

INQUISITOR



THE ISTVAANIAN SOURCEBOOK

INQUISITOR

Presented by

DARK MAGENTA

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the “Istvaanian Sourcebook”, a fan-created supplement for the *Inquisitor* game, which some players of *Dark Heresy* may also find interesting. Just as the Games Workshop written “Thorian Sourcebook” and fan-produced “Recongregator Sourcebook” that have already been released on the fans of intrigue in the 41st millennium have delved into the background behind one of the shady groupings within the Inquisition, this book aims to offer an insight into the infamously bloodthirsty Istvaanian faction.

Within this publication you’ll find a treatise on the Istvaanian faction, detailing its history, splinter groups, its place within the Ordos and some notable Istvaanian inquisitors.

Though this book is entirely unofficial and offers only my take on the Istvaanian faction, it is all based on the established background laid down in such mighty tomes as the *Inquisitor* rulebook, the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook, various *Dark Heresy* publications and not least the “Thorian Sourcebook” which provided most of the inspiration for this endeavour. Credit must go to the authors of these pieces for without their work, none of this would have been possible.

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Artwork by Nyla Abraham and Ruaridh Dall.

Thanks to David Knowles and Derek Gillespie for constant inspiration and proofreading.



This sourcebook is a not-for-profit fan-made endeavour, designed to provide additional material for the *Inquisitor* game system.

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ISTVAANIANISM

“In a galaxy of unending war and madness, only the strongest can hope to survive,”
 – Inquisitor Volantin Atlas, *The Imperium and War*

Mankind has forever been a violent race and there are some that would say that since the dawn of time, humanity has had a distinctly Istvaanian outlook on life – that only through turmoil and conflict has progress been made. The Imperium has known violence since the Emperor looked out at the stars from Terra and decided that He was the one to bring them all under humanity’s rule, and the age of war looks set to continue into the 42nd millennium and beyond. Some would attest that this constant battle has strengthened humanity and given each and every man a steelier outlook on life, making them all the more determined to succeed. Others simply say that the violence has weeded out the weak and left the strong to carry the Imperium forward, all the better for shedding the dead weight. Those members of the Inquisition that hold these viewpoints are known as the Istvaanians. They are a faction for whom the modus operandi is the initiation of conflict and upheaval for its own sake. Distrusted by many, they are no strangers to battling with their Inquisitorial brethren, sometimes over philosophical differences, and sometimes simply for their desire to create violence within the Ordos in addition to the Imperium at large. Individual Istvaanians range from bloodthirsty berserkers that bring fire and death to the battlefields of the 41st millennium to men happy to manipulate and agitate from the shadows of the lowliest mutie slum. The various ways in which conflict can be used to spur the Imperium on have led to the formation of many splinter factions over the years, from the warlike Solarians to the scheming Fomenters that can trace their philosophy back over hundreds, if not thousands of years. The Istvaanians have existed within the Inquisition for millennia, and unless the galaxy becomes peaceful, they will exist for many millennia to come.

The Fallibility of Legend

Across the Imperium, much is made of the interpretation of scripture, legislation and even battlefield orders. A simple slip of an archivist’s pen can forever sully the name of an Imperial hero or cause a millennia-old religious sect to be declared heretical. Misspellings are a common error to affect history books, as handwritten accounts are notoriously difficult to interpret, written as they are on scrap parchment or in the midst of battle. These differences in spelling can be purely cosmetic, but sometimes can cause accidental offence in local dialects, and can even result in armies being directed to invade the wrong planet. One spelling difference often debated over by the archivists on Terra is the correct spelling of “Istvaan”. Following the Horus Heresy, the system in question was declared Perdita and put under permanent quarantine. It seemed that during the recording of this an error slipped into the archives and resulted in two different spellings for the system’s name: Istvaan and Isstvan. Normally such a difference would hold little interest or be debate worthy, but with the system’s legend being of such historical importance, generations of archivists have made it their goal to find out which spelling is right. So far, none have come close to finding the truth in the monumental datastacks of Terra.

ORIGINS OF THE FACTION

"We fight not because we can, but because we must; that is the human way," – Inquisitor Volantin Atlas, The Imperium and War

THE BEGINNING OF THE IDEOLOGY

It is said that the term "Istvaanian" came into use in the late 34th millennium, after Inquisitor Volantin Atlas declared that the Imperium as it came to be was born the day Horus unleashed the horrific bombardment on Istvaan III that began that greatest of wars. He maintained that without Horus's callous act and the resultant sundering of the human race the Emperor would never have ascended to Godhood and heroes like Dorn and Sanguinius would never have come to the fore. Guilliman would never have called for the splitting of the Astartes Legions and the sundering of Guard and Fleet, and the Imperium would not have endured the next four thousand years. Indeed, the noble Inquisition would never have come to be without the death of the Emperor, and thus there would have been no one to guide humanity from the shadows throughout the millennia. He made references to the ongoing conflict between the followers of von Dressen and the Horusians as further proof that conflict was the reason behind everything that the Inquisition had achieved; without rival groups working to foil each others' activities, neither would have strived to achieve their goals and both would have achieved so little as a result. Atlas was said to be obsessed with generating strife wherever he went, and some historians say it is too much of a coincidence that the Nova Terra Interregnum came to pass as Atlas was at the height of his scheming ways for him not to have been involved in the temporary sundering of the Imperium.

Much of what Atlas laid out was elaborated on in the coming millennia, with proponents such as Inquisitor Ioan von Oettingen celebrating the turmoil that Vandire's Reign of Blood had created, allegedly declaring that "Vandire is only second to Horus in terms of good done for the Imperium!" The quote brought him much

notoriety, but he was always keen to point out that no one would dispute that the Imperium was a better place for the changes that had been made, not least the limiting of the potential power one man could wield. The Reign of Blood also gave birth to the Ordo Sicarius and Ordo Hereticus, as well as forging the relationship between the latter and the newly formed Adepta Sororitas, increasing the power that the Inquisition had over the common man and Ecclesiarchy. Some even went as far as to declare the Reign of Blood comparable to the Istvaan massacres in terms of importance for the structure and continuing survival of the Imperium.

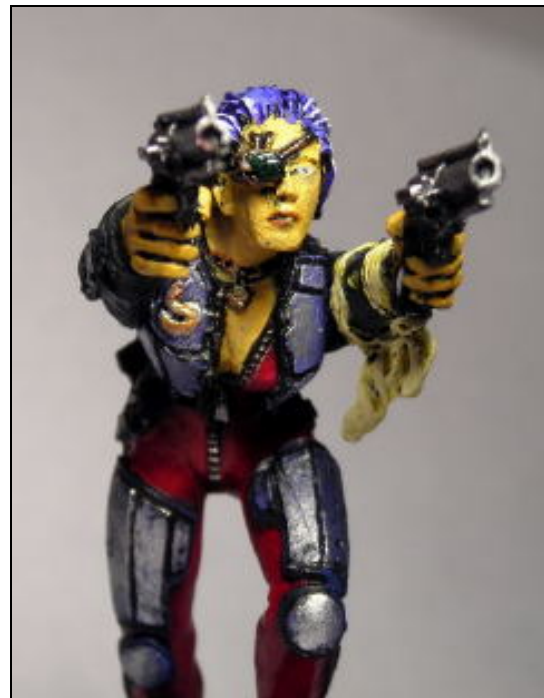
ISTVAANIANISM GROWS

After the upheaval of the Reign of Blood, the galaxy entered into a relatively calm period. Orks still set fire to whole systems, Chaos raiders still ravaged Imperial space and the Eldar attacked and disappeared just as they had always done, but there was no great conflict that threatened the future of the Imperium as a whole. The Ordo Xenos still spoke of a reawakening ancient race in hushed whispers, and the Ordo Malleus plotted in secret on Saturn's moons. The newly formed Ordo Hereticus though, was not idle, in a period that would become known as the Age of Redemption, inquisitors flocked to its ranks, some simply aligning themselves with an Ordo that now represented their modus operandi of hunting rogue psykers, and others who were determined to make sure something like the Age of Apostasy could never come to be again. Many of these inquisitors set out on bloody pogroms, carving through the populations of many planets in search of witches, mutants and traitors. Some worlds were declared Perdita and subjected to Exterminatus to remove forever the mass

mutations within their populaces. The Ordo Hereticus was quickly establishing a bloody reputation for itself, and those few active Istvaanians there were at that time took notice. For the first time, hundreds, if not thousands, of Inquisitors had the scent of blood in their nostrils and were prepared to act against the common men and women of the Imperium – the next violent upheaval to face mankind was to be led by its secret guardians, and the Istvaanians could not sit by and let the impetus fade.

Initially, it was not difficult for the Istvaanians to convince their colleagues to move from world to world and carry out their purges, but the movement soon became a victim of its own success. The Ordo Hereticus had to reach further and further out to find worlds that had not been swept clean of rogues, and the tales of torture and mass burnings had spread like a bow-wave in front of the coming inquisitors. Populations had taken to rounding up their traitors and witches themselves to avoid the indiscriminate killing that the Ordo had indulged in. Some of the most bloody-minded Monodominants were not discouraged from genocide by the seeming co-operation of the worlds they came to, but they were in the minority. Some Istvaanians took to working with these butchers and prolonged their purges, a few even managing to turn their puppets' eyes outwards and leading them on crusades into xenos-controlled space, but most had to be far more resourceful to prolong the violence that they felt was doing great things for the human race. Some perpetuated rumours of psyker covens within ruling families, while others took the secret lore they had accumulated over their years of service to the Emperor and actively shared it with dissident cults, only to then bring their fellow inquisitors down upon them. As the violence continued, some Istvaanians felt able to share their views, subtly at first, with their compatriots, and they were able to convince others that the bloodshed the Ordo Hereticus was unleashing was a good thing – they were ridding the Imperium of a great many dangerous heretics and mutants, and the common man was exposing the sins of his neighbour in fear. The Imperium was growing stronger as a direct result of the continuing

purges and their actions could not be allowed to end. Some found the evidence compelling and accepted the wisdom of Atlas and von Oettingen, but others took stock and looked at the butchers they had become. A great many of those stopped the wanton bloodshed there and then, but there were those who resented greatly the way they had been used, and plotted revenge on the Istvaanians who had perpetuated the madness. If violence was what they extolled, violence was what they were going to get.



ANDRUSYSHYN'S IRONY

One of the most vocal critics of the Istvaanians was Inquisitor Petraeus Andrusyshyn. Andrusyshyn had been one of the few inquisitors who had attempted to alert their fellows to the danger that Vandire had posed before he had taken the Imperium by the throat. To him, the Reign of Blood had been one of the most shameful episodes in the Imperium's long history, and the madness that had culminated with an Astartes assault on Holy Terra itself was completely unforgivable. For Andrusyshyn, the Imperium could only prosper with peace, and the newly vocal Istvaanians were upsetting any chance the

Imperium had of returning to relative tranquillity. Just like the forces of Chaos and the xenos hordes, they were a threat to the stability of the Imperium and needed to be neutralised. By this point Andrusyshyn was several centuries old, and many of his detractors claimed he had become world-weary by this point, depressed by the slaughter he had witnessed over his many years in the Emperor's service and his wish to see the Imperium at peace with itself was just not realistic. However, Andrusyshyn had many allies within the Inquisition and beyond, and with the gathering anger at the Istvaanian movement it was not long before dozens of inquisitors had pledged themselves to Andrusyshyn's cause.

Andrusyshyn envisioned a series of surgical strikes that would rid the Inquisition of the Istvaanians quickly and with minimal collateral damage. His first target was Inquisitrix Viola Zohar, an indomitable woman who had been instrumental in the purging of the Isaiah Sector in the Segmentum Solar. Her pogrom had allegedly seen millions of civilians burnt at the stake for witchcraft and heresy, and Andrusyshyn saw her as one of the biggest threats to the sanctity of the Emperor's realm. Andrusyshyn dispatched two of his closest allies within the Inquisition, Emerson and Dashell, to the capital world of the Isaiah Sector, Balophamael, and they slew Zohar and her bodyguard on the steps of the Cathedral Maximus in Hive Excelsior as she preached to an assembled crowd of thousands. Emerson and Dashell were hounded all the way back to their dropship by the enraged crowd but they made their escape in a blaze of autocannon fire. As news of Zohar's demise spread, there was little doubt in the mind of her allies that only the Inquisition could have planned and executed such an attack, and her Istvaanian friends either prepared themselves for an onslaught, or simply went to ground. Andrusyshyn had dealt with one of the most infamous Istvaanians, but in doing so he had set the tone for how the Istvaanian faction would operate over the millennia to come. Its devotees now understood that their beliefs were never going to be accepted by the mainstream and they were going to face anger and violence from within the Inquisition at

every turn from now on. Those that survived Andrusyshyn's purge did so either because they became exceedingly martial in outlook, as a result of the need to use force to defend themselves from their brethren, or took their beliefs into the shadows and worked secretly to continue the turmoil they had created. Learned Istvaanians refer to this as "Andrusyshyn's irony" – though he wished to end them, Andrusyshyn became responsible for the survival of the Istvaanian faction. Those same Istvaanians look back at this period with a smile – it was through violence that the Istvaanian faction forged ahead and survived.

