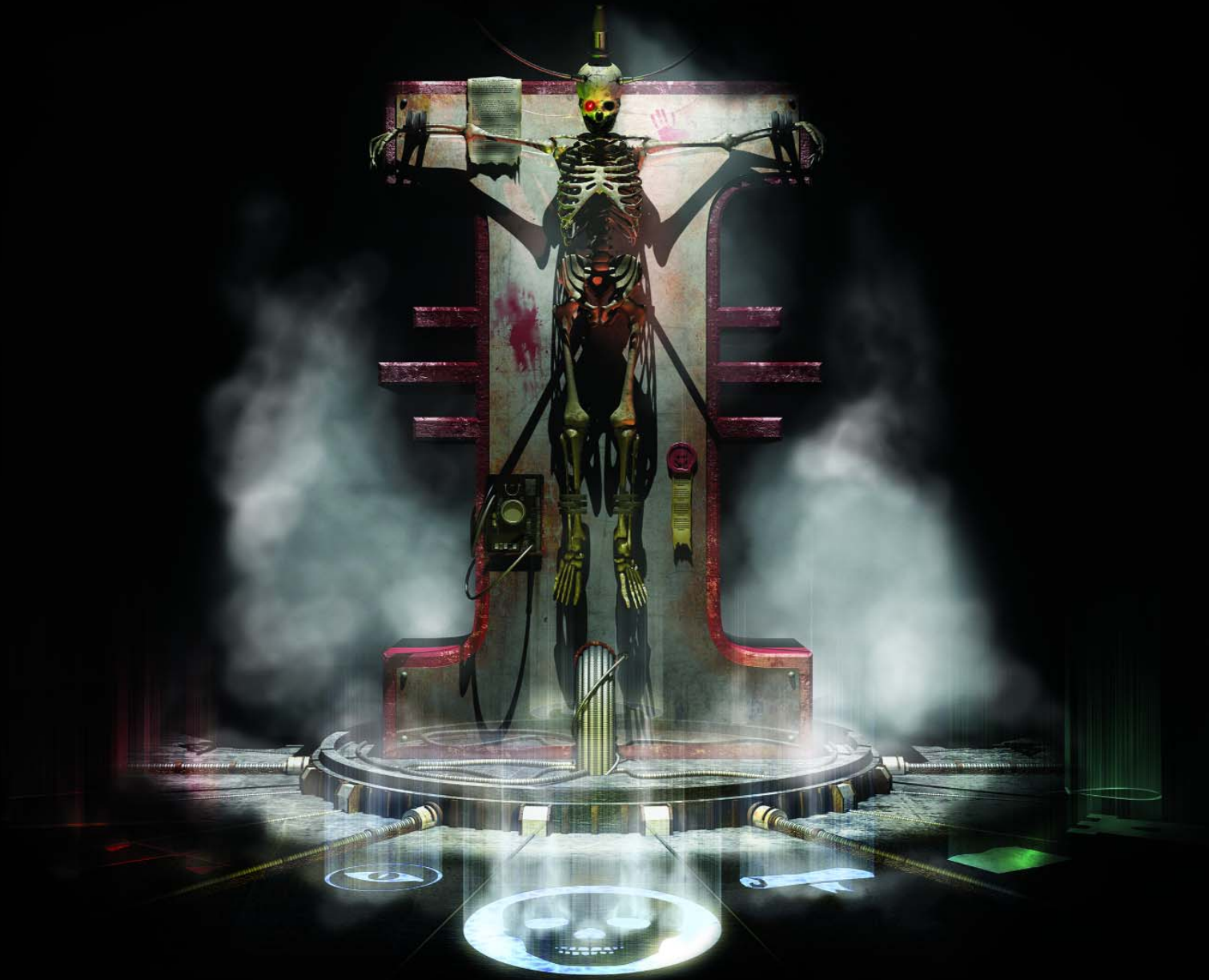


Gav Thorpe

INQUISITOR



THE
THORians

GAMES WORKSHOP®

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Thorian Faction Sourcebook, an in-depth guide to the Inquisitors that follow the Thorian philosophy. We hope that this book will help Inquisitor players and Games Masters in their scenarios and campaigns, by providing detailed background information on this slice of the Inquisition, including numerous examples of characters, scenario ideas and events that you can use to form the basis of a campaign.

The focus of this book is not on the game of Inquisitor, but on the shadowy realm that exists as the backdrop of your games. The intention is to illuminate the character of Thorian Inquisitors, through their history and exploits, rather than to provide hard and fast rules and game mechanics. We will also take a look at an aspect of the Inquisition at the whole - their practises, beliefs or structures.

This sourcebook contains the following sections:

The History of the Thorians: An overview of how the Thorian philosophy came about and how it has evolved since its adoption by members of the Inquisition.

Thorian Splinter Factions: A look at some of the diverse philosophies and goals that exist within the wider Thorian framework of beliefs.

Thorian Personalities: We examine some of the most notable proponents of the Thorian philosophy, their followers, achievements and battles, and the foes that they faced. You may wish to use these characters in your games, or perhaps they will serve as inspiration for your own creations.

Thorians within the Imperium: A detailed look at how Thorian Inquisitors operate within the wider structure of the Inquisition, in particular their preferred methods of operating and their allegiances to other organisations within the Inquisition and without.

Thorians and other Factions: How Thorians view other philosophies and how they are viewed - a look at their allies and opponents within the Inquisition.

Cells and Conclaves: A treatise on the means by which factions can be formed and how Inquisitors of similar beliefs communicate with each other and work together.

Thorians in Games: Rules and suggestions for players and Games Masters for Thorian Inquisitors, their warriorbands, favoured wargear and weaponry.



The Thorians

Written by Gav Thorpe
Concept and production by Andy Hall
Cover by Andy Walsh
New internal art by Paul Jeacock

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HISTORY OF THE THORIANS

While the Thorians as a faction have only grown in prominence since the 36th millennium, the heart of their philosophy is one that dates back much, much further. Resurrectionist cults and philosophies have waxed and waned throughout the history of the Imperium, and can be traced back to the earliest days of the Inquisition. Now considered to be one of the more puritan factions, the chequered history of those who believe in the Emperor's rebirth has not always been considered to stand on the right side of heresy. The history of the Thorians is, at its heart, the history of the battle for the Emperor's soul.

THE FIRST FOUR

The ideal of restoring the Emperor to the Imperium in mortal form is at the heart of the Inquisition's formation. In the dark days that followed Horus' invasion of Terra and the Emperor's internment in the Golden Throne, the empire he had created was reeling in the aftermath of the civil war and the Emperor's ascension.

Four individuals, trusted servants of the Emperor during the building of his galactic empire, gathered together to discuss what was to happen. They were divided in opinion, with two believing that the fledgling Imperium could not survive without the Emperor to directly lead Humanity, while the other two were adamant that the Emperor has ascended to a higher plane and that it was folly to interfere with the course of events as they had unfolded.

The two resurrectionists, known only as Promeus and Moriana, left Terra to begin their quest of bringing back the Emperor, while the two that remained acted quickly to establish themselves with the newly formed Senatorum Imperialis. Known to the Primarchs as loyal servants, these two began to lay the plans for the formation of an organisation that would combat the efforts of the two dissidents. Thus were the seeds of the Inquisition itself sown.

With the backing of the Primarchs, the two first Inquisitors made themselves known to the High Lords and began to recruit like-minded individuals from amongst the adepts and warriors on Terra. Their dream of an organisation dedicated to the protection of the Emperor would not be realised in their lifetimes, even extended as they were by arcane technologies, and the Inquisition as it is seen today did not fully come in to existence until the 32nd millennium, by which time the Imperium itself and its many institutions were beginning to grow and spread across the galaxy.

Promeus and Moriana were not idle during this time, and in the wake of the news of the Emperor's ascension gathered together a following of their own, particularly amongst those cults and sects that were now appearing on many worlds claiming the deification of the Emperor. At some point Moriana and Promeus split, their goal still the same but Moriana determined to use whatever means necessary to achieve her aim.

Fearful that Moriana would unleash unspeakable powers of Chaos to achieve her goal, Promeus created a small army of dedicated followers to combat the menace he believed she posed. These two factions clashed many times until Promeus's disciples prevailed and Moriana disappeared, probably into the Eye of Terror.

As the Inquisition grew and its presence was felt further and further from Terra, it came into contact with the Promeans. Several hundred years had passed since the fateful first conclave, and even then the Inquisition, ever a confederacy of individuals rather than a single body, was pursuing several different agendas. The original intent, to prevent the reincarnation of the Emperor,

had been diluted over the centuries, and when the Promeans were discovered fighting against an ill-specified Chaos threat, they were brought into the fold. Neither the Inquisitors that contacted the sect nor the Promeans themselves were aware of the irony of their cooperation, and thus the first resurrectionist Inquisition faction was created.

THE RISE OF HORUSIANISM

For nearly a millennia the Promeans continued on their quest, combating threats to the Emperor while seeking a means by which He might be brought back to a mortal body. The research of the Promeans rivalled the greatest libraries of the Imperium, but it was dispersed across the galaxy like pieces of a puzzle scattered over a wilderness. By the 33rd millennium the Inquisition boasted several thousand Inquisitors and hundreds of thousands of agents, but was still little more than individual bands of dedicated men and women pursuing their own goals, with little or no organisation amongst themselves. Thus were the seeds of heresy allowed to take root once more.

It is not known whether Moriana herself was still alive at this point, unnaturally sustained perhaps by the energies of the Eye of Terror, but her legacy was to make itself felt again. Over a period of several centuries, those Inquisitors that had once claimed to be Promeans began to pursue a new philosophy. Amongst the great number of texts compiled over the millennia by their predecessors was a growing body of information concerning musings on the nature of Horus and his possession by Chaos. Considered by many to be unholy tomes whose secrets were best left forgotten, these texts once more began to be rediscovered and entered circulation and debate.

As the resurrectionists took greater note of these works, a splinter philosophy began to form, eventually to be dubbed the Horusians. Unwittingly, they were continuing the work of Moriana, investigating the possibility of using the power of Chaos to restore the Emperor to a mortal form fit for his psychic presence. The nature of their works took them to some of the most uncharted areas of the galaxy, in particular around the Eye of Terror, and unobserved by most they grew in numbers and influence.

A few true Promeans still remained, and as they became aware of what was happening they were horrified. Only a handful had ever read the first teachings of Promeus, or had been recruited by Inquisitors that had seen his works, but they immediately recognised the hand of Moriana in the beliefs of the Horusians. Now a dwindling factions, spread across the Imperium, the few Promeans that remained did what they could to thwart the efforts of the Horusians, but there was little they could do and by the end of the 34th millennium the Horusians were a dominant part of the Inquisition agenda.

It was a woman named Stalia von Dressen that stood against the tide. She had been inducted to the Inquisition by a man named Lord Phoran, who had in his possession a second generation copy of Promeus' original works. This had been passed from master to apprentice for nearly two and a half thousand years, and the keepers of the book were all dedicated Promeans. Inheriting this mantle, von Dressen was still young and idealistic. Warned by her mentor of the threat posed by the Horusians, von Dressen made it her life's work to combat this menace and see the Horusians' power broken.

Abandoning her normal Inquisitorial duties, von Dressen embarked upon a lifetime of travelling, contacting as many of her fellow Inquisitors as was possible. With the Book of Promeus as her guide, she began to recruit to her cause, particularly amongst

the oldest and most respected Inquisitors, as well as creating anti-Horusian cells in the worlds that she visited. Now well respected amongst the higher circles of the Inquisition, she met Lord Inquisitor Ardlan Baigdan. Between them, they spent two decades on Terra itself and using references and clues from the Book of Promeus they found some of the texts created by the original founders of the Inquisition. Though these were truly ancient and terribly incomplete, the two of them pieced together enough information to show them the original schism between the Inquisition and the Promeans.

Aged one hundred and twenty years old, von Dressen reached a harsh decision. For her entire life she had been dedicated to the Promean cause, and now had to search deep in her heart to admit that it had been a fool's errand. It is a testament to her conviction that Horusianism had to be stopped that she destroyed her copy of the Book of Promeus and, with Baigdan, initiated a pogrom of pro-resurrection Inquisitors. By the time she died, aged three hundred and four, this new order was beginning to establish itself and the Horusians were embattled and dwindling. By the start of the 35th millennium, the Inquisition had turned full circle and resurrectionism was once again all but eliminated from the Inquisition's goals.

THE REIGN OF BLOOD

With all but a few Inquisitors having abandoned the resurrectionist agenda, the Inquisition enjoyed a period of relative stability for several hundred years. However, during this time a new threat was emerging that would focus the attention of the Inquisition to external forces menacing the stability of the Imperium.

Thus it was that when perhaps the Inquisition was most needed, its eye was focusing on new alien races discovered on the Eastern Fringe and events on Terra were rapidly turning to anarchy. The 361st High Lord of the Administratum, Goge Vandire, used a combination of blackmail, bribery and murder to establish control of the Senatorum Imperialis, including taking the mantle of Ecclesiarch.

Using the power of both positions, Vandire set about establishing a galaxy-wide tyranny subservient to his insane demands. A few Inquisitors had tried to warn of the impending catastrophe, but to most of their comrades the seemingly petty machinations of a single High Lord had appeared inconsequential when compared with the threat arising in the Halo Stars.

With his Frateris Templars, a corruption of the Imperial Fleet and Imperial Guard, Vandire attempted to impose strict rules of behaviour on the populace of the Segmentum Solar and beyond. Deviation in ritual and belief was ruthlessly crushed, while dogma was enforced proclaiming the semi-divinity of Vandire himself.

Many that have read of these terrible times have wondered how the Inquisition could have allowed it to happen. To understand this, one must look at two things: an oversight of the importance of the Ministorum and the temporal power it wielded, and a resurgence in pro-resurrectionism around the world of Dimmamar.

A NEW PHILOSOPHY

For the first millennia of the Age of Imperium, certain Inquisitors had become fixated upon the resurrection of the Emperor by restoring or strengthening his crippled mortal body. With the purge initiated by von Dressen and Baigdan, resurrectionism had become an isolated, almost extinct philosophy. However, as the centuries passed, those Inquisitors that were intrigued by the possibilities of resurrection but wary both of the dangers associated with and the prohibitions placed upon pursuing such an agenda, a different approach was taken. These scattered individuals carried out their works in secret to begin with, wary of anti-resurrectionist sentiments throughout the Inquisition. However, as the studies of several progressed and they came into contact with one another, a tangential philosophy was born – the Incarnationists.

The principles of Incarnationism were simply yet eloquently penned by Theodre the Questioning in the works titled *Musings Upon the Will of the Emperor*:

“The Emperor walks among us. He chooses his vessels to do his work, as he has done so since time began. The rotting carcass maintained in the Golden Throne is not the Emperor, for he travels abroad, tending to his Divine Will, instilling his power into those that have been chosen. But what if the Emperor could be granted a body that does not wither and die, that could be his vessel for all eternity to come? I believe that such a thing is possible, that the Emperor yet waits for his new body to be found or created. In essence, a new Emperor will be created to lead Mankind to its destiny and conquest of the galaxy.”

Though the Incarnationists were but a fledgling faction, their numbers included not only several well-placed and highly respected Inquisitor Lords such as Theodre, but also a number of young, dynamic Inquisitors that were keen to be pro-active in an organisation that had become increasingly dogmatic as it had grown and become more established.

Thus it was that before he came to prominence amongst the rest of the Imperium, Sebastian Thor was well known to several agents of the Inquisition. Ever interested in tales of sainthood and remarkable individuals, a number of Incarnationists were drawn to the world of Dimmamar, even before the rise of Vandire and his Reign of Blood. At a young age, Thor was noted not for his physical size or skill, but for his presence, charisma and oratory ability; talents, some Inquisitors believed, that verged on supernatural.

As was usual in such circumstances, Thor was closely observed to detect the taint of Chaos or alien influence or mutation in his remarkable skills, but was found to be resoundingly pure. Totally pure, which in itself raised eyebrows amongst the Incarnationists.

The excitement of the Incarnationists was felt by other members of the Inquisition, and so it was that those who were not perturbed by growing stories of ancient pyramids at the galaxy's edge were caught up in the growing interest in Dimmamar. Though few would ever realise it, the rise of Sebastian Thor not only halted Vandire's reign, but was also partly responsible for it being allowed to start.

ACCEPTANCE

As the Reign of Blood continued and Thor spoke out against Vandire, the Inquisition were content to aid him by shadowy means but otherwise left him be, interested to see whether this potential Divine Vessel would provide some kind of key to them. As evidence of this marked fate grew, such as Thor's astounding ability to generate such great faith in those around him that it could conjure or quell warp storms, the Incarnationists had found themselves a new focus. While before they had looked for all manner of vessels that the Emperor might inhabit, they began to focus on the saintly, human beings that might provide the final answer. They became known as Thorian.

With their emphasis on finding a natural human receptacle, close work with the burgeoning Ordo Hereticus and their own devout policies of daemon-hunting and anti-possession rituals, the Thorian were regarded as stoic, pro-Imperial Inquisitors, and thus gained wide acceptance, even if their number was relatively small at first.

The Principles of the God Incarnate were written in mid M.40 by Inquisitor Helsten, and were the compiled dissertations of several Thorian Inquisitors from the Tiberias Conclave. Though not widely known amongst even the Inquisition, these principles can be said to be part of the foundation of the Inquisition and its mission. With this knowledge under their control and a great determination to destroy the Emperor's enemies, the Thorian have come to be regarded as one of the most puritanical factions, even though their philosophy was once perhaps the most heretical of all.

THE GOD INCARNATE

THE PRINCIPLES OF THE GOD-INCARNATE

The Emperor really is a god, His ascension after the fight with Horus is very real. Like the other gods He exists within the Warp and in essence He is the god of Humanity. The one limitation to any god is that to have power over the physical world, they must rely upon mortals to do their work. The Emperor is in fact the greatest example of this – the galaxy spanning Imperium is merely the material instrument of the Emperor. In a similar fashion, the Chaos gods must have Champions, possess worshippers or temporarily create physical manifestations in the form of Daemons. At the bottom line, the Warp is merely a reflection of the material world, and without mortals, none of the gods would exist. All of the existing background points towards the gods, and other Warp entities, craving after the physical universe.

However, what if a god could become a physical incarnation? As a man (the Emperor) can become a god, it stands to reason that a god could become a man. This is the idea of the God-Incarnate, the physical vessel for a god in the material world. The idea of the God-Incarnate is that there will be a certain individual (or individuals) who will allow this to happen - a god could invest their power into the mortal body and literally become a living god (commonly known amongst Thorians as Divine Avatars). Without being restricted to the Warp, and therefore restricted to the manipulation of crass, mortal pawns, what power would a god have?

THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE GOD-INCARNATE

One can imagine that Humanity would be doomed if one of the Divine Avatars were to become the incarnation of a Chaos god. Similarly, the idea of the God-Incarnate is not restricted to Humans - the Eldar are striving to create a new god to defeat Slaanesh, while a God-Incarnate of Gork or Mork would be terrible. However, possibly an even greater threat to the Imperium, and the reason why the God-Incarnate is such a secret that only the Inquisition know of it (not even the High Lords of Terra know) is that it would be possible to reincarnate the Emperor into a living being again.

