

CHRONOLOGY

GLINDEX FORK CHRONOLOGY

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"We live in a dark time. The human species is now engaged in a desperate struggle with a terrible alien enemy. I, like many others throughout the Panhumanic Community, find myself confused and lost in the welter of information and conjecture relating to this matter. This is a collection of articles and papers obtained from a variety of sources that I hope might serve to bring some measure of understanding to those struggling to come to terms with the present crisis."

**-Yadis Maruganya: Librarian 2nd Class, Grand
Irallic Library, Irallia, 02.08.3493 IST**

"It is said that Man is made in the image of
God and since this God made the Universe,
Humanity feels confident that it
has a right to rule it.

But there are other Gods, dark Gods, Gods
in whose terrible image other
creatures are made -

*and these too might believe
that they are destined
to rule....."*

-origin unknown, 34th Century IST

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CHAPTER

1



The Kryomek - The First Encounter

Entry in the *Encyclopaedia Trallica*

ALIS D792.43

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Encubed Imprint 3490 (Visicube 27.4.tl99)

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In 3487 a representative of the megacorp Pandaris Prime informed the Nexus Quorumate that a type 5 shear trajectory had been determined in the Maktor Diman. The first interstice lay in the middle of panhumanic spacetime: the second lay across the galactic centre in a far distant star cluster¹. The Quorumate financed the sending of a probe through the diman. This returned data by TDC² that indicated that the cluster had an unusually high planetation index. The APT³ provided two of its transmuting vessels and a diman dreadnought was assigned as escort with a full 20 bicentions of troopers and associated support craft. The entire operation was to be commanded by Admiral Mankturian.

The transfer through the manifold was successful and several I-Class planets were quickly located and the planetary transmuting ships were dispatched on ion drive towards the nearest. The process continued in the usual way for several months as the transmutor ships jumped from system to system. Few life-forms were discovered and those that were were exterminated by the repopods⁴.

The main fleet was passing through the Jang'ada system and went to examine some signals coming from the vicinity of the gas giant Aleph Jang'ada when the encounter occurred. The third moon of the planet contained an outpost hive of the

¹ see "Appendix A: Dimensional Manifolds"

² Trans-Dimensional Carrier used for inter-planetary communications.

³ Agency for Planetary Transmutation (see next footnote)

⁴ see "The Planetary Transmutation of Avakrellia II"

First Encounter

Kryomek. The troopers were completely overwhelmed. Kryomek craft swarmed up from the moon and severely damaged the fleet. Admiral Mankturian only just managed to make it back to the manifold with the dreadnought. Damage to it's space folding equipment caused more losses as the transfer through the diman was partially unsuccessful. At that time the Kryomek did not have any diman technology and they could not follow.

The disaster at Aleph-Jang'ada III re-examined

by Bicenturion Hragnos Baltak

Article Appearing in an Aractosian holomag, ALIS C792.43

10.01.3491 IST

The day Jandubar 13, 3488 is burned deep in my memory as it is in all the combat troops of the NTFA⁵ that took part in the terrible massacre that began on Aleph-Jang'ada III.

I am writing this in an attempt to set the record straight. The subsequent humiliation of Admiral Mankturian at the Court of Investigation that was set up after the battle still rankles with many of his fellow officers. We said it at the time, and I repeat it again now, no man could have avoided the massacre! We were not expecting what happened - and there was no reason to do so. He was just a scapegoat - a sacrifice to the hysteria that flew through the outworlds to eventually reach even the home-worlds.

When the Admiral's task fleet approached the third moon of Aleph-Jang'ada on what was, after all, a routine reconnaissance of a new system it was evident from certain electronic transmissions,

that were picked up by the fleet's sensors that there was something on that rock that had at least rudimentary technology. These were run through the decryptor circuits of the compcore⁶ time and time again with no result. The messages, if that was what they were, were regular enough for it to appear obvious that they were not a natural phenomena. The compcore could resolve nothing with a linguistic content from the signal patterns.

I must stress that the fleet was immediately put on yellow alert - even though by then it was suspected that this might indeed be some kind of strange natural phenomenon that had never been previously encountered. Cautiously, the Admiral ordered the fleet into a standard conic formation and thus we approached the moon ready for anything anything that is except what we found.

At first everything went by the book. The Convict-units were landed by twister⁷ before all the others - as usual. I could see the neuro-regulators embedded in their skulls glowing like single, bright eyes - it was because of this that the regular grunts called them 'cyclos'. I could also see the characteristic shapes of their special brand of heavy equipment without all the fancy safety gear that the regulars demanded. They fanned out from their shattered capsules and then we went in behind them - using them as cover - as the manuals instruct us to do. Our power armour was encrusted with the dirt of countless other moons. It was just like any of the others - there was some talk about it all being a joy-ride - some crude jokes - the normal thing - nothing out of the ordinary.

We had been given a fix on the signal as we landed and I was directing several squads of troopers that way when I spotted the chimney. I

⁵ Nexus Tri-Federal Alliance

⁶ high yield computer matrix.

⁷ helical descent landing pod: see "Application of Biostatic Cryogenic Systems to High Velocity Personnel Deployment Systems"

could only see its strangely shaped upper lip over the rim of the crater but as we got closer I saw more of it, and then I saw that it was flanked by others. Then we crested the crater wall and saw it all. There it was as real as you like. The entire crater was full of those strange towers in elaborate clusters, stretching as far as the eye could see - and even further if my sensors were to be believed. It was such a surprise that perhaps we all just stopped - stunned staring at it all - perhaps it was that hesitation that finished us.

For then it happened. There were a hundred flashes amongst the nest of chimneys as a swarm of craft as dense as smoke erupted from amongst the towers. They were upon us before we knew it. It was a nightmare - a nightmare in slow motion without the sound-track. Demons, monstrous terror-creatures fell from the sky, from spined sky-racks, tearing and rending as they fell. Gobbets of thick, scintillating fluid arched through the air and where these landed they burned - even through the rock. Blasts of violet fire punched holes in power armour. Then I saw one of them - one of the things, huge with a head full of teeth. He smashed his way through the cyclos as if they were toys, shredding them like paper dolls. Even to this day I wake up screaming with the image of that horror forever printed on my retina. No need here to describe the Kryomek. Now everyone has heard of them - everyone has seen the hideous *things*. Familiarity has made people blasé to the horror - they're no worse than things on a hologic .. but then few of them have seen them in the flesh - their alien flesh with its lurid, iridescent sheen - their carapaces - the loathsome belch of their weapons - or seen them rending flesh when they feed on human carrion.

I suppose we could be blamed for having become complacent. But then you must remember that we were only escorting a transmuting expedition. We had met other life-forms before.

**The Kryomek
were the first
to fight back.**





**In the throes
of civil strife
few eyes were
turned up to see
the invaders.**

Origins of the Nexus Tri-Federational Alliance

Entry in the Encyclopaedia Irallica

ALIS C789.1

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Encubed Imprint 3490 (Visicube 13.7.x675)

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The Nexus owes its origins to the conditions that existed in the latter half of the 34th century. A certain tension had always existed between the three inhabited worlds orbiting Solarica. Irallia's claim to the mastery of the three relied essentially on it having been the original homeworld of the race. Aractos used its pre-eminent technology to justify its demands for dominance while Xardil, the furthest from the sun and then still a cold and hostile frontier world, boasted that its race were destined for imperial greatness because they were younger and more virile than those who lived on the other two warmer worlds.

For centuries these warlike planets had vied with each other for supremacy and squabbled for control of the double ring of mineral-rich asteroids. Warfare was endemic to the area but it was rare for these conflicts to extend beyond purely stratospheric skirmishes. The inhabitants of all three worlds watched these conflicts in their skies complacently. Fathers pointed out the casualties to their sons as if they were nothing more than a shower of shooting stars.