ISTVAANIANISM IN THE 41st MILLENIUM

Despite its survival through Andrusyshyn's purge, Istvaanianism has never held great sway within the ranks of the Holy Ordos in comparison to Thorianism, or more recently Amalathianism, as it is seen by many as a far too high risk strategy to better humanity's place in the stars – is the future longevity of the Imperium worth gambling by throwing it headlong into conflict and strife in the chance that something good may come of it? Many critics argue that an internecine war for the sake of hopefully having one side emerge victorious and more powerful than the collective sides that took to battle initially is folly of the highest level. Such a war would more than likely weaken the Imperium such that it would be ended by its traditional foes. Those outspoken Istvaanians there are scoff at the lack of understanding these critics have of their views and activities, both for their genuine disbelief at the narrow-mindedness on show and because they know that saying such things will entice their dissenters to take up arms and make to settle their difference with violence. Istvaanians are nothing if not brilliant manipulators, no matter if they are clandestine or vocal in their beliefs, and know how to pick a fight like the angriest of orks. However, there are some within the Istvaanian sphere that are beginning to think that internal strife is not an aid to humanity, and that our violent tendencies should be focussed elsewhere. Perhaps the future of Istvaanianism resides

with these “Solarians” – their crusading cause is at last growing much conservative support as the 41st millennium draws to an end. With the Cadian gate besieged, the Tau enclave expanding and the Tyranids sweeping into the galaxy, it is perhaps time for the Imperium to go on the offensive and make its own future.

Whatever that future is though, it is almost certain that the Istvaanians will have a place in it.



FACETS OF ISTVAANIANISM

*“Peace is an affectation of the weak,” – Inquisitor Volantin Atlas, *The Imperium and War**

As one can see from the history of the faction, there are a great many differing ideologies on how to achieve the Istvaanian goal of bettering humanity through adversity. Over the years, the popularity of these separate philosophies has waxed and waned, and, typically for Istvaanians, the devotees of each facet have come to blows in the past. For some Istvaanians though, the thought of limiting themselves to one particular modus operandi is nauseating and quite frankly not anarchical enough for one determined to birth a strengthened Imperium from the blood of the weak. These inquisitors transcend all of these splinter factions, using ideas and methods from each to achieve what they see as “true Istvaanianism”.

IMPERATORS MAXIMUS

Imperators all share in the belief that the Imperium is mighty, but within the teeming masses of humanity, there are those who have become lax in their devotion to He on Terra and some may have even begun to harbour heretical thoughts. This weakness of spirit threatens to undermine the Imperium, and these men and women must be reminded of the power of the Adepta around them. To this end some Imperators will have people forcibly taken from their homes and places of work by the authorities on their orders for any number of crimes (and sometimes on a whim). Sometimes these people are returned to their communities, bloody and bruised, or sometimes not at all. However it ends, these communities will have witnessed firsthand how the Imperium deals with criminals and seditionists, and will immediately return their prayers to Terra in fear of being taken next. Imperators traditionally maintain ties with the Adeptus Arbites to initiate their arrests and at the same time provide a recognisable face of Imperial power.

This approach certainly keeps neighbourhoods on the straight and narrow, but occasions can call for a much larger swathe of a population to be reminded of just what their masters are capable of. Some Imperators have been known to foster their own heretical cults by acting as a demagogue and sharing forbidden lore with them or by uncovering cults and having the authorities turn a blind eye to their activities. A careful Imperator can allow these cults to become sizeable, and just before they become a deadly threat, they can expose the cult to a more puritanical inquisitor, or simply bring the full force of the Imperium down on them themselves in a spectacular double-cross. On more than one occasion an entire crusade has been put into motion to destroy a rebellion, daemonic intrusion or xenos infiltration that began with the work of one Imperator, and the news of such a massed show of power can echo for sectors around, convincing many would-be recidivists that their cause is a hopeless one.

However, such grand plans of sham-heresy are not to be undertaken lightly though, and should a cult grow too rapidly in power then a careless Imperator may find that the iron fist of the Imperium just isn't strong enough to deal with the threat he initiated...



FOMENTERS

Observers of the orkoid races note that they are ever at war, even amongst their own kind, and rather than suffer for their internecine killing, the orks thrive. Orks grow bigger with conflict, becoming more physically attuned to death and destruction, and, as a particular tribe triumphs over its neighbours, there is a

build up of communal psychic energy that draws even more orks to their banner. As the numbers swell around the strongest, the psychic energy builds until a critical mass is reached and the orks begin a crusade or “Waaaagh against their enemies, such as the Imperium. Although the communal psychic energy seems unique to the orks, there are some Istvaanians who copy the orkoid model of conflict within communities. They apply the logic that the fighting will drill the participants into becoming more warlike and improve their personal combat abilities. These skills will be vital when the time comes for them to defend themselves against xenos or recidivist aggressors.

Fomenters achieve their aims by stirring up violence on Imperial worlds through a myriad of schemes: Some politicise, and sponsor pro-Imperial parties into positions of power, allowing them to meet out persecution and punishment on their peoples; some descend into the dangerous underhives of countless worlds and start turf wars with a few well-placed lasbolts; some will encourage men and women to take up the mask and flamer of the Red Redemption and bring fire to the sinners around them; some preach to the massed



congregations of devout worlds and declare that theirs is the one true path and all other interpretations of the creed are heresy; and some declare the discovery of mutation within noble houses to draw their age old rivals into conflict. It is relatively easy to create conflict within the Imperium – violence being the human nature after all – and Fomenters are the masters of turning even the most peaceful grox-hands into vicious killers through nothing more than a few well placed, but highly manipulative whispers.

SOLARIANS

At the beginning of the 41st millennium, perhaps the greatest and most successful crusade since the Emperor set off from Terra to reunite humanity was overseen by Lord

The Elucidium

In an organisation as widespread and fiercely clandestine as the Inquisition there are many groups who hold the same modus operandi, but operate under different titles, completely unaware of the existence of their like-minded brethren. This may be down to the simple coincidence of inquisitors at opposite ends of the galaxy fighting common foes, but in some cases an inquisitor will set up cells in isolation of each other, especially if he is investigating a brother inquisitor and cannot risk his whole operation being exposed. The Elucidium was a cell of Istvaanian inquisitors that existed entirely unaware that the faction was a force in the Inquisition at large. Their founder was a man named Agmar, an inquisitor who held to Istvaanian tenets, but did not tutor his acolytes about the origin of his beliefs, perhaps because he feared he would be entitled a Radical by those he mentored. Whatever his reasons, Agmar created a close-knit and secretive group of Istvaanians in the shape of his acolytes. They called themselves The Elucidium and undertook their war-mongering schemes for decades unaware that their philosophy was not unique. Secretive to the last, no one knows now if The Elucidium still exist, but in the wider galaxy it is entirely possible another cell of Istvaanians works alone, blissfully unaware that there are others like them setting planets alight and breeding strength through conflict.

Solar Macharius. Macharius and his men claimed over a thousand worlds in the Emperor’s name, stretching the Imperium to the Halo Stars on the fringe of the galaxy to the west. No general is likely to make such gains for the Imperium again, yet Macharius was not content with his achievement. As the flames of war died down on the world that became known as Ultima Macharia the Lord Solar was said to be staring at the stars above and readying himself for the next battle. It was one of his generals, Sejanus who convinced him that his men were broken and could fight no more.

Some Istvaanians look upon this day as a failure and curse Sejanus's name as a traitor. At that time, Macharius's men were at their most deadly; survivors of thousands of conflicts and veterans of every type of terrain known to man. There have not been soldiers since to match their skill. If Sejanus had not made his claim, who knows what Macharius could have won. Some say he wished to head for the Eye of Terror itself and bring the forces of Chaos to their knees.

Solarians see crusades and the constant roar of battle as the one true path for humanity's salvation. They believe the Imperium's warriors must live a life of eternal conflict to hone their talents and become the most deadly they can be. The enemies of the Imperium are multitudinous, and only by taking the fight to them will humanity's warriors learn their weaknesses and how best to rid the galaxy of them. Solarians believe that by initiating a number of successful crusades, the rest of the Imperium will be galvanised into devoting itself to one great war to finally exterminate the foes that oppress humanity. These lofty expectations are scoffed at by many, but increasingly, the Solarians are attracting more and more inquisitors to their cause, often from more "Puritanical" factions. It is only a matter of time now before the first great crusade since Macharius took to the stars begins, and those inquisitors that share his wish to paint the galaxy red with blood will soon see if the Lord Solar's impetuousness had been right all along.



FRATRICIDIANS

The majority of those inquisitors united under the banner of Istvaanianism would agree that humanity as a whole benefits from being on the front foot – letting conflict decide who is the strongest. As their name suggests, the Fratricidians believe that no one should be

spared from bloodshed and death, especially the Inquisition. Fratricidians wish to drag the disparate groups of the Inquisition into conflict with each other on the understanding that this is the only way for the various factions to prove who is right and let the strongest lead the Inquisition to its destiny.

Fratricidians can trace their history back to the purge initiated by Andrusyshyn all those years ago – it is said that their founder was actually one of the inquisitors who flocked to Andrusyshyn's side, though he did so because he wanted to force Andrusyshyn's hand towards open conflict. Some go as far to say that he was the one known as Emerson, and had in fact initiated the strike against Zohar without Andrusyshyn's consent. Whatever the truth, the Fratricidians have been the root cause of numerous inter-factional wars over the millennia.

Fratricidians are regarded as untrustworthy, silver-tongued manipulators with a callous disregard for life. Some pose as members of one faction and seek out "like-minded" inquisitors only to betray them to members of opposing factions similarly duped, while others fabricate rumours and lies about their brethren to circle throughout Conclaves and Inquisitorial communication lines.

One of the sad truths of the Inquisition is that the Fratricidians do not need to work very hard to achieve their goals.



SCULPTORS HOMINUS

Every Istvaanian believes that conflict breeds strength, so what if a world could be turned into a wholly martial society where trial by combat settled all grievances and formed the basis for government? A world where the fighting pit replaces the town hall at the centre of every community and where the crèche is the first battleground. The people of such a

world would be lean, strong, tough and the masters of combat, unarmed or otherwise. They would be the perfect recruits for the Imperial Guard and even the Astartes. The Sculptors aim is to see every world in the Imperium become a breeding ground for the heroes of men.

Naturally, this is no easy task, and many Sculptors dedicate themselves to continuing the barbarian cultures of worlds like Fenris and Kanak that breed such deadly men. Sculptors perpetuate inter-tribe violence where they can, by infiltrating tribes with their strongest acolytes to have them mould the community into the inquisitor's vision, or by simply removing the heads of weak tribes and letting the next in line come to power. Others deliberately hinder the progress of such worlds by attacking missionaries who promote peace, or the Adeptus Mechanicus who may attempt to annexe a world if a valuable natural resource is discovered.

It is not only feral worlds that produce the best warriors though - Cadia is a prime example of a civilised world that produces some of the best soldiers in the Imperial Guard. Millennia of war has left its mark on the people of that world, and from childhood every boy and girl is trained to wield a lasgun and they are all born ready to lay down their lives for the Emperor. This military mindset comes, of course, from the proximity to the Eye of Terror and the ever-present threat of attack. Some Sculptors aim to engineer threats to other worlds in order to force their inhabitants to turn their efforts towards defending themselves. Some of these threats are nothing more than rumour-mongering and raids by heavily disguised agents of the inquisitor, but some Sculptors have gone as far as to set up destabilising cults, draw in xenos armies or worse. By forcing conflict on agri- and mining-worlds critics say that Sculptors are doing irreparable damage to much needed resources but these inquisitors are ever keen to point out that these worlds are most in need of a standing army to prevent capitulation at times of war.

Surprisingly perhaps, these are not the most extreme measures some Sculptors will go to achieve their dream of a martial society –

rumour has it that more than a few apocalypses to strike Imperial worlds over the millennia were initiated by a Sculptor to rid the Imperium of a world they believed had “gone soft” and build a new planet of bloodthirsty warriors from its ruins.



Dellas stalked through the maintenance conduit warily, apprehension written all over his face. His contact in the Ordo had promised him information that would lead to his quarry, but the locale he'd chosen for their rendezvous couldn't have been riper for an ambush. There were that many pipes venting steam that he couldn't see more than ten yards ahead of him, and he was sweating profusely with the temperature. He couldn't think of a more dangerous meeting place except perhaps the rim of one of planet's volcanoes, but the contact had insisted that this was the only place the Ordo weren't watching. Dellas couldn't argue with the man's inside knowledge, and had to agree with the meeting; it was the only way to bring down Freeman. He was too close to uncovering his scheme, and had to be ended swiftly, with no link back to him. The contact had promised a thorough dossier on Freeman's movements, associates and bases of operations, and with that knowledge, Dellas was sure he could plan a way to assassinate him whilst leaving no evidence linking him to the crime. Now he just had to hope the contact had been telling him the truth.

At the next junction the steam cleared slightly, extending Dellas's field of vision to the next bulkhead. Runes above it denoted it as access 12/80 and he relaxed a little. He had made it to the rendezvous without incident. He placed a screamer on the floor to warn of anyone sneaking up on him and drew his bolt pistol. He trusted his contact, but he wasn't about to take any unnecessary risks – his contact could oh-so-easily have been compromised by one of Freeman's men. Dellas entered the ritual sequence of unlocking into the keypad beside the door just as the contact had told him, and was rewarded with a grinding of gears. The door shuddered open to reveal a dark room beyond, one solitary lume-strip in the ceiling providing the most meagre of lighting. Dellas took a light-caster from his belt, cracked it on his knee and through the tube into the room. The chemicals inside the tube fizzed before throwing back the shadows with a momentarily fearsome luminescence that slowly faded to something much more comfortable on his eyes. The room appeared empty, apart from a cleaning servitor slumped over the bucket that protruded from its belly. It was long dead if the stink was anything to go by, trapped long ago by whomever had closed the door he'd just come through. He paced into the room, quickly checking the corners for any surprises. The room was quite deserted. He let out a sigh of relief and checked his chronometer. He was two minutes early for the meeting. He turned on his heel and stood facing the door, bolt pistol raised. Two minutes came and went. Something had gone wrong.