As far as the many of the Inquisition are concerned, the 'second coming' of the Emperor would be a bad thing. This is quite an understandable position really, and springs from uncertainty. If the Emperor were to become a God-Incarnate, what would happen to the Astronomican? What would be Humanity's reaction to having their god walking among them? Would the Imperium be torn apart by war, as believers and unbelievers in the second coming clashed. If the Emperor were in physical form, could He be killed again, and if so would He be destroyed forever, exposing Humanity to the many perils that the Emperor protects them from? Would the Emperor be destroyed if things

went wrong, if the Divine Avatar was unsuitable? All in all, many of the Inquisition would rather see the status quo sustained.

THE INQUISITION AND THE MAGI

It is the real task of the Inquisition to seek out possible Divine Avatars and either kill them, control them or study them according to their personal philosophy. Over ten thousand years they have gathered information about what to look for to indicate a possible Divine Avatar (see Signs and Portents below). Under the cover of rooting out heretics, witches and mutants, some Inquisitors are searching for individuals that show signs of Divine Avatar-like properties.

The Magi (the original philosophical descendants of Moriana) are doing the same thing, only rather than wishing to suppress the God-Incarnate they want to bring it about. Some of the Magi may be trying to create a God-Incarnate of the Chaos gods, out of selfish hope to either be the Divine Avatar themselves, or by earning eternal favour of their god for being the most loyal of servants. Others may be trying to reincarnate the Emperor, seeing this as the true way forward for Humanity.

So we have the Inquisitors and the Magi both questing after the same thing, but for very different reasons - an eternity of secret conflict.

SIGNS AND PORTENTS

The myths and legends surrounding the God-Incarnate tell of the coming of the new god amidst great upheaval, strife and war. Just as Revelations lays down the horrors of the second coming, or Ragnarok heralds the end of the world, so too will the God-Incarnate's arrival be preceded by momentous events. There are many Inquisitors that believe the end of the 41st millennium is just such as time with such tumultuous circumstances - Ghazghkull's biggest Waaagh! the multiple hive fleets attacking the Imperium, the reawakening of the Necrontyr, and a growing Adeptus Mechanicus schism - all indications of growing turmoil and strife.

Similarly, there are indicators that point towards who the Divine Avatar/s will be; shrouded in myths and legends as you'd expect, some of them as simple as 'Ten ways to recognise the Divine Avatar':

"He shall have a great doom upon his brow, he shall be a witch of great power, he shall be altered in the physical form, he shall be able to talk and walk with the animals"

Nobody knows all of the signs, and part of the reason for the Inquisition hunting down all the psykers, aliens and mutants they can is to study them, to find out what they can about these individuals so that they might better understand the type of person who would become a Divine Avatar.



THE GALLILENUS HERESY

The Cardinal world of Gallilenus III lies some four hundred light years from Terra and is often visited by pilgrims travelling to the Imperial Palace. One of the oldest worlds to have been incorporated into the Ministorum, it boasts not only huge palaces and cathedrals, but also an extensive catacomb of ancient tombs and vast reliquaries. The bodies, or parts of them at least, of several saints are believed to reside on Gallilenus III, guarded by a detachment of Battle Sisters.

Gallilenus II had often been visited and investigated by Inquisitors that subscribe to the Thorian philosophy, but it was the attention of one particular Inquisitor that caused a rift between the Ecclesiarchy officials of the world and the Inquisition that has yet to be closed.

Young and headstrong, for one of his position, Inquisitor Jaueg Dag was eager to forward the Thorian cause. Not content to merely study the texts of his predecessors, he was possessed of the notion to make a great discovery that would raise the level of Thorian knowledge to a new level. Having seen or heard of the great many works embarked upon near Dimmamar and Ophelia, he chose instead to perform his researched on Gallilenus III.

In the past several Thorian Inquisitors had requested that the saints' remains be exhumed for examination, but the rulers of Gallilenus had refused. Not wishing to force the issue with the Ecclesiarchy, these Inquisitors had wisely decided to continue their studies elsewhere. Inquisitor Dag decided to conduct his investigations in a clandestine manner instead, not even notifying the cardinals of his presence on his world.

For several months he and his agents infiltrated the catacombs and examined what they could of the ancient relics and corpses. Psychomancers in his entourage probed the bodies for clues as to the nature of the souls that had once inhabited them, while extensive physical tests were also conducted on the corpses. Over this time, growing rumours of shadowy tomb robbers began to circulate until they reached such prominence that the Cardinals themselves heard them and acted.

Dag and his followers were intercepted whilst attempting to exhume the body of Saint Accillia, and a firefought broke out amongst the pillars and tunnels of the Chapel of Rest in which she was interred. Not wishing to have himself revealed, Dag fought back with lethal intent against the Sisters of Battle that had hunted him down, killing several of them before escaping into the catacombs.

Shocked by his own actions, Dag realised the folly of his covert methods and with his warrior band quit Gallilenus III as soon as he could. He went on to become a confident and successful member of the Ordo Hereticus, spending his life in atonement for the rash actions of his early years. Tales still abound across Gallilenus III of ghoulish bodysnatchers, believed by some to be dark cultists, by others to be flesh eating daemons or aliens.

THE VIRENUS GAMBIT

There are some amongst the Thorians that believe that a Divine Avatar may never come about naturally, and that it is their duty to devise a way to artificially create a host for the Emperor's soul. One such man is Inquisitor Dahwrin. In the latter years of the 41st millennium he has gained something of a reputation for being an expert on such matters, having widely examined all manner of documentation regarding the Primarchs and Space Marines. However, few know of his studies whilst operating as part of the Ordo Sicarius, the group of Inquisitors that have spent their efforts watching the Officio Assassinorum, established after the perilous Wars of Vindication.

It was, naturally some might say, the shapeshifters of the Callidus Temple that attracted the attention of Dahwrin. As well as his usual duties of guarding against misuse of the Assassins and watching their training, Dahwrin spent much time examining the properties of the shape-altering drug polymorphine.

Though few know the locations of the hidden Assassin temples, there is little that an Inquisitor cannot discover and Dahwrin became aware of the isolated Callidus training outpost on the second moon or Osirian. Accompanied by a Magos Biologis of the Adeptus Mechanicus, Hexun Lurd, Dahwrin travelled to the temple and invoked an Inquisitorial quarantine. Cut off from interference, he and Magos Lurd began to experiment with polymorphine, using the trainees as their test subjects.

Their aim was to create a hyperpolymorphine that could, when used on a psychically suitable subject, perhaps create a robust enough vessel for the Emperor. Much of this was carried out on a trial and error basis and the horrors created by over-stimulated polymorphine were lucky if they died swiftly. However, after several months and nearly two dozen test subjects, one of the Assassin potentials survived a particular hybrid variant of polymorphine.

Unbeknownst to Dahwrin, Magos Lurd had no intention of simply handing over the results of the studies to the Inquisition. An armed force loyal to the Adeptus Mechanicus broke through the quarantine in an attempt to remove the successful subject to the nearest forge world for closer examination by the Techpriests.

Dahwrin naturally struck back and fighting broke out between the two forces within the temple. Already disturbed by the Inquisitor's practises and now alarmed that the Adeptus Mechanicus were aware of the location of her temple, the Master Callidus that run the facility joined the fighting and a three-way struggle broke out.

During the chaos of those weeks, the test subject, Asaid Virenus, escaped. Using her polymorphine abilities, she managed to slip out from the grasp of all three parties and is to this day still unaccounted for. Lord Inquisitor Antigonus Balorodin, who led the subsequent investigation that saw Dahwrin savagely censured for his actions and Magos Lurd executed for his traitorous behaviour, is still hunting the fugitive Callidus.



THORIAN-RELATED FACTIONS

As one can see from the history of the Thorians, the beliefs that have built into the Thorian philosophy can be manifested and acted upon in a number of different ways. As well as the Thorians there are other resurrectionist/incarnationist factions, including splinter groups within the Thorians themselves. Here are a few examples of such groups.

THE HORUSIANS

Despite the pogroms of the 35th millennium, Horusian ideals have waxed and waned in popularity ever since the founding of the Inquisition. The Horusian ideal is quite simple, and yet also unpalatable for many Inquisitors, even those with a resurrectionist outlook. Their assumption is that somehow the powers of Chaos that manifested themselves in Horus might be harnessed for the creation of a Divine Avatar, or perhaps in the process of transferring the Emperor's soul from its current form into the body of a living god.

Considered radicals except by themselves, the Horusians are few in number but fanatical in their cause. They tend to be older Inquisitors, frustrated by the lack of answers provided by other resurrectionist theories and therein lies the danger. Chaos and its power can never be viewed as a quick route to success, for in that direction lies damnation.

Quite apart from the normal anti-resurrection arguments, many Inquisitors view Horusians with suspicion, out of fear that their dabbling with possession and Warp intrusions endangers those around them and the Imperium in general. However, the most experienced Horusians are well versed in the perils of the Warp and Chaos and so are numbered amongst the most proficient and dedicated daemon hunters in the entire Inquisition.

Like all such philosophies, the Horusians must tread a path along a precipice of dedicated service to the Imperium and the fulfilment of their researches. It is a path that most have trodden wisely, but not all Horusians have remained faithful and, perhaps like Moriana ten thousand years ago, succumbed to the lure of the Dark Powers.

ANOMALIAN BEHOLDERS

While other Incarnationist Inquisitors believe that it is their duty to bring about the Emperor Incarnate, the Anomolian Beholders believe that such thoughts skirt with hubris. Instead, they are perhaps the most conservative of all the Incarnationist factions, their goal being not to create the Emperor Incarnate, but to observe Humanity and await His arrival. They see it as their job to prepare for this momentous event and to stand ready to offer whatever assistance may be needed at this great time.

The predominant activity of the Anomolian Beholders is locating potential Divine Avatars and observing them. Only if they are convinced that the vessel is tainted will they destroy it. Much like the original Thorians they are content to examine and research remarkable individuals for signs of potential or corruption. They are more zealous than most to follow up any sign or omen of a possible Divine Avatar, and are amongst some of the most travelled Inquisitors in the galaxy.

Anomolian Beholders tend to be pragmatic, down-to-earth individuals, after a lifetime of seeking wisdom and enlightenment, only to have their hopes thwarted time and again. They tend to take a longer view of matters, and despite numerous setbacks to achieving their goals, are always optimistic that the future may hold the answers. This has garnered them a reputation for being level-headed and reliable, and other Inquisitors will often happily overlook their foibles in return for these better qualities.

ARDENTITES

Though not truly following a philosophy of resurrectionism or incarnationism, the Ardentities are best discussed alongside such factions. Their somewhat quirky belief is not widespread amongst the Inquisition but had been persistent in various guises for several millennia, either within the broader Thorian ideals or as a distinct faction in its own right.

The Ardentities firmly believe in the basic principles of the Emperor Incarnate, but their similarity with the Thorians ends. Rather than a single Divine Avatar, the Ardentites feel it is more likely that the power of the God-Emperor is likely to manifest through a group of people, or more likely the entirety of Mankind.

Given Humanity's evolution towards being a psychic race, evidenced by a gradual but perceptible increase in mutation and psychic ability, it is the belief of the Ardentites that the ultimate plan of the Emperor to protect Mankind during this vulnerable stage was to disseminate his power throughout Humanity.

So it is that the Ardentites do not concern themselves merely with remarkable individuals, but rather attempt to locate evidence of the Emperor's presence in any person expressing proof of talent or psychic ability. This is a vague, unsure process, for none can say what defines evidence of the Emperor's presence, though certainly there is no end of accounts of miraculous events that might be accounted for by intervention by the Emperor.

Known sometimes by the rather derogatory title of miracle-chasers, much of the disdain for Ardentites stems from the erratic behaviour of Inquisitor Voragian Thex, who spent two centuries during the 39th millennium attempting to prove the Ardentite theorems, but was unable to produce a shred of evidence. Having presented his findings at a conclave of his fellow Inquisitors, he was censured for dereliction of duty for devoting time and resources to his baseless beliefs.

It is perhaps this defiance of defeat and a rebellious streak that characterises many Ardentites. They are widely regarded as eccentric individuals who see the work of the Emperor everywhere, but they also make great investigators for they will often delve deeper and for longer than others, unwilling to make obvious conclusions from their discoveries but to seek inner meanings and hidden motives in what they encounter.

CASOPHILIANS

Saint Casophili was a missionary with the Missionarus Galaxia in the early 41st millennium, spreading the teachings of the Ecclesiarchy to worlds in the southern Segmentum Pacifica. It was on the world of Alena Three that he discovered minions of the Dark Gods at the heart of several of the feral societies on the world.

With few resources to hand, Saint Casophili did what he could to counter this endemic threat and laid the foundations for a full Ecclesiarchy task force to continue his work. However, as he moved from settlement to settlement preaching the word of the God-Emperor, his foes began to take notice. Unable to bear such a threat to their power, the council of priests that ruled the world moved against him and had him captured and tortured, to recant his errant beliefs.

The chronicles of Casophili tell of his arduous ordeal at the hands of the twisted priests, to the point at which he died from his wounds. Here the tale of Saint Casophili may have ended, unknown and unrecorded, another pious missionary whose life had ended in the pursuit of his calling.



Though Casophili died at the hands of his tormentors, something remarkable happened. Five days after his death, the body of the missionary was to be burned upon a sacrificial pyre to the Dark Gods. As the flames took hold of the tarred wood, Casophili roused himself and jumped from the fires. Miraculously brought back from the dead, Casophili confronted his tormentors and the gathered crowd. The story of Saint Casophili's return spread quickly and he led the people of Alena Three against the priesthood.

Such an occurrence would naturally attract the attention of Resurrectionist Inquisitors, but the faction that have dedicated themselves to the study of Casophili's story focus on one particular aspect of the saint's tale. In his later works, Casophili writes of his experiences over the five days between death and resurrection. During this period, the saint tells of a bodiless floating sensation in a gulf of sound and colour. He writes of a clamour of myriad voices, some whispering and others bellowing, swirling around him. He also speaks of a great light that suffused everything, which he believed to be the Emperor.

The fact that Casophili's soul returned to his body is not so much of a concern for the Casophilians, for the basic assumption of all Thorian and related beliefs is that the psychic energy of an individual can pass to the Warp and back. The fact that Casophili's writings tell of a place within the Warp where these souls reside is the province of the Casophilians.

Knowing that daemonic entities can broach the barriers between Warp and real space, the Casophilians dedicate their study to the transition of a human soul to their universe. They are profound experts of daemonology with regard to ritual summoning, as opposed to accidental or malicious possession. With this knowledge they seek to devise a way to bring forth the soul of a deceased man or woman, and if this proves successful, it will be a major step towards creating the means by which the Emperor's soul can be invested into a suitable mortal form.

Rather than the general and rather isolated studies of other Resurrectionist factions, the Casophilians openly embrace new ideas on their theories and work closely with Inquisitors of different leanings, gleaning what they can from the experiences of others. In particular, they are often found working in conjunction with an Inquisitor who follows the philosophy of the Anomolian Beholders, for the Casophilians focus on the souls of the dead, while the Anomolian Beholders study the souls of the living.

REVIVIFICATORS

Unusually for a resurrectionist cult, the Revivicators have few ties with the Ministorum. Their focus is directed towards the transition of the soul to the Warp at the point of death. In particular, they study the means by which this can be slowed, halted and, ultimately, returned. This study takes them to battlefields and plague areas, to conduct their investigations on those close to the death. They are also frequenters of tombs and mausoleums, hence a certain amount of disrespect for the practices of the Ecclesiarchy.

Known as ghouls or ravens for their somewhat morbid practices, the Revivicators are also known to have learned much from the capture of various Eldar over the centuries. In particular, they find the principle of the Eldar spirit stone intriguing, and have on numerous occasions attempted to replicate the practice of capturing a departing soul. So far, such attempts have proved wholly unsuccessful, for Mankind's psychic technology is far inferior to the psychic-engineering properties of Eldar wraithbone.

There are also those that have read Van Hinkel's Treatise on the Soultheft Methods of Eldar Pirates, penned by the Inquisitor Lord in the late 39th millennium. This detailed manuscript contains Van Hinkel's report on interrogations of captured Dark Eldar, as well as collating information from many other sources previously scattered in various libraries and datafiles throughout the Inquisition's fortresses and stations.

The least scrupulous Revivicators have attempted to repeat the torturous practices of the Dark Eldar, usually on heretics and other criminals, though not exclusively so. Few amongst the Inquisition know of the grisly dungeons staffed by telepaths and wired with arcane machinery for the detection and extraction of psychic energy.

Ultimately, it is the goal of the Revivicators to study the Golden Throne itself and perhaps alter its working so that the Emperor's body might be restored. To this end, it is not only the passage of the soul to the Warp that the Revivicators study, but also the processes by which a corpse may be maintained in a state ready for such a reinfusion of the soul. Access to this knowledge and technologies means that Revivicators often leave far longer than even other Inquisitors, the oldest being Inquisitor Lord Verinath, who was shot and killed whilst hale and hearty at the age of seven hundred and sixty three.

THORIAN PERSONALITIES

LORD ANTIGONUS BALORODIN, EXPULGATOR OF THOTH PRIME

As the youngest son of the Imperial Commander of Polyphemia II, a hive world in the Segmentum Solar, Antigonus Balorodin had spent his life being groomed for a career in the military of the world. His father, a staunch traditionalist, insisted that all his children serve at least five years in the Polyphemian Guard, the planet's defence force. As the youngest of five sons and three daughters, there was little prospect of Antigonus ever rising to the position of Imperial Commander, and it was expected that he would continued to stay in the Polyphemian army and perhaps rise to the rank of colonel or even general - depending on his abilities, for his father had no place for toadying and favouritism when it came to the defence of his world.

When Antigonus was in his second year as a Lieutenant in the Polyphemian First Division, a Departamento Munitorum tithing fleet arrived at Polyphemia, much to the surprise of the Imperial Commander and his aides. Orks had invaded Dacemon, an agri-world some hundred and twenty light years away, and Polyphemia was required to provide four hundred thousand soldiers for the army being assembled for the reconquest.

Ever one to stick to his principles, the Imperial Commander sent his best equipped and trained troops - the First, Second and Third Divisions. Thus it was that Antigonus became a lieutenant in the Imperial Guard and within three months was aboard ship and heading to his first warzone.

The Polyphemians were amongst the first to arrive at Dacemon and were dropped onto a world that was three-quarters overrun with Orks. It was their mission to establish a fortified landing site from which attacks could be launched against the Greenskins, and into which new regiments arriving from other tithed worlds could be landed.

The initial assault was a complete disaster. Poor intelligence led to the majority of the drop being made onto unstable lava beds, and tens of thousands died as the drop ships crashed through the fragile surface or were destroyed by eruptions caused by the impact of hundreds of monolithic drop craft.

To make matters worse, what was thought to be an uninhabited wasteland was in fact densely populated by numerous large creatures that lived within tunnels inside the vitrified lava flows. Many of these were very predatory and even as the dropped regiments were recovering from their disastrous landings more soldiers were lost to attacks from gigantic crab-like creatures and mutant hunting cats.

So it was that the assault force was entirely unprepared for the Ork counter-attack when it came. As gargants and other war machines assailed the Imperial

Guard positions it was quickly evident that they would not hold their position. Antigonus, recognising this predicament, requested permission from his hyperiors to lead a force into the network of tunnels, to act as a rearguard for the retreat. The request was denied, with the order that there was to be no retreat - the landing site had to be held at all costs. Three more regiments were inbound towards the planet, having just made warpfall, and if the landing zone could be held for two weeks, they would arrive to reinforce it.