As the 34th century drew to a close things changed. The population of Irallia always large was expanding explosively. Aractos would take no more immigrants and Xardil had become unattractive even to the poorest Irallian. Colonies had been put on some of the more habitable moons of the gas giants but these would have been expensive even without the constant warfare and became ruinously so with it. Forcible deportation was even tried - though it too failed because of the astronomical cost. Irallia began to

Nexus History



collapse under a flood of humanity. At that time it - like the other two - was a political chaos of democratic pluralism. The people of Irallia were dictated to by the shrill capitalistic demagogues that were really the voices of the exploiting corporate structures that ran the planet. It was a delicate balance, one carefully kept for centuries by rich industrialists. Perhaps they thought that it was going to be like that forever. If so they were wrong. From the most miserable shanty town of the great megatropolis Xirell there rose a messiah. He called himself Qaral which in Saka-Irallic⁸ means Purification. To history he is better known as The Flayer.

It took just seventeen days for Qaral to overthrow the system which had controlled Irallia for centuries. His acolytes moved across the planet like a plague whispering rebellion into the ears of the dispossessed. At first the governments thought that they could contain it in Xirell. The city was blockaded and its inhabitants began to starve. But the rebellion was like a pestilence: the weaker the people became the more susceptible they became to the words of the Dark Prophet. Soon he ruled supreme in the ruined megatropolis. His followers, already demented, slipped into madness, painted themselves and even wore the skins of their enemies which they did in mockery of the former exploitations of their oppressors.

The rich began to fear. The mask fell away and all the apparent conflicts between them whether religious or political or whatever else vanished as if they had never been. As it bent all its resources to crushing the Flayer in Xirell the Establishment was revealed unified before the world as it had always been behind the scenes. It was already too late. Rebellion had spread like cancer to the other megatropolises and even into the ranks of the military and security forces. By

the seventh day as all semblance of order disappeared, the skins of the rich began to adorn the glass towers from which they had ruled for so long.

The Terror spread. The memories of the multitudes were scoured for records of past crimes and outrage and the acolytes of the Flayer were everywhere casting their unfortunate victims upon the rack.

The rich on the other two planets watched the carnage with ever increasing horror for neither Aractos nor Xardil were strangers to exploitation. They feared that the blight of rebellion might spread across the vacuum to their worlds and they determined that they would step in and cleanse Irallia of it first. The two planets that had been at war for centuries formed an instant alliance and it was only a matter of days before their joint fleets appeared in the skies of Irallia. The planet was defenceless. In the throes of civil strife few eyes were turned up to see the invaders.

Death rained down upon the torn planet. There was no attempt to choose 'military targets'. The Alliance was determined to burn Irallia clean of the dangerous contagion. It began as a punitive attack against the rebels but ended in a holocaust. For days fire fell from the skies until even the great towers of the megatropolises had fallen into the smouldering mass below. The strategists of the Alliance considered their strategies and beheld the ruin and sent back reports to their worlds that they were victorious and that the Flayer and his rebellion were no more.

The great fleet returned into the void between the three worlds leaving only a few vessels to police the ruins. On Aractos and Xardil the politicians like the scavengers they were had already begun to carve up Irallia between them.

⁸ dead classical language used for centuries in divine liturgy.

But the Irallian fleets had not been destroyed. When the Flayer rose from the burning ruins into the sky with his crazed legions the few remaining Alliance ships were easily overwhelmed. Then it was the turn of the Irallians to visit their enemies with fire. The Flayer came amongst them like Death himself, unlooked for and terrifying.

In the end the Alliance managed to repulse the Flayer but at great cost. He returned to Irallia with the battered remnant of his legions. His was a spent force. With his defeat the spell was broken. He vanished from history and Irallia settled into decay. When the Alliance returned the survivors were a few wretches skulking in the ruins leaderless and despairing.

But the Alliance itself had been transformed, forged anew by the terrible price that it too had paid. The old order had been discredited and the victorious military moved into the power vacuum that they left.

The military were led by a group of enlightened men that did not wish to turn Irallia into a slave planet. They found what representatives they could in the ruins of the megapolises and asked them to bring Irallia into a new Triple alliance. The Nexus Quorumate was formed from the highest ranking stratecoms and admirals of the military of all three planets. These men had the vision to turn their eyes out from the small cluster of three planets to the immensity of the greater galaxy. They understood that Man's destiny lay amongst the stars. Those stars were a prize that seemed ripe for the picking.

The Corporationalising of the Panhumanic Metaconomy

by Anquviar Haldosiac, 21.02.3490 IST

Article appearing in the Muja issue of
"The Corporation"

ALIS C793.7
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(one of a series of articles dealing with
developmental metaconomic issues.)

The past decade has seen an unprecedented expansion of the panhumanic metaconomy. In this time we have seen an increasing integration between the economic system and the Nexus Military. Of course this is a rather simplistic way of stating what is unsurprisingly a process of great complexity and subtlety. This article will attempt to analyse the basic trends and developments that have led to the current metaconomic system.

Metaconomic transformation began in 3463 when the Nexus Quorumate repealed the anti-monopolistic statutes that formed part of an ancient Irallian Law. This law was originally intended to stop overall control of vital planet wide services from falling into the hands of a few large corporations.

Various adjuncts to this were made when the Triple Alliance was formed that extended its jurisdiction to all three member planets. Simultaneously, the Quorumate annulled an entire complex of statutes and regulations that determined and in many ways constricted all forms of interplanetary trading and economic activity.

The result of these repeals was to engender a new atmosphere of 'laissez-faire' which set in motion the processes that have culminated in the megacorps. Economic agglutination began early with for example the spectacular series of acquisitions and take-overs which led the already large industrial giant Hajunka to develop within two years into the first true megacorp. Others followed until today 73% of the entire panhumanic metaconomy is controlled by just six megacorps.

Natural economic development would not by itself have accounted for the dramatic transformation of the economic scene. The combination of almost complete government non-intervention had to be coupled to the resource dynamics of the Great Push which each year has seen an exponential increase in markets, in the resource and demographic base. The embryonic megacorps found that they could hitch their production volumes to an unlimited theoretical maximum. Even the most resource consuming technology could be developed at astronomic cost because it would be certain to be accommodated within the rapidly growing metaconomy. The megacorps made fantastic profits. Within five years all but three of them had achieved turnovers that exceeded in size the entire panhumanic economy that had existed just a few years before.

It must be pointed out that throughout this period this level of development would not have been possible without the previously unthinkable partnership between the megacorps and the military. The dynamics of the Great Push made the interests of the military identical to those of the megacorps. The symbiosis was perfect and complete. The Quorumate forced psychosocial changes on the whole panhumanic cultural system whose only purpose was to allow the megacorps to achieve an almost total and unhindered policy of exploitation. The megacorps were soon able to manipulate large portions of the panhumanic populations as they already did enormous sectors of the resource base. In return for this consideration the megacorps provided the military with what it needed: steep-gradient development technologies.