Dellas made for the door, but it ground shut before he could get there. Despairingly, he battered it once with the butt of his pistol, before turning back to the room with a curse on his lips. The servitor was gone, its bucket sitting lonely on the floor. Not a servitor then, just part of a trap. Dellas's eyes darted around. It had to be in the room. He heard the shuffle of feet to his right and blasted a bolt round through a cluster of pipes. They squealed as they began to vent steam into the room, and Dellas caught sight of movement through the cloud. He darted forward and fired off another shot into the gloom.

'Where are you?' he growled.

He was answered with the unmistakable feeling of the point of a blade in his lower back.

'I thought I'd been duped you know, when my contact failed to show,' his target whispered in his ear, 'but he's done better than just give me your location it would seem.'

'Freeman?' Dellas spurted.

'Of course. Expecting someone else?'

'Someone who said they could lead me to you.'

'Seems they did. Pity you couldn't take advantage of them giving me to you, unlike I have.'

Freeman let Dellas's body slump to the floor and wiped the blood from his knife, speculating over how very different things could have been had he not worn his cameleoline synskin. Both he and Dellas had clearly been set up, probably by the same contact, but to what end? Perhaps the contact wanted them dead and had hoped this meeting would have killed the both of them. If that was the case, he would have to watch himself – the contact's mission was only half-completed. He mentally shrugged and opened up the door. He turned to close it, and caught sight of the bucket. Just where had the servitor gone?

ISTVAANIANS WITHIN THE ORDOS

“What was the Reign of Blood if not an opportunity to kill off the unworthy?”

- Inquisitor Ioan von Oettingen, Vandire and the New Order

As a result of Andrusyshyn’s purge all those years ago, Istvaanians fell roughly into two camps – overt preachers of violence and death, and covert manipulators working puppets from the shadows. This division is not absolute by any means, and indeed there are Istvaanian inquisitors whose methodology falls outside these categories altogether, but it is a useful tool for understanding the approach of different Istvaanians with regards to the Ordos. In general, the warmongers amongst the Istvaanian ranks are affiliated with one of the Ordos Majoris due to the assets that can be called upon from these organisations, such as raw manpower and the support from their peers for their wars (it should be remembered at this point that, outwardly, an Istvaanian may appear as a shining light of purity that wishes only to smite the Imperium’s foes, not a warmonger who wishes to pitch the Imperium into violence. Indeed many Istvaanians have never been revealed as such until late in their careers). Those that work from the shadows often do so without support from the Ordos as they wish their actions to remain clandestine and do not believe that their peers would appreciate their actions if discovered.

Of course, there is no such thing as an “average” Istvaanian, just as there is no such thing as an “average” inquisitor. Unless trained by an Istvaanian, most inquisitors will not come across the ideas of the faction for many years, and some never at all. Therefore, there are inquisitors who have long been members of an Ordo who come to change their views of how best to serve Him, and not wishing to cause suspicion, remain affiliated with their parent Ordo while implementing Istvaanian schemes. These ties have their benefits of course: time spent with the Ordo

Malleus will have taught the inquisitor of many Chaos cults and daemonic entities; the Ordo Hereticus teaches how to seek out witches and provides knowledge of the different facets of the Ministorum; and through the Ordo Xenos an inquisitor will come to learn of many alien threats – all of which could be put to use in their own way to create havoc and bloodshed.

There of course exists a number of minor Ordos which may harbour Istvaanian inquisitors that utilise their specialist resources and knowledge, but due to the fact that they are small and not well known, and are so specialised towards one area of expertise means that there are barely a handful of Istvaanians within these groups. Even if an Istvaanian were to come across such a cell, it may be that he passes over the chance to join it as they may not be able to serve his motives at all. Istvaanians are known for being extremely self-serving, and even if they can help with a threat, they often don’t, preferring to watch conflict descend and letting the madness decide the future.

Crossing the boundaries of the Ordos is not unheard of in Istvaanian circles. If an Istvaanian finds that the threats he is creating are not having the desired effect, or that he has been incredibly successful and the world or group he has endangered has dealt with the threat admirably, he will want to change tack to further challenge his targets. Sometimes this is as simple as creating a new destabilising cult, or assassinating the right man, but sometimes something far more drastic can be called for, such as an Ork Waaagh, or the coming of a new saint and this is where the knowledge that one of the other Ordos holds is vital. However, seeking out the other Ordos

requires a long list of trusted colleagues, something that some Istvaanians simply do not have through choice, and these men and women will be forced to work with whatever they have already to hand.

In summary then, Istvaanians can be found throughout each of the major Ordos, and a few are scattered throughout the Ordos Minoris, but many choose to be unaffiliated with any because of the extra attention such an association can bring. If they are associated with an Ordo, it is almost certain that they will not be so out of any moral compunction to combat the traditional threat opposed by the Ordo, but rather to utilise its resources and to use the knowledge of the order to fuel their personal wars, for the betterment of the Imperium.



HERETICUS

It was the birth of the Ordo Hereticus that gave true impetus to the Istvaanian movement, and it is perhaps unsurprising that the largest

concentration of Istvaanians found within the Ordos today is within the Ordo Hereticus. The Ordo Hereticus is the largest of the three major Ordos, and wherever there are people of the Imperium, there will be a Hereticus presence watching over them for signs of witchcraft, genetic deviancy and heresy. The sheer size of the Ordo undoubtedly contributes to the increased number of Istvaanians within its ranks, but there is also the simple truth that that the Ordo governs the men and women of the Imperium, the very flesh and blood that defines the realm of man, that draws Istvaanians to it. The people of the Imperium are the fuel with which an Istvaanian stokes the fires of conflict – without men and women to fight, how can an ideological difference progress to war?

The Ordo has a deep understanding of cult activity the galaxy over – their names, their goals and most importantly the threat they pose – and this knowledge provides access to groups who can be convinced to fight for their beliefs and provide a supply of foot soldiers ready to martyr themselves for a cause. As well as the access to existing cults, membership of the Ordo can provide an understanding of the multitudes of methods cults use to attract new members, carry out their operations, conceal themselves from discovery and the typical weaknesses that spell the doom of many. This knowledge is extremely useful to an Istvaanian who wishes to foster his own cults for his own ends – with this combined expertise, an inquisitor can form a cult that can live under the radar of the authorities for as long as he needs it to. One command given from afar will be enough for the cult to become exposed and destroyed once it has served its purpose, with little danger of incriminating himself. The Ordo's ties to the Adeptus Arbites provides a perfect force for an Istvaanian to counter the threat of a cult that has come to the end of its usefulness, and these same ties may make it possible for a blind eye to be turned to a cult's activities during its period of operation.

In addition to this knowledge of cults, the Ordo maintains close ties to the Ecclesiarchy. While this bond gives access to the Adepta Sororitas and the fury they can unleash, this link also

provides a route to the centre of nearly every community across the Imperium: as varied as the Imperium's worlds are, all share the common factor of the Imperial Creed (in whatever form it takes) and preachers, missionaries and devotees are found everywhere. These men and women are pillars within their respective communities and their words and instructions are often followed through blind superstition, and without question. The simple manipulation or replacement of one of these clerics could sway a community into violently deposing neighbours with a different take on the creed, or simply open old wounds and watch as first a city, and then worlds fall upon each other. Istvaanians strive to stir up conflict, and the ecclesiastical divisions with the Imperium are ripe for exploitation.



XENOS

Despite being an organisation purposely built to deal with the threats posed to the Imperium by alien races, the Ordo does contain a fair number of Istvaanians. One of the central tenets of the philosophy is that great wars and the strife they bring are needed to galvanise humanity and make it better for having fought in them, and the many xenos races that oppose man are as worthy foes as other men. Some would say argue in fact that the unfamiliar battle tactics, weapons and equipment that alien races employ require more skill at arms to conquer than mere men and therefore inter-species war results in stronger armies and, therefore, the Imperium should be encouraged to combat enemies outside its borders. And of course, there are Istvaanians who, as loyal subjects of the Throne, despise xenos races and wish to rid the galaxy of them, just as they should!

Being a member of the Ordo provides knowledge of what these xenos races are,

their location and their threat level, allowing the direction of Battlefleets and legions of Guardsmen into righteous combat with them. For Istvaanians of a crusading mindset this knowledge is clearly gold dust as it will allow them to direct the fighting masses straight into the jaws of an alien threat. The understanding of the varying threat levels assigned to each race or empire allow an Istvaanian dedicated to eradicating weakness through warfare an arbitrary guide to which opponents will test the Imperium's forces the most. It is probable that many wars have been launched against powerful xenos enclaves simply because an Istvaanian wanted to put an army group through a meat grinder to leave a group of veteran soldiers that could take on just about anything the galaxy could throw at them.

Many members of the Ordo Xenos believe that in order to defeat a foe, one must have complete knowledge of it in order to reveal its weaknesses. Understanding of a xenos species' biology is paramount to this, as it not only reveals a creature's weak spots but also its mode of reproduction, as many a time a threat has been thought to have been eradicated, only for the next generation to blossom and wreak as much habit as its forebears. Istvaanians within the Ordo have been known to exploit this knowledge and set up infestations of various species on Imperial worlds to bring about carnage. Orkoid species spread by spores and it takes only the introduction of one to initiate an infestation that can take years to purge. Genestealers are theorised to be responsible for drawing the Hive Fleets into Imperial space, and bringing an enemy to the Imperium creates conflict just as taking Imperial soldiers into xenos territory does. Rumour has it that there are a few Istvaanians within the Ordo Xenos attempting to set up genestealer cults within Imperial space and these men are hounded as traitors by many. They will undoubtedly propagate war, but at what cost?

Lastly, the Ordo knows of many races that attempt to corrupt men and women and cause worlds to secede from the Imperium, through genetic corruption, perversion of the Imperial Creed or propaganda. The most well-known of these races is the Tau, who wish to subvert

Imperial citizens with promises of a better existence as part of their “Greater Good”. These races form a threat to the moral fibre of Imperial citizens, and their destruction is encouraged. A manipulative Istvaanian though may wish to copy the methods of these races, or simply encourage them to cause insurrection and civil war.

VETERAN ARMIES

There is no greater pressure on the Imperium than the eternal war with its innumerable enemies within, without and beyond. Millions die every day across the galaxy, but for every thousand men that fall, one will survive by strength of arms, natural toughness or some quirk of fortune. The ferocity, cunning or luck that sees these individuals through often cataclysmic battles sets them apart from their fellow men, and many Istvaanians are keen to make use of such special warriors. The old mantra of “conflict breeds strength” is literally applied to these survivors, and some inquisitors have agents within many armies ready to sweep up those left at the end of decade-long campaigns whose battle-craft is simply unparalleled. Some Istvaanians are rumoured to have at their beck and call regiment-sized formations of soldiers to whom no enemy holds any fear such is the experience of war they have. These veteran armies are the pinnacle of humanity’s fighting forces save the Astartes themselves and they are often directed into the teeth of the enemy where their combat-nous enables them to triumph where other men would simply die in droves. Many a victory has owed its success to a company of veterans dispatched by an Istvaanian inquisitor into the toughest knots of resistance. And of course, every new battle teaches its survivors something new, ever increasing their combat-effectiveness.

MALLEUS

The smallest of the Ordos Majoris, the Ordo Malleus boasts only a few inquisitors that follow the Istvaanian philosophy. The Ordo chiefly exists to oppose the threat posed by

the warp, including the forces of Chaos whose continuing existence relies on pacts with the Dark Powers and their daemons. The warp is a reservoir of immense power, power enough to destroy whole worlds, and the inquisitors of the Ordo Malleus alone understand the danger it poses. These men and women therefore are preoccupied with either combating the malevolent effects of the warp, or learning its secrets to try and turn it against itself. Without their heroic efforts, the human race would surely fall to darkness.

However, there are exceptions to every rule, and there are a few individuals within the Ordo who use their expertise to garner conflict. Most of those do so by leading armies of Imperial Guardsmen, Space Marines and even the legendary Grey Knights into battle with the forces of Chaos. Some do so for the simple want of driving the Great Enemy back into the Eye of Terror, forging monstrously powerful legions of warriors as they go, while some look back at the events of the Heresy that gave their faction its name and take battle to their former brothers to continue the war that began all those millennia ago.

There are also a number of Ordo Malleus inquisitors who have seen firsthand how the pollution of Chaos can seep through Imperial society and leave worlds bloody with civil war. After decades of service these inquisitors may come to see that the presence of Chaos within its ranks can actually galvanise a world, or indeed sector, into rising up and throwing out the corruption with force. Successful crusades against these recidivists can strengthen devotion to the God-Emperor and cause a world to look more carefully at itself, making it less likely to allow an unwanted presence to fester again. More than one inquisitor has born witness to the positive effects that the presence of a Chaos cult can bring to a world, and it is not a large step to consider that the creation of a small cult could bring a huge long term benefit to both a planet and the Imperium at large.

In addition to these more calculating inquisitors there are those Istvaanians who seek nothing more than wreaking havoc wherever they go. Should they have come across the Istvaanian

philosophy while a member of the Ordo, or have some past association with it then they will know that perhaps more than any other entity in the galaxy, nothing has the potential for carnage than a daemon of the warp. The summoning of a daemon, whether into a host or pure manifestation results in the coming of a pure engine of destruction that can bring a world to its knees. Of course, the retaliation against an inquisitor found to be following such a course of action would be extreme, but for most Istvaanians perpetrating such an act, the violence that could come their way will suit their ideals perfectly.



SICARIUS

The Ordo Sicarius watches over the most lethal individual tools in the Imperium's multi-faceted arsenal, and having a hand in directing these agents of death perhaps unsurprisingly appeals to those with agendas of bloodshed and warfare like the Istvaanians. An Officio Assassinorium agent can gain covert access to just about anywhere in the galaxy and kill any man, woman or child. If that individual is an Imperial governor, Navigator Paternova or tribal chieftain, huge power vacuums can be created with one bullet, blade or poisoned chalice, vacuums that will only be resolved with copious amounts of bloodshed. Even if an Istvaanian cannot realise the sanctioning of an Assassin, the specialised equipment that his position will give him access to will make an assassination with a lesser man all the more easy.