It was at this point that Antigonus began to show some of the guile and initiative for which he has become known amongst those that have met him. Within five days, the planetary enclave was untenable and Antigonus suggested to his hyperiors that they would be better relocating their command headquarters to the tunnels, where they would be safer from the gargant



THE SOULWATCHER HELM

Antigonus crafted the Soulwatcher helm himself, with the aid of Magos Psykana Alendrixa. Antigonus is not a natural psyker, and so the Soulwatcher helm functions differently to a normal psi-booster. The spirit stone encased within the Soulwatcher helm contains an Eldar soul - a psychic essence that Antigonus can tap into. Spirit stones are specifically created to shield the soul within from the warp, in particular the attention of Slaanesh. This allows Antigonus to use the psychic energy of the stone without risk to himself, and the Soulwatcher helm contains an intricate network of mind impulse circuitry that allows the Inquisitor to interact with and gain feedback from the psychic gem.

However, communing with a dead Eldar spirit is something that cannot be done without other risks. Even on the Eldar craftworlds, such matters are only undertaken by especially resilient psykers known as Spiritseers. The effect of this unconscious and conscious communication between Antigonus and the Soulwatcher helm is bound to have an increasingly profound effect on the Inquisitor.

Not only is Antigonus risking his mental stability by perceiving the world through the psyker-sight of the spirit stone, but bringing his mind into close contact with an alien consciousness as powerful as an Eldar's has inherent risks. Though there are probably only a few individuals in the history of the Imperium that understand such matters fully (Inquisitor Czevak perhaps being the most prominent), Antigonus' few colleagues suspect that the growing relationship between the Inquisitor and the captive Eldar spirit is affecting Antigonus' judgement.

bombardments and attack runs by Ork aircraft. Antigonus formed the remnants of the First Division into a bodyguard and broke out of the closing ring of Greenskins with the command staff. Of nearly half a million guardsmen that had landed, only sixty thousand still remained. Of these, some seven thousand formed the remainder of the First Division.

Despite the denial of his request by the Imperial Guard command, Antigonus had already sent two pioneer companies, some five hundred men, into the tunnels east of the landing zone. Already they had set up defensive works and communications arrays, and conducted mapping missions of the surrounding area. With his foresight, Antigonus was able to lead the Polyphemian command staff into a near fully functioning headquarters, secured against the subterranean hunting creatures and well obscured from attack from the surface.

While the remainder of the assault force was reduced to a few hundred men using the crashed dropships as bunkers, the First Division used the tunnels to launch counter-attacks against the horde. For seventeen days they held out against the Greenskins and also supported the troops still holding the drop site. When regiments from Argastas arrived, the First Division broke out in force and covered the landings, losing over half their number in the ensuing Ork attack. Despite these losses, the Argastans landed safely and finally a breach was established. The drop site battle had lasted twenty four days, and the Polyphemians were withdrawn to orbit, only three thousand of them left alive.

The drop site debacle unsurprisingly drew attention, and Inquisitor Brek arrived at Dacemon determined that those guilty of such incompetence would not go unpunished. During his investigation, Brek was impressed by Antigonus and rather than chastising him for his somewhat lax attitude to authority and deliberate misinterpretation of orders, admired his foresight and planning. When Brek left Dacemon, Antigonus had joined his entourage and was taking the first steps to becoming an Inquisitor.

Antigonus learned under Brek for twenty three years, taking part in many dangerous missions with his master. It was during the Benlarii Scouring of 936-938.M41 that Antigonus first met

Inquisitor Lord Tawb-Shiba. With the Cult of the Reconciled unveiled and crushed, Brek was leaving Benlarii. Antigonus requested that he be allowed to join Tawb-Shiba, intrigued by the Inquisitor Lord's Thorian beliefs. Brek was more than happy for Antigonus to strike out on his own, though he knew he would miss his abilities.

Tawb-Shiba was a classical Thorian and a strong proponent of Incarnationism in general. It was during his seven years with Tawb-Shiba that Antigonus was introduced to the principles of the Anomolian Beholders, and the practical outlook of this philosophy. A man always possessed of a direct rather than philosophical outlook, Antigonus has actively pursued the Anomolian agenda since parting with Tawb-Shiba in 945.M41.

Antigonus' work was diligent but unremarkable for several decades. He uncovered and destroyed a Genestealer cult on Thrand's Landing, which brought Antigonus into contact with two Inquisitors of the Ordo Malleus. For the next seven years Antigonus was initiated into the workings of the Ordo, during which his studies and investigations into the nature of the Divine Avatar were suspended.

It was after this period that Antigonus was drawn to Thoth Prime to combat the growing Eldar threat on the mining world. The details of the Expulsion of Thoth Prime are told elsewhere, but of importance is Antigonus' creation of the Soulwatcher helm. Using a mix of Eldar and Imperial technology, the Soulwatcher helm allows Antigonus to look at the psychic aura of any living creature, or so he believes.

With the aid of the Soulwatcher helm, Antigonus has moved from success to success. Able to look into the soul of those he speaks to, Antigonus can detect lies and half truths with unerring accuracy and detect motive and emotion. He has become expert at rooting out the truth, and in particular for uncovering cults and plots long before they would normally come to the attention of the Inquisition. He can also spot psykers and latent psykers at a glance, and has on occasion worked closely with the Black Ships of the Inquisition. To Antigonus, the Soulwatcher helm allows him to see the purity of others.

The Soulwatcher helm has not come without a price though. It has divorced Antigonus from Humanity, reducing men, women and children to little more than flickering, weak soul-fires. He increasingly views things as abstract, intellectual problems, removed from suffering and consequences.

Inquisitors that have known Antigonus for many years express growing doubt at his worryingly erratic behaviour. He has, it is claimed by some, an aversion of mirrors, borne about by his inability to look at himself. He has become quick to judge, relying more and more on the Soulwatcher helm and less on the traditional methods of the Inquisition. This has brought into doubt the veracity of some of his investigations, although to date there is no hard evidence that Antigonus has been made any errors or proceeded without cause.

Most of all, the Soulwatcher helm has earned Antigonus the enmity of the Eldar. Several times his actions have been dogged by an Eldar Ranger intent on reclaiming the Soulwatcher helm. This individual is believed to have met Antigonus during his mission on Thoth Prime and has tracked him on and off ever since.

This has become particularly problematic on occasion, as evidenced during Antigonus' explorations of the alien ruins on Pryzsbila Contempta. Though believed deserted, the megalithic structures of the world harboured an unknown peril in the form of a small cadre of Eldar warriors, who had somehow tracked Antigonus to the dead planet. The small Adeptus Mechanicus team that accompanied him was attacked several times, as was the Inquisitor himself, and eventually they were forced to abandon the ruins. Antigonus has yet to return to Pryzsbila Contempta, but has vowed to do so with a Deathwatch kill-team.



GOTTERICH VALON

Cardinal Gotterich Valon was a prosperous, powerful individual on the world of San Sebastian. Well-respected amongst his peers, he was touted as an obvious candidate to the Cardinals Astra on Ophelia. In his late forties, Cardinal Valon had done much work with the Missionarus Galaxia and Schola Progenium, diverting considerable Ecclesiarchy resources into the missionaries' endeavours and establishing several dozen new Schola Progenium Abbeys in the surrounding sectors.

As well as these good works away from the Cardinal world, Cardinal Valon was also responsible for several esteemed projects on San Sebastian. The Great Library of Thor - over seven hundred volumes dealing with the life and works of the saintly Ecclesiarch - was renovated and restored with help from the local populace. For seven years they laboured, removing the books to other storage while masons and engineers reconstructed the massive edifice containing the collection.

Techpriests of the Adeptus Mechanicus were also employed to bring several custom-built stasis chambers to house the library's oldest and most precious works, including several of the Ecclesiarch's journals from his early life as a preacher.

In tribute to his hard work and dedication, Cardinal Valon was granted passage to conduct a five-year tour of the Schola Progenium facilities and Missionary waystations constructed under his patronage. Small Warp-capable cutter and crew were procured for the cardinal's use, and he began his tour in 965.M41.

It was halfway through the third year of the journey that Cardinal Valon came to the world of Luchesio. Much to the dismay of the ship's crew, they found themselves in a warzone. An Ork hulk was menacing the Luchesio system and Ork ships had landed on the agri-world. Though the captain of the vessel was keen to leave, Valon insisted that they continue on their journey to visit the Schola Progenium abbey on Luchesio.

The Abbey itself was defended by several squads of Battle Sisters, led by Palatine Joannus, and the Abbot's staff and Progena. There had been little fighting around the Abbey itself, though the Sororitas had embarked on several purging missions into nearby Ork warbands.

Upon the arrival of Valon, the Abbot was most perturbed and insisted that the cardinal return to his ship in orbit and continue on his way. Valon declined, insisting that he would see first hand what had been achieved with the resources put into the Luchesio Abbey. Commissar training squads, Battle Sister potentials, Fleet Officer cadets and others were all gathered into ad-hoc squads to assist the battle sisters, under overall commander of Palatine Joannus.

A number of minor Ork attacks assailed the Abbey and surrounding area, and on one occasion Valon himself was caught by a surprise flight-bomber raid whilst exercising in the cloistered quadrangle. The columned walls were sent tumbling by two rocket impactors, throwing masonry and dirt across the Cardinal. His leg was shattered and a shard of stone had pierced one lung. Unable to call for help the Cardinal simply lay under the rubble. A young girl, perhaps twelve years of age, was the first to find him.

The Abbey was now under bombardment from Ork guns on the nearby rooftops of the surrounding buildings, but the girl, Louisa Della Monica, was unperturbed, having been raised at the Progenium by the Sisters since she was a babe. With a prayer to the Emperor on her lips, she began to dig Valon out of the rubble. A salvo of shells detonated inside the ruined courtyard, flinging Della Monica to the ground. She emerged from the dust cloud unscathed. To Valon's eye, perhaps miraculously unscathed.

After several more weeks of fighting, the Orks were pushed back many miles from the Abbey and it was safe for Valon to take his

leave. He had resolved not to continue his tour, but to return to San Sebastian and report on his extraordinary encounters at Luchesio. With him he took several of the bravest fighters from the attacks on the Abbey, amongst them Della Monica.

On his return to San Sebastian with his group of Luchesio veterans, he presented them to the rest of the Cardinals. After many days of questions and examinations, Della Monica was declared blessed of the Emperor, and the benefactor of a miraculous intervention. Valon had long been aware of such miracle happenings, but having witnessed one first hand an insatiable curiosity had been piqued.

Still with a year's license and a cutter to use, Valon spent his time well, taking his new companions with him to visit various sites of other recorded miracles in the surrounding systems. This eventually brought him to Sanagua Primar, and the attention of the Inquisition.

It was no coincidence that Inquisitor Van Dremen was on Sanagua Primar as well, for it was here that the Advent of the Living Saint Blaesilla occurred in the 39th millennium. Van Dremen and Valon crossed paths in the Chapel of Blaesilla's archives, and the two formed an immediate friendship. The Thorian Inquisitor immediately recognised a potential ally in Valon and soon arranged for him to be relinquished of his Ecclesiarchal duties. In return, Gotterich Valon added his vast theological knowledge and recent observations to Van Dremen's own investigations and knowledge and the pair continued working together for several years.

During this time, Van Dremen inducted Valon and his companions into the Inquisition proper and Valon became an Interrogator under Van Dremen. Upon Van Dremen's death during the Epsclion Demise, Valon was granted full Inquisitor status by Lord Inquisitor Heidenreich.

Valon continues to this day, protected by Della Monica and his compatriots from Luchesio. He is now a noted daemon hunter, and saw much action in the fighting leading up to Abaddon's 13th Black Crusade and the assault on Cadia. Wounded in the fighting once again, much of Valon's body is now artificially sustained by a number of chem-inducers and bionics. Unperturbed, he pursues the Thorian agenda and the duties of an Inquisitor with equal vigour.

UMBERCO ETO, QUESTOR OF TIARNI DELTA

A daemon hunter of some repute, Umberco Eto has pursued his vocation within the Inquisition for seven centuries. His travels have taken him across the Ultima Segmentum, but it is for his works close to the Maelstrom that he is particularly noted.

Eto was born on the other side of the galaxy in the Segmentum Obscurus, on the backward world of Arbrenia. Here he should have stayed, growing up in ignorance of the Imperium except for the ancient myths of the Star King and the Warriors of Heaven that fought for him. However, his life was utterly changed by the arrival of Rogue Trader Daskon Holpstein.

Holpstein's vessel had been attacked by a small Eldar pirate fleet and had been forced to make a hazardous jump into the Warp to escape capture. During the fighting and the forced jump, he had lost many of his crew and so came to Arbrenia looking for

replacements. Armed bands shuttled down to the surface and rounded up hundreds of the inhabitants, who were shocked and awed by the metallic birds descending upon them from the sky on tails of fire.

Eto was amongst the seven hundred or so pressed crewmen taken aboard the Prince Yugen and spent his early teens as a runner on the gun decks. From other crew members he learned of the Emperor on distant Terra, a dire and powerful individual, and of the many worlds that they were exploring and trading with.

So it was that Eto and the others aboard the Prince Yugen dared the remote areas of the Eastern Fringe, seeking an undiscovered world or isolated planet that would be profitable for their master. What they found would have an even more profound effect on Eto's life.



At Bredo Rock, a common staging point for ships travelling to the north of the Ultima Segmentum, the Prince Yugen docked at one of the system's dozen space stations. As Holpstein went about gathering supplies, the story of the Eldar attack and the press-ganging of the Arbrenians began to spread. It was either the Emperor's Will or poor luck for Holpstein that these tales reached the ears of Inquisitor Malordnu, an agent of the Black Ships. One of the Inquisition's psyker-hunting vessels was at Bredo Rock and soon the Prince Yugen was quarantined and boarded.

The entire crew were subjected to psychic testing and young Eto was found to possess psychic potential. Having already been taken halfway across the Imperium, the boy now found himself aboard a dreaded Black Ship, his fate uncertain. He had only the vaguest notion of what was happening to him, but was in no doubt that his future looked bleak.

However, as the Black Ship left Bredo Rock on its long voyage back towards Terra, the testing and investigation continued. Inquisitor Malordnu was informed that Eto was a powerful latent psyker, those his abilities had yet to manifest themselves in any way. Further probing and research over the coming months brought forth a willpower and mental fortitude in Eto that was unexpected but ultimately saved his life.

Eto was one of those rare psykers with power enough to protect himself from the worst perils of the Warp. Not for him to be consumed by the Emperor, nor to endure the agonising soul-binding to become an Astropath. Greater things awaited the illiterate youth - a lifetime of service to the Inquisition.

Eto was taken to an Inquisition stronghold not far from the Maelstrom, on the world of Judgement. Here he underwent several years honing his psychic abilities bringing them to the fore whilst learning to control them. He was inducted into the ways and means of the Inquisition and was a gifted, eager student. Having learned to read and write, he developed and almost unhealthy appetite for knowledge and mentally devoured any text that he was allowed to look at. In fact, so remarkable were his abilities that at the young age of twenty-five Interrogator Eto was taken into the hallowed ranks of the Ordo Malleus and received further tuition on the art of the Daemonhunter, his master none other than Inquisitor Coteaz.

Spending several years in Coteaz's retinue, Eto quickly learned the ways of the daemon, the wiles of the summoner and the weapons of the Daemonhunter. By the time he was thirty two, Coteaz released him from his service and Eto was granted the rank of full Inquisitor. While Coteaz travelled elsewhere to pursue his foes, Eto has remained in the sectors around the Maelstrom, combating the ever-present threat of possession and daemonic ingress to the material world.

Eto became a Thorian after reading a transcript of the Tiberias Conclave held by Helstern. Intrigued by the notion of the Emperor-Incarnate, which Eto deemed plausible enough given his growing experience with daemonic manifestation, the Inquisitor was therefore quick to respond when he heard word of strange happenings at the isolated monastery on Tiarni Delta.

Not so much a world as an inhabited asteroid, Tiarni Delta had been home to a secluded sect for many generations. Mendicant worshippers of the Emperor, the inhabitants of Tiarni Delta were noted by the Ecclesiarchy for their harsh lifestyle, but had

otherwise not drawn attention to themselves since their founding back in the 40th millennium.

It was odd, then, that the Tiarni Delta enclave was the source of sudden rumours concerning a miraculous manifestation. The head of the order, and aged woman called Thessala Prim, had begun to hear the voice of the Emperor. Knowing all too well that voices in the head were unlikely to be the Emperor and very likely to be malign, Eto set off to Tiarni Delta to investigate. En route, he heard of pilgrims now gathering at the world after stories of the sick being healed and the blind being given back their sight were spreading out of the system into the surrounding sub-sector.

With his warriors concealed and his identity secret, Eto arrived at Tiarni Delta aboard a merchant ship, posing as just another group of faithful pilgrims come to see the miracle of Thessala Prim. At first Eto found it exceptionally difficult to gain access to the head of the sect, as there were now several hundred pilgrims in a force-shielded enclave intended for only dozens.

It was not long after Eto's arrival that the first corpse was found. One of the water recyclers jammed and the remains of a young man was pulled out of the central reservoir. His face was contorted in a rictus of fear and as the news spread quickly through the growing populace, panic began to take grip. However, Eto was loathe to surrender the element of surprise over his foe and so chose not to reveal himself and restore order.

More bodies were discovered in the following days, all of them pilgrims that had come to Tiarni Delta. Investigation showed that none of the dead visitors - all of them young men - had yet been granted an audience with Thessala Prim. Through diligent observation, Eto and his team drew up a list of those pilgrims likely to be the next victim and set to the task of keeping them under scrutiny.

Sure enough, within four days, a young pilgrim called Piester Haune went missing near the central chapel. Eto was warned and he gathered his warrior band to break into the chapel. Inside all appeared normal at first. However, closer investigation revealed a hidden series of corridors and chambers beneath the audience chamber and the warrior band descended.

What they found was a full blown cult of the Prince of Pleasure. At their centre lay the body of Piester Haune, while Thessala Prim writhed and cavorted over him. The creature within her was manifesting itself, an incorporeal aura of shimmering, sweet-scented energy that teased and lapped at the circle of worshippers around the sacrifice.

Eto had seen enough and attacked, his psycannon destroying the daemon's host in a single volley while his warriors despatched the sect with brutal efficiency. However, Eto could not be sure that the taint had been fully cleansed. Calling back his lander from orbit, he prepared his warrior band to leave, but not until he had rigged explosive on the force shield generator that held in the enclave's thin atmosphere. As he departed Tiarni Prime, Eto detonated the generator killing everyone still on the asteroid. It was a further three months before an Imperial Navy vessel arrived in response to Eto's call and destroyed the asteroid with torpedoes. For three more years, Eto tied up the loose ends, tracking down and detaining seven pilgrims that had left Tiarni Delta before its destruction. All seven were found to be clear of taint and were sent to the nearest fortress to serve the Inquisition as scribes and menials.

Eto himself is an outlandish character, often dressed in a mix of Imperial robes and strange garb from his barbaric homeworld. He still occasionally takes trophies from slain enemies as was the custom on Arbrenia. The latticework of wires in his skull betray the presence of his psychic hood, though often these are concealed beneath the cowl of a robe or the hood of a cloak. The scion of a warrior society, Eto supplements his psycannon with a force axe whose blade is shaped like a snarling tiger, and many foes have felt its bite over the decades.