For example, in the first year the military were still using tetraspatial vessels with conventional space-folding capabilities but, by the fourth, spin-offs from space-folding communications technologies had made limited access to dimensional manifolds possible; by the eighth year Hajunka had delivered two Leviathan class dreadnoughts to the military that were capable



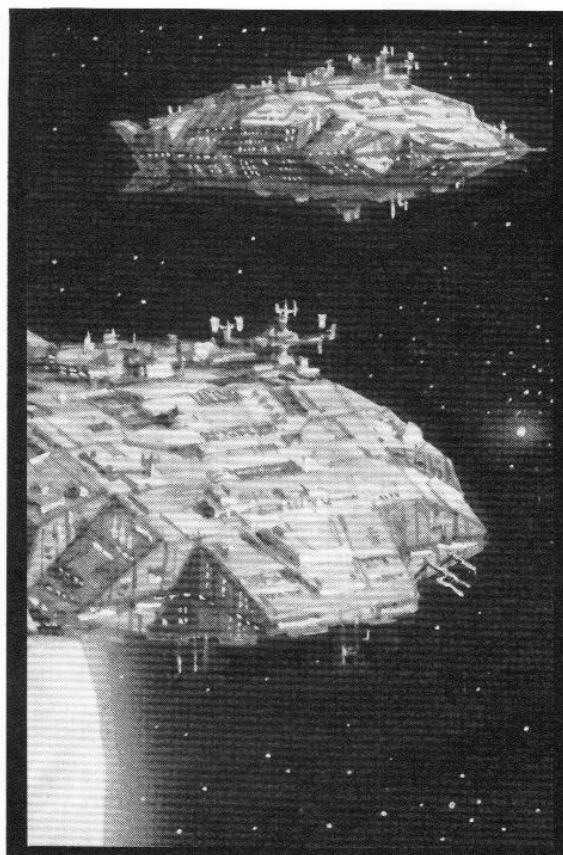
of unlimited access to probability mapped dimensional manifolds. These developments were initially made to reduce the cost of deep space freight transportation but the result was that the military were given the capacity to rapidly re-deploy their resources with next to no relativistic phasing being incurred.

The corollary to this is that Pandaris Prime, another of the megacorps, had developed the manifold probing technologies that allowed the essential probability mapping to be carried out for all dimensional manifolds intersecting panhumanic space-time. Of course since dimensional manifolds suffer from probability drift these mappings are transient and the supply of the constant updates to the military provide Pandaris Prime with a substantial portion of its revenues.

In 3470 the 'Six' met on Irallia for discussions about the possibility of mutual cooperation between their megacorps. Out of this meeting there rose ComCorp which was a cartel that was instituted to exclude all other corporations from achieving the status of megacorps. In early 3471 the Six met again and they invited a representative of the Nexus Quorumate to attend. Admiral Ganjivar Tredilion became the first Moderator and thereafter the organisation met regularly.

The presence of the Nexus moderator effectively gave the Quorumate the status of a megacorp. Within two years ComCorp had achieved almost as much political power as the Quorumate itself.

In conclusion, the linking of ComCorp with the Quorumate has provided humanity with strong leadership in every field and is the foundation on which the entire complex of the panhumanic metaconomy rests. If it were not for these power structures it is possible that the panhumanic system might have been completely overturned by the initial attack from the Kryomek. It is unlikely that when Kryomek and Panhumanic space-time intersected defence would have been possible without, for example, the advanced technologies such as dimensional manifold transportation which were a direct result of megacorp development. The Hivestone Incursion Crisis, a potentially terminal disaster for Humanity, has in fact been successfully incorporated into the Great Push dynamic. The struggle with the Kryomek is now beginning in earnest and its outcome depends on the ruthlessly efficiency of resource exploitation for which the megacorps are largely responsible.



**When the
Alliance returned
the survivors
were a few
wretches skulking
in the ruins,
leaderless
and despairing.**

SOLARICA

HARIBIDIS

ICARUS

ASTARTIS

IRALLIA

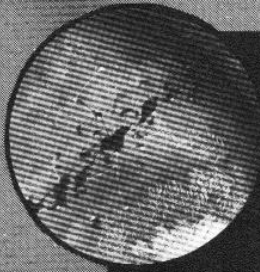
ARACTOS

XARDIL

MAHUBA

LEPIS

IXATHOS



ARACTOS

mass (Irallia=1)	0.603
volume (Irallia=1)	0.25
density (water=1)	3.45
Equatorial Diameter (km)	8 998
"Surface" gravity (Ir =1)	0.78
Number of Satellites	3
Period of rotation (Ir days)	1.04
Length of year (Ir days)	23.34
Distance from sun (max) Mkm	202.8
Distance from sun (min) Mkm	181.1
inclination of axis (degrees)	23.41
inclination of orbit to ecliptic	5.4

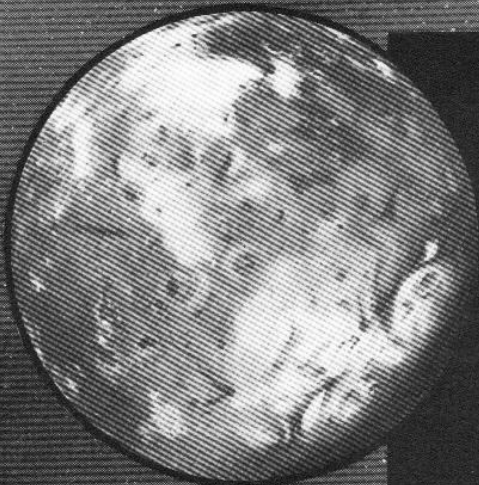
IRALLIA

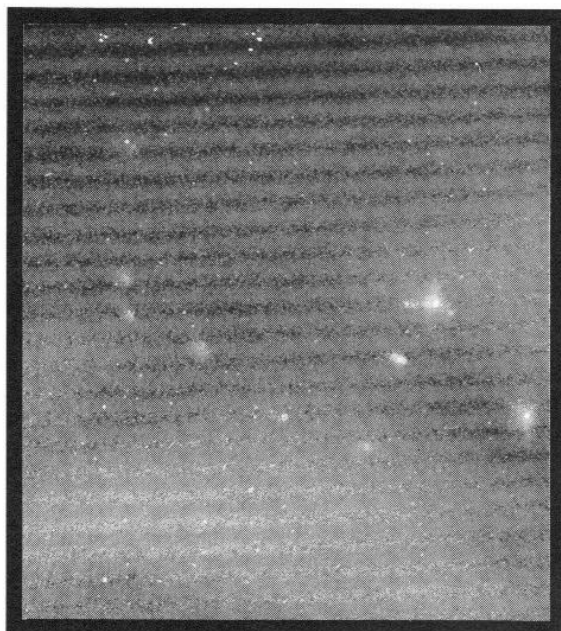
mass (Irallia=1)	1
volume (Irallia=1)	1
density (water=1)	5.77
Equatorial Diameter (km)	14 275
"Surface" gravity (Ir =1)	1.00
Number of Satellites	2
Period of rotation (Ir days)	1
Length of year (Ir days)	378.21
Distance from sun (max) Mkm	163.2
Distance from sun (min) Mkm	157.9
inclination of axis (degrees)	21.43
inclination of orbit to ecliptic	0



XARDIL

mass (Irallia=1)	1.204
volume (Irallia=1)	1.11
density (water=1)	5.85
Equatorial Diameter (km)	15 988
"Surface" gravity (Ir =1)	1.12
Number of Satellites	3
Period of rotation (Ir days)	0.92
Length of year (Ir days)	533.23
Distance from sun (max) Mkm	254.3
Distance from sun (min) Mkm	233.2
inclination of axis (degrees)	11.22
inclination of orbit to ecliptic	0.8





A Guide to Solarica

A Short Guide to Panhumanic Space

ALIS CD381.2

(extract) imprint 3480

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Solarica

Solarica is an apparently quite ordinary yellow dwarf main sequence star. Half of its mass is concentrated in its core creating the pressure and temperature necessary to cause its nuclear reaction.

Icarus and Haribidis

These two tiny worlds are very peculiar in that they form a micro-planetary system by rotating around each other around a common orbital centre. It is likely that they were once a single planet which was split in two by some cometary collision in the distant past. Icarus, the smaller of the two, has an exceptionally large metallic core which comprises 56% of its volume. They are both without atmospheres and suffer from vast extremes of temperatures.

Astartis

Pearl white Astartis is the planet in the Solaric System that most closely resembles Irallia in both volume and mass. However it has a dense atmosphere of carbon dioxide and hydrocarbonic gases which produce an extremely acidic climatology. It has been the dream of many for centuries to transmute this planet - it might soon be attempted.