SEPULTURUM

Throughout the ages, many disasters have befallen humanity, but always there are those that survive, stronger and wiser for the experience: on feral worlds, tribesmen learn that the open plain is the hunting ground for

carnosaurs; techpriests learn how better to appease a Machine Spirit after it malfunctions; and Imperial Guard commanders learn quickly that shooting the big ones will stop a Tyranid horde in its tracks. Disaster weeds out the weak, the inadaptable - the dead weight of humanity.

There is no such entity as good at disposing of the weak as disease – every new planet settled by the Imperium has cost hundreds of millions of lives even before battlefield casualties are factored in because of unfamiliar pathogens. Those that survive these plagues pass on their strength, and their planet and mankind are all the better for it.

Though initially dedicated to understanding the Zombie Plague unleashed during the 13th Black Crusade, members of the Ordo Sepulchrum are fast finding themselves experts on a great many diseases as they try to understand the malefic nature of the zombie viruses. Such knowledge can be put to many uses, not least in the furthering of factional agendas.

Istvaanians of the Ordo Sepulchrum study disease and its survivors, finding out what traits make men strong and how they can spread that strength. Others take the opposite approach and knowingly unleash contagions upon populations in the hope of shaping that world's peoples into a hardy, powerful race.



OTHER ORDOS

An organisation as secretive as the Inquisition undoubtedly has groups hidden within its ranks dedicated to safeguarding or empowering particular aspects of the Imperium. No one knows how many more Ordos may be in existence, but rumours persist of a small number that, if they do exist, could hold great power.

The Ordo Militum it is whispered watches over the Imperial Guard and Imperial Navy for signs

of heresy, poor leadership and corruption. If the Ordo does exist, then its ability to direct the military arms of the Imperium from within would certainly attract Istvaanian inquisitors. The potential to increase the proficiency of the armed forces or simply to start wars would clearly appeal to a great many Istvaanians.

The Ordo Astartes, as its name suggests, may be interested in the affairs of the Space Marines. Events like the Badab War would lend credence to the idea that such an organisation may be home to a number of Istvaanians intent on extending their philosophy that conflict breeds strength to the angels of death.



ISTVAANIANS AND OTHER FACTIONS

“Mad he may have been, but can you honestly look upon our Ordo Hereticus and say that only ill came from that man?” - Inquisitor Ioan von Oettingen, Vandire and the New Order

The very fractured nature of the Inquisition serves those inquisitors with Istvaanian beliefs well. Perhaps more divided than any other Imperial institution, the Inquisition is not a unified organisation with any one single goal, and open conflict between inquisitors of differing schools of thought is not uncommon, as most inquisitors will resort to violence to ensure the success of their missions. This willingness to bear arms - coupled with the Inquisition's knack at uncovering the exact kind of secret plots they themselves engage in - means that there are battle lines drawn between the members of the Holy Ordos the galaxy over, and such conflict is exactly what nearly all Istvaanians want to see. In particular, Fratricidians strive to antagonise rival groups within the Inquisition to propagate battle between them, but the stirring up of such internecine conflict is not strictly limited to that particular branch of Istvaanianism. Just as Istvaanians use sects of the Ecclesiarchy, or simple hive gangs to achieve their aims, the Inquisition can be manipulated into causing havoc on the Imperium's worlds. The setting up of a dangerous anti-Imperial or daemon-worshipping cult by an Istvaanian can result in an Inquisitorial purge that pitches numerous Imperial organisations into battle, or even be the basis of a civil war if the cult reached all the way to the planetary elite and they take objection to the attentions of the Inquisition and their lackeys.

The various factions of the Inquisition then provide a bed of ideological differences that can be preyed upon by the careful Istvaanian. Many will spend years researching the practices of their fellows so that they can come to understand their every move and work out how best to use their fellow inquisitors as

tools. Also, the very aims of the factions are divisive subjects, and a calculating Istvaanian could do his utmost to further one ideological standpoint in the hope of generating friction between parties. Istvaanians commonly hide their true beliefs and pose as inquisitors of other factions, some to avoid criticism, and others as they can use the image they assume to generate conflict. Taking on the auspice of a Monodominant Witch Hunter can cause terror within Imperial societies and see people turn on their neighbours for any number of alleged heresies, while outwardly appearing as a Thorian could garner links with Resurrectionist cults that could be manipulated into being more vocal, bringing them hopefully into conflict with the followers of other churches or even the authorities.



ISTVAANIANS AND AMALATHIANS

Perhaps the most obvious opponents of the Istvaanian methodology are the Amalathians, who espouse maintaining the status quo of the Imperium and seek to remove those who would initiate upheaval and change. Amalathians are typically critical of the violence Istvaanians strive to create, particularly within Imperial society, as such activity inevitably destabilises authority and threatens the Imperial way of life. Conversely, Istvaanians are critical of the Amalathian desire to let the Imperium fester and grow

content with its lot. They feel that the Amalathian viewpoint stifles the human spirit, especially its endemic violent nature, which should be exploited to its maximum if humanity is ever going to succeed. They despise the values that Amalathianism seems to stand for – to not aspire for more, to not take risks. Amalathians are not dreamers, and that lack of ambition is seen as a character flaw – the Imperium needs initiative to take it forward, even if that means another age of bloodshed.

ACOLYTES

An acolyte in the employ of an Istvaanian will typically endure much violence and hardship during their time with the Inquisition, as their master's desire for strife will usually stretch to involve them too. Many face trial by combat to cement their place within their master's operation and continuing turmoil to facilitate their ascension through the ranks. These trials may either take the form of ritual combat, where first blood may suffice to determine a winner, or a new recruit may find himself pitched into a hostile environment with nothing but a knife and instructions to kill whoever he comes across – most likely the other new potentials who will have been set the same challenge. Particularly exacting (or callous, depending on one's point of view) may pitch hundreds of men and women against each other and wait until one emerges from the charnel house, half insane, but unparalleled in the act of survival, butchery and sheer bloody-mindedness.



ISTVAANIANS AND MONODOMINANTS

Despite Monodominance being regarded as that most pure of the Puritan factions, and Istvaanianism taking up the mantle of a Radical faction, there are perhaps a

surprisingly high number of similarities between both factions in terms of drive and modus operandi. Both are seen to push for warfare against the Imperium's enemies, both stir up xenophobia and encourage Imperial citizens to turn on the mutant and witch, but while the Monodominants encourage this violence as a matter of principle, Istvaanians do so as part of a bigger picture. Istvaanians may have no strong opinion on the rights of mutants or the "true" manner of worshipping the Emperor, but they choose sides nonetheless in order to ferment violence and dissent.

There have been many occurrences where a violent pogrom has been attributed to a Monodominant that was in fact the work of an Istvaanian - the outward similarities of the factions' approaches offers the Istvaanian worried of scorn a cunning cover story. However, the number of times a Monodominant has put an end to a cult fostered by an Istvaanian has given cause for many to be branded foolish, dangerous or worse.



ISTVAANIANS AND THORIANIS

Thorianism can trace its history back to the founding of the Imperium. Indeed the founders of the Inquisition fought over the possibility of the Emperor's rebirth, shaping the organisation into a suspicious and infighting-prone entity. Many of the most learned Istvaanians credit the strife created by Promeus and Morianna as being one of the main reasons behind the success of the Inquisition and some make moves to initiate conflict between contemporary inquisitors to further the brilliance of the Ordos.

Thorianism, or more precisely, Resurrectionism and Incarnationism, are divisive subjects amongst the Inquisition and therefore a perfect point of contention for

Istvaanians to manipulate. Istvaanians may unveil the Thorian beliefs of their colleagues in the hope of starting a conflict. Further to that, the greatest fear amongst those opposed to the Thorians is that the rebirth of the Emperor would create a civil war that would rival the Horus Heresy in terms of bloodshed, and shake the Imperium to its core. Such a war is seen by some as the ultimate pinnacle of Istvaanianism. Therefore there are some within the Istvaanian faction who spend their lives dedicated to furthering the Thorian cause, their own beliefs on Reincarnationism set aside, hoping only to see the Imperium erupt into violence come His return.



ISTVAANIANS AND XANTHITES

There are few more hated and feared amongst the Ordos than the Xanthites; those men and women that openly use the weapons and daemons of Chaos to achieve their aims. Such dislike can manifest itself in a frenzy of fury when evidence of a Xanthite's presence is uncovered - normally calm inquisitors become seething monsters with nought but death in their mind when an arch-Radical is exposed. A cornered Xanthite too will be very ready to defend his views with deadly force, and such single-minded attitudes are what some Istvaanians strive to manipulate. Some Istvaanians spend years on the trail of Xanthites, gathering support from other inquisitors and violently laying waste to cities and even worlds thought to be harbouring their prey. Some even spin elaborate hoaxes purely for the violence the rumours can bring, and some even take to flaunting Xanthite views themselves. There is an even smaller minority who have taken to the Horusian path to try and bring about a new Emperor for humanity for the same reasons as those who further the Thorian cause - to tear the galaxy asunder in a ferocious civil war as worlds declare themselves for or against humanity's new master.

ISTVAANIANS AND RECONGREGATORS

These factions share similar views in terms of what must be undertaken to achieve their goals. Both would rather make changes to improve the Imperium than allow it to stagnate and become relaxed with regards to where its destiny lies. However, there are many within the Recongregationist movement who do not wish to see the Imperium reborn with fire and bloodshed and are therefore at odds with the Istvaanian desire to initiate violent conflict. Some see Istvaanians as notoriously short-sighted and bloodthirsty, plunging worlds into warfare for no other reason than it suiting their beliefs. Istvaanians are not immune to finding flaws with the operations of their "Radical" brethren either though. For all their preaching about the necessity for a "new Imperium", Recongregators can come across as too timid and worried about the upheaval they espouse to some Istvaanians, especially those Recongregators who work from the shadows, pulling political strings that will eventually have a new regime set up upon a world. The cloak and dagger approach does not expose enough of the common citizenry to war and strife so cannot possibly strengthen them. There are of course followers of both ideologies who find a common ground and combine forces to achieve a goal together, perhaps more so than with any other of the factions. Many an Istvaanian has brewed a civil war while his Recongregator colleague primes a new ruler to dispose the man who let his world fall to war.

CULTS

“Walk the streets of any Imperial city and you will find yourself hunted,”
- Inquisitor Volantin Atlas, *The Imperium and War*

The term “cult” is used almost universally across the Imperium and is defined as a group of people who subscribe to a particular belief or common interest. Some use the term to refer solely to heretical organisations within Imperial society that blatantly worship the Gods of Chaos, while for others it is used much more liberally, even going as far as to call the followers of the Imperial Creed the “Cult of the Emperor”. There is no way of knowing how many cults exist in the Imperium as there are an almost infinite number of beliefs for a cult to form around. Any one Imperial world could perhaps have hundreds, if not thousands, of individual cults drawn together around things as varied as the collection of images of Roboute Guilliman for a share of his wisdom, growth of serene fungi for prayer sessions under its calming influence, or trying to glimpse the future in the ropery entrails of a recently slaughtered grox.

Most cults are innocuous entities, mere groupings of people with a common interest, but amongst the teeming masses there are those who pose a danger. Millennia old death cults prowl the shadows for sacrifices to the Emperor, the descendants of deposed planetary rulers plot revenge on their usurpers, and fanatics that believe the end is nigh try to deliver as many souls to the Emperor as they can before the darkness consumes them all. Worse still are the followers of Chaos who seek to turn their worlds over to their daemonic patrons in exchange for authority, power over their enemies or immortality. These individuals are at the heart of many rebellions and terrorist attacks the galaxy over and the Ordo Hereticus goes to great lengths to remove these threats before they raise their ugly heads and doom a world to destruction.

As cults are so endemic, it does not take long for agents of the inquisition to locate them, and some acolytes have made careers out of their ability to infiltrate cults to report them to their

masters. Some acolytes work their way around worlds and sectors looking for dangerous cults, and the acolytes of Istvaanian inquisitors are sometimes charged with finding cults that can be incorporated into their master’s schemes to bring conflict to a world. Some recidivistic cults simply require a gentle push to take up arms and go to war against loyalist troops, while some cults need moulding, often over years, into the correct kind of warmongering tool.

Istvaanian inquisitors are by no means limited to taking charge of existing cults: some inquisitors seek to establish cults of their own that can be carefully watched over and controlled more easily as the grand plan comes to fruition. Some cults are specifically tailored to come into conflict with followers of an opposing viewpoint while others may simply be for initiating terrorist attacks in the hope of drawing a response from the local authorities. More cunning still are those cults initiated to attract the attention of a particular branch of the Inquisition that the Istvaanian believes needs testing in battle, and of course some may be founded to trap an opponent the Istvaanian wishes to attack.

As can be seen, cults form an important resource for Istvaanian inquisitors: they are a means to create conflict and can serve as foot soldiers in a war. The sheer number and variety of cults in the galaxy at large means that an Istvaanian is unlikely to ever be without a group he can manipulate to serve his means, and if he is, then the nature of people to come together around common causes means that he is unlikely to go without a cult at his beck and call for long.

THE CHILDREN OF THE SICKLE MOONS

“Simple foods cannot bring me succour and pleasure. My needs stretch far above humble bread and water. Bring me the meats and juices of men so that I can feel their strength as I sate my hunger. Fill hypodermics with their adrenaline so that I feel their power in my muscles. Let me devour their grey matter so that I learn their deepest secrets. Let me chew upon their eyes so that I can see what they have seen. Let me break open their bones and succour myself on the marrow within. To excel, one must consume.”