CORNELIUS LAVASLAR ANTRECHT

Like many Thorians, Cornelius Antrecht is an Inquisitor within the Ordo Malleus and possesses formidable psychic powers. He came to the attention of the Inquisition during anti-mutant sweeps of Menthusium II, a large mining colony in the Segmentum Solar.

Unlike many untrained psykers, who flee the wrath of the Inquisition and their agents, Antrecht openly surrendered himself to the investigators of the Black Ships. Worried by his own abilities, the pious young man presented himself to Inquisitor Bastalek Grim in part believing that he might be saved from damnation and in part to protect those around him.

Somewhat surprised by this unusual occurrence, the normally hardline Inquisitor Grim submitted Antrecht to psychic evaluation and he was found to possess the required strength of mind to undergo training. Coupled with his own forthright manner, Antrecht's psychic abilities garnered him a place amongst the Inquisition and he pursued his new vocation with fiery determination for many years.

Despite his own psychic powers, Antrecht was one of the most energetic witch hunters of the Ordo Hereticus. Driven by a mixture of self-loathing and disgust at those that would hide their abilities, Antrecht prosecuted many successful anti-psyker campaigns across worlds in the Feareach and Optimus sectors. During this personal crusade Antrecht and his followers captured or killed no less than three hundred and fifty psykers and latent psykers.

However, on the world of Danse Landing, Antrecht was to find a new subject for his purges - the daemon. Antrecht came to Danse Landing to seek out psykers, as he had done so for many years previously. What he was to uncover was greater and more sinister than he had ever encountered before.

Rather than conducting anti-mutant purges and destroying or surrendering psykers to the Inquisition, Imperial Commander Gothburg of Danse Landing was leading a growing cabal of these individuals. Early in his life, the taint of Chaos had taken grip of Gothburg as he had sought to rise to power and turned to the Dark Gods to eliminate his enemies. Having usurped the previous Imperial Commander, he then set about a decades-long project to gather as many psykers as he could. If not for the intervention of Antrecht then perhaps eventually all of Danse Landing would have been subverted to the power of the Dark Gods.

As it was, Antrecht came to a world that was in the grip of the mad Imperial Commander, where psykers ruled the world as glorious kings. Abhorred by what he found, Antrecht immediately sent Astropathic messages seeking large military forces to purge Danse Landing, but in the meantime resolved to deal with the heart of the matter - Gothburg.

Fuelled by an intense hatred, Antrecht led his team into the Imperial Commander's palaces, destroying everyone in his path. Unleashing his own psychic powers, something that had become increasingly rare in recent years, Antrecht brought flame and sword to the depraved cabal ruling Danse Landing. However, against the combined might of Gothburg and his minions, Antrecht was fighting a losing battle. Despite his intense efforts, Antrecht and his followers were subdued and taken prisoner.

Unwittingly, Antrecht had provided Gothburg with the means to achieve his goals. His psychic potential greater than any other individual on Danse Landing, Antrecht would provide the ideal vessel for a daemon entity summoned by Gothburg and his psykers.

For several weeks the combined mental power of the Danse Landing cabal tore at Antrecht's psychic defences. Already possessed of considerable mental abilities and hardened by Inquisition training and years of discipline, Antrecht resisted the attempts to breach open his mind and make him vulnerable to the denizens of the Warp.

It is to Antrecht's credit that during this tortuous ordeal that he still endeavoured to strike back at his enemies. Several of his psychic tormentors suffered the Inquisitor's wrath as they probed and attacked his mind, having their own souls scourged and shredded by psychic blasts from the Inquisitor.

As well as the psychic assault, Antrecht's body was subjected to all manner of agonising tortures, Gothburg's hope that weakening the Inquisitor's body would aid in breaking his spirit. Eventually, even the iron will of Antrecht could not withstand the psychic intrusions into his mind and he was reduced to a coma-like state, his mind torn open and vulnerable.

Gothburg and his acolytes began their diabolical ceremony within days, at the heart of the palaces in a specially constructed temple at the top of the edifice. In a chamber daubed with dire sigils and filled with tainted incense, Antrecht was laid within a pentacle and prepare for possession.

As the ceremony reached its height, a daemon entity began to occupy Antrecht's passive shell. His body rippled and shifted as the possession grew in power and the daemon corrupted the physical form that it was entering. Perhaps it was this that triggered Antrecht's awakening, or perhaps the touch of the alien presence in his mind. Whatever it was, Cornelius Antrecht surged back to full consciousness before the possession could be complete.

In a psychic blast that flattened everybody in the chamber, Antrecht hurled the daemon back to the Warp. Though his body was crippled by torture and the daemon's mutating presence, his mind was stronger than ever. With coruscating arcs of energy, he struck down the assembled cabal, razing the room with psychic power. Within a few moments, their smoking corpses littered the floor.

Partially paralysed and mutated, Antrecht dragged himself from the chamber. As he crawled through the corridors and rooms of the palaces, he struck down everyone that he met. Exhausted by his efforts, Antrecht hid in the dark, ancient places beneath the palaces for seven months, fitful and feverish for much of the time. Eventually an Ordo Hereticus force arrived and began to reclaim Danse Landing for the Imperium. It was only the Inquisitorial seal that he wore on his signet ring that saved Antrecht from the ire of the Battle Sisters as they came across his twisted, battered form in the palace dungeons.

Over several years, Antrecht was rehabilitated and regained some use of his body, though he wears a power harness to aid his movements and cannot speak. However, his psychic potential having been increased even further, his telepathic abilities more than make up for his deficiencies.

Having felt the power of possession first hand, Antrecht was naturally drawn towards the beliefs of the Thorians, and endeavours to bring about the Emperor-Incarnate with all the vigour that was once directed towards witch hunting. Still prone to occasional bouts of nightmarish hallucinations, Antrecht has joined the ranks of the Ordo Malleus in his efforts to thwart the machinations of the daemon at every occasion.



ASAID VIRENUS, ROGUE ASSASSIN

Growing up in the Underhive of Perseus Hive on Olympus is not easy, but Asaid Virenus decided at an early age that she was not going to try to. Aged only six, she ran away from the communal nursery to seek a better life.

Through natural quick wits and an uncanny talent for mimicry, Asaid made her way up the Underhive and into the Hive City above. She stayed here for a couple of years, observing the incessant trade wars between the various hive factory communities, and decided that although better than the nightmarish world of the Underhive, the Hive City was still not good enough for her.

It took a further three years for Asaid to inveigle herself into the society of the Upper Hive, first posing as a maid, but later taking on ever more bold guises, until she killed a distant niece of the governor and took her place. Now aged twelve, Asaid was living a life of privilege in the Upper Hive, attending elegant balls and drinking fresh water, but she was still restless.

She has never revealed what her next plans were to be, and her scheming was never able to take root. Investigating other matters, Inquisitor Virtuna uncovered Asaid's subterfuge. Revealed, Asaid fled capture and managed to avoid the Inquisitor and the governor's forces for several days before she was cornered. She killed two men before being finally subdued.

The governor was keen to have Asaid executed for her crimes, but Inquisitor Virtuna had other ideas. He took the girl into his custody and promised the governor that she would atone for her misdeeds. Leaving Olympus, Virtuna handed Asaid over to the Officio Assassinorum for testing to see if she were suitable for the Callidus Temple. She passed the physical tests easily, and her intelligence was clearly hyperior to most of the Imperium's inhabitants. There were doubts over her loyalty, but the masters of the Temple believed that through years of arduous training this could be overcome.

As it turned out, Asaid continued to be rebellious and selfish, and aged seventeen it was likely that she would be quietly killed, unsuitable for further training. Though she had perfected many of the skills required of the Callidus, and had even begun to use the shape-altering drug polymorphine, her dubious motives had become too much of a worry for the Assassins' leader.

And so Asaid's story would have ended were it not for the arrival of Inquisitor Dahwrin. Intent on developing a hyperpolymorphine to artificially create a vessel for the Emperor-Incarnate, Dahwrin tested his theories on the Temple's trainees. As failure followed failure, Asaid took a gamble and volunteered her services to the Inquisitor - it was that or be executed. Pleased with her show of faith, the master of the Temple released Asaid into the care of the Inquisitor.

Asaid survived the experimental sessions, her own ruthless determination allowing her to master the side effects of the hyperpolymorphine. However, even as she was plotting to get out of her predicament, the Inquisitor's Techpriest accomplice provided her with an opportunity to escape. As the Techpriests and Inquisitor's



forces battled with each other over their successful test subject, Asaid masqueraded as the Temple master and gained access to the Inquisitor's cutter. Overcoming the crew, she stole away from the Temple and into the stars.

Using the powers granted to her by the hyperpolymorphine, Asaid took on the appearance of Magos Lurd, the treacherous Techpriest, but hideously burned and maimed. She piloted the craft to the Adeptus Mechanicus vessel and convinced the Techpriests aboard that Lurd's attempt had been quashed and an Inquisition warship was on its way. She then induced a controlled coma and collapsed. The Techpriests quit the system before retribution could catch up with them.

Whilst the vessel was stopping over at a naval station in Aguilana, Asaid took her leave of the Techpriests, killing several before disappearing into the throng of the space station. From here, she was able to stow aboard a naval frigate and soon was light years away from her pursuers.

Since then, Asaid has survived as a freelance assassin, working for Imperial Commanders with political ambitions, and their enemies, and has even worked alongside aliens and subversive cults. One legacy of the hyperpolymorphine is a dependency on certain stabilising elixirs and Asaid uses her mercenary activities to sponsor raids on Adeptus Mechanicus facilities to acquire sufficient drugs to preserve her life. It is through these appearances that her main hunter, Lord Antigonous Balorodin, has been able to follow her trail.

He almost caught up with her on the isolated research facility on Bagrin Fex, near the galactic core. Correctly predicting that the arid moon would be Asaid's next target, Balorodin lay in wait with a force of Techpriests and Inquisitorial Storm Troopers. At the last moment, Asaid spotted the trap and tried to escape. She killed a dozen enemies as she fled, and wounded many more. Though she slipped from the clutches of the Inquisition again, she was unable to procure any more of her life-saving elixirs. It is only a matter of time before she must strike again or risk her altered body changing out of control.

Balorodin's concern is not only for the acts of murder and mayhem that Asaid commits, but also the tacit threat her existence poses. While Asaid lives, anti-Imperial forces could capture her and learn many of the secrets of the Callidus Temple and the Inquisition. Should knowledge of polymorphine be learned by the Emperor's enemies, it could cause untold damage, while the location of any Assassin temple's outposts is a closely guarded secret.

The hyperpolymorphine grants Asaid almost superhuman abilities, coupled with her training and iron discipline. Not only is she able to imitate others almost perfectly, including altering her vocal cords and internal organs to match her subject, but it also makes her able to infiltrate places inaccessible to normal humans. In pipes barely a foot wide she can sneak into the heart of her target's chambers, while she can push her unnatural body through grilles and tiny windows to reach her mark.



THORIANS WITHIN THE ORDOS

The Thorians, with their particular areas of expertise and interest, are naturally drawn towards certain aspects of the Inquisition's role within and outside the Imperium. In their pursuit of the Divine Vessel, the Emperor-Incarnate or research into the ways in which these might be brought about, the Thorians are naturally inclined to specialise their activities towards not only the Warp, but also the Ecclesiarchy and its many saints.

However, the Thorian philosophy has always trod a fine line between orthodoxy and heresy, and so many Thorians prefer to work alone and so do not have access to the higher organisation and resources of any of the Ordos. Any cooperation they enjoy, either with other Thorians or Inquisitors of a different philosophy, is quite often on an ad-hoc and temporary basis.

This situation is quite often reciprocated by other Inquisitors. Although Thorianism is now a widely-held and accepted faction within the Inquisition, Inquisitors have long memories and records that go back even longer, to a time when the predecessors of the Thorians were not so welcomed. The Thorians themselves are always awaiting a change in feeling towards them, and thus do not enter into confidence lightly with others.

These factors mean that integration of a Thorian into one of the Ordos, which are hidden organisations within the Inquisition not known to the uninitiated, normally occurs only if a Thorian already within the Ordo actively seeks out others of a like-minded philosophy. Thus the Thorians form a sub-group within the Ordo, clustered in scattered locations where they have identified each other and feel more confident in discussing their work with others.

Even allowing for this, the focus of the Thorians in certain areas means that they can rise to positions of considerable prominence within an Ordo, as several have done since the Age of Apostasy. There are even records that show that Thorians have been nominated to the position of Inquisitorial Representative - on of the High Lords of Terra sitting on the Senatorum Imperialis. There are those that have been worried in the past that giving the Thorians such potential power - on Terra itself, the seat of the Emperor - is not only dangerous for the Inquisition but the Imperium itself. Thus, such positions have generally been short-lived as opponents have gathered support and opinion has swayed against the Thorians.

On the whole, the Thorians are less disposed towards the prosecution of their duties within the Imperium itself, and are more concerned with external activities such as daemonic possession and alien technology. In the past, the divergence of an Thorian's activities and pursuit of knowledge have caused friction and even conflict within the Ordos, though perhaps no more than those of Inquisitors of other beliefs.

The somewhat broad approach that many Thorians have in attempting to find the Divine Vessel or the Emperor-Incarnate means that should a Thorian Inquisitor become inducted into one of the Ordos, it is not unusual for him or her to swiftly move into another Ordo as well. In this way, for example, a Thorian may spend a few years as a daemon hunter of the Ordo Malleus before his research or investigations lead them to some alien technology used to protect against daemons, and the Inquisitor is drawn into the organisation of the Ordo Xenos.

A Thorian that does access one of the Ordos is fortunate, for their self-appointed task requires knowledge of many different disciplines, from techno-arcana to daemomancy, Ecclesiarchy history to xenox psychic abilities. As the Ordos exist as a means

of sharing knowledge and resources, a Thorian that can access the accumulated wisdom and manpower of one or more of the Ordos, is much more likely to interconnect the disparate strands of the Thorian philosophy and make a meaningful step forward in theory, or uncover some hidden clue to the nature of the Emperor-Incarnate.

THE ORDO MALLEUS

Most Thorians that enter one of the Ordos will be daemon hunters in the Ordo Malleus. Their predisposition towards the interaction of the Warp and Humanity makes them natural candidates, as well as accomplished experts in the field of daemonic possession and summoning.

However, Thorians can also be at odds with the greater goals of the Ordo Malleus, sometimes bordering on radicalism. While no Thorian would ever condone the use of Chaos and its powers to bring about the Emperor-Incarnate, not since the conflict-filled days of the Horusians, it is not uncommon for Thorians to wish to study their adversary.

All Inquisitors believe that knowledge is power and often the best weapon against their various foes, but Thorians have been known on occasion to endanger their mission and those they are sworn to protect, in pursuit of gleaning some extra nugget of wisdom regarding the interaction of the Warp and real space.

This is counteracted by the exceptional wealth of knowledge that a single Thorian can bring to the Ordo. In regards to daemon-hunting, the study of summoning rituals and the signs of possession, the Thorians are unequalled masters. Not only this, but more psykers are drawn to Thorianism in comparison to any other philosophy, and though psykers are vulnerable to daemonic intrusion and manipulation, they also form the best defence against interlopers from the Warp. The combination of these two factors makes Thorians impressive, and very successful, daemon hunters.

It is not perhaps for the power of the Grey Knights that a Thorian is drawn to the Ordo Malleus, but for access to millennia of daemon-lore. The archives of the Ordo Malleus, hidden in secret libraries and collections across the Imperium, are a treasure trove for any Thorian. With some records dating back to the establishment of the Imperium, the knowledge of the Ordo Malleus, should any one individual ever be able to access it all, contains invaluable information regarding the relationship between mortals and the Warp.

Though dedicated to the destruction of daemons, the reports of daemonic possessions, summoning arcana and banishments are, to the Thorians, merely links in a complex mesh of data that contains important revelations on the Divine Vessel and the Emperor-Incarnate. While other Inquisitors delve into these archives with a view to expanding their armoury against the immortal entities of the Warp, the Thorian approaches them with an eye to weaving them together into a coherent series of theses that may provide the final link in that mesh of knowledge, and allow them to create or discover a Divine Vessel.

The Thorians also scour these records with another purpose, to rule out a horrifying possibility - that the Emperor-Incarnate has arrived and been destroyed, mistaken for a daemonic manifestation. Though the thought of such a thing occurring terrifies the Thorians, they are not so confident that the misguided zeal of others would have endangered the Emperor's divine will.

Even within the Ordo Malleus, the activities of Thorians are closely watched by others. The line between noble vocation and



the perils of radicalism is notoriously thin. The history of the Ordo has several occurrences of Thorians, or members of earlier Ressurrectionist factions, that have strayed over the line. The quest for wisdom is always susceptible to self-interest, and for Thorians with access to the vast repositories of knowledge that the Ordo Malleus holds, it is a constant discipline to maintain their Inquisitorial duties whilst furthering their personal cause.

THE ORDO XENOS

In comparison to the Ordo Malleus, there are very few Thorians within the ranks of the alien hunter of the Ordo Xenos. The vast majority of alien races, above and beyond their physical threat to Mankind, hold little interest for Thorians. However, there are a few that have specialised in the alien menace, where these Thorians see possible answers to the questions posed by the possible existence of the Divine Vessel.

Of those alien races that attract the attention of the Thorians, the Eldar undergo the most scrutiny and investigation, by far. As master of psychic technology, the Eldar may hold secrets to the method by which the Emperor's soul may be returned from the Warp into the real universe. This alone makes the enigmatic aliens worthy of attention.

Once a Thorian can make the mental decision that alien influence might be important to the creation or location of the Emperor-Incarnate, the Eldar become a natural field of investigation. Throughout their history, what little is known to the Inquisition and society, the Eldar's knowledge of the Warp and its inhabitants far surpasses even the gathered wisdom of the Ordo Malleus.

If he is of a mind to look at the Eldar, a Thorian Inquisitor can find the answers to many of the riddles that confront him. The existence of spirit stones prove that, given sufficient knowledge, souls can reside out of Warp space. The method by which this transference takes place, and the materials from which a waystone is made, has eluded Thorians for centuries, yet there are those that endeavour to uncover these secrets.

If spirit stones were not motive enough to dedicate a lifetime of research to this advanced race, then the existence of the Avatars is an even greater lure. If the legends of the Eldar are to be believed, these daemonic manifestations are each a part of the ancient Eldar war god, Kaela Mensha Khaine. Each Avatar is, it is believed, a soul-fragment of the Eldar god, and though they are not possessed of the magnitude of power that the Emperor-Incarnate would hold, they may provide the proof needed that a Divine Vessel could indeed house the soul of the Emperor in the corporeal universe.

With such possibilities open to them, some Thorians see the resources of the Ordo Xenos as invaluable to their studies. It is believed, though has never been documented, that the great Inquisitor Lord Czevak was once a Thorian, and it was this that led him on his quest to penetrate the secrets of the fabled Black Library of the Harlequins. That he succeeded is no small testament to his resolve. However, given Czevak's more xenophobic behaviour and philosophy after his admittance to the Black Library, it seems that some questions are best left unanswered. It is certain that Czevak no longer has any time for Thorianism and has, in typically enigmatic fashion, spoken out against the aims of the philosophy.

It is not just the Eldar that can lure a Thorian into the Ordo Xenos, as rewarding as the possibilities they present. Within the Warp there exists alien creatures that are neither mortal nor daemonic. Investigation of these aliens is not as alluring as the daemonic, but the methods by which they can influence and breach the barriers between Warp space and real space are an obvious source of knowledge for the Thorians.