Irallia

Moons: Nihiri, Jederan

Beautiful turquoise Irallia is the only Solaric planet to have abundant quantities of surface water. In fact 78% of its surface is covered by the vast Tethas Ocean and the Tantaric Inner Sea. Of the four continents Kanda, Ataras, Athurica and Austraka, only the latter does not have a coast on the Inner Sea.

Irallia's vast population is mainly concentrated in the megatropolises around the Inner Sea and the hundreds of oceanic islands that make up the Austrakan archipelago.

Nihiri

The smallest of Irallia's two moons and the largest military base in the Solaric System. It has berthing facilities for three Leviathan class dreadnoughts.

Jederan

The caverns of Jederan contain a dense population. This is the thriving financial centre of Solarica and one of the greatest in all of panhumanic spacetime.

Aractos

Moons: Trakuya, Mendigal, Carbondar

Golden Aractos was originally a cold desert planet with a thin atmosphere. It was here that humanity made its first attempt at planetary transmutation. Centuries have seen Aractos acquiring, through a systematic liberation of all reserves of atmospheric gases, an atmosphere which is now almost indistinguishable from that of its mother planet Irallia. The planetary climate is carefully controlled to minimise cloud cover which thus increases the proportion of Solaric heat reaching the planet surface. In equatorial regions bodies of open water have been created. The vast area of land available for habitation is offset by the great drop in temperature as it gets nearer the poles. On much of Aractos people live very much as they do on Irallia though outside the tropics lifestyles are more reminiscent of Xardil than they are of the mother planet.

The low gravity tends to mean that Aractans are generally a taller, slenderer race. Certain conditions attendant on the original colonies have left Aractos at the forefront of human technologies.

Trakuya

Owned by the Agarax corporation highly cyberneticized and protected by one of the most sophisticated security systems in panhumanic space. Cerabex is located here: this is the birthplace of the famous active cyberneural matrix.

The Moloch Rings

The two rings of asteroids, Moloch Minor and Moloch Major support a large thriving population of miners. The Rings are very mineral rich and it is true to say that the panhumanic colonisation would not have been possible without them. The population of the Molochs is not distributed uniformly throughout the rings but rather is concentrated on the larger asteroids. Of these the two most notable are Darkstone and Kutta which are renowned for their violence and debauchery.

Xardil

Moons: Gulgatrax, Makoydis, Uris, Lucifer,

Xardil is likely to remain an anomaly amongst human colonised worlds because it is no longer necessary to colonise worlds so inhospitable to human beings. From space Xardil appears to be a rusty red - this is a peculiarity of its rocks and soils that contain a substantial proportion of ferrous compounds. This world is very cold and unlike its sister planet Aractos, no attempt was made to transmute it. In spite of this Xardil is densely populated though the majority of the population is found beneath the planet surface. There are thousands of population centres connected by surface maglevs and the people show a resilience which has made Xardillians bear a disproportionate burden of the colonisation of the Outworlds. The heavier gravity has made the standard Xardillian noticeably squatter and more muscular than his Irallie brother.

Gulgatrax

The high security prison moon where the most dangerous criminals from a thousand worlds are incarcerated.

Lucifer

The headquarters of the megacorp Hajunka and it is here that the first Leviathan class dreadnoughts were built in orbit.

Mahuba

Moons: Tatun, Kakar, Gigaltion, Sulphuria, Yantiri, Alkolan, Mesmurian, Pantegron, Yadriss, Momandron, Polgonoeth, Tognoth, Artica, Bazedus, Zeduphar, Pagaja, Kintikor, Feyada,

Since ancient times this red gas giant has been associated with the dark procreation gods of many cultures. When the first telescope trained on its blood red eye it was to find the most violent storm centre in the Solaric System.

Polgonoeth

A huge astrophysics and astronomic research establishment is situated here listening and watching the cosmos.

Lepis

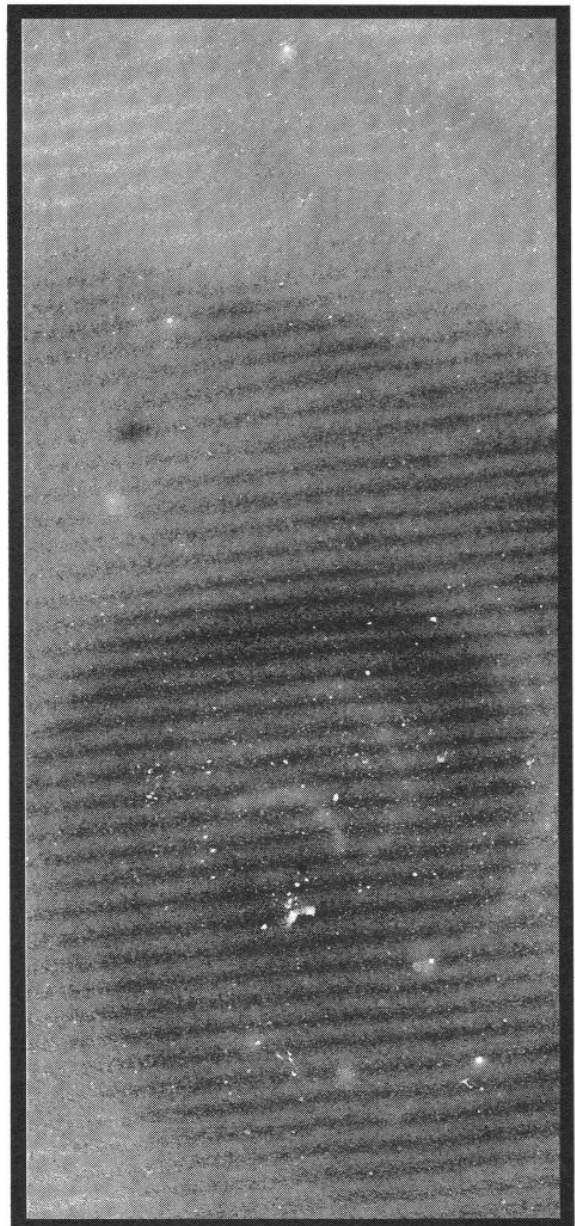
Moons: Hrilli, Takeda, Dangoran, Neptunia, Okania, Marussia, Tritonus, Ammonuria, Methana, Jangis-Tur, Haheda, Iapatus

Sea green Lepis is a mysterious world that has only ever been visited by probes. It seems to have a core of liquid hydrogen and exhibits bizarre large scale perturbations in its magnetic field.

Ixathos

Moon: Hadis

Tiny Ixathos is so far from Solarica that for much of its year its atmosphere which is mainly composed of methane becomes frozen. It exhibits the peculiar phenomena called the 'lights' which is caused by electrical discharges through the substantial quantities of atmospheric neon. The eccentricity of its orbit sometimes brings it within the orbit of Lepis.





Kryomek Biogenetics

Entry in the Encyclopaedia Irallica

ALIS CA587.3

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Encubed Imprint 3490 (Visicube 12.3.ff8)

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Biogenetical knowledge concerning the Kryomek is still at a fairly rudimentary stage. All information currently available is derived from the analysis of the data obtained during the recent Hivestone Incursion Crisis⁹. No specimen has ever been taken alive and very few were obtained intact from the battlefield. In addition the examination of a dead Kryomek is fraught with difficulties - not least the highly corrosive nature of its body fluids. Putrefaction sets in remarkably quickly and all of the really valuable data was obtained actually on the battlefield before the carcass had time to decompose too far.