Salathek the Bloodthirsty, convicted serial killer, Sorimund V

Executed 2645917.M41

Across the Imperium there are many haemovoric cults, some little more than gatherings of nervous citizens who once a month share a drink of blood procured from a medicae facility for a dose of the “Emperor’s strength”, while others are true death cults, where children are raised in the art of death, knowing only that they have a duty to He on Terra to kill and consume their victims. Many death cults believe that the consummation of flesh and blood brings strength and that, in order to prosper in the hostile galaxy, they must ascend to the top of the food chain. As top predator amongst mankind, they will reign unchallenged as the Emperor’s champions and come to dominance within their societies. These cults await the approach of the xenos hordes in order to ascend the galactic food chain even further, but until that blessed time comes, they make do with cementing their position amongst their own kind with blade and cudgel. Some take their victims from the weak and destitute, those the mighty Imperium could do to lose while others kill indiscriminately. Some seek out only the most dangerous of foes, those whose strength most matches their own and whose flesh they will gain most benefit from consuming. These cults are the most despised by planetary Governors as they like nothing more than assaulting military groups, security forces and even the Adeptus Arbites if chance presents itself.

The martial prowess these cults aspire to, their abilities as assassins, and even the very philosophy of gaining strength from consuming dead foes are all qualities that attract Istvaanians to them. With a death cultist under their command, an Istvaanian has an excellent tool with which to propagate violence through assassination of important figures, and many blade-wielding, masked warriors can be found in the warbands of these inquisitors. Sometimes though, it is the haemovoric ideology that Istvaanians wish to spread, not mere daggers, and such was the case with the Children of the Sickle Moons.

The Children were a haemovoric cult found on Anascargus, a thriving Imperial world of the Argent sector in the mid-north of the Ultima Segmentum. Anascargus was largely ruled by industrial conglomerates that paid fealty to a branch of the Ministorum known as the Silverists. The Silverists paid homage to the Emperor through the construction of mighty machines whose divine designs had been shown to them by His Martian prophets. While not directly worshipping the Ommissiah, the Silverists were seen by some within the Ecclesiarchy as being little more than confused fools that needed to be turned away from their devotion to the machine spirits and be put on a more orthodox path. An inquisitor by the name of Blythe had been watching the local synod at the time, and seeing the growing point of contention, endeavoured to aid the conservative elements of the clergy through both a moral conviction and the desire to prevent a battle between very powerful elements of the church whose resources would be best directed elsewhere. Blythe revealed himself to the pontiffs and took a team of missionaries to Anascargus with the intention of turning large swathes of the population to a less controversial interpretation of the Creed. The mission ultimately failed, not least because of the intervention of the Children of the Sickle Moons, who had chosen the newcomers as targets as they presented a new and well-armed challenge.

The death of Blythe attracted the attention of Inquisitor Godwin Peake, an Istvaanian whose operations had suffered many inconveniences at the hands of the resolutely Amalathian

Blythe. Peake respected strength, and those who had conquered a man he had failed to kill on many occasions demanded his adulation. Peake sought out the Children, and took delight in the carnage they wreaked upon his retinue as he closed on them, constantly impressing him with their abilities and conviction to fight to defend themselves from such a determined foe. At the cost of many lives, Peake's team managed to subdue six cultists with tanglefoot grenades and webbers, and he set about interrogating them to verify that they were Blythe's killers. As the interrogation progressed Peake came to learn of the group's beliefs, and seeing a parallel between their desire to be the ultimate predators through killing and feasting on the worthy foes around them and his determination to strengthen the Imperium by subjecting it to war, Peake struck a bargain with the group's leader to give them their freedom on the condition that they would spread their cult to all the worlds of the sector and answer his call should he need their weapons. The conditions were agreed to, and soon daughter cults began springing up all over the Argent Sector.



As they spread they came into contact with a great many varied peoples, but it was on the world of Pax that the Children of the Sickle Moon gained notoriety amongst the Ordos Argentus. Pax, a mining world in the Lumiere system was home to a long established death cult, the Murderesses of the Flowing Dark, and when the two cults came into contact, the world was changed forever. The cities of Pax were subterranean, away from the deep cold of the planet's surface, and nearly all had been constructed in caverns left by the mining operations. The caverns were all linked by tunnels large enough to drive mining machinery down, but within the cities the streets were often mere crawl spaces between individual habs – space was at a premium in these cities, and wide thoroughfares would simply have been wasteful. The tight confines between the buildings were claustrophobic in the extreme, and as if the fear of the closeness of the walls was not enough, the Murderesses had made the nightmarish tunnels their hunting ground. It was a common occurrence for streets to be boarded up or shunned if the dismembered remains of some poor soul had been found in one, and the congestion in other channels that followed led to a slowdown in economic output as workers were late and general civil unrest. The Murderesses were a menace that the local authorities wished to stamp out, but every attempt to corner and destroy them had resulted in the deaths of numerous deputies.

When the Children arrived, they too found themselves hunted by the Murderesses, and the unfamiliarity of their surroundings led to the demise of many of the death cultists. Those that survived though came to learn the layout of the cities and began to turn the tables on the Murderesses, who were a very worthy foe to ply their deadly trade on. The authorities too saw the potential of the Children to rid the cities of the Murderesses, so entered into a pact with the Children, promising them new recruits on the condition that none of the common citizenry could fall victims to their blades, and that only their rivals could be hunted.

So began a period of carnage on Pax that has endured to this day. The Children and the

Murderesses began to engage in deadly games of cat and mouse, initially in the shadows, but eventually the chases spread to city streets and even through hab blocks, rampaging through kitchens, bedrooms and even bathrooms. Some cities became visions of hell with blood-soaked warriors crossing swords anywhere they pleased. Some hab blocks were abandoned and left to become a bloodied playground for the cultists, and rumour has it that an entire city emptied of its citizens due to the horror of the cults' war, and now lies rotting at the end of a great tunnel still lined with mining vehicles left behind in the exodus. Perhaps one day one side will triumph, but for now the corridors of Pax will be alive with the clash of steel and screams of the dying. Somewhere, Inquisitor Godwin Peake must be very, very happy with himself...



THE FREE GORGON MOVEMENT FOR ECONOMIC STABILITY

Cults exist in all strata of Imperial Society, from the lowest mutant slum, to the ruling families of the mighty hive spires. While most mutant groups will likely never see their dreams realised, cults within the richest and most powerful groups of citizens often have the wealth and influence to propagate their beliefs, whether in secret or the open. With wealth comes education and the understanding of how societies prosper – and this knowledge allows cults of the noble-born to come to be much more than groups of like-minded people. Often times one of these cults will try to further its influence through the medium of politics, coming to ingrain its desires in the everyday lives of the civilians below them. The cultures of thousands of Imperial worlds exist in their current state because of the drive of their ruling elite: how many religious groups have been stamped out because their beliefs

differed from those in power; how many worlds are police states because their rulers feared the potential power of the groups within society; how many worlds tolerate a mutant population because slavery is the basis of the wealth of the nobles?

The link between cults and political parties is strong, and there are probably tens of thousands of parties and hegemonies across the Imperium that began as a group of powerful men and women with a similar desire. The Free Gorgon Movement for Economic Stability began as a collection of merchants who had come to realise that the constant feuding between Gorgon's city-states was very damaging to their profit margins. The collateral damage from the constant warring damaged factories and infrastructure as well as killing off many of their customers. Their dream was simple: to end warfare on Gorgon and begin reaping the economic rewards peace would bring. Between them, the Movement had contacts high up in nearly all the city-states, and after many bribes and promises of percentages of the monies to come, the Movement managed to achieve something extraordinary; an armistice between all sides and a meeting of the heads of each city-state. The initial meeting achieved little, and the armistice ended within 3 weeks, but it became clear that war was far from the only answer, and 6 of the 27 city-states united under a banner of mutual solidarity. The Movement was excited by the turn of events, and the sudden flow of cash into their accounts convinced them to push on with achieving peace.

At this time, the Movement were approached by a man claiming to represent the Sultan of Manesh, the head of the most powerful city-state. The stranger claimed that Manesh and its closest allies would lay down their arms if the Movement were able to conquer Karazeez, Manesh's greatest enemy. The Movement knew that having Manesh agree to peace could signal the beginning of a planet-wide truce as the greatest individual threat to the other states would have been removed, so redoubled their efforts in getting Karazeez to join the 6 states already at peace. Their initial badgering was tolerated, but eventually the

Movement were expelled from Karazeez, the King making it absolutely clear that they would not come to peaceable terms with anyone. The Movement regrouped and came to the decision of offering larger payouts when peace came. The envoys were received with a hail of lasfire and died at the gates of Karazeez. There was outrage in the 6 city-states united under the Movement's banner and it was clear to them that Karazeez would come to know peace only when it was destroyed. They raised an almighty army between them, for the first time able to commit nearly their full complement of troops as their borders were now unthreatened. They fell upon Karazeez without mercy and raised the city-state to the ground. The unprecedented act of carnage drew an almighty response from Karazeez's allies and soon the entire eastern hemisphere was ablaze. Seeing a chance to establish dominance like never before, the remaining city-states took to battle and the world descended into madness.

The Movement never achieved its aim and observers state that in actual fact it was the Movement that was directly responsible for the almighty conflict that devastated the world. Had it not united the 6 city-states then Karazeez would not have been destroyed, the trigger for the carnage that followed. Some say that their overbearing desire to see Karazeez agree to peace was based on a deception – no representative of the King of Manesh ever admitted to visiting the Movement. Who that stranger actually was, no one can say, but members of the Ordo Hereticus taskforce sent to restore order to Gorgon regard him as the catalyst to the war. Their search has so far been fruitless, but a report of a small ship leaving the system after all-out war was declared leaves at least one clue to his identity.



THE TALE WEAVERS OF UNSUPLA

In 726.M41 in the Helios Sector of the Segmentum Tempestus, the reclamation of the Leven Bank worlds ended on Unsupla after a six year campaign to wrest control of the sub-sector from the secessionist Cardell Monarchy. The war for Unsupla itself had been a bloody one, as the well dug in ranks of the Monarchy's military had resisted waves and waves of guardsmen. The final victory was put down to Lord Commander Aurelius's dramatic feint led by the Phosphotine XXIV armoured division to the south of Halonen, the planet's capital, that drew enough defenders away from the north of the city to allow the remainder of his forces to storm the city. When Aurelius died eight years later the Helios diocese was petitioned to ordain him as a saint, and after three decades of deliberation, Saint Aurelius of Leven was recognised by the Ministorum. In Halonen, almighty marble edifices were raised in his honour, and soon after their completion they drew hundreds of thousands of pilgrims to the city from right across the sub-sector. The columns of pilgrims that came to line the avenues that led to the memorials soon attracted all sorts of peddlers, offering food, shelter, memorabilia and one group who told tales of Aurelius's greatness and his victories. These story-tellers went on to be responsible for one of the biggest wars to hit Unsupla since the Cardell Monarchy fell.

The Tale Weavers, as they were known, were initially relative strangers who had all come to Halonen to earn money from their oratory skills. Their backgrounds were varied: some were clerics and lay-preachers who adulated Saint Aurelius, some were archivists who wished to exalt the subject of their studies, but most were simple street entertainers who were giving their audience what they wanted. This last group were an almost unofficial brotherhood, a pseudo-caste within Unsuplan society and their bonds to each other were tight. They had been raised in squalor by their poor street performer parents, and were used to deprivation and having to scrounge every last penny. Many were addicted to proscribed substances, their only way to let their minds escape their miserable surrounds. Away from the crowds of pilgrims they tended to spend their evenings sharing their meagre earnings and listening to each other's tales. Often times

they would challenge each other to come up with fantastical tales, and nearly always a man named Lester Phoebaticus would win. After months of listening to his bizarre tales, Phoebaticus was approached by one of his closest friends, Nerhus Oppen, who was determined to learn his secret. After much cajoling, Phoebaticus revealed that his stories came to him in dreams fuelled by a drug called starlight. Phoebaticus allowed Oppen to sample some of the drug, and Oppen promptly won the next story-telling challenge. Oppen could not keep his mouth shut about the starlight, and soon the group was all using it to compose their tales. The sudden increase in demand pushed the cost of the drug higher and higher until the Tale Weavers had essentially priced themselves out of the market. Desperate to acquire a batch, Phoebaticus devised a plan to rob one of the local dealers, and after much deliberation, the other members of the group agreed to it after Phoebaticus promised that he knew people who could protect them from any reprisals. The robbery went ahead, and the Weavers intercepted a truck laden with drugs. They got their supply of starlight, and much more. Crates and crates of lust, groove, spike and many more fell into their hands. The beginnings of a drug dealing empire were theirs and as a means to escape the poverty they had forever known they took the drugs back to their homes and began to sell.

Directed by Phoebaticus, the Weavers carved themselves a chunk of the Halonen underworld, branching out into extortion, kidnap and assassination. Within ten years they had spread their influence to eight other cities and had a stranglehold over starlight production in Halonen. They had their run-ins with the law and their rivals, but always seemed to come out on top in open conflicts, even when the odds were stacked against them. Fortune seemed to smile on them, and a series of accidents befell their opponents, not least the Victory Bridge disaster that killed

the head of the rival Coffin Syndicate. The incidences of divine intervention raised suspicion within some of the Weavers, but others were keen to point out that perhaps the Emperor was finally smiling on them after generations of downtrodden luck.

The Weaver's operation grew in size almost exponentially over the next five years until it came to the point that there was no opposition left in Halonen and three other major cities. They ruled practically the whole of Unsupla's underworld and had nothing to fear from the authorities. Then, completely inexplicably, Phoebaticus disappeared. Ripples of panic spread through the Weavers – had their leader been killed; had he been kidnapped; had something forced him to flee? The Weaver's accounts were untouched, and no ransom note was forthcoming, so Phoebaticus had not fled with the money or been taken captive. As they were essentially in power on Unsupla, there was surely nothing he would have had to flee from. His disappearance did not make sense at all, but it was not long before the truth was revealed.