Enslavers, Psycheneunein, Vampyr and other Warp creatures are able to exert their will into the real universe, and many of them are capable of transgressing the boundaries that separate the two. If only to avoid intrusion by these creatures on a Divine

Vessel, some Thorians have dedicated their lives to a greater understanding of these hideous creatures.

Both Enslavers and Psycheneunein manifest physical influence over hosts in the material universe. Unlike daemon possession, the pulsing, fleshy Warp gates of the Enslavers are an actual break across the barriers of Warp space. Similarly, the eggs laid into the brains of their victims by the wasp-like Psycheneunein are a physical form teleported across those same barriers. If physical objects can be displaced across the dimensions in this fashion, perhaps they hold the key to how the Thorians might be able bring forth the Emperor-Incarnate.

As well as the creatures themselves, the Thorians are interested in the properties of the hosts they pick. A strong psychic connection, as with all Warp manifestations, is the single linking factor, but Thorians within the Ordo Xenos believe that other traits that make a host suitable for Enslavement, for example, may aid in understanding the nature of the Divine Vessel. No Thorian Inquisitor has so far been able to retrieve for study a living specimen mid-infection, but the resources of the Ordo Xenos may yet provide this vital piece of the evidence.

It is the threat posed by the creatures to a Divine Vessel that also occupies the minds of alien-hunting Thorians. Wards and technology that prevent against psychic infection are under constant research by the Ordo Xenos, amongst their many other fields of study. If reliable, portable containment fields or other technology can be constructed that could protect a Divine Vessel from Vampiric corruption or Enslavement, then the chances of the Emperor-Incarnate manifesting are greatly increased. Or so say the Thorians.

THE ORDO HERETICUS

Many Thorians believe that the secret of the Emperor-Incarnate exists beyond current human knowledge, and though their duties may deal with the threat of the traitor and heretic, there is little for them to study to further their cause. It is for this reason that the Ordo Hereticus is a rare choice for a Thorian Inquisitor.

Most of those Thorians that are part of the Ordo Hereticus exploit the position for one particular reason - the Ordo's relationship with the Ecclesiarchy. The history of the Thorians is inextricably linked to the Ecclesiarchy. They are, after all, named after the most prominent Ecclesiarch in the history of the Ministorum.

It is not just this historical connection that draws a few Thorians to seek out the Ordo Hereticus, for there is a much more practical purpose. The ancient connection between the Ordo Hereticus and the Ministorum grants those Inquisitors in the Ordo access to the Ecclesiarchy's records. There is a vast wealth of information contained in the annals of the Ecclesiarchs, original copies of the Book of Saints, various incarnations of the Litanies of Faith and other doctrinal material. In particular,

theological musings on the nature of the Emperor, and accounts of the activities of saints and living saints are all fuel to the Thorian fire.

On the whole, Thorians do not necessarily agree with the Ministorum and its multitudinous sects with regard to their view of the Emperor. Inquisitors are, by their nature, pragmatic and not given to fanciful ideologies, whereas the dogma of the Ministorum has in the past caused grief to the Thorians. Inquisitors, should they work openly, attract fear and suspicion even from the innocent, and in an organisation as large as the Ecclesiarchy, there will always be those that would rather the Inquisition were not operating in their vicinity. This hidden resistance can often be avoided by members of the Ordo Hereticus, as many of the Ecclesiarchy see them as allies rather than foes.

As with the Ordo Malleus and Ordo Xenos, the resources of the Ordo Hereticus allow a Thorian Inquisitor a vast sum of knowledge and expertise. In conjunction with the studies of Thor himself, the tales of other famous members of the Ministorum are scrutinised and checked in the search for signs of the Emperor-Incarnate or a Divine Vessel. By cross-checking these records with the findings of Thorians in other specialties, an Inquisitor can determine if such remarkable individuals were simply gifted, perhaps possessed of psychic powers, or influenced by other, darker entities. If these avenues of investigation are exhausted or prove inconclusive, there remains the possibility that these saints were indeed Divine Vessels and perhaps partook of a portion of the Emperor's power.

It is not only those that have been loyal and faithful that attract the attention of the Thorians. The Ordo Hereticus is, after all, devoted to rooting out corruption and disloyalty, not to the praising of martyrs and saints. It is the belief of some Thorians that exceptionally gifted individuals may have been mistakenly prosecuted as threats to the Imperium when in fact they were actually showing signs of potential divinity.

In many long centuries, Ressurrectionism or Incarnationism was suppressed or even heretical, and in these periods, the beliefs and learning of the pre-Thorian factions was destroyed or declared Perdita. It is the belief of some Thorians that during these times of ignorance and denial, Divine Vessels, or at least potential Divine Vessels, may have been mistaken for psykers or the possessed. The Ordo Hereticus itself is as old as the Thorians, dating from the Age of Apostasy, but the vocation of the Witch Hunter dates back much further. The records of the Ordo therefore predate the investigations of the Thorians themselves by several millennia, much of it contributed by Incarnationists and Ressurrectionists from bygone centuries. To gain access to these old accounts and reports is reward enough for Thorian willing to balance his studies with the investigation of heretics and witches.



And it is also, of course, the duty of the Ordo Hereticus to hunt down psykers - they are the Emperor's Witch Hunters. Psychic ability is closely linked to the Divine Vessel by the Thorian, for it is psykers that are closest to the Warp and therefore in contact with the Emperor's soul.

The Ordo Hereticus therefore provides valuable information of psykers and their powers, and its network of agents can be used by a Thorian to locate psykers that also display other traits associated with a Divine Vessel or the Emperor-Incarnate. Being assisted in the investigation of these individuals allows a Thorian Inquisitor a greater chance of actually discovering one or the other, should they actually exist.

Thorians who themselves do not have psychic powers may therefore enter the service of the Ordo Hereticus in order to gain a greater understanding of these mystical abilities, perhaps the better to predict where the Divine Vessel may appear, or just to have a better level of empathy with those they are seeking.

In particular, the most powerful psykers - those graded as Alpha-level - are the greatest threat the Ordo Hereticus faces. They are also the most likely candidates for Divine Vessel status, for if a body can contain the power of an Alpha-level psyker - individuals capable of destroying Battle Titans or controlling whole worlds - then it follows that the Emperor's divine essence may also be contained within such mortal bodies.

THE ORDO SICARIUS

One of the Ordos Minoris, the Ordo Sicarius is responsible for investigating and controlling the Officio Assassinorum. By ancient decree, no Imperial Assassin may be deployed without the consent of the High Lords of Terra. This is, of course, immensely impractical and quite often an Inquisitor of the Ordo Sicarius will sanction the Officio Assassinorum under the guise of an edict from Terra. While some believe this to be an abuse of their power, in a galaxy-spanning civilisation, such measures are essential to maintain a level of response required by threats to Mankind.

Every Assassin is selected from a young age, often from feral worlds or the Scola Progenium, and trained for many years. The selection process is even more rigorous for Assassins than it is for Space Marines, and perhaps only one in several million candidates will finally fulfil their training and become an Officio Assassinorum operative.

It is this perfection of mind and body that is the lure of the Thorian. Not only does the Ordo Sicarius, through the Officio Assassinorum, have access to the historical records of such remarkable individuals, but also is formed in such a way as to allow the identification of possible recruits. A Thorian in the Ordo Sicarius can monitor such activity and, if he or she feels it appropriate, investigate potential subjects for signs of Divine Vessel suitability.

There is another, much less manipulative reason for Thorians to operate within the Ordo Sicarius. Thorians are often drawn to powerful individuals, who may well turn out to be daemonically possessed, Alpha-level psykers or Warp-infected. Such people are dangerous adversaries and an Inquisitor that can draw upon the Officio Assassinorum is much better positioned to deal with these threats. Many a Thorian has ordered the assassination of an important leader having discovered that they are not a Divine Vessel, but in fact something more menacing.

The last reason why a Thorian may well end up within the Ordo Sicarius is one of opposites. They believe that to achieve greater understanding of the Divine Vessel, one can study the most repulsive, unholy aberrations within Humanity - those with the Pariah gene. Pariahs are individuals that not only have no presence within Warp space, but actually have a negative impact.

They are psychic leeches that absorb Warp energy, not only from psykers but also from normal humans and other creatures. This ability to draw out psychic energy is central to the Thorian cause,

and an understanding of the Pariah gene may well assist in the creation of a Divine Vessel, or at least further knowledge in the pursuit of the means to bring the Emperor back from the warp.

The Ordo Sicarius is responsible for overseeing the Culexus Temple of the Officio Assassinorum, whose operatives are uniquely Pariahs. Between the Ordo Sicarius and Culexus Temple, a Thorian Inquisitor has a much greater chance of encountering, and perhaps even studying, an Untouchable. The chances of coming across a Pariah, who occur once in several billions amongst Humanity, and virtually non-existent. However, a member of the Ordo Sicarius can gain access to such individuals every few years and study them at length.

THE ORDO SEPULTURUM

One of the smallest and most specialised organisations within the Inquisition, the Ordo Sepulchrum operates around the Eye of Terror and is dedicated to investigating a specific threat - the Zombie Plague.

Although occurrences of Plague Zombies have been recorded across the Imperium for many millennia, it is in the wake of the Plague Fleets of the Chaos Champion Typhus that they have grown in number to the point where they present a threat to the Imperium in their own right.

Before Abaddon's 13th Black Crusade, the incidence of Zombie Plague around the Cadian system dramatically increased. This was noticed by several agents of the Inquisition who were soon in communication, and within a few years several more Thorians, most notably Inquisitor Aghastri, were investigating the Zombie Plague and the Ordo Sepulchrum was formed.

As a combination of both a Chaos infection as well as a physical malaise, the Zombie Plague has always been on the agenda for Thorians to study, but its unpredictable nature and sporadic occurrences meant that it took luck or a tremendous amount of patience to capture Plague Zombies for investigation. With the advent of the Eye of Terror-related epidemic, Inquisitors that had previously been thwarted in their missions to achieve specimens were suddenly confronted with a plethora of test subjects.

The Zombie Plague physically degenerates those it infects - and infection can occur in many ways, including psychically - but maintains a portion of the life essence of the victim even after physical death occurs. The parallels between the Zombie Plague and the operation of the Golden Throne have not been overlooked.

The increased study of the Zombie Plague has led many Thorians believe that in its unaltered form it may well provide several clues to the nature of the Emperor's life-indeath, but all forms of the 'faith virus' so far examined have undergone mutation. That the Plague Zombies still possess a Warp-reflection has been confirmed not only by psychic investigation but also by the fact that several psykers have been able to control these creatures - psychic manipulation is normally only possible through the Warp-ego of a creature. The possibility that the Plague Zombie infection is an offshoot of Golden Throne technologies is not widely supported and the common theory is that it was spawned by Dark Mechanicus within the Eye of Terror.

Much more rare is the Obliterator virus, which again is a Chaos-born contagion that combines elements of physical corruption with mental disruption. Allowing the psychic manipulation of technology, the Obliterator virus allows for humans to interact and meld with machinery, not only on the physical plane but also on the psychic and spiritual level. In combination with what has been gleaned from Eldar technology, the existence of the Obliterator virus lends hope to the idea that an augmented Divine Vessel could be artificially created, should a non-corruptible version of the virus ever be developed.

THORIANS WITHIN THE ORDOS

The particular beliefs and goals of the Thorians are more specific than many other factions, and so do not directly clash nor contradict the beliefs of other factions. Thus it is down to individual Inquisitors and their personal activities whether they find common cause or conflict with other Inquisitors.

Since the formation of the Thorians, Resurrectionists and Incarnationists have endeavoured to be more open about their agenda. However, millennia of mutual suspicion and conflict leave their mark for a long time and the Thorians do not co-operate well with Inquisitors with a differing philosophy. This suspicion occasionally gives rise to conflict in itself, regardless of the actual motivations of the Thorian involved.

Similarly, Thorians are very likely to be secretive about their work, and may end up conflicting with the goals of another Inquisitor unintentionally, even when no direct clash of goals exists. A Thorian has an inherent degree of paranoia about their ideals, and so is quick to assume the worst of others.

The theological connotations of the Thorian agenda can also give rise to conflict of another kind. The majority of Inquisitors are pragmatic with regard to the Emperor, viewing the Imperial Creed of the Adeptus Ministorum as a useful tool to control the Imperium at best, or a distraction at worst. However, there are a small number of Inquisitors, normally those inculcated into the Ecclesiarchy's beliefs through the Schola Progenium before becoming Inquisitors, that object to the aims of the Thorians on religious grounds.

These Inquisitors tend to form pro-Ecclesiarchy factions and promote the Ministorum as the best means for reinforcing the faith of the Imperium and using this as a defence against the wiles of Chaos. To them, the thought of interfering with the Emperor with any means, whether it risks Him or not, is a violation of the most fundamental kind.

Such theological differences are thankfully few and far between, because they tend to run deep. The Pro-Ministorum Inquisitors feel it an obligation to protect the Emperor, while the Thorians will do anything to bring about the Emperor-Incarnate. Conflicts between those striving for these two goals are short and often very bloody and brutal.

The Thorians on the whole are considered a Puritan faction after casting off the last taint of the Horusians during the Age of Apostasy. To this end they are naturally opposed to the use of Chaos in any form. This, of course, runs counter to their goals of studying the interaction of Warp space and real space and thus they must try to observe such things as they occur over the normal course of events, as opposed to those that artificially engineer such situations to increase their knowledge.

However, the Thorians are a lot more lenient when the matter turns to alien technology and contact. This does not sit well with some other factions, who see aliens as just a great a threat to Mankind as the traitorous and the daemonic. To Thorians, the higher goal and the greater gain of the Emperor Incarnate is far more important than any temporary weakness of will regarding the Xenos threat. They expound the idea that the ultimate threat is the lure of Chaos, and the only means by which this can be fully thwarted is to bring about the Emperor-Incarnate - the petty machinations of aliens is little cause for attention.

THORIANS AND XANTHITES

Though they expend great energy and devote much time to the study of Chaos, the Thorians do not believe that Chaos itself can ever be harnessed for the ultimate benefit of Mankind. Through their studies, they believe that the spirit of the Emperor may be

brought forth once again, in order to destroy the threat of Chaos once and for all.

This is in itself enough reason to cause conflict with the Xanthites, but is by far the lesser reason. The true enmity between the two factions can be traced back through the origins of both factions, and the divisions between Resurrectionists and Horusians. There are some that believe that Inquisitor-Master Zaranchek Xanthus was hunted down and executed not for his dabbling in Chaos per se, but for pro-Horusian leanings, although this was never proven.



The ongoing cooperation between Xanthites and the few Horusians that remain to this day is more than enough to create an antipathy towards the Thorians, a hostility that is reciprocated in full by the Thorians themselves. More than any other faction, the Xanthites distrust the Thorian motives, accusing them of simply hiding behind their new puritan outlook. Xanthites see the Thorian philosophy as a betrayal of the original Resurrectionists and a denial of their true goal. The Xanthites see the Thorian-Horusian conflict as an extension of the same divide that exists between themselves and most other Inquisitors.

Such divisions can only be deepened by experience rather than lessened. The Thorians would see all Horusians eradicated and the philosophy buried once and for all, because the Horusians act as a constant reminder of the Thorians wayward past. Such conviction has been instilled into generations of Thorian Inquisitors to the point that many see any kind of purposeful manipulation of Chaos, rather than simply its observations, as a tell-tale sign of latent Horusian tendencies.

This vindictiveness is repaid in full by those that become Xanthites, for they see the burning of Xanthus as a martyrdom, made at the hands of the Resurrectionists. They believe the Thorians to be the latest in a long line of self-deluding, short-sighted meddlers that should share the vision of Xanthus to achieve their goals, rather than continue to destroy the great works of the Xanthite founder.

So single-minded is this animosity that it is one of the few things that can distract a Thorian from the pursuit of his other duties. The merest hint of Horusian activity is enough to suspect the involvement of a genuine Horusian, and the Thorians hold many conclaves to discuss how to destroy this menace for the rest of eternity.

So opposed to each other are the Xanthites and Thorians that such conflicts almost always end in physical clashes. Given the long history of both beliefs, it is inevitable that the relationship between them is littered with internecine fighting, blood and death. Each further sacrifice made by an Inquisitor in his or her cause only serves to further reinforce the entrenched positions of the two factions.

The worst case of this conflict was the Laskar Purge, where over a dozen Inquisitor's of both factions and their warrior bands had gathered over a course of time, determined to kill their foes. Many innocents were caught in the crossfire until kill teams despatched by the Inquisitor Lords, after notifying the High Lords of Terra themselves, wiped out both sides in the conflict. Large parts of the underhive populations of Laskar were also eliminated to prevent news of the internal strife within the Inquisition ever being known outside its operatives.

THORIANS AND RECONGREGATORS

Though much less imbedded in their philosophies, there is a continuing and growing enmity between the Thorians and the Recongregators. This cause of this contention is not the aims or differences in belief of the two factions, but rather their methodology.

The Thorians expend much time and power in locating possible Divine Vessels that might perhaps be an avatar of the Emperor-Incarnate. In contrast, the Recongregators often spend much of their time manipulating important individuals, as well as numerous demagogues, agitators and rebellious visionaries.

There have been many reported occasions of the Thorians and Recongregators coming into conflict over these individuals, each wishing to observe or use them to further their own ends.

It is a source of much frustration to the Thorians when they have spent much of their resources investigating a particular person, who might perhaps have shown innate leadership, foresight and charisma, only to find that their potential Divine Vessel has gained these abilities simply through manipulation on their behalf by an Inquisitor interested in Recongregation.

On the other side, the Recongregators know that there are those amongst the Inquisition that think their theories of destabilisations and deconstruction are very dangerous, and prefer to work as secretly as possible. The unmitigated prying they suffer at the hands of the Thorians, as the Recongregators see it, jeopardises work and plans that have often been decades in preparation and execution.

So it is that simple, human exasperation can set these two factions against one another, with disastrous consequences to both. Secrecy compounded by a clash of goals often turns into individual paranoia or vindictiveness, distracting Inquisitors from their important vocations.

It is a dilemma that has no obvious or lasting resolution, for while the Thorians continue their quest in search of the Divine Vessel and the Recongregators continue to manipulate influential men and women across the Imperium, the two factions' paths will cross and lead to dispute and, almost inevitably, physical conflict.

THORIANS AND AMALATHIANS

Though both espouse puritan ideals, the Thorians and Amalathians are frequently at loggerheads with each other, perpetuated mostly on the part of the Amalathians. The goal of the Thorians, that to resurrect or reincarnate the Emperor, is anathema to the maintenance of the Imperial status quo espoused by the Amalathians.

The distrust of the Thorian agenda is propagated mainly by the Amalathians through the rest of the Inquisition, as any attempt to return the Emperor is diametrically opposed to the continuance of the Imperium and its organisations. The Amalathians respond vehemently, and often violently, to any enterprise that jeopardises the current state of affairs.

In Imperial history terms, the Amalathians are a relatively new phenomena, and the Thorians paint a picture of them as an upstart, reactionary philosophy, particular in comparison to the ages-long tradition and beliefs of the Resurrectionists and Incarnationists. This is seen by the Amalathians as arrogance, symptomatic of the general disregard for the Imperium perpetrated by the Thorians.

With this in mind, the Thorians care little for the aspirations of the Amalathians and their intransigent attitudes regarding the Imperium. They see the perpetuation of the Imperium as a mere footnote against their grandiose plans for the resurrection of the Emperor and his restoration as the true leader of Mankind.