However certain things are known. For example it has been ascertained beyond any doubt that the Kryomek consist of a variety of sub-species which are all trimorphic (that is they all pass through three distinct stages of body development). That they have three 'sexes' is now considered beyond doubt. Most Kryomek are predominantly of the neuter sex class. Each hive is dominated by a Hivemaster, an enormous winged creature that performs the function which in our terms might be labeled, 'male'. Biologically speaking, its function is predominantly one of impregnating the vast, bloated breeders. These in turn function as enormous egg factories that produce the endless

Comparative Somatology



HUMAN



HELION

The Kryomek

19



WARRIOR

numbers of Kryomek of the neuter sex class. Beyond the Hive much power is devolved to other huge winged creatures called Swarmmasters. Swarmmasters are almost indistinguishable from a Hivemaster but they do not appear to perform any sexual function and remain subservient to them. They have the ability to be able to produce all the essential chemical signals that control the Hive Swarm.

The three distinct forms found in the Kryomek warrior caste occur in a regular succession. The Helion form originates from its egg as a primitive eating machine. Its very lack of higher functions makes it an awesome assault weapon. It seems to be by feeding on the flesh of the Hive's victims that the bio-genetic changes are induced in the Helion that cause it to pass through a pupation stage to become a Warrior.

The Warrior is a fearsome creature of marked intelligence and weapon handling ability. It is not known what precipitates some Warriors to transform into the third and final stage, the Warmaster. These are monstrous horrors - terrifyingly aggressive, cunningly intelligent and very powerful, having lost their legs and developed an armoured carapace and tail.



WARMASTER

Close analysis of visidata obtained from the remains of the partially completed Hive on Tau-Maktor suggests that the Kryomek had begun to construct hybrid composites by geno-splicing together the scavenged parts of Kryomek and Human troops.

Though very little direct evidence exists it is assumed that the Helion form must also be capable of transforming into the numerous Hivebrood, or worker caste, that perform non-combative functions in the Hive.

Organisation and Structure in a Kryomek Hive (Extract)

Report presented to the Nexus Military	ALIS BA587.2
Quorumate by the NMI	1 2 A
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NMI_SR22245/Dept 5.3/05.05.3492	2 5 A

All Kryomek biological functions, biopolitical structures and military organisation are based around the complex infrastructure which, for lack of a better term, is called a hive. The common analogy used to describe these hives is to compare them to human cities - this analogy is fallacious - in fact these vast structures bear little resemblance to anything previously encountered by the Nexus Tri-Federation.

It must be said at the outset that all the data that has been collected on this subject is very meagre and, considering the threat that the Kryomek pose to humanity, it is pitifully inadequate.

Some information was obtained by those few of our operatives that we have actually managed to get into a Hive. This policy has been discontinued because of the unsustainable losses in manpower (see attached Addendum 6 ¹⁰). The other main source of information comes from members of the

⁹ see "The Hivestone Incursion Crisis"

¹⁰ this addendum has been excluded from the present work in the interests of brevity.



NTFA forces that have penetrated Hives during military encounters - **and survived.**

Architecturally all hives so far encountered seem to be remarkably similar and probably conform to patterns that are genetically encoded into the Hivemaster that oversees its construction. Ostensibly, most of the hive lies below the surface - at this time we have no way of ascertaining how deep they go. On the surface there are densely packed clusters of hexagonal tubes - some form towering 'chimney's' that presumably are used to expel wastes from the hives and perhaps to draw in various atmospheric gases. Others are the ends of huge shafts that plunge deep into the earth. From these the Swarms of Kryomek craft issue out from the hive.

Beneath the surface all that we know suggests that the hive consists of vast interlocking flat discs each consisting of innumerable chambers and centred on one of the vertical shafts. There are various conjectures as to how the discs are interconnected. It is also thought likely that there are deep sub-structures of the hive that are connected to shafts that do not reach the surface.

The hivecore is the complex of chambers that houses the Hivemaster and his entourage. It is probably always located quite deeply in the hive and will have direct connections with the numerous brood chambers which contain the breeders and the millions of eggs.

Only one hivecore has ever been penetrated by NTFA personnel - a specially trained suicide convict-squad¹¹. (There is no reason at this time to suppose that this was not a typical example.) The hivecore was very deep - at least 2.5 kilometres below the surface - and seemed to be of vast extent. Careful scrutiny of the visicube data obtained by the squad before they stopped transmitting has revealed how intricate and deeply organised the structure is. The Hivemaster has now been located and identified on the visidata and when this was obtained, it was being evacuated by a detachment of huge Warmasters.

Careful structural analysis of the data has revealed a structure which we have termed the Hub. This was at the centre of a bewildering array of instruments of bio-mechanical construction - beyond this in concentric rings of ever increasing diameter were numerous instruments and fantastically mutated Kryomek hivebrood and other organisms that were imperceptibly fused with the machinery surrounding them. Our scientists are convinced that this elaborate nerve centre responds to the Hivemaster at its centre in much the same way that a body does to its brain.

The Hivemaster lies in the hub exuding control substances which are picked up by batteries of chemical amplifiers and which transmit his commands throughout the hive. Other sensors and instruments allow commands to be issued to distant Swarmmasters. From a hub of this kind an Imperial Hivemaster could have bi-directional chemical linkages with all his Swarmmasters in the field, with Swarmfleets and with vassal Hivemasters. It is highly probable that contact is even maintained with the other five Imperial Hivemasters that apparently make up the directing will of the Great Hive Hegemony.

One of the brood chambers was briefly penetrated providing us with the only visidata available. The breeder was a vast bloated bag crawling with small Kryomek hivebrood. Innumerable chambers led from it each filled with eggs of different sizes - many were connected to equipment which suggests that they are artificially incubated.

There are two other salient features that should be noted. The first is that NTFA squads have encountered areas which seem to function as some kind of hibernation chamber with vast banks of cells each occupied by a Kryomek of the warrior caste. Brief examination revealed evidence that these Kryomek were in some kind of state of suspended animation - perhaps to be activated by a control substance produced by their Hivemaster.

The second feature of particular interest, and a source of some distaste was the discovery of chambers whose function seems to be connected with the construction of Kryomek hybrids... hybrids that appear to incorporate the scavenged component parts of both Kryomek and ... **of human troops.**



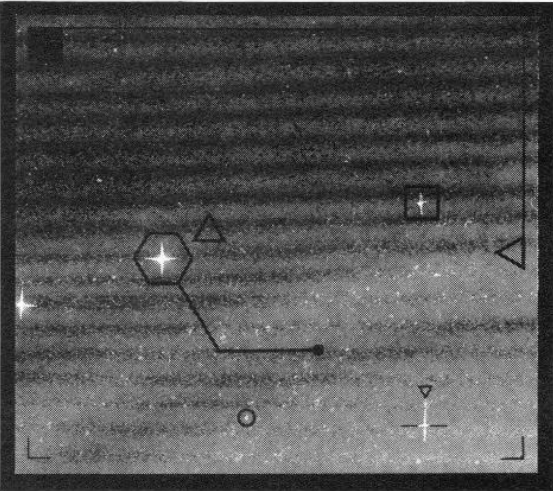
¹¹ the Hivestone during the Hivestone Incursion Crisis

The Origins of the Advanced Kryomek Hive Complex

by Jardus Manturikan

Article Appearing in Scientific Xardillian	ALJS B587.19
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It is impossible at this time to ascertain even a vague date as to when it was that the present Great Hive system arose amongst the various sub-species of the Kryomek though, without doubt, this period must lie well in antiquity. Furthermore it is purely a matter of conjecture as to exactly what planet gave birth to this virile life form. Statistical correlation of all known Kryomek occupied worlds has lead to a number of projections which would place the homeworld somewhere in the Bayuda-Manturax Karyx 5 sub-quadrant. Certainly the homeworld of the Kryomek species must have had a high predation index, perhaps well into the 40s, to account for the extreme adaptations possessed by the Kryomek for conquest and other-species annihilation.



The current Great Hive meta-structures show a high degree of sophisticated scientific advancement which, however, appears to be completely integrated with many ancient features of a fundamentally bio-genetic nature.