At the side of his master, Inquisitor Rafe Krycjek, Phoebaticus returned to the world at the head of three regiments of the Petraeus Nighthawks to purge the Weavers from the face of the planet. The fighting against the well-armed Weavers was furious, but the superior training and fighting qualities of the Nighthawks won through. The streets of Halonen were swept clear of vagrants, drug addicts and the dealers that had brought the great city such distress. The Unsoplans were reminded of the power of the Imperium and just what men like Saint Aurelius had stood for. For the last fifty years Unsupla has been exemplary in stamping out criminality and now raises some of the best troops the Helios sector has to offer. How long it persists in this state is up to the whim of the Inquisition.

ISTVAANIAN PERSONALITIES

“Even the Inquisition, that one shining light in the darkness, is nought but a hive of power-hungry murderers, sell-swords and traitors,”

- Inquisitor Volantin Atlas, *The Imperium and War*

INQUISITOR KOR GRUNDIG, ORDO HERETICUS

The feral worlds of the Imperium all have one thing in common – the men and women born on their forsaken soils are forced by their hostile surroundings into learning how to survive. The many dangers they face, be it carnosaur, meteor showers or simply other people, quickly whittle out the weak, leaving only those in the peak of physical condition. Violence is no stranger to these people, and every tribe knows the sharp end of a spear from the haft. This dangerous life breeds tribes who know only war, tribes who would kill other men for their food rather than hunt beasts themselves. On the world of Solonius in the Venix sector there was one tribe whose name was



whispered around campfires as the harbingers of death, the Bloodied Knife. Some said they were the Star-Emperor’s chosen, and they meted out His disapproval with their curved blades. The very rumour of their sighting would cause whole tribes to abandon lush valleys and seek shelter in the rocky wastes above, willing to take their chances in the winter rather than face the Bloodied Knife. One of their number was especially feared: a giant by the name of Kor. Kor was said to be able to strike men down with a glance, and uproot trees with his bare arms. He could kill a score of men single-handed, and wore the scalps of all his victims on his belt. If the Bloodied Knife were the Star-Emperor’s chosen, then Kor was His champion.

It was during a routine visit to the world by the League of Blackships that Kor came to the attention of the Inquisition. Every generation or so, the Star-Emperor would send His apostles to Solonius to demand the turning over of the witches and shamen, for which the tribesmen were rewarded with a blessing from one of His emissaries. On this visit though, the natives appeared only in dribs and drabs, and all begged the Adepta Sororitas and Stormtroopers present

to leave before the Bloodied Knife arrived. They had been spotted not ten miles from the shuttles landing site and it was believed that they were intent on making trophies of the visitors, the only group whose blood their blades had not tasted. Realising that the presence of the Bloodied Knife was keeping the locals and their psychic prisoners away, the

leader of the landing party, Inquisitor Kaleb Heratsi, struck out with a contingent of Stormtroopers in a Chimera to locate the Bloodied Knife and either drive them off, or come to some kind of understanding with them.

It was not long before the Bloodied Knife let themselves be known, and the avalanche of rocks they unleashed to block the Chimera’s path proved they were in no mood for discussion. Heratsi had the top hatch of the personnel carrier opened and he stood up in full view of the tribesmen, sword in one hand and bolt pistol in the other. He fired one shot into a nearby tree and blew it into splinters in the hope that the primitives would be scared

off. He was quite disappointed when they remained standing, and was surprised when the biggest of the group began shouting and gesticulating at him, his twin knives held threateningly in front of him. Impressed, Heratsi had his Stormtroopers stand down before they riddled the tribesmen with hellgun beams, and climbed out of the Chimera and jumped down to the ground to face off with the bellowing monster. The brute came at him quickly, but Heratsi's noble swordsmanship was the match of the man's blows, and the inquisitor kept his foe at bay with a flurry of parries. The brute became tired, and Heratsi found an opening with which he dealt a blow with the flat of his blade to the tribesman's head, knocking him to the ground. Heratsi kicked away his knives, and looked down at his opponent. Knowing he had been defeated, the brute offered his neck for the killing blow, but instead was offered a hand to bring him to his feet. Kor Grundig and the rest of the Bloodied Knife entered into the service of the Inquisition that day.

Grundig was an acolyte for over forty years before he was granted his own seal at nigh-on seventy. He remained a ferocious warrior during his service to Heratsi, and despite gaining an aptitude for study following bionic replacement of part of his brain after a life-threatening head injury; he was always happiest at the forefront of a charge into a nest of heretics and, as an inquisitor in his own right, little changed. Able to call on the might of the Imperial Guard and the Adepta Sororitas with a flash of his seal, Grundig initiated many bloody pogroms across the Venix Sector in the Segmentum Ultima at the slightest hint of heresy. Grundig was rumoured to have initiated the raising of a whole regiment of guardsmen on the Sector's capital world, Derun, ahead of a personal crusade into the

Ork-held system Ivar. However that crusade never came to be because of the repercussions of the so-called Schism of the Conclave Venixian.

The death of two inquisitors with known grudges against each other was the catalyst for over five years of near open warfare between the members of the Conclave Venixian that eventually culminated in the destruction of ten square kilometres of industrial sprawl in the outskirts of Derun's principle hive after the explosion of a plasma generator. The shameful incident is little talked about now in the Venix Sector, and though many inquisitors were blamed for the atrocity, no individual man or woman was singled out for blame. Those inquisitors that admit to being involved in the madness claim that it was Grundig that had been behind it all: he had been the one to arrange the first two deaths and had then set about dragging more and more inquisitors into the mess until he managed to dupe one into blowing up the plasma reactor to destroy any evidence of his plans. Some say that it was his plan to cripple Derun's industrial capabilities and pitch the sector into economic strife, while others say that such lofty thoughts were beyond the man, and he simply stirred up old enmities within the Conclave and then made his escape just before the futility of it all was realised. Whatever the truth, Grundig's bloodthirsty past drew him to follow the Istvaanian path, and in the Venix Sector at least, he succeeded with its ideals and left the sector in turmoil. He has not been seen since the end of the Schism, and though rumours of his demise persist, there are many that say that the body presented to the Conclave was simply one of the other members of the Bloodied Knife and that Grundig is still at large, plotting his next campaign of violence.

Inquisitor Grundig is right handed

WS	BS	S	T	I	Wp	Sg	Nv	Ld
83	54	64(87)	62	72	72	66	83	71

Special Abilities: *Leader, Furious Assault*

Equipment: Average Bionic right arm (S55), Advanced Bionic Brain (Sg bonus included above), Power Sword, Stubber with bayonet, Bioscanner Auspex, Flak armour on arms, chest and abdomen, heavy robes on groin and legs.



INQUISITOR JAN KIERYS, ORDO XENOS

Being born into the family of a Rogue Trader brings the opportunity for great wealth, but also boundless corruption. Plying the uncharted regions of space on the rim of the galaxy results in contact with all manner of dangerous xenos races and warp entities. There are many tales of Rogue Trader vessels disappearing without trace, or worse, returning into Imperial space irrevocably changed; their crew members no longer entirely human or sane. Unsurprisingly, the Inquisition watches the Rogue Traders as closely as they can for signs of corruption, to prevent them acting as unwitting vectors for disease, mutation, heresy and worse on their return to Imperial planets. To this end, the Inquisition is eager to place agents aboard Rogue Trader vessels as high up the chain of command as possible, as it most likely that the Rogue Trader himself and his inner cadre will be the ones to come in contact with corrupting forces. By achieving this, the Inquisition has a mole through which they can learn exactly what the crew has encountered, and also have a place at the Rogue Trader's table through which an inquisitor can attempt to coerce him into abandoning potentially corrupting ventures. Placing such a mole is never an easy task however, as Rogue Traders are nothing if not a suspicious lot. More often it is easier to bribe someone already on the crew, though this requires very large amounts of capital or other promises to make it worth the would-be double-agents while. This is exactly how Jan

Kierys came to be an agent of the Inquisition some ninety years ago.

As the third son of the Rogue Trader Cornelius Kierys, Jan was raised to be an officer on his father's flagship, but knew that the trading charter his father possessed would never be his. He carried out his duties as an officer well, and despite being shunned by Cornelius in favour of his older siblings, he took part in many planetside missions with his father, encountering all sorts of xenos monstrosities, some of whom who could be traded with and some who deserved nothing better than a taste of the Emperor's mercy at the end of his bolt pistol. Jan's only real weakness was



women, and it was through a beautiful pleasure-girl named Estella that Jan was ensnared by the Ordo Xenos. Inquisitor Hiram Retzlaff used Estella as a lure to bring Jan into his custody, whereupon Retzlaff made his proposal: Jan would feed information to him, and in exchange would receive standings on Blane in the Rho Sector, and immunity from any charges related to consorting with xenos creatures that may unfold. Hiram made it absolutely clear to Jan that he could have him executed for what they knew already about his father's missions and that the Inquisition's mercy was not to be tested. Begrudgingly, Jan accepted the offer, and for nearly a decade fed Retzlaff with information about the planets his father took them to, and what races were encountered. Over this period, Jan grew even more aloof from his father and his brothers as he began to realise just how little a future he had on board the fleet. The depression caused Jan to become sloppy with his work, and while on planetary leave on Trian in the Empathaline system, Jan was caught by his father sending an astropathic communication to Retzlaff. Jan barely escaped from his father before Cornelius returned to his ship and blasted clear of the system. Retzlaff arrived some weeks later, angered by the loss of his eye on Kierys senior and chastised Jan for his failings. For nine years though, he had proved himself a capable agent, and Retzlaff offered him the choice of thirty years service in his retinue, or a swift date with the Emperor. Jan accepted the new proposal without hesitation.

Jan's experiences with xenos races resulted in him acting as both an advisor to Retzlaff and as a frontline agent able to interact where necessary with alien societies. Jan came to learn of the varying ways in which xenos races could threaten the Imperium, from the propaganda of the Tau to the infestation and subversion of the human race by genestealers and how best to counter these threats. When his thirty years of service expired Retzlaff summoned Jan and told him that his work as an acolyte was finished, and that he had one more choice to make: retirement to Blane, or to take up a seal of his own. Without hesitation, Jan agreed to be confirmed as an inquisitor.

As a member of the Ordo Xenos in his own right, Kierys initially set about studying the Tyranid Hive Fleets, especially their apparent rapid evolution that saw them take on the best aspects of the individual races they consumed, forming each successive generation of beasts into even more deadly killing machines. Historical reports from Macragge did not contain images of creatures commonly seen in recent attacks, which suggested that even in the last two centuries, many new genuses had developed, and it was clear that the Tyranids would continue to develop new creatures to counter Imperial defence strategies over the coming years. Kierys understood though that there was little he could do to halt the evolution of the Tyranid race short of decimating each and every hive fleet in the void. In order to outdo them, the Imperium would have to evolve itself, at least in terms of combat ability and willingness to fight the alien menace.

Kierys travelled to planets in the predicted path of Leviathan and immediately set about auditing their ground and system defences. He was shocked to find how woefully defended some of the worlds were, especially agriworlds which presented a large biomass for assimilation by the hive fleet, and without which many systems would starve. Kierys set about petitioning the Departamento Munitorum to boost the defences of these worlds, while sending agents to the worlds to encourage enrolment in volunteer militias and the Planetary Defence Forces. He sent emissaries to Space Marine Chapters and to the Adeptus Mechanicus to share warnings of the impending attack and request arms and warriors. Only time will tell if he has successfully mustered enough forces to repel the oncoming horde.

Jan thinks of himself as a humble defender of the Imperium, but to some of his colleagues within the Inquisition his actions are that of an Istvaanian. He is setting up a score of planets across a sector for a war that may never come, press-ganging men into military service and diverting normal industry into the production of war materiel. His actions are causing discontentment within merchant sectors as prices fall, and conglomerates are going to battle with each other for military

contracts. Some say that the disruption to the planets he has caused will take decades to put right, but if Kierys is right then just perhaps he

is constructing a wall against which the Tyranid menace will break.

Inquisitor Kierys is right handed

WS	BS	S	T	I	Wp	Sg	Nv	Ld
71	74	57	61	62	87	86	77	82

Special Abilities: *Leader, Feint*

Equipment: Average Bionic Ear, Lazarus Pattern Hellpistol plus reload, Chainsword, Filter Plugs, Heavy robes on all locations.



INQUISITOR OZAN CONAKOGLU, ORDO HERETICUS

As an orphan taken in by the Schola Progenium, Conakoglu followed in the footsteps of billions of Imperial servants that had passed through its scriptoriums and combat-salles. Within the Scholae, days are long, discipline is harsh, and students have their resolve tested from day one. The Scholae exist to produce men and women of power and ability, and the Drill Abbots encourage bullying and conflict between students so that natural leaders can assert themselves within the student body. For those who gain respect through their charisma, a place as an officer in the Fleet or Guard perhaps awaits, where they can get the most from their men; those who achieve respect through physical prowess and mean nature can make excellent Arbitrators; and those who never stand down through sheer bloody-mindedness can make excellent Commissars. Conakoglu was one of the latter; a young man that stood up to the bullies in his Schola and grudgingly earned their respect. The Drill Abbots had him marked as one to watch from

a very early age, and come graduation, he was one of the first handed to the Commissariat for induction into their ranks. Life in the Commissariat made the Schola look like a veritable picnic. What minor flaws and weaknesses each new recruit had were laid bare and trampled over by the instructors and replaced with an unshakable faith in the Emperor and the strength of the Imperium. Junior Commissars were expected to be able to recall entire passages from numerous books of prayer and military discipline *ad verbatim*, with physical punishment for those who misquoted or hesitated unduly. They are taught to despise weakness and be ever on the lookout for the symptoms of cowardice, so that they can reaffirm the belief of the men under them with a well-placed bolt round. The steely determination that Conakoglu had displayed as a youth was forged into an all-conquering will of iron and by the time his first posting came, Conakoglu was more than ready to take charge of whatever miserable group of hive-trash or feral beasts the Departamento Munitorum chose to throw him to.