For the most part Thorians are keen to observe rather than to influence, gathering knowledge for future quests and finding answers to the eternal questions of the nature of mortality, the Emperor and the Warp. The actions of the Amalathians do little to contradict this agenda, and the Thorians are usually quite content merely to watch the efforts of the Amalathians in an amused, condescending manner.

Thus most conflict is initiated by the Amalathians, whether the actions of the Thorians directly affects their aims or not - it is a question of principle rather than substance that the Thorians must not be allowed to further their aims.

In turn, aggressive action by the Amalathians will garner a response from fellow Thorians, escalating the situation and increasing the instability and danger inherent in the Inquisition.

By these unconscious means, the Thorians have been drawn into a centuries-long feud not particularly of their making, but one that attacks their fundamental philosophy and purpose.

HOW THE INQUISITION OPERATES

Like all Imperial organisations, the Inquisition is vast, covering the galaxy with untold numbers of agents. However, here the similarity ends, for the Inquisition is arranged in a way that is completely different to the galaxy-spanning bureaucracies of the Adeptus Terra. Its remit is open, its mandate simple: to protect the Emperor and Mankind against any threat, by whatever means are necessary. Such a mission requires the ultimate flexibility, and the scope of the threats ranged against the Inquisition vary from the individual mutant to system and sector-spanning conspiracies and alien domination. In this section, we will explore the ways by which Inquisitors fulfil their mandates, and the resources at their disposal.

The basic operational unit of the Inquisition is the Inquisitor. In an Imperium that groans under the weight of gargantuan organisations and an impossible bureaucracy, the Inquisition is unfettered by such considerations and is free to operate where and how it sees fit. With an open remit to combat threats to Mankind, the Inquisition operates outside of the other Imperial organisations, though has absolute authority over them.

In practice, the Inquisition must be more political than its mandate allows. Though their power derives from the Emperor himself, and even the High Lords of Terra are not above their scrutiny, the Inquisition must also rely on the other parts of the Imperium for resources. The Inquisition has tremendous amounts of power, and has access to troops, weaponry and archives beyond most other Imperial organisations, it must still receive these from the Adeptus Astartes, the Imperial Guard, the Adeptus Mechanicus and others.

In essence the Inquisition exists not as a force in its own right, but as a guiding hand that allows the Imperium to protect itself, after a fashion. Much of its work is dedicated to observing threats to Mankind and instigating an appropriate response. As well as the many Inquisitors, the Inquisition has millions, probably billions, of other agents and operatives across the Imperium and beyond, watching for signs of mutation, alien aggression, treachery and incompetence.

Each and every Inquisitor embodies the whole Inquisition and wields the power of the entire organisation. The word of an Inquisitor is absolute and beyond reproach - except by other Inquisitors. Thus it is that as well as protecting the Imperium, the Inquisition is also responsible for its own self-policing. It is a testament to the courage and diligence of the Inquisitors that it has maintained its position for ten thousand years despite wars, pogroms, internecine conflict and internal heresy. The men and women of the Inquisition are amongst the most vigorously tested, intensively trained and motivated individuals from the whole of Humanity, and they need to be.

An Inquisitor needs more than simple physical skills, and an armoury that goes beyond mere weaponry. His mind is his great strength, not only for intelligence but also strength of will. In a galaxy ruled by dogma and orthodoxy, an Inquisitor must cast aside superstition and faith and operate outside the established view of the galaxy.

To be an Inquisitor is to understand the forces that work against the Emperor and Mankind in a way that no other individual in the Imperium understand - not even those that sit on the Senatorum Imperialis. To be required to fight against ten thousand years of received wisdom and established orthodoxy is no easy task, but if the Inquisition is to remain effective then it is essential that its Inquisitors can see the galaxy through eyes untainted by doctrine or assumption.

To avoid the monolithic, slow processes that are the curse of other Imperial organisations, the Inquisition is organised on only the most fundamental level - the single Inquisitor. From their original conception, the Inquisitor can call upon whatever local resources were required to deal with the threat, with no need for recourse to the Adeptus Terra.

This has stood true for ten thousand years, and throughout that period the Inquisition has needed to maintain its position of absolute authority. The Inquisitorial seal carried by every Inquisitor brings with it tremendous responsibility but also the means by which this responsibility can be met. The presentation of an Inquisitorial seal to an Imperial Guard Colonel, an Imperial Navy Admiral, Imperial Commander or Space Marine Chapter Master cannot be gainsaid.

Many threats that arise can be dealt with by the Inquisitor and his retinue without outside assistance. Cults in their infancy, renegade commanders, small scale alien influence and the other menaces that the Inquisition must battle every day are swiftly dealt with, either by the simple expedient of removing the individual at the centre of the threat, or by elimination of the core of the enemy group.

On occasion a threat will be of such an extent that the Inquisitor must also call upon local resources, most notably the Adeptus Arbites and planetary warriors. They may require intra-system space craft to bring their foes to justice, or simple need more firepower against established sects or powerful individuals. In such circumstances an Inquisitor can continue in one of two ways. They may openly reveal their presence to local military commanders and thus garner the resources they need. Alternatively, they may wish to keep their presence unknown. This is particularly true if corruption is believed to be more endemic amongst local forces. By passing on information through other channels, the Inquisitor is able to bring the problem to the attention of the Imperial Commander or other individuals and then assess their response. Failure to act appropriately to this information may well incur the wrath of the Inquisition and a greater, more widespread purge will be required.

In some situations, local forces are not a viable option. This may be because they lack sufficient strength to deal with the threat, or perhaps because they are linked to the threat in some fashion. In such a scenario, the Inquisitor will need to draw on forces from further away.

Such a situation can be difficult for the Inquisitor, as the Imperium is not swift to respond and a threat that might be easily countered within weeks may grow progressively in strength before sufficient force can be brought to bear. It is the great expanse of the galaxy and the time delays involved in moving large bodies of troops even relatively small distances that provide the greatest obstacle to an Inquisitor in confronting a large threat to a world or system. By the time suitable forces arrive, the problem may have grown beyond their capacity to deal with it.

It is therefore in the role of instigators that Inquisitors must often operate. If a world has succumbed to alien domination, Chaos influence or some other major corruption, it is the duty of the Inquisitor to set the military wheels of the Imperium in motion and oversee their response. The Admirals and Colonels that are brought to the growing war zone may never even know that the Inquisition initiated the course of events that summoned them.

There is also one area of an Inquisitor's remit that is fraught with peril, but is fundamental to their successful operation - their relationship with the Space Marine Chapters of the Adeptus Astartes. Like the Inquisition itself, the Adeptus Astartes operate alongside the Imperium rather than as part of it. The Inquisition's power extends over the Space Marines, but the Chapters themselves are fiercely independent and not welcoming of outside investigators.

An Inquisitor that suspects a Chapter of deviant behaviour must tread carefully. Space Marines have been, historically, extended a lot more latitude than other Imperial forces concerning their organisation and activities. However, the threat posed by a renegade Chapter is such that they must be constantly monitored. The purity of their gene-seed and the motives of their actions are regularly scrutinised for irregularities.

The most traditional, hardline Inquisitors have immense problems dealing with the Adeptus Astartes, simply because they also operate outside the dogma and bureaucracy of the Imperium. What may seem heretical and self-serving on one level can also be viewed as essential to the Space Marines' power. The ability to act on their own, to fight where necessary and to take whatever action they deem fit is intrinsic to the Space Marines' capability to respond quickly and efficiently to emerging threats or to proactively protect Mankind.

Unorthodoxy is easily confused with disloyalty, and there have been a few occasions when an over-zealous Inquisitor has instigated a problem where none existed. The Space Marines are rightly justified and proud of their loyalty to the Emperor, but endeavour to remain aloof from the infighting and politics that plague the Imperium. They answer to none but their Chapter Masters and the Emperor himself, and to have their loyalty brought into question is a great offence. To have forces of the Imperium brought against them is, to the Space Marines, a betrayal of the bonds that exist between a Chapter and the Imperium.

It is therefore a prudent Inquisitor that does not rush in. In circumstances where a Chapter is proven to be a threat, it is the most preferable course of action that other Adeptus Astartes are used to combat the threat. Not only is a Space Marine Chapter a formidable fighting force that conventional troops may not be able to confront, but also allowing the Space Marines to deal with each other is invaluable. Space Marines all share a common bond with each other, and a Chapter Master will respond to information that threatens the honour of the Adeptus Astartes as a whole - for one Chapter to turn renegade is a smear on the reputation of all Space Marines.

It is sometimes enough to be confronted by fellow Space Marines rather than an agent of the Imperium to make a Chapter see the dangerous path it has begun to tread and to change its behaviour. If such criticism were to come from another source, it is likely to prompt a harsh reaction, possibly even compounding the threat. On the other hand, if a situation has reached such a level as to become a genuine menace, the destruction of the Chapter is sometimes the only course left open. This is no small undertaking, and several other Space Marine Chapters may become involved, either of their own volition or by request, as happened in the Fourth Quadrant Rebellion that led to the Badab war.

It is clear then that wherever possible it is best if the Inquisition can deal with a threat using its own resources, avoiding the dangerous entanglements that may result from involving other agencies and military forces. It is for this reason that the Inquisition maintains its own fighting formations, foremost amongst them being the Kill-teams of the Deathwatch Space Marines and the daemon-hunting Grey Knights Space Marines.

RECRUITMENT

As with all aspects of the Inquisition, the matter of recruitment is not centralised, and the power to invest others into its ranks lies with the Inquisitors. Some do not recruit at all, spending their years in the pursuit of their enemies and dedicating themselves to their duties within their own lifetime. Others feel it is one of their burdens to bring about the next generation of Inquisitors to carry forward the battle that they must wage.

Inquisitors are left to their own judgement in all matters, subject only to scrutiny by their peers, and the same applies to recruiting new Inquisitors. Many Inquisitors leave such matters to chance or perhaps fate, picking a suitable candidate or candidates from amongst those individuals whose paths they cross.

Other Inquisitors are more rigorous in their pursuit of apprentices. They will spend a proportion of their time seeking out suitable candidates, perhaps from amongst the ranks of other Imperial organisations.

There are no consistent criteria of age or physical condition required to be suitable for investiture into the Inquisition. Proof of intelligence and loyalty are the key requisites, and often these aspects of a person's character cannot be properly judged until later in life. It may happen that extraordinary circumstances lead an Inquisitor to recruit a boy or girl whilst still in their teens, if they show exceptional ability, but this is not common practice.

On the whole, Inquisitors will take note of individuals that are free-thinking, possessed of will power and determination and unflinching principles. If they find a suitable person, they will become part of the Inquisitor's retinue, perhaps serving in a more minor capacity while the Inquisitor continues their evaluation. Those that prove their worth working with the Inquisitor will then be taken into their master's or mistress' greater confidence.

Over several years, the apprentice will learn what they can of the Inquisitor's knowledge and in time will take on many duties. Some Inquisitors refer to these semi-qualified individuals as Interrogators, though they are also known as Novitiates, Neophytes or Approbators. Such individuals may undertake missions on their own, or control operations in concert with the Inquisitor, but they are still subordinate until their master or mistress fully invests them.

It normally requires the consent of three Inquisitors or an Inquisitor Lord to pass on the full powers of an Inquisitor and grant an Inquisitorial Seal, though there have been occasions when this has not been necessary, or the immediate situation has dictated that the apprentice take on full Inquisitorial responsibilities immediately. This is likely if an Inquisitor is killed - their apprentice will inherit their Inquisitorial Seal and may fulfil the role of an Inquisitor subject to repeal by another Inquisitor.

Interrogators may pass from one Inquisitor to another as fate and necessity dictates. It is in this period that the ideals of the Inquisitor are passed on and spread, and through this generational growth, the factions and institutions that make up the Inquisition are propagated across the centuries.

As well as philosophy, the student will also learn what their tutor knows of the internal working of the Inquisition - or such facts as the Inquisitor feels is right and proper. It is an important tradition amongst Inquisitors that each of them earns the knowledge that is theirs, as well as the respect of their peers. Such wisdom cannot be freely given nor taken without effort, for it devalues the knowledge itself. As the saying goes, 'Knowledge is Power; Guard it Well.'

INQUISITION CONCLAVES

The solitary nature of an Inquisitor's work means that after leaving the company of their tutor, they might never meet another Inquisitor. This is not that uncommon, and in distant parts of the galaxy where the Imperium is spread thin, there are small offshoots of the Inquisition that have had no contact with Terra for years, centuries or even millennia.

It is in these splinter groups that new philosophies may be born, or older factions maintained even though the greater Inquisition may have disregarded them. Dealing with a myriad threats that perhaps no other Inquisitor has encountered before, these isolated Inquisitors and cells might be viewed as dangerous or beneficial, and in the past have proven to be both. Over the generations, as with the Inquisition across the galaxy, the mission and purpose of Inquisitors may be perverted, either deliberately or simply through the progression of knowledge from individual to individual.

There have been several occurrences when the Inquisition has openly conflicted with these groups, both sides ignorant of the true nature of their adversaries. Such wars do not usually end well, and so those who are most prominent in the Inquisition make great efforts to maintain contact with as many Inquisitors as possible to avoid such confrontations.

Though some Inquisitors may endure a lonely vigil against the darkness that surrounds Humanity, most will at some point meet other Inquisitors, either during the course of their duties or at a specially convened conclave.

Conclaves are formal gatherings of two or more Inquisitors, and are convened for a variety of reasons, which shall be discussed later. Most conclaves are called to discuss a single matter, and will last a few days at most and be attended by no more than a handful of Inquisitors. Some, known in some records as High Conclaves, can last for several weeks and cover a multitude of related topics. The attendance for High Conclaves may number several dozen Inquisitors depending on the extent of the topic or topics being conferred upon.

Any Inquisitor can, in theory at least, convene a conclave, although only an Inquisitor Lord will have the authority to call a High Conclave. In practice, it is the more experienced and connected Inquisitors that have the means and communication resources to gather such a group.

Most conclaves will fall into one of two areas: Inquisitorial remit, or factional agenda. Those convened under the Inquisitorial remit may include Inquisitors from different factions, and High Conclaves fall exclusively within this category - such a gathering of Inquisitors from their activities can only be necessitated by an urgent or important reason. On such occasions, the varying viewpoints proffered by Inquisitors with differing outlooks is not only desirable but almost essential if a proper consensus for action is to be agreed.

Factional conclaves, on the other hand, will be called to discuss matters that fall within the beliefs of the faction members, and may have little pertinence or interest to Inquisitors outside the faction. The Thorians, for example, may well convene every few years to share information about possible Divine Vessels, new theories purporting to any of the multiple facets of Thorianism, or to share new knowledge.

It is for the flow of information that the majority of Conclaves are gathered - to warn others of a new threat, to discuss recent events, to pass on news of success or failure. This information-sharing will be followed by debate, as the Inquisitors decide upon a course of action that they will each take. Consensus is not essential, as Inquisitors know full well that different approaches to the same problems will garner different results. However, being aware of the activities of other Inquisitors around a certain area or confronting a particular threat can avoid unfortunate confusion and even confrontation later.

INQUISITOR LORDS

The Inquisition does not have formal organisation, and therefore there is no system of ranks or command as there are in the Adeptus Terra or the military. Authority within the Inquisition is governed by two factors - reputation and influence. An Inquisitor may be willing to gainsay one of his fellows, but if confronted by several he will defer, thus an Inquisitor with experience and contacts can exert control over younger, less influential comrades. Seniority is in itself no true test of authority, but most Inquisitors will default to the wisdom of another that is older and more experienced.

Despite this, there is a need for a higher tier of Inquisitor to help maintain the integrity of the Inquisition and to watch over the rest of the organisation and the marshalling of resources. They are known as Lord Inquisitors, Inquisitor Lords or High Inquisitors. Promotion to the ranks of Inquisitor Lord is by invitation only, and is extended to those that have proven themselves numerous times, not only their courage and ability, but also their integrity and loyalty.

To become an Inquisitor Lord, one must be nominated by an existing Lord, and to have the nomination approved by two others. Quite often this is a formality, as the word of an Inquisitor Lord is sacrosanct to his fellows and the chances of an Inquisitor actually being known personally by more than one Lord are exceptionally small. However, there is occasionally contention and a conclave may have to be convened to discuss the matter - usually, but not always, with the nominee in attendance to answer enquiries as to their activities and beliefs.

Being an Inquisitor Lord is a recognition rather than an absolute rank, and is more a formalisation of a position enjoyed by the Inquisitor rather than an actual promotion. This is because an Inquisitor Lord has no real temporal dominion - they are not responsible for any given area of the galaxy nor specific individuals. Instead, it is reinforcement of the Inquisitor's authority and in particular to power within the organisation. The most obvious benefits are the ability to recognise the appointments of others to the ranks of Inquisitor, to convene High Conclaves and to requisition greater resources from the Inquisition's forces and agents.

A conclave is gathered by one of two means, either through open invitation to any Inquisitors to attend, or by more selective invite. The first is the accepted course of action if a serious threat arises or is discovered, requiring that all Inquisitors in the neighbouring sectors be aware of it and, as is sometimes necessary, abandon their current missions to concentrate on this new menace. The second is more likely if the Inquisitor calling the conclave knows of others that will bring particular skills or knowledge to the meeting, and is perhaps after guidance or further information.

Given the nature of communication and travel, gathering together even half a dozen specific individuals in a single place at a certain times requires that most conclaves are restricted in their sphere of influence to few hundred light years, and must be planned in advance. High Conclaves, those that deal with the most grave matters brought to the attention of the Inquisition, can be convened on smaller timescales if required, as astropaths send out urgent missives to Inquisitors across a wider area. High Conclaves are sometimes an ongoing affair that may see several dozen Inquisitors answer the call all told, though perhaps less than half of them will be present on any given day as they arrive or depart as the tides of the Warp allow.

With the exception of the High Conclaves, which must be held on one of the Inquisition fortress worlds placed strategically across the Imperium, conclaves can be convened just about anywhere. Secrecy necessitates that they be conducted in somewhere that is secure and more experienced Inquisitors may well retain or acquire estates, libraries or bases where such conclaves can be held.

THE INQUISITOR REPRESENTATIVE

There is one position amongst the Inquisition that carries with it more power and authority than any other - the Inquisitorial Representative to the Senatorum Imperialis. One of the High Lords of Terra, the Inquisitorial Representative is nominated from amongst the Inquisitor Lords of the sectors surrounding Terra, and Inquisitors that have filled this role are referred to as an Inquisitor Lord Terran.

It is not unusual for several Inquisitor Lords Terran to share the role of Inquisitorial Representative at the same time. Though the attendance of the Representative is always appreciated, their position in the chambers of the Senatorum Imperialis is often empty and their vote conferred by missive - such are the demands of the Inquisition.

An Inquisitorial Representative may fulfil their role only once in their life, or they may attend the Senatorum for several years. The requirements of service to the Inquisition may necessitate them leaving Terra to attend a High Conclave, while others quickly tire of the bureaucracy and politics that the Senatorum is based upon and relinquish their position to return to more active roles out in the wider galaxy. To avoid unpleasant politicking on the part of the Representative, the maximum term that an Inquisitor Lord Terran can serve on the Senatorum is five years, after which they must stand down.