The Proto-Hive systems were essentially bio-genetic ones with the maintenance of a vast and continuous spawning rate being the central dominating force driving all further development. It is certain also that this constant population pressure led to an ever increasing conflict for resources which led in turn to unremitting internecine warfare which finally culminated in the bio-militaristic mechanisms which are the present Great Hives.

At all times in their history it must be assumed that the Kryomek were entirely dominated by their Hivemasters. Because of the bio-genetic centrality of the Hivemasters, all subsequent developments necessarily led automatically into an increase in their power and sophistication.

For example, before the Kryomek developed chemical synthesizer-transducer technologies, the size of a hive was limited by the amount of control substances that could be produced by the Hivemaster and the maximum range over which these could be dispersed. The development of sophisticated dispersal techniques, by itself might have led the way for an immediate and massive expansion of hive systems. Coupled with chemical amplifying technologies the development of enormous hive systems seems inevitable.

The most important consequence however of these developments was the emergence of the Great Hive System. The new chemicoms systems not only allowed a vast increase in the size of a hive but also the distance at which a Hivemaster could maintain intimate chemical communication and control of his Swarmmasters.

One other core advance, essential to the emergence of the Great Hive System, was the gradual evolution of Imperial Hivemasters. It is certain that from the beginning Hivemasters had, at certain times caused to be produced other Hivemasters to take their closely allied genetic strain and form a new hive. This new hive though having strong bio-genetic links with the parent Hive, would certainly have become rapidly independent. The new technologies however allowed a Hivemaster to exploit a certain advantage that was always inherent in the spawning of new Hivemasters. A Hivemaster that nurtured the spawning of another creature like itself would soon have found itself the target of its offsprings voracious appetites if it were not that evolution had provided a 'chemical backdoor', a substance produced by a Hivemaster that maintained control over the new Hivemasters even as they emerged from their eggs. This control would last until they left the hive. Once the substance was no longer present the new Hivemaster rapidly threw off its vassalage to its parent.

The new chemicom systems however, allowed the parent Hivemaster to maintain its offspring in perpetual thralldom by transmitting the control substance to them constantly - these Imperial Hivemasters came to dominate an ever increasing brood of junior Hivemasters and so could form a super hive system - or what is technically termed a Great Hive.

visicube 6-MR/3 - [22:14:05] 19/07/3489 IST
operation code: M256.45 DD07/XM4-C01-S19
location: Kryomek Hivestone - Maktor 000
subject: [Hivemaster] - hub - hivecore



Bio-Political Power Structures of the Great Hive Hegemony (An extract)

Doctoral Thesis 3493 - Ambuvar

Mercatos Brandillian -(Extract)

ALIS B587.2

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Chandar University, Aractos

Any analysis of the structure of the Great Hive Hegemony has to contend with the sparsity of data available on all matters concerning the Kryomek. However, even though this is the case there are several strong reasons why I have chosen to examine this topic. Not least amongst these is the fact that humanity has never before been in a position to properly examine a virile alien culture - especially one of such complexity.

There is one singular component of Kryomek politics that is unique - and that is the bio-genetic paradigm that is at its centre. The most paradoxical and fascinating manifestation of this is the Great Hive Hegemony itself.

Clearly it would be presumptuous of me to suggest that I have a deep understanding of how the Hegemony works but rather I would like to suggest some possible explanations for the observed facts.

Firstly, the Hegemony is composed of the six creatures which are normally termed the Imperial Hivemasters. Each of these is the lord of a Great Hive, an absolute monarch whose each and every chemical exudation is received with fanatical fervour by his subjects as a command from a god. The peculiarity in this, at least from the position of a comparative political analyst, is that all the subjects of an Imperial Hivemaster are also his progeny - even though they are often numbered in their countless billions. Thus an Imperial Hivemaster appears before the other Five as the father and champion of his (and his subjects) paramount genetic lineage.

Power relationships within a Great Hive have been examined in some depth by other researchers, but power relationships within the Hegemony are still shrouded in mystery. It is true that the Six do in some way formulate a common policy for the species. It appears that now there

is little internecine conflict between the Great Hives. It seems certain however that this was not the case in the past. Junior Hivemasters are apportioned rights of conquest of new planets by their Overlord - but he in turn must ultimately, in some way, receive this mandate from the Hegemony.

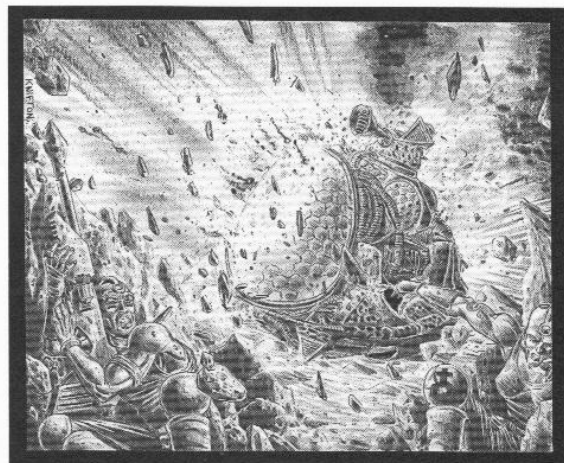
It is possible that the Six carry out a subtle dialogue with chemical messages, remotely from the dark depths of their hives - that when they act, they act in concert - as council, or a debating forum.

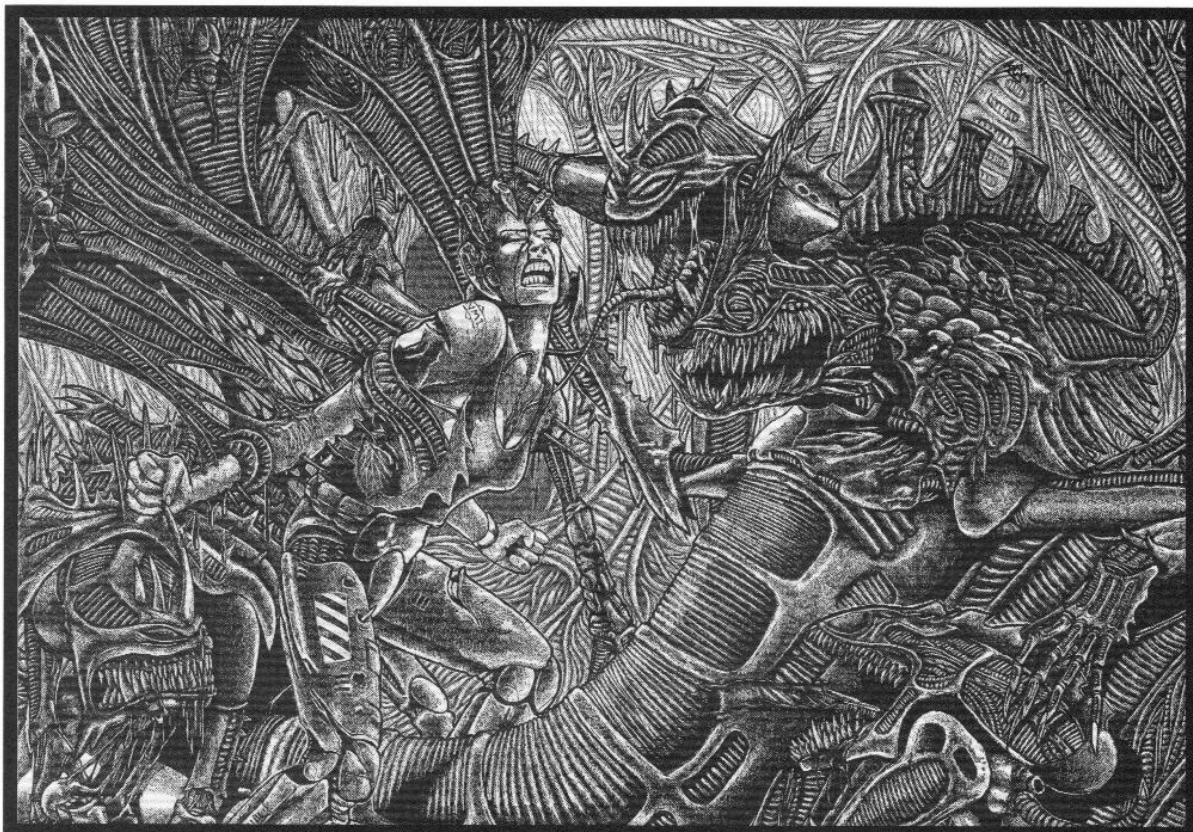
And yet, I think not - I cannot support this hypothesis. I would suggest that everything that we know about the Kryomek flies in the face of this supposition. Where is there any evidence that the Kryomek ever indulge in debate? For the Kryomek all is monologue, a perpetual stream of chemically coded imperatives that has been delivered from the cores of their hives since they evolved on some world, distant in both time and space. Everything beats to the insistent rhythm of biological necessity. Their religion is evolution. They live to breed and conquer. In this scheme there is no place for debate, no time for individuality only the single purpose of perpetuating their genetic strain.