The world of Nuuk is known primarily for two things – the export of raw ores, and the mining corporation-sponsored thug-armies that are constantly sabotaging the mines of other companies. The average Nuukite is a powerfully built, but shorter than average human. Their main distinguishing features are large eyes as a result of millennia of low light conditions in the mine depths, and mottled skin due to heavy metal tattooing of skin lacerations. To outsiders, they are often thought of as abhumans, or mutants, but their prominent traits are no more than an adaptation to their environment, just as Catachans are naturally tall and well-muscled. The exogenous pigments in their skins are an unfortunate side-effect of their mining background, but there is no genetic deviancy at work, though many a Nuukite has fallen foul of an off-worlder mistaking him for something unclean. As a result of the prejudices they face from others, Nuukites found away from their home world are a habitually insular people, full of resentment at the mistreatment they receive. Regiments of guardsmen raised on Nuuk are often considered little more than dregs to be fed to the enemy's guns by army command groups, and the 6th Company of the 14th Nuukite Grey Coats that Commissar Ozan Conakoglu was attached to was no different.

Regiments from Nuuk also suffer from the fact that men are press-ganged from across many corporation thug-armies, and deadly enemies suddenly find themselves shoulder to shoulder in the grey stormcoat the regiments traditionally wear. Such animosity often boils over into full-blown battles within companies, and Conakoglu found himself in the midst of a storm when his company made landing on the contested world of Cryolite. The 6th company found themselves in the centre of an army group advancing on the enemy-held city of Ivingut but, during a break in the march, a massed brawl broke out between the workers and thugs of the Friedrich-Bach Fellowship and their opposite numbers associated with the Boehmite Cooperative. Such a loss in discipline with the enemy a mere five kilometres ahead was absolutely unacceptable, and Conakoglu strode into the middle of the combatants, swatting away those that dared stand up to him with an entrenching



tool. Once he reached the centre he fired his bolt pistol into the air, and bellowed, “The filth-encrusted heretics we were delivered here to dispatch are not an afternoon’s march from here and yet you fight amongst yourselves like children? The Emperor does not care which corporation you represent, He cares only that you turn your guns on the apostate that occupy His city of Ivingut. You will cease this madness and make ready for war, or the next one of you to throw a punch will receive a bolt round to the head and the knowledge that he will not be granted a seat at the Emperor’s table in the afterlife.” Conakoglu met the gaze of every Nuukite that dared stare at him and without a word each and every guardsman retrieved his lasgun. “Onwards”, Conakoglu was heard to order, and the 6th company broke ranks and marched on Ivingut. The surprise and ferocity of the attack was to breach a hole in the enemy’s defences that formed the beachhead through which the army group was able to take Ivingut, and the city would form a staging point for the re-conquest of Cryolite.

Conakoglu served as a Commissar with the 14th Nuukite Grey Coats with distinction for nearly two decades before the Battle of Saxonia decimated the regiment. The few survivors were inducted into the veteran army of Inquisitor Akondra who had been supervising the operation, and Conakoglu

found himself part of a witch-hunting team led by one of Akondra's interrogators. Akondra's teams had a high attrition rate due the dangers posed by the rogue psykers he persecuted, and Conakoglu was one of a handful of Nuukite 14th veterans to survive the first two years with Akondra. The dangers he faced as an acolyte honed Conakoglu's fighting abilities, sharpened his perception of his surroundings and optimised his survival skills. He had found a new purpose as one of the Emperor's unseen servants, and as time passed in Akondra's retinue he strove to be the best he could be, so that one day he might be able to take up the mantle of Witch Hunter himself. Akondra was impressed with Conakoglu's drive, and elevated him to the position of interrogator, from where he could lead his own witch-hunting team. Conakoglu excelled in the role and after a decade. Akondra successfully petitioned for him to be declared an inquisitor in his own right.

In his early years as an inquisitor, Conakoglu carved a reputation for himself as a successful witch-hunter, just as Akondra had been. He brought salvation to many worlds in the thrall of rogue psykers and his name became synonymous with unrelenting fury in the name of the Emperor in the Torus Sector. He worked his acolytes hard, just as he had been worked hard himself, because for Conakoglu, it had been the sheer difficulty of the witch-hunting missions that had driven him to reach the top; they had created a need for him to be at his optimum just to survive, and he had flourished with the pressure. The constant threat to his continuing existence had been key to his success, and the potential inquisitors in his charge would not be treated

any differently. Such was the exacting nature of the training his acolytes went through that when the first few of his interrogators to take up the seal themselves began their work their early careers outshone most of their contemporaries. Old colleagues of Conakoglu's congratulated him on his mentoring, and asked for his secrets. Conakoglu reflected on the harsh nature of his training, and he began to ponder if such logic could be applied to the Imperium as a whole. He conducted research into invasions of Imperial systems, such as those during the Gothic War, and the first Tyrannic War and began to see that when faced with total annihilation the men and women of the Imperium could rise up and triumph over insurmountable odds. Humanity had shown an aptitude for success under pressure, and Conakoglu took it upon himself to create duress for the citizens of the Imperium where he could to get them to rise to new levels of greatness. His early methods included the sponsoring of rebellious factions, and the encouragement of warfare between cartels, just like that on Nuuk that had created the brutal warriors of the 14th Grey Coats, but in recent years he has taken a more direct approach due to the state of the galaxy around him. The Imperium has external pressures all around in the form of its many enemies, and with the 13th Black Crusade and all other invasions threatening the Emperor's realm, Conakoglu believes it is now time to take the Imperium to face its threats, for by throwing them into the clutches of their foes the fighting men and women of the Imperium will reach their potential and cast back the darkness once and for all.

Inquisitor Conakoglu is right handed

WS	BS	S	T	I	Wp	Sg	Nv	Ld
76	68	55(66)	56	59	85	74	83	84

Special Abilities: *Leader, Word of the Emperor: Curse of Undoing*

Equipment: Average Bionic Eye incorporating Motion Predictor, Storm Bolter, Chainaxe, Rebreather, Voice Thrower, Power Armour on all locations except head.

INQUISITOR CILLIAN LYKO LOSPORIN, ORDO SEPULTURUM

The frontier worlds of the Eastern Fringe are for the most part lawless wastelands where the Imperium is a distant legend and worlds go for decades without visits from Imperial institutions. For the people of these planets, life is invariably tough as they battle against inclement climates and attempt to build cities and industries without the technical support they require. Worse still is the fact that their sheer isolation means that should they be attacked, there is little chance of help arriving in time to save them. Some of these worlds last a handful of years before something comes from the darkness of space and annihilates them, while others somehow prosper through the discovery of some valuable resource, excellent planning, or sheer luck that keeps the circling vultures off their backs. Most though fall somewhere in the middle, and struggle on despite their difficulties, resolutely refusing to give in to dangers arrayed against them. Such stubbornness to submit is a prominent feature of the settlers that live on these worlds, many of whom have escaped indescribable atrocities and been forced east, and these people will fight tooth and nail for the second chance at life that He on Terra has gifted them with. Most frontier worlders are doughty, grim and self-reliant, trusting only their nearest and dearest, and perhaps the shotgun under their bed for protection. Such hardiness can be a great asset, and it is unsurprising perhaps that some members of the Inquisition make the long trip to the furthest reach of the Astronomican to find men and women to recruit to their operations.

Cillian Lyko Losporin was a lawman on Longreach, a cold, rocky and intimidating little hole of world at the eastern edge of the Adrienne Sector in the Ultima Segmentum, some 20,000 light years east of Kar Duniash. Losporin was a solid deputy who had taken part in many hunts for karhnud rustlers; rustling being the most common crime of note aside from petty thieving and the occasional assault around the settlement of Benediction that he called home. In the winter of his 32nd year, Losporin's career as a lawman was cut

short by a tragedy that befell the neighbouring settlement of Ironhead. Nothing had been heard from them for a month, and while that wasn't terribly unusual in the winter months, it usually meant that the other settlement would be struggling to look after itself. Losporin and a group of a dozen men set out for Ironhead dragging as many supplies as they could behind them on sledges. After nine days they reached the outskirts of the town, finding it eerily quiet and no smoke rising from chimneys despite the deep cold. Searching of the houses revealed that the townspeople had not run out of food or fuel for their fires, and as they pressed onwards a feeling of dread built in each of them. The group reached the chapel in the centre of the town, and Losporin was shocked to see its windows shattered and facings chipped by gunfire. He nervously pushed open the door and came upon a scene that had him whispering the names of the saints. The pews were filled with the settlement's townsfolk, every last one of them, and they were all missing the roofs of their skulls. He could see things scabbling over the corpses, diving into the craniums of the dead to feast. At the head of the chapel sat a pair of beasts, humanoid, but wrongly proportioned and swathed in rags. They looked up at the group's entry and the least-bloated of the two leapt to its feet and



shrieked. Losporin immediately felt light-headed and sunk to his knees, the butt of his shotgun the only thing keeping him upright. Around him the others collapsed and he looked up to see the beast closing on him. It walked with a shallow gait, its head sweeping around and Losporin remembered a sermon from his youth about the perfect form of the human body and how the xenos races were a slur on the one true form. With all the strength he could muster, he raised his shotgun and blew the thing back down the chapel. With its demise his mind cleared, and he was able to stalk to the front of the chapel to where the other still sat, mewling pathetically. It clutched its belly and Losporin took it to be female, pregnant with another litter of the things that were devouring the brains of the townspeople. He blew its head open and then blasted its belly into tatters.

Before they left Ironhead, Losporin had the church burnt to the ground to make sure all the xenos taint was erased. Losporin and another struck out for Premier, the site of the planet's spaceport and nominal capital to report their finding. On reaching Premier, Losporin approached the Arbites to make his report, but found himself on the receiving end of an interrogation by a man named Malachi. After they had finished talking, Losporin found himself bundled onto a shuttlecraft and taken from Longreach. His service with the Inquisition had begun.

Under Malachi, Losporin came to learn of dozens of individual xenos races that existed in the sectors around Longreach and the threat they posed to the Imperium's will. The creatures Losporin had encountered were revealed to him to be known as Omikans and Losporin took pleasure in eradicating them from the Adrienne Sector alongside Malachi. Losporin served as an acolyte for eighteen years before being granted his own seal and continued his persecution of xenos races up and down the Eastern Fringe. However, a chance event during the Perseus War against the Crethalin sparked a new interest for Losporin: disease.

Imperial Guardsmen involved in the Pheros drops were reporting a contagion spreading

through the ranks that was leaving them with swollen, painful hands and unable to lift their weapons. It was feared that the Crethalin were using a new viral weapon to disable the men sent to fight them, so Losporin and his personal physician went to investigate garbed in vacuum-proof hostile environment suits. Losporin found the men in varying states of agony, some with rashes on their faces, and some reported rashes in other more intimate areas. He asked if any men had not been affected and was told only the regimental commissars had escaped the affliction. Losporin's doctor inspected them, and it was only after he asked them to remove their gloves that they started to show symptoms. It was obvious that there was some alien irritant that the men had come into contact with and all were ordered to don gloves. The company was ready to fight again the next day.

Losporin was amazed by how something as simple as a microscopic particle had reduced the fighting effectiveness of a company of men to zero. He began to concentrate his resources on understanding xenos viruses, and then illnesses in general, generating close ties with the Order Hospitaller, Officio Medicae and the Adeptus Mechanicus Biologis. He wanted to know what it was that made some men resistant to disease and others susceptible. He travelled to worlds ravaged by disease and took samples of DNA from the unaffected and compared them with the dead, looking for clues in the genes of both groups. He took survivors from all the worlds he visited, adding them to his retinue as glorified guinea pigs to see if they would fall to other diseases on other worlds, searching for someone resistant to every known contagion. He dreams of engineering a race of men unsusceptible to any biological agent to unleash on the Imperium's enemies and has developed a working relationship with a Magos Genetor to help facilitate this aim. Recently it has been rumoured he has joined the Ordo Sepulcrum to further increase his knowledge of disease, and some fear that he may be attempting to unleash an epidemic to find his next group of resistant survivors to experiment on.

Inquisitor Losporin is right handed

WS	BS	S	T	I	Wp	Sg	Nv	Ld
64	79	53	65	76	79	83	72	71

Special Abilities: *Leader, Rock Steady Aim*

Equipment: Advanced Bionic Eye incorporating digi-laser, Stubber with reload, Hand Flamer, 5 shots of Detox, Filter Plugs, Analgesia Infuser, Carapace Armour on arms, chest, abdomen and groin, heavy robes on legs.



ISTVAANIANS IN THE GAME

“Without Istvaan III there would be no God-Emperor; I can see no greater argument for perpetuating the eternal war than that,”

- Inquisitor Volantin Atlas, *The Imperium and War*

ISTVAANIANS AND WARRIOR BANDS

The joy of playing an Istvaanian inquisitor is that you have a character who absolutely revels in anarchy. To be Istvaanian is to have a desire to see communities, worlds and the Imperium at large burn in the fires of conflict, and there is much fun to be had playing the callous monster to whom death is a vital part of strengthening the rest of the human race. There is a lot of enmity reserved for Istvaanians within the Inquisition, and therefore a lot of scope for bringing inquisitors into conflict with them, and of course there are those Istvaanians who would like nothing better than to see the Inquisition tear itself apart.