It is rare that the Inquisitor Lords cannot agree on a candidate for the role, for it does carry little more honour than that of messenger - the Representative communicates the will of the Inquisition, not his own. However, it does come with a great deal of responsibility. While the Inquisition enjoys absolute authority, in reality the cooperation of the other High Lords is essential in maintaining this position. If a Representative were to cross the Fabricator-General of Mars, for instance, the starships and arms by which the Inquisition's power is maintained may be put at risk. Conversely, if the Inquisition feels that an organisation is stinting in its dedication, pressure can be applied to the relevant High Lord, turning an organisational issue into one of personal confidence.

In this respect, the Representative is in an unparalleled position of leverage, for he has not attained his role by personal ambition or desire, and therefore risks no personal stake in his dealings with the other High Lords. They, on the other hand, will be only too aware of the subordinates that view their position with envy and ambition, and so must actively protect their power at each turn. The merest hint of the Inquisition's displeasure can be the catalyst for a High Lord being removed by those he represents. Those High Lords whose position is non-permanent, such as the leader of the Chartist Captains or the Lord Solar, are particularly vulnerable to this type of careful manipulation by the Representative, for they risk not only their personal privilege, but also that of the organisation they represent. Thus the careful balance of power between the Inquisition and the rest of the Imperium is carefully preserved.

As well as garnering support for the Inquisition's endeavours, the Representative has two other main responsibilities. The first is to warn the Senatorum of threats significant enough to trouble their debates. The Inquisition operates in such a way that it is normally the first to become aware of emergent menaces to the Imperium, and has proven this with regards to the Necron awakening, the arrival of the Tyranid hive fleets, the advent Hrud Migration and during many other momentous events. Thus the Inquisition serves as the High Lords' eyes and ears across the galaxy, enabling them to bypass the dreary and lengthy processes maintained by the Adeptus Terra, when the need arises. Such warnings come not only for information, but are inevitably attended with a recommended course of action. The High Lords will debate this recommendation, usually modifying it in some form or other, and then begin turning the great wheels of the Imperium to implement their plans.

There have been instances in the Imperium's past when the Representative has been absent for many years, and in such times the Senatorum has become more rife with politics and infighting than is usual. The height of this was Lord Vandire's claiming of the joint titles of Master of the Administratum and Ecclesiarch, heralding the Age of Apostasy, or the Assassin Wars of Vindication that followed shortly after the Reign of Blood. The Inquisition was unaware of these internal problems, faced as they were by increasing discoveries of an ancient alien civilisation seeded through the halo stars and dead worlds at the edge of the galaxy.

One of the most dire reasons for a conclave to be convened is for the adjudication between two Inquisitors. An Inquisitor is above any judge but his peers, and thus it is required that for an Inquisitor be brought to trial a fellow Inquisitor must act as prosecutor. In these situations, an Inquisitor Lord will convene the conclave, often with the accused being in absentia, and a panel of three or more Inquisitors will hear the case to be answered. Such a conclave can find an Inquisitor negligent, incompetent or worse. The greatest sentence handed down by these conclaves is the declaration of *Traitoris Excommunicate* - the Inquisitor is found to be a heretic and is to be hunted down at all costs.

It has been known for Inquisitors to declare another Inquisitor traitor without recourse to a conclave, as may be necessary to prevent a deviant from escaping, or when physical conflict is imminent. In such cases, a conclave of enquiry will be held after the events have unfolded. Sometimes such conclaves do not occur within the lifetime of the accused or the accuser, and they must make their judgement based on whatever evidence remains. Given the flexible mission of the Inquisition and the individuals that make up its ranks, such trial conclaves are limited in the punishments they can mete out on the guilty. One cannot simply stop being an Inquisitor, and so censures and other threats carry little weight. Most often, the guilty party may be subjected to further examination - in itself, not a pleasant experience - and this is usually enough to provide an Inquisitor with a new incentive to re-examine his priorities and agenda.



There is also another resource that an Inquisitor can draw upon - other Inquisitors. On occasion an Inquisitor may well encounter another of his organisation, or specifically request the aid of a comrade. These are temporary, short-lived affairs on the whole. However, repeated cooperation between Inquisitors can become established, and over time a growing group of Inquisitors will communicate regularly and assist each other.

This is likely if the Inquisitors share some common goals and these cells, as they are known, tend to be factional in nature and therefore can be used not only to further the cause of the Inquisition as a whole but also to fulfil the agenda of the Inquisitors involved.

Some cells may only last a few years, as the duties of the Inquisitors take them apart to different worlds. The Inquisitors may never meet again, though sometimes a cell will continue to communicate sporadically over many years and large distances. In time a cell may contain a dozen or more Inquisitors, occasionally working together and passing on information to one another.

A cell will often be formed to confront a particular problem - a daemonic manifestation for example. When this sort of threat reoccurs, and Inquisitor may call upon his or her old cell to confront the new menace. In this way, a cell may lie dormant for years or even decades, before the call is sent out and the Inquisitors gather.

Given the secretive nature of the Inquisition, the way a cell operates is very much built upon keeping the members secure and to protect them from outside recognition. Many Inquisitors do not work openly, and simply identifying another Inquisitor can prove difficult. At some point, as suspicions are aroused, an Inquisitor will have to make the choice whether to declare himself - risking discovery by a potential foe but also gaining a possible ally. If two covertly operating Inquisitors encounter each other, the manner of their meeting will determine their reaction.

To ameliorate this state of affairs, all Inquisitors carry with them an Inquisitorial Seal. This may be a pendant, signet ring, actual seal or some other accoutrement, and is marked with a variation of the symbol of the Inquisition. This seal is proof positive that the Inquisitor carries with him the full authority of the Emperor. Should anyone doubt the veracity of a seal, they will normally contain other encoded information that will prove the identity of the bearer, utilising technologies seldom seen outside the forge worlds of the Adeptus Mechanicus.

Although traitors and other nefarious individuals have claimed Inquisitorial status to further their own ends, such is the fervour with which the Inquisition hunts down these rogues, and the well-communicated manner of their agonising deaths, that it is a brave man or woman who dares such a thing. The absolute trust and authority with which the Inquisition must operate cannot be threatened and Inquisitors will go to any lengths to expose a fraud and bring them to justice.

In addition to their Inquisitorial Seal, an Inquisitor's clothing and personal effects may well contain all manner of subtle information about his philosophy, allegiances and contacts. There is no set cipher to this iconography, for it has developed over ten thousand years and contains many levels of hidden meanings, and indeed some symbols will mean various things to different Inquisitors in different parts of the galaxy.

This symbolism is not always a conscious effort on the part of the Inquisitor. By its secretive nature, much information passes between Inquisitors either in written form or by word of mouth. In time, certain artefacts have come to symbolise a variety of meanings, some of which are relevant only to particular factions or Ordos, others that are more widespread.

The Thorians, for instance, make great use of the skull symbol, as a representation of the Emperor-in-Death. Skull buttons, cuff-links tattoos, earrings or other decoration may be worn as a sign of reverence, but is also recognisable in certain situations by

other Thorians. However, it cannot be said that the skull is the emblem of the Thorians, for no such thing exists and the skull is a popular symbol throughout the Imperium, imparting a variety of meanings depending on how and where it is rendered. In addition to the skull, the Thorians will often have other symbols about their person, such as a scroll clasped in a hand - supposedly the hand of Prometheus himself as he left the first conclave - and also a broken lock - the solving of the riddle of the Divine Vessel.

Inquisitors are, of course, exceptionally observant and will instantly pick up these and many other details upon meeting another individual. They will already know a little of the other Inquisitor and their purpose before a word is spoken.

Cells will often take this one step further. Agents for one Inquisitor in a cell may not know who else their master is working with, and an Inquisitor will not necessarily know who are the agents of his allies and who are either bystanders or enemies. To overcome this, a cell will often agree on a symbol or set of symbols with which to identify themselves and those operating for them. This can be as subtle as a particular type of stitching used on the hem of robes and coats, or more open such as the wearing of a particular style of ring or broach. By these means, Inquisitors can identify and cooperate with their allies without fear of betraying themselves, or their comrades.

Some cells, particularly those that are operating exceptionally covertly and perhaps investigating local Imperial officials of power and means, will also adopt a peculiar form of language. All Inquisitors will learn various codes and battle-tongues from their master or mistress while they are in Interrogator, and there are several spoken by Inquisitors all across the Imperium in one form or another. However, it will also be one of the qualified Inquisitor's first tasks to modify or create a secret tongue of his own. Inquisitors are pragmatic for much of the time, and every Inquisitor is taught early on that their loyalty to the master may one day have to be forgotten and they will investigate their former mentor. In such situations, security cannot be compromised, and so there is the need for every Inquisitor and his or her warrior band to be able to communicate in a unique manner.

The cell will, either through meeting one another or by use of intermediaries, agree upon a form for their code-speak, corresponding to one of the basic language foundations used throughout the Inquisition. Some are utterly impenetrable to others reading or listening, and appear to be nonsense, others are hidden within everyday phrases and conversation, with carefully placed code-words to convey the true nature of the message. As with their visual appearance, an Inquisitor's use of different types of cipher can say a lot about what they believe and whom they learned their skills from.

As mentioned earlier, a cell does not consist solely of Inquisitors, but also their agents. This varies from their immediate comrades that accompany them to distant contacts that provide other forms of support or information. When cooperating as part of a cell, an Inquisitor may pass on certain details of their informants and allies to the other members of the cell, though it is an unspoken tradition that where possible an Inquisitor only deals with his own aides and confidants unless absolutely necessary.

Using the visual keys and code-language, the Inquisitors will be able to make their loyalties known to this intermeshed network of accomplices and agents and thus utilise their services if required. For their part, the agents will have been told of others working with their master or mistress, but information is power and so any one individual is unlikely to know who ultimately they are working for, and will instead only be aware of the cell through a layer of intermediaries and scant contact. They may not even know it is the Inquisition that is pulling the strings. It is not unusual for an Inquisitor, even when contacting his agents directly, to masquerade as a lesser functionary to protect his identity.

All of this allows the cell to deal with the threat for which it was created. A cell will last as long as the particular problem or menace remains, and may last for several years. Cells are transitory creations and may contain Inquisitors who are only allied through common acquaintance and may never meet all of the other members of the cell. However, should they do so, they will know immediately they are in the presence of their co-conspirators.

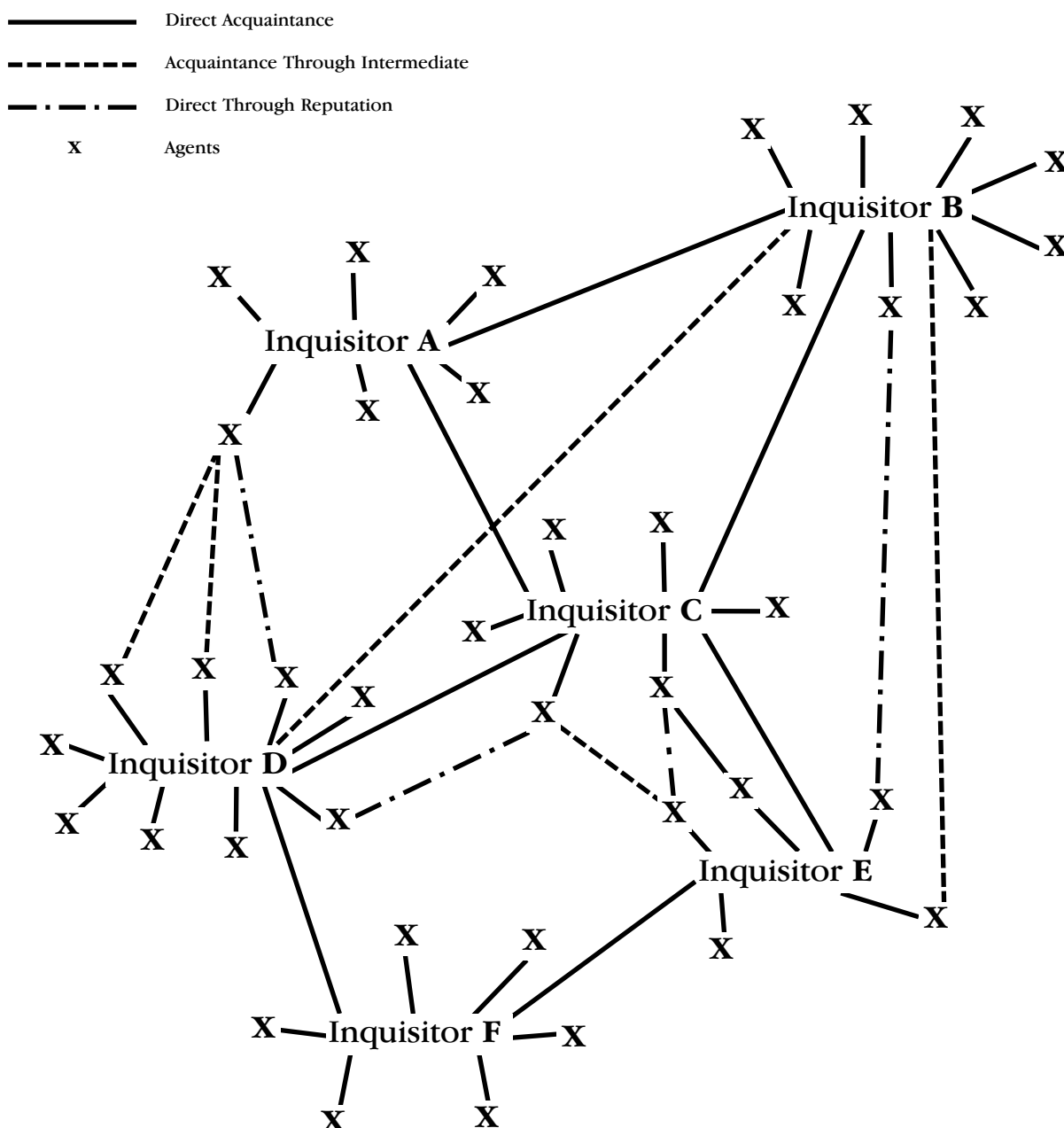
Given the diverse nature of the threats combated by the Inquisition, which pay no heed to time nor space, a cell may not convene with each other for several years while its members pursue their own missions in accordance with the cell's goals. On the other hand, the cell may see concentrated, almost frenetic activity for several days or months, during which the situation is resolved.

Cells formed over longer periods may well meet again when another threat arises, as an Inquisitor seeks out tried-and-tested companions to aid him. Others will disband never to cross paths

again, although the knowledge learned and the shared experience will be kept by the Inquisitors involved for the rest of their lives.

It is through the organic ebb and flow of the cells that ideas, theories and acquaintances can eventually pass from one end of the galaxy to the other over the span of years, decades, generations and centuries. Philosophies that may well have fallen out of favour near Terra may only just be catching attention in the southern rim or the Eastern Fringe. The Inquisitors know full well the impossibility of maintaining any kind of structure across the great gulfs of space covered by the Imperium, unlike other Imperial organisations, and for the last ten thousand years it is an approach that has, on the whole, been very successful.

In all, it is important to remember that cells exist for a specific purpose, to combat a common threat identified by the Inquisitors within that cell. Inquisitors are free to leave cells or to invite new members to join the effort, and they are organised on an ad-hoc basis.



An example of the organisation of a cell: Inquisitors A, B & C formed the cell. A & C subsequently draw in D, who becomes indirectly known by B. Inquisitor C recruits Inquisitor E, who becomes indirectly known to B & D. Inquisitor D & E bring in Inquisitor F who is not known yet to any of the other Inquisitors.

A cell diagram such as this describes the relationships of a cell only at a certain point in time, as associates and knowlege are passed between the Inquisitors. A small or new cell will have a few strong connections. Larger and usually older cells will have complex, sprawling relationships between the Inquisitor.

THORIANS IN THE GAME

THORIAN INQUISITORS AND WARRIOR BANDS

The joy of playing a Thorian Inquisitor is that of having a character with a sense of purpose higher than the aims of the Inquisition itself. They see themselves as true believers, even though those around them doubt not only their methods, but also their ultimate goals. In each Thorian there exists a state of strict denial of the status quo and a fervent loyalty to the Emperor that goes beyond the sermons of the Ecclesiarchy and dedication of other Inquisitors.

There is an intrinsic dichotomy in the Thorian philosophy that allows for great characterisation and development of scenarios and campaigns. While staunchly puritan in their outlook towards aliens, mutation and Chaos, their ultimate goals are perceived by many to be as dangerous and radical as any Xanthite or Chaotician. When the duty of the Inquisitor conflicts with the quest for the Emperor Incarnate, the dilemma is magnified and from this springs as much conflict as years of Inquisitor gaming will need!

A Thorian Inquisitor allows for great scope in character generation. More than any other faction, Thorians may have psychic powers, particularly focussing on Daemonology or Biomancy (or the new Theosophamy discipline given later). Their particular speciality tends to be daemon-hunting, and protection (such as pentagrammic wards) and weaponry (such as force hammers or swords) fit this role nicely.

On the following pages you will find sample characters of the individuals discussed earlier in the Thorian personalities section. These show the breadth of different characters that fall within the Thorian philosophy and hopefully demonstrate some of the themes that you can build upon with your Thorian Inquisitor.

As far as warrior bands go, Thorians are also pretty versatile. Their particular and peculiar relationship with the Ecclesiarchy, and their focus on the Emperor, means that they attract more Ministorum adepts and warriors than other Inquisitors.

A good start are the Cultists and Fanatics characters discussed in Inquisitor, to represent resurrectionist sects and individuals within the Ministorum. Such individuals will be only too eager to help a Thorian Inquisitor, although their somewhat unpredictable behaviour can also prove to be a problem for their master.

The Inquisitor book also contains sample characters from the clergy of the Ministorum, and a Preacher, Drill Abbot or Cardinal may well find themselves inducted into the retinue of a Thorian, either temporarily or on a permanent basis. The companionship of these individuals is often a great comfort to the Inquisitor, and their connections within the Ecclesiarchy and ability to interact with the unwashed masses of Humanity can make them valuable aides as well as warriors.

Similarly, a Thorian connected with the Ecclesiarchy may well be able to procure himself an Arco-flagellant or two. Not only are these berserk warriors useful to have around in a crisis, but the tortuous alterations visited upon their bodies can also provide a Thorian Inquisitor with a useful subject for investigations into the nature of a Divine Vessel.

THORIAN SCENARIOS AND CAMPAIGNS

There are two obvious plot devices in the Thorian philosophy that any GM can exploit to create a Thorian-themed scenario or campaign: Divine Vessels and the Emperor-Incarnate. Any lead or information that hints at the existence of either of these can be used to draw a Thorian Inquisitor into whatever nefarious plans a GM may have.

It is the conflict between the ultimate goal of the Thorians and their day-to-day responsibilities that provides grist to the mill for any GM. A potential Divine Vessel, in particular, are likely to

attract attention not just from Thorians but from all manner of other interested parties, including other Inquisitors. The person themselves is not likely to meekly surrender to the investigations of the Thorian either, and so a three-way struggle can easily ensue.

For more involved campaigns, it is quite straightforward to use either the Divine Vessel as an opening gambit to draw the Thorian into the plot, or to inveigle the Inquisitor in what seems like a 'routine' investigation, only to reveal later that a possible Divine Vessel is involved. If the investigation of the Divine Vessel will hinder the main plot, this is all for the better! Below are just a few ideas for one off scenarios involving Thorians, as well as a few basic frameworks to build a campaign around.

SCENARIO CONCEPTS

To Err Is Divine

Evidence pointing towards a possible Divine Vessel has brought a Thorian Inquisitor to Alpha Prime. After further investigations, he has isolated a powerful psyker and makes his move to abscond with them for study. The target is protected though and a fight ensues, during which the Thorian realises that his target is in fact another Inquisitor.

Keep Your Enemies Closer

A Monodominant is pursuing an Eldar psyker across a contested world, determined to exterminate the alien witch. Unfortunately, the psyker is also being hunted by a Thorian for very different reasons.

To Catch a Thief

A radical Inquisitor has travelled to a world where there is evidence of a growing anti-Imperialist cult. This is in fact a ruse created by a Thorian Inquisitor who wishes to abduct the radical's powerful Daemonhost to study it for himself.

The Slow and The Dead

A member of the Ordo Sepulchrum is hard at work on a world near the Cadian system, exterminating an infestation of Plague Zombies. These creatures seem to act with a will behind them, and investigations soon reveal a misguided Thorian using the Zombies and his own telepathic powers to further his knowledge of Warp-real space dynamics.

CAMPAIGN CONCEPTS

Cardinal Sin

On an Ecclesiarchy world, the Cardinal Commander has been reported as behaving strangely. He speaks of hearing voices and occasionally acting without his own volition. Daemonic influence is immediately suspected, but investigation proves inconclusive. Hearing of the situation, a Thorian Inquisitor arrives, bringing his own expertise. Perturbed by the sudden interest in him, the Cardinal flees. To one Inquisitor this is proof of guilt, and he sets about hunting him down. The Thorian must locate the Cardinal first, to ensure that he isn't a Divine Vessel.

Better The Vessel You Know

A Thorian Inquisitor has been drawn to a world after tales of a remarkable healer. Many of the accounts point towards a potential Divine Vessel. However, upon arrival, the Inquisitor is perturbed to find out the healer has already been abducted and a double put in his place. The Inquisitor must track down the perpetrators and take the healer for his own studies. Complications arise when it becomes clear that the healer is in the hands of a Xanthite who wishes to take the healer for their own purposes. On top of that, people are beginning to get suspicious that something is wrong with the fake healer.

LORD ANTIGONUS BALORODIN

Balorodin is right handed

Equipment: Soulwatcher helm; Master-crafted bolt pistol; Shuriken pistol; Carapace armour (chest), 2 points of armour on all other locations except head; The Sacred Writ

Special Abilities: Leader; Word of the Emperor - Curse of Undoing; Fearsome (except to Eldar); Deadeye Shot (only with bolt pistol).

	WS	BS	S	T	I	Wp	Sg	Nv	Ld
Antigonus Balorodin	65	85	72	69	88	95	93	95	100

Soulwatcher Helm: This provides four points of protection to the head, and includes an aura-scrye and psi-tracker. Grants Balorodin Wyrd - Mesmirism and Wyrd - Mind Scan. Each time that Balorodin uses the Soulwatcher helm to make an active scan or use one of its Wyrd powers, he must commune with the Eldar within the captured spiritstone. To do so, he must pass a Willpower test. If this is failed then he reduces his Wp and Sg by 2D10 (roll for each). He may concentrate, as with a psychic power, to add +10 to his Wp for each successful action. As always, a roll of 96+ will automatically fail. If ever his Wp or Sg is reduced below 50, Antigonus will succumb to the Eldar's will and should be controlled by the GM as appropriate.

The Sacred Writ: This device is attached to Balorodin's back and, connected by an MIU, automatically records his observations of his subjects. This allows him to predict his enemies actions accordingly should he meet them again. As well as its uses within a campaign, the Sacred Writ allows Balorodin to foil his opponents' plans within a game. Should Balorodin face an enemy for a second or subsequent time, he may spend D6 actions consulting his notes from the Sacred Writ (the GM should roll to see how long this will take for each character he is facing again at the start of the game - the player controlling Balorodin is not told until he has finished reading). This grants Balorodin Dodge against the character's first shot, or negates any and all charging bonuses they may have during the first time they charge him (whichever occurs first).

GOTTERICH VALON

Valon is left handed

Equipment: Hammer of the Righteous; Soul net; Stubber; Plasma Pistol; Flak armour on all locations except head and legs; Refractor Field; Hexagrammic Wards; Advanced bionic left leg, average bionic left arm; advanced bionic hearing; Spur injector

Special Abilities: Leader; Word of the Emperor - Faith Overcomes All; Furious Assault

	WS	BS	S	T	I	Wp	Sg	Nv	Ld
Gotterich Valon	80	72	74	79	81	91	94	95	110

Hammer of the Righteous: Blessed by Valon himself, this double-headed hammer is shaped like a swooping eagle and contains a powerful disruption field fuelled by Valon's faith. It follows the rules for a force hammer, although Valon is not psyker. Attacks with the Hammer of the Righteous count as Blessed, and in addition will do an extra D6 damage against Daemonic foes.

CORNELIUS LAVASLAR ANTRECHT

Antrecht is right handed

Equipment: Power harness; MIU-linked autogun with man-stopper rounds and one reload of man-stopper ammo.

Special Abilities: Leader; True Grit

Psychic Abilities: Banishment; Sanctuary; Psychic Shriek; Demoralise; Telepathy; Detection; Gaze of Death

	WS	BS	S	T	I	Wp	Sg	Nv	Ld
Cornelius Antrecht	46	68	25	75	52	98	99	93	85

Power Harness: Antrecht requires the power harness to control his crippled body, and without it is almost paralysed. It provides him with 6 points of armour on his chest legs and arms and incorporates a conversion field. Antrecht can never move faster than walking speed and cannot go prone (though he can just about crouch). The Strength value in his profile is that of his unassisted muscles. The power harness triples Antrecht's Strength in the same manner as bionics.

UMBERCO ETO

Eto is right handed

Equipment: Psycannon with two reloads; Psychic Hood; two psyk-out grenades; Pentagrammic Wards; motion tracker; force axe.

Special Abilities: Leader; Heroic; Rock Steady Aim

Psychic Abilities: Confound Daemon; Seal Warp Breach; Stigmatise; Fireball.

	WS	BS	S	T	I	Wp	Sg	Nv	Ld
Umberto Eto	84	79	72	69	88	95*	93*	95	100

ASAIID VIRENUS

Equipment: Hyperpolymorphine; C'Tan Phase Sword; Neural Shredder; three knives; 2 Bloodfire grenades; 7 Choke grenades.

Special Abilities: Ambidextrous; Acrobatic; Blademaster; Catfall; Deflect Shot; Dodge; Heroic; Lightning Reflexes; Nerves of Steel

	WS	BS	S	T	I	Wp	Sg	Nv	Ld
Asaid Virenus	86	91	65	62	93	98	76	90	35

Hyperpolymorphine: The true effects of the Hyperpolymorphine coursing through Virenus' system can only be properly explored in a campaign setting. She is able to mimic virtually any creature that is roughly human sized, able to even change sex, skin colour and the arrangement of her internal organs. If she has a physical sample to absorb she can even alter her genetic structure to match the creature she is mimicking, although only for short lengths of time before the alteration risks becoming a permanent mutation.

This makes her an excellent infiltrator and a wonderful antagonist to pitch against powerful Inquisitors. She can quite easily pose as a member of a warrior band (should she be able to subdue/kill them and take their clothes and equipment) and is only detectable by psychic probing (it is this that has made Lord Balorodin her nemesis thus far). GMs should endeavour at every opportunity to play on the paranoia of the players, perhaps having them encounter Virenus at an early stage and then creating ample opportunities for her to have swapped places with various other members of the campaign cast. See the Scenario concepts Trust No One... and Doppelgang War for other ideas!

Virenus is also a great tool for some Deus ex Machina on the part of the GM, if he wishes to eliminate anyone from the campaign for any reason. Virenus is so versatile and deadly that it is almost impossible to protect her target unless one mounts a constant (utterly constant) watch. And of course, you can't trust your fellow guard, because that could be her as well. The merest threat of displeasing Virenus might be used to drag a faltering campaign back on track. Make no mistake, she is one of the deadliest and most hunted enemies of the Inquisition, but also it is a brave Inquisitor who faces her without serious amounts of firepower and reinforcements.

In game terms the shape-changing effects of the hyperpolymorphine can be used in two ways - to imitate opposing characters or to gain access to normally inaccessible spaces. In the first case, Virenus will most likely need to change her appearance out of sight for this to be effective, perhaps waylaying a henchman and taking their form. Simple changes (i.e. other humans without too many clothes to strip) will take roughly six turns. More complex alterations (into a Kroot, for example) will take considerably longer, perhaps up to ten turns. Remember that although she can mimic such things as implant weaponry, these are still made from shaped, coloured flesh and so will only count as improvised attacks. At a pinch, Virenus can even shape her flesh to mimic clothing, although this will only work for short periods of time, at a distance or in bad light.

Secondly, Virenus can alter her fingers into dagger-hard hooks to crawl up walls, dissolve her skeleton to pass through gaps no larger than half a yard wide and so on. This allows her to move at a sprint (or slower if you wish, of course) along any surface and to pass through narrow gaps, open windows and such like.

If not imitating another individual, Virenus can also use the hyperpolymorphine to change the cells in her body to other functions, able to grow tougher skin, thicker bones, blood-cleansing organs and similar. The scope for this is pretty much limited by the imagination of the GM - increasing her resistance tests for toxins and gasses; adding Toughness or armour to certain locations; growing increased senses (perhaps even extra eyes!) in difficult conditions. As with detection, her only real vulnerability is psychic.

Using the hyperpolymorphine requires intense concentration on the part of Virenus, and so each time she tries to change shape she must pass a Wp test. The quicker she is trying to change, the harder it is, so reduce her Wp by 10 for every turn less than ideal she is attempting to change within. For example, if she is trying to imitate another human but wants to change within two turns, she will be at -40 to her Wp (pretty dangerous really!). If she fails she suffers D3 hits, to random locations doing D6 damage, and is stunned and prone for D3 turns while her body convulses and rejects the alterations.

C'Tan Phase Sword: Made from a fragment of the Living Metal that encases the god-like alien C'tan, the phase sword exists neither in the real universe, not wholly in the Warp, but in a dimension of its own. This allows it to pass through the strongest barrier, bypassing armour and even forcefields. The C'tan phase sword has the profile below. It is a power weapon and, in addition, the damage it inflicts is never reduced by enemy protection such as armour, force fields or even psychic power. Cover also has no effect on a C'tan phase sword.

Reach	Damage	Parry	Penalty
2	4D6		-20%



NEW PSYCHIC ABILITIES

Below are a selection of psychic powers that are particularly appropriate for Thorian Inquisitors, including a new discipline. Of course, players and GMs should feel free to use these for other types of characters as well.

New Discipline - Theosophamy

Akin to Daemonology, Theosophamy is a psychic discipline that concentrates on the manipulation of the Warp in its interaction with the real universe. It is based upon ritual and control rather than unleashing the raw power of the Warp, and is intended more to disrupt or close breaks in the barrier between dimensions, rather than opening them.

Confound Daemon - Difficulty: 10

The psyker reaches out with their mind to disrupt the flow of energy from the warp into real space, temporarily disorientating Daemonic creatures. This is a ranged ability. When successfully targeted at a Daemonic character, the target must pass a Wp test. If this is passed, they are stunned for one turn. If it is failed, they are stunned for an additional turn for every 10 percent (or part) by which they failed the test. The target's Wp is reduced by the amount by which the psyker passed their psychic test to use Confound Daemon.

Seal Warp Breach - Difficulty: 20

Seal Warp Breach cuts off the connection between the mortal universe and Warp space. Daemonic creatures drawing on the energy of the Warp will have their power leached away as they attempt to continue to exist in real space, and will perish if they cannot re-establish another link to their immaterial realm. Seal Warp Breach is a ranged, persistent ability. When successful used against a Daemonic character, the target adds D6 to their Injury total, and another D6 at the start of every turn the power is successful maintained. The target may attempt to nullify the ability by spending actions in the same way as a psyker nullifying any other persistent psychic ability. If the target is rendered unconscious by this damage, they are banished back to the Warp.

Stigmatise - Difficulty: 5

The psyker creates a disruption in the link between a mortal and its soul, not only disconcerting the target but also creating a subconscious suspicion in their comrades. Stigmatise is a Ranged power. The target must pass a Nv test or be stunned for a turn. In addition, any character friendly to the target within ten yards reduces their Ld by 20 for the remainder of the game. Note that a character's Ld is only ever reduced once, regardless of the number of times they come under the influence of Stigmatise.

Strike Daemon - Difficulty: 15

Unleashing a bolt of faith, the psyker blasts the Daemonic foes of the Emperor with the strength of their mind. Strike Daemon is a psychic bolt that can only cause damage against Daemonic characters. It has the following profile:

Type	Rng	Mode	Acc	Dam
Special	D	Semi-auto(4)	–	2D10

New Daemonology Powers

Summon Warp Power - Difficulty: 10

Drawing on the energy of the Warp, the psyker imbues themselves with extraordinary strength and agility, for a limited

time. Summon Warp Power is a persistent ability. Whilst successful in play, Summon Warp Power grants the psyker one of the following abilities (this ability may not change from turn to turn, although more than one ability may be in play with several successful uses of the power): Acrobatic; Lightning Reflexes; True Grit; Dodge

Summon Void - Difficulty: 15

The psyker opens up a small breach into the Warp, tearing away a tiny piece of reality and dragging into the other dimension. This is particularly useful for attacking foes protected by armour or cover. Summon Void is a psychic bolt. It has the following profile and any damage inflicted ignores armour. If the location is protected by a force field, then roll for protection as normal. If the field fails to stop all of the damage, then it has no effect at all.

Type	Rng	Mode	Acc	Dam
Special	B	single shot	–	2D6

Biomancy Power

Bind Corruption - Difficulty: 15

The psyker reaches out with their mind to heal the body of another, drawing out infection and stimulating its own resistance responses. It is particularly used to halt to progress of Warp-related contagions such as Zombie Plague and the Obliterator virus, although can only slow the advance of the disease rather than halting it. This is a ranged power. The target immediately recovers from being stunned and may take a Toughness test for each incidence of bleeding they are suffering from. If the T test is successful the bleeding stops. The target may also may a fresh resistance test against any gas, toxin or virus currently affecting them.

NEW SPECIAL ABILITIES

The Word of the Emperor Exotic Ability in Inquisitor is a generic ability to represent the general faith and zeal of a character. Here we present a more in-depth look at these acts of faith and protective liturgies.

Word of the Emperor - Faith Overcomes All

Bolstered by the sermons of Thor, the character's resolve is hardened to the perils presented by the foe. Whilst the character is reciting the litany, the character and any friend within earshot benefit from Nerves of Steel and Force of Will.

Word of the Emperor - Curse of Undoing

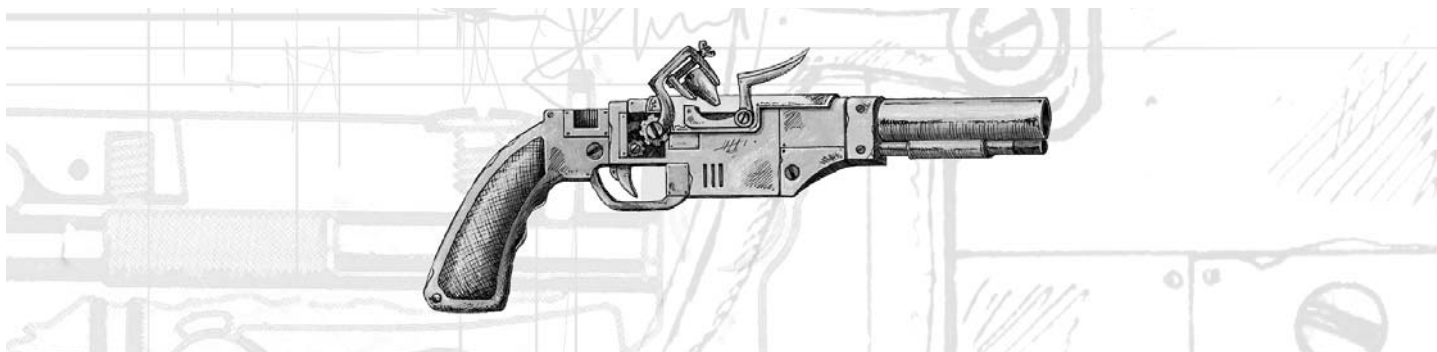
A powerful condemnation of the works of the Ruinous Powers, the Curse of Undoing can ward away psychic powers. A character may recite the Curse of Undoing to nullify a persistent psychic power in the same manner as a psyker.

Word of the Emperor - The Will and the Way

This hymnal instils those that hear it with an indomitable resolve, enabling them to push their physical endurance to the limit. A friendly character within earshot gains the True Grit ability whilst they can hear the litany.

Word of the Emperor - Catechism of Hate

Most commonly used by the Space Marines of the Adeptus Astartes, a Catechism of Hate drives the faithful into a vengeful fury, determined to crush the enemies of the Emperor. Any friendly model hearing a Catechism of Hate is subject to Frenzy and benefits from Furious Assault for the duration.



NEW WARGEAR

Soul net

A soul net was one of the Thorian's crude attempts to replicate the technology embodied within the Eldar spirit stones. It is a latticework of psycho-conductive material that is designed to activate upon death to trap the escaping soul of the wearer. Unfortunately, it interferes with the psychic aura that surrounds the wearer, reducing them to a comatose state or even killing them. This side effect has now seen use as a weapon against Daemons and psykers. A soul-net is used in the same way as a bolas. A Daemoniac or psychic character entangled by a soul net loses any Daemoniac or psychic abilities they have whilst entangled.

Psychic Dampener

Used almost exclusively by the Ordo Hereticus, a psychic dampener disrupts the flow of Warp energy within its range of effect, disturbing the psychic powers of others. Any psyker attempting to use a power within fifteen yards of a psychic dampener must re-roll a successful Psychic test - if the second test fails, there is no chance of psychic feedback.

Empath Field Generator

Originally designed for Imperial Officers to control penal troops, an empath generator creates a psychic field that allows the wearer to project their emotions into another individual. A character with an empath generator can instil fear in an enemy within twenty yards, or Nerves of steel in a friendly character within twenty yards. Using an empathy generator is a risky action, and if failed results in the character being pinned.

Telepathic Beacon

A telepathic beacon can be implanted into the mind of an individual to allow them to broadcast their thoughts. A character with a telepathic beacon has the ability Wyrd - Ttelepathy. Each time the beacon is used, the character must pass a Wp test or suffer damaging feedback that stuns them for D3 turns.

Aura-scrye

The aura-scrye is a special type of auspex that works along similar principles as the psi-tracker. It works by detecting the psychic emanation that all mortal and Daemoniac creatures exude, and displays this as an image when used as an optical aid. The aura-scrye can only be used to make an active scan. It allows the user to make a detection test to spot any character within its arc of sight, regardless of whether they have line of sight.

Master-crafted Weaponry

Made by the most skilled artisans of the Adeptus Mechanicus, a master-crafted weapon is far better than the mass-produced armaments from hive worlds.

A master-crafted ranged weapon allows the firer to always count as having aimed when calculating the chance of making a placed shot.

A master-crafted close combat weapon reduces the enemy's chance of parrying or dodging by 10%.

Eldar Shuriken Pistol

Type	range	mode	acc	dam	shots	rld	wt
Pistol	E	semi (2/4) Full (8)	-	2D6	40	3	10