I propose to solve this riddle by suggesting that the Six in some way which may possibly always to be beyond the scope of our investigations, in some dark way they choose one from amongst themselves and elect him Hegemon - and then the others for the moment, until the streams of power run in different courses - the others will allow themselves to have his control substances applied to themselves and obey him as their vassals obey them.

I postulate that in all their evolutionary history this ability of an Imperial Hivemaster to temporarily overcome the almost irresistible compulsions to completely and absolutely dominate all other creatures - to make itself subservient to the dictates of another, competing genetic lineage - this would stand out as the greatest landmark for that species. This alone would demonstrate a terrifying clarity of purpose, such a distillation of malice - of an overweening single-minded pursuit of power which would bode ill for all other creatures in this galaxy.

The question I am forced to ask is whether we humans would sink our lesser differences so easily?





The Kryomek War Machine

(transcribed extract from recording of introductory lecture given by Planetary Stratecom Tarandon to officers of the NTFA)

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An approach which tried to explain the Kryomek by using analogies based on Humanity is one that is bound to fail. The approach of all researchers has been the same. They begin by dividing the Kryomek into categories based on roles and functions. They then proceed to determine the dynamics between those roles and then through this they attempt to arrive at an analysis of the political division of power. Such an approach has little application to the Kryomek. It is never more misguided than when we consider the Kryomek approach to war.

To talk about a Kryomek 'military', to draw a comparison with the NTFA is to commit the greatest of errors. There is no such thing. The nature of the Kryomek is that nothing is divisible. The Kryomek have no military in the same way that they have no government nor economy.

We will begin to reach some measure of understanding if we conceive of the Kryomek as consisting of a few super-organisms. All the Kryomek of one Hive form a single, indivisible organism that has as its 'brain' the Hivemaster and of which the numerous hivebrood and warrior castes form the organs and limbs. Taking this analogy further we can see that the chemical transducer systems

that relay control substances play the part of the nervous system. If we take this analogy still further we realise that the Hivemaster does perform all the functions of a brain....exactly! Everything from conscious motivation to exuding the chemicals that like hormones affect the 'rate of growth' and the 'metabolic rate' of the hive.

We can enlarge our model to describe a Great Hive as a super-organism. It is a larger, more powerful form of the hive organism - one that is its evolutionary descendant. Perhaps a comparison might be made here to human mitochondria¹² that are now organs in each and every human cell and which were once independent algal organisms.

Armed with this new powerful analogy we can begin to examine the nature of the Kryomek 'war machine'. It is immediately obvious that when we consider 'warfare' we are not dealing with a special function of the Great Hive super-organism. Warfare is as endemic to it as the action of our immune systems is to us. The Kryomek do not 'declare war' - in fact it is true to say that the Kryomek have no conception of peace - for them all is perpetual struggle. A description of the Kryomek War Machine is in fact a description of the Kryomek themselves!

How then do we describe the motivations of the Kryomek super-organism? The language of Bio-evolution provides us with some help. It is an en-

¹² organelles in animal cells responsible for metabolic processes.

tity that strives to survive at all costs and to spread its particular genetic strains across as much of spacetime as is possible.

The important thing that we must bear in mind is that a hive is composed of creatures that are genetically kaleidoscopic fragments of their Hivemaster. Only the Hivemaster and breeders are important as the source of the Hive genes - all other members of the Hive are expendable - their only value lying in the investment of time and resources that their body represents.

Incidentally, as an aside, during the Hivestone Incursion we found this to our cost when we attempted to destroy the hive on Tau-Maktor by using nucleonic impact devices launched directly from orbit. At first we were overjoyed when we perceived that all the chimneys and tower stacks were obliterated. I volunteered to go down with the cyclo myriad. We went in by twister. It was cumbersome negotiating the debris of the tower stacks in isolation suits. The ground had been vitrified into a polished mirror by the nucleonic blast. It was like walking on ice. When we approached the ragged lip of the first shaft we could see that the blast must have penetrated deep into the hive. As far as we could see down into the shaft everything had the same reflective, glassy shell - as if someone had spilled a pot of varnish over the whole damn place.

But then they came at us. It was true that the Warmaster's carapaces had lost their gleam. They were scorched and blistered. Their markings were dulled. But they could still fight. They might be slowed by blast trauma but we were encumbered with our isolation suits. I was lucky to get out with my life.

Sure, they would all die in a few weeks - perhaps even days. No living thing - not even a Kryomek can take that kind of dose of gamma rays and remain in the peak of health. But in the end it made no difference. We only stopped them when we incinerated their Hivemaster in the Hivestone itself.

But I digress. As I was saying, the Hivemaster and the Breeders are really the only thing that matter. You can kill everything else but as long as those remain they will rebuild the hive within weeks.

To return to our analogy - it is obvious that blasting off a limb of a super-organism that can regenerate can only give us a local, temporary advantage. Only taking out the brain kills the super-organism - or if that is impossible then go for the nerve centres - for at least these will slow the regeneration. All this is true for the Kryomek whether we are considering assault on a hive, attacking a Swarmfleet or the battlefield Swarm.

On the battlefield the Kryomek have achieved what human military theorists have been attempting for centuries - perfect control. Our forces are subdivided into squads, centions and myriads. All of this is an attempt to suppress the individuality of each soldier and bend his will to the tactical dictates of a single mind. The Kryomek have no need to make such distinctions. They are biogenetically designed to function as a single entity. It is true that they do have something approximating a command structure. In the field the Swarm is controlled by a Swarmmaster, but he relays his instructions to the Warmasters. This appears to have similarities to our military practise. There is no real similarity though, for each Warmaster acts merely as an extension of his





Swarmmaster. There is no notion of jurisdiction except in so far as the dispersal range of the war-master's control substances determines the effective range of his control. The Swarmmaster passes his helions and warriors from one Warmaster to another as easily as I can move my arm thus....

Kryomek Somatogenic¹³ Weapon Systems

by Jardus Manturikan

Article Appearing in <i>Scientific Xardillian</i>	ALIS AD587.386
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Recent research has revealed the startling fact that many Kryomek battlefield weapons are somatogenic. Many early observers, when confronted with Kryomek bioacid sprays could not understand where the weapon's fluids were stored. Various propositions were put forward suggesting that the Kryomek had developed some kind of molecular compression technology - though no theoretical work could even begin to determine how this was done. The truth is simpler and yet even more astounding than that. The reservoirs for the bioacids were always in view - the bodies of the Kryomek themselves.

Much Kryomek weaponry is metabolically integrated into the creature's soma¹⁴. Nexus troops had long known that Kryomek blood or - more accurately - serum was highly corrosive but the connection was not made with the weapon propelled bioacids for those were far more powerful. The discovery that such a weapon contained what turned out to be an acid amplifier

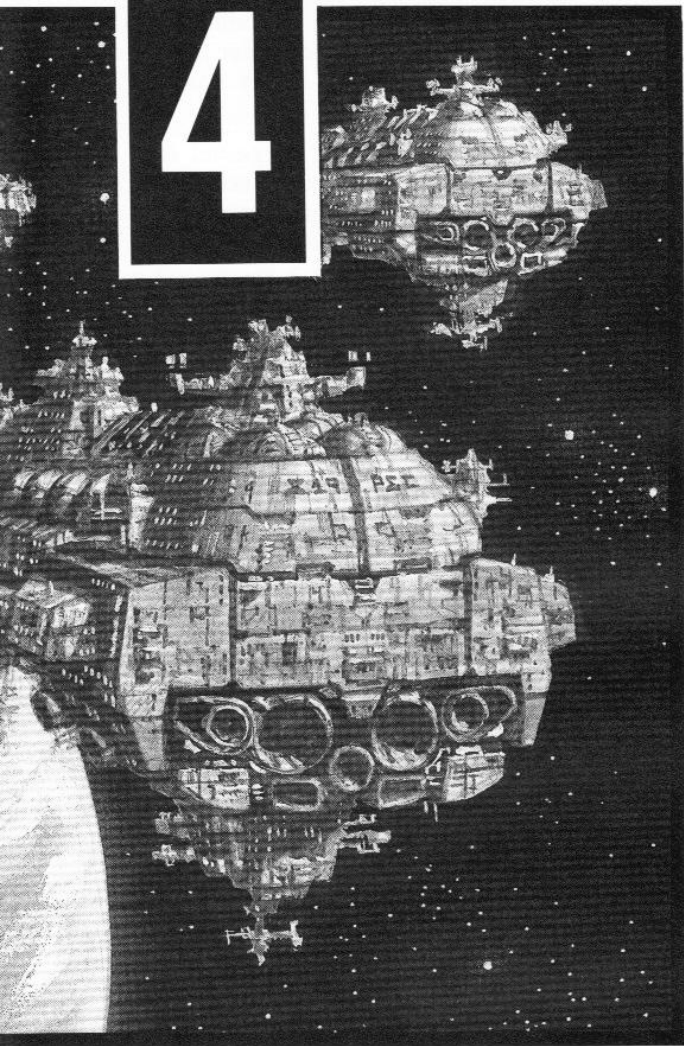
¹³ generated within the body ¹⁴body

immediately suggested the Kryomek serum as the most likely source of the bioacids. This theory had the further advantage that it explained why Warmasters were the only Kryomek ever observed to wield the terrifying corroder lance - simply because they had far larger somatic reserves of serum.

More recently it has even been suggested that some of the more complex weapons such as the plasmid cloud-duster are also somatogenic. It is conjectured that the highly infective plasmid vectors are obtained either from a Warmaster's serum or even from a special metabolically integrated implant. In either case the plasmids must be deliberately introduced since they are obviously biogenetically engineered.



**The reservoirs
for the bioacids
were always
in view...
the bodies of
the Kryomek
themselves.**



**Like great fish
they swam around
the planet and
gorged on the
assembled
resources of
humanity.**

The Colony Arks

Panhumania (extract)

ALIS D781

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Educational Imprint 3464 IST

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The New Millenium Manifesto was announced on all three homeworlds simultaneously shortly after the formation of the Nexus Military Quorumate. The body of the Manifesto was somewhat complex and tedious but it was preceded by a short passage which is now termed the Panhumanic Declaration. The first few words of this declaration still resound with a resonance which is undimmed by the years.

"As the representatives of the new paramount order we assert that Man's destiny lies in the stars. We say this now that future men shall know where this great thing began and why. We shall begin the struggle now that will give to our children and to our children's children the great immensity of space. They shall be heirs to this great endeavour. Their birthright shall not be denied them."

The Quorumate set about fulfilling their great project immediately. All resources not needed for the reconstruction of Irallia were channelled into the building of the Colony Arks. Nine thousand citizens, three thousand from each of the homeworlds were chosen to carry humanity to the New World. The greatest minds were drawn together to counsel the designers. The skeletons of the three great Arks began to appear in the skies of Aractos. Like great fish they swam around the planet and gorged on the assembled resources of humanity. Three years were spent and the wealth of the race expended. The launching of this first great colonising effort by humanity was timed to coincide with the celebrations that would accompany the ending of the millenium. The Arks were to be a great symbol of hope for the new millenium.

The Great Push

29

The great day came at last. The Nine Thousand were feted and blessed and then stepped aboard the Arks. All eyes on Aractos turned upwards. The pulse engines, each larger than the fallen towers of Irallia, fired and spat ions into the void. Slowly at first the great mass of the Arks was coaxed into motion. They drifted slowly out of orbit with Aractos. Within twelve days they were sailing past Xardil - already their speed was greater than any that man had attained. Soon they had become three distant shining specs like stars as they passed the great gas giants. Several weeks later they passed through the orbit of tiny icy Ixathos and were officially in deep space.

The colonist Arks sailed through space towards the star Tataris more than a parsec away. Instruments pointed there had detected a I-class planet. This was to be the New World Tataris IV.

Avoiding a Demographically Induced Cusp Catastrophe

Report presented to the Nexus Military
Quorumate by the TCDS

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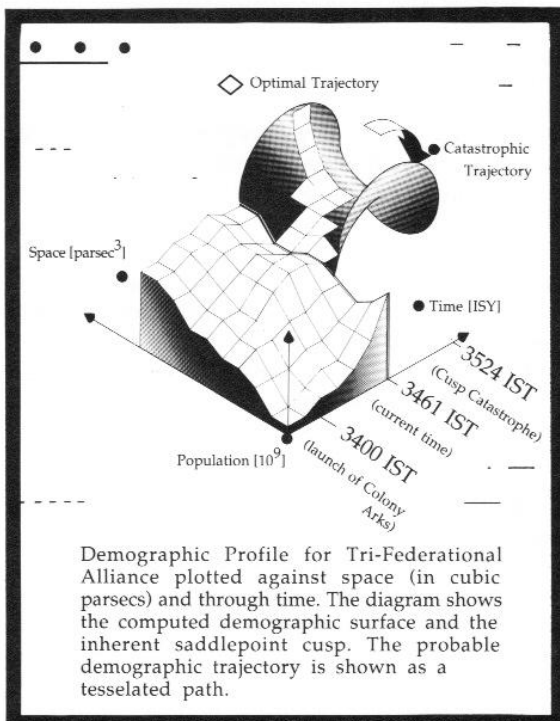
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The current population increase trends on the three homeworlds of Aractos, Xardil and Irallia threaten to overwhelm the political and economic superstructures of the Nexus Tri-Federal Alliance. An extensive program of investigation has made it fairly certain that the current demographic profile for the three worlds is approaching a saddlepoint cusp which will precipitate the Nexus Tri-Federation into a catastrophe where there will be fast and irrevocable decline in economic and military strength, accompanied by a complete dissolution of social order. Calculations suggest that if the incidence angle of the demographic profile is modified carefully the

catastrophe might be avoided and in fact might be led into a rising segment of the saddlepoint cusp.

This solution which is currently termed the Slide-Cusp Scenario involves a number of rapid changes in the way in which otherworld colonisation is being carried out. At the moment this is a haphazard affair with various Tri-Fed. departments and numerous of the larger corporations being involved in an anarchic free for all.

This must change - it must be replaced by a highly coordinated, centralised program of colonisation (our department for Propaganda has suggested calling it the 'Great Push'). Large segments of the homeworld populations must be transplanted to ever further outworlds according



Demographic Profile for Tri-Federal Alliance