The varied scope of the Istvaanian faction means there is a large selection of methods that an Istvaanian may employ to achieve his aims, from politicking and creating friction between a worlds’ ruling parties, to directing conflict through a cult from afar, or even fighting tooth and nail at the forefront of his wars. His Ordo affiliation (or lack thereof) will govern what resources he can call on, and may well be responsible for the methods he chooses.

The modus operandi of the Istvaanian uses to bring about strife will translate itself into the type of character he is, what equipment he uses, and the people he keeps close to him:

- An Ordo Hereticus inquisitor that raises cults to test local law enforcement may well be an unassuming man wearing simple robes with a small weapon concealed about his person, accompanied by simple desperados, fanatics, or even mutants depending on what community he has infiltrated.

- An Ordo Xenos inquisitor who terrorises planets with the aim of fuelling an increase in their military qualities will be heavily armed and surround himself with a crack team of well-drilled killers, such as Imperial Guard veterans or assassins, or perhaps even xenos allies, such as the kroot.
- An inquisitor of the Fomenter splinter faction who wishes to ferment violence between sects on an Imperial world is likely to be well equipped, surrounded by fiery orators such as priests to drum up support as well as military-minded characters with which to enact his battle-plans.

This is by no means an exhaustive list, but these examples should hopefully get the creative juices flowing and allow for the creation of original and, most of all, fun Istvaanian characters.



ISTVAANIAN CAMPAIGNS AND SCENARIOS

Istvaanian characters are well-suited to just about any campaign as their presence can often be put down to their interest in propagating violence, but there is great scope for designing a campaign based entirely around the activities of an Istvaanian inquisitor. With the Istvaanian as the protagonist of the piece a campaign could revolve around the inquisitor’s attempts to create conflict between two separate parties, through politics, manipulation or simple assassinations. An Istvaanian makes for an interesting antagonist

too, and a hunt for such a character across a battle-ravaged planet could be great fun for players who enjoy lots of collateral damage! Presented below are a number of campaign and scenario concepts suitable for involving Istvaanian characters.



CAMPAIGN CONCEPTS

Heresy Begets Retribution

An Amalathian inquisitor arrives on a planet to investigate a series of ritual killings that seem to be the work of a Chaos Cult. What he doesn't know is that the cult is being fostered by an Ordo Malleus Istvaanian who wants to bring the planet to its knees. However, the Amalathian's investigation is swift and bloody, and soon the cult has been decimated. The Istvaanian must change tack if he wishes to see the Inquisition tear the planet apart so must set up a paper trail that leads to the planet's higher institutions, while not revealing himself at any point.

Schism

An entire subsector burns. What began as an argument between senior members of the local synod over which of the main religious factions had a greater right to remains of an Imperial Saint discovered on a dead world has erupted into an indescribably vicious sectarian war. The war is spreading inexorably, as systems throw in their lot with one of the sides for economic or religious reasons. An Ordo Hereticus taskforce has been dispatched to quell the violence, but they come across the trail of an agitator seemingly responsible for the increasing conflict. Can they track him down before the entire sector is engulfed in violence?



SCENARIO CONCEPTS

The Hit

The underhives of Plosiv are the breeding ground for some of the most ferocious Guardsmen the Segmentum Tempestus has to offer. However, in the depths of Gamma Hive, a powerful leader has united many of the gangs and the levels of violence are falling. Such peace will undoubtedly soften Guard recruits for years to come, and therefore the leader must be assassinated to restore the natural, violent, order.

Desecration

An Istvaanian inquisitor wishes to ferment war on an Imperial world with close links to the Ecclesiarchy. There are already deep divisions within society on the planet, with only certain castes allowed to worship in the temples and cathedrals, and this has left the low-born very resentful of their lot. By setting fire to a temple and pinning the blame on the poor, the Istvaanian hopes to drive the nobles to violence against the low-born and kick off a civil war.

Hidden Guns

An Istvaanian has drawn two rival inquisitors to a secluded spot. As the rivals face off with one another, their hands hovering over their pistols, the Istvaanian forces them into action with a couple of well-placed long-las shots. Can the Istvaanian remain hidden while the other warbands tear themselves apart, or will the rivals realise they have been set up and momentarily forget their disagreement and seek out the phantom sniper?

Unleashed

An Ordo Malleus Istvaanian has posed as a Xanthite for many years to gain the trust of a fellow radical. Finally the Xanthite has agreed to join forces with the Istvaanian on what has been described to him as an assault on a sorcerer's stronghold. In actual fact, the sorcerer is a puppet of the Istvaanian, and he has actually drawn the Xanthite here to destroy the bindings on his daemonhost and unleash the unbound creature on the planet.

NEW PSYCHIC ABILITIES

Below are a selection of new psychic powers particularly appropriate for Istvaanian inquisitors, or for the psykers they may employ.

TELEPATHY DISCIPLINE

Enrage – Difficulty: 5 per target

The psyker reaches into the minds of those around him and fills them with anger and the desire to shed blood. This is a *ranged* ability that may target as many characters as the player desires. An affected character must pass a Willpower test with a negative modifier equal to the amount the psyker passed his psychic test by, or be subject to *Frenzy* for D3 turns.

Empathic Command – Difficulty: 15

The psyker forces his persona on those around them, subconsciously willing them to follow him into battle. The character may only use this *persistent* power on himself, and while it is active he counts as having the *Leader* special ability, but with the range of the ability doubled to 12 yards.

Forget Me – Difficulty: ¼ Target's Willpower

The psyker casts a veil over his target's mind, rendering him incapable of forming memories about the psyker for a short while. This is a *ranged* ability. An affected character will forget all further actions the psyker takes that turn, essentially becoming unaware of the psyker. The target will still interact with the psyker, be it answering a question, or fighting in hand-to-hand combat, but will have no memory of anything occurring between the two of them.



TELEKINESIS DISCIPLINE

Willed Shot – Difficulty: 10

The psyker focuses on the bullet in the firing chamber of his gun, and lets the bullet free, guiding it unerringly with his mind to the target. The first shot the psyker fires after using the

power will count as having two levels of aiming, offering a +40% bonus to hit. This power can only be used on single firing mode. In addition, this power can only be used in conjunction with weapons that fire actual shells, such as stubbers and boltguns. Energy-based weaponry, such as lasguns and plasmaguns are unaffected.

Assail – Difficulty: 5

The psyker uses his powers to gather up detritus from the area and forms it into a cloud of rapidly moving shrapnel that he can unleash on his enemies. If the ability is successfully activated, the psyker can propel the shrapnel at a target, and for the purposes of the attack counts as being armed with a shotgun loaded with a scatter shell, though he does not have to drop what he has in his hands to use it.

Crush – Difficulty: ½ Target's Toughness

The psyker focuses on an enemy, using his will to subject him to massive telekinetic forces, crushing him where he stands. This is a *ranged* power. The target suffers one level of damage to his chest for every full 10% the psyker passed the psychic test by as his vital organs are compressed by the colossal forces around him.



MISCELLANEOUS ABILITIES

Mind Ward – Difficulty: 15

The psyker draws on the warp to banish thoughts of fear from his mind and steels himself against oncoming horror. The character may only use this *persistent* power on himself, and while it is active he counts as having the talent *Force of Will*.

Weapon Meld – Difficulty: 10

The psyker focuses his will on the weapon in his hands, allowing his subconscious to flow into the blade, forming it into a deadly extension of his body. This is a *persistent* power, and can only be used by the psyker on himself. The ability grants the psyker a +10% bonus to his Weapon Skill while it is active.

NEW SPECIAL ABILITIES

Sure Strike

The character bides his time in combat, awaiting the perfect opening to drive a blade between armour plates or through eye-pieces. The character can choose to use this ability in hand-to-hand combat as part of an attack action. Sure Strikes are at -20% to hit, but the attack ignores D6 points of armour on the location hit.

Strength Boost

The character can momentarily boost his strength through meditation, activating servos on his armour, by taking a stim, or through sheer bloody-mindedness. The character must spend an action activating the boost, in whatever form it takes, and gains a +10 bonus to his Strength for the rest of the turn.

Reaper

The character excels at cutting swathes through vast numbers of opponents with the arcing swings of his blade. The character can use this talent in hand-to-hand combat if he is at arms length and armed with a reach 4 weapon. The character can choose to target multiple opponents at arms length with one attack, though suffers a cumulative -10% penalty to hit for each target after the first. Any one successful parry (*n.b.* not dodge) will prevent the character from continuing to hit further targets as his blade will have been deflected out of the attack arc.



NEW WARGEAR

Fury (Exotic)

This toxin blocks higher brain functions, leaving those under its effects little more than beasts with an irresistible urge to kill. If the target fails its resistance test it will immediately attack the nearest character it is aware of in hand-to-hand combat and will continue attacking him until another resistance test is passed in the recovery phase, or the affected character's opponent is knocked unconscious or killed, in which case he will seek out the

next nearest character and launch a new attack.

Voice Thrower (Common)

A common piece of tech used by rabble-rousers the galaxy over, a voice thrower amplifies the volume of a person's voice allowing them to be heard further away than normal. Voice throwers may be implanted in a person's larynx, simply carried by hand, mounted on servo skulls or other familiar, or more exotically be a form of implant allowing telepathic communication. In game terms, a voice thrower allows shouting to be heard and understood at 3 times their normal range, 90 and 60 yards respectively. In addition voice throwers can be used to produce eardrum-shattering bursts of feedback, which in close proximity to another character can be a useful way of disorientating them. An action must be spent to use the voice thrower in this fashion. Any character within 5 yards of the voice thrower must pass a Willpower test or be stunned for a turn. The character activating the voice thrower is considered immune from the effects of the feedback as they were expecting the horrific noise!

Adrenal Spike (Rare)

This implant floods a person's system with adrenaline, increasing their reflexes and boosting their strength. However, such sudden and sustained exertion rapidly exhausts, and as such, Adrenal Spikes are not often implanted in willing subjects. Adrenal spikes boost a character's Strength and Initiative by +20, but the character must pass a Toughness test every turn while the Spike is active or add D6 to his injury total. Spikes are treated like stim injectors, and carry a dose measured in turns of use, and can be activated remotely by another character, via a trigger word, telepathic trigger or simple radio control.

Analgesia Infuser (Exotic)

An analgesia infuser is a medical implant that pumps painkillers and system stabilising agents into a person's system in response to trauma. Analgesia Infusers are activated after a character suffers an injury and give a +1 bonus to his roll to reduce his injury total following successful recovery rolls for the rest

of the game. However, the drugs affect reaction time somewhat and will reduce a character's Initiative by -10 for the duration of the game.

Lazarus Pattern Hellpistol (Rare)

An uncommon double-barrelled design gives this las-weapon a high rate of fire, and it is notable for its accuracy at short range and considerable stopping power.

	Type	Range	Mode	Acc	Dam	Shots	Rld	Wt
Lazarus Pattern Hellpistol	Pistol	F	Single/ Semi 2	-	3D6	30	5	25

The cries were stopping now, and the black cloud of circling carrion birds in the sky above was coming ever closer. The slate of the valley's floor was slick with blood for hundreds of metres in every direction and Collington estimated that there were eight thousand bodies arrayed at the bottom of the slope. The battle had been furious, and in the press of the rocks had been settled not with lasbolts but by fist and bayonet. The Tergun had triumphed, just as he had predicted, and even now the survivors were closing on the dam at the head of the valley, the taste of blood fresh in their mouths.

The berserkers from Tergun were nigh on uncontrollable, but once they had a foe to take battle to they were the most efficient assault troops Collington had ever had the pleasure of sending into battle. His army group had smashed aside the resistance around the Finback Mountains thanks to the ferocity of the Tergun. Initially he'd had some reservations when he had been presented with the rabble, especially considering there was a regiment of Cadians a continent away, but after the first assault all his disappointment had vanished in a storm of lasfire and bayonets. The primitives were going to win him quite a few medals, especially if they managed to attach the demolition charges to the dam like they'd been shown. The tech-adepts had not even attempted to teach the Tergun how to rig a detonator and instead had relied on a timer to bring about the final pyrotechnics, but Collington was confident that the primitives would get the job done. They hadn't failed with anything yet.

Collington sat down into his command throne in the back of the Salamander and turned to his aide.

'Signal Lord-General Murdoch and inform him that the Tergun are closing on the dam,' he instructed. 'Those bastards in the citadel will be drowned soon enough.'

Collington couldn't say he was a fan of the orders he had been given – he certainly wouldn't like to be drowned in a tidal wave – but this plan would save on artillery shells and the lives of guardsmen. Plus, they were all heretics. Or at least Collington assumed so. In the three wars he had fought against men, always they had been on the side of the Great Enemy. Mutations, symbols of Chaos, even the traitor Astartes had been prominent, but this time he had seen nothing but Imperial Aquilae and human faces. Chaos could deceive, but why would they endure the thrashing they had taken thus far without calling upon their traitor Astartes allies? Perhaps there was some greater plan at work here, but the longer it took the enemy to show their cards the better.

An explosion rang out across the mountains and Collington stood up with a start. The demolition charges. A sound like distant thunder followed, building in intensity until it became a roaring crescendo. A churning impasse of water burst from between the walls of the chasm to Collington's left, sweeping up the slate and bodies from the ground as it went, forming a mass of jagged shards and thundering foam. The water roared past him, thousands of gallons passing every second. The men in the citadel didn't stand a chance.

'Signal Murdoch and tell him the mission was a success,' he told his aide wearily. He banged on the driver's hatch. 'Let's go and see if any of the Tergun survived,' he instructed. Somehow he knew that all of the men that had made it out of the valley would be standing atop the ruins of the dam, screaming their curses at the thousands they had just condemned to death. The Emperor smiles on the strong, he'd heard someone say once and right now it was so very true.

THE ISTVAANIAN SOURCEBOOK

This sourcebook is a not-for-profit fan-made endeavour, designed to provide additional material for the *Inquisitor* game system.

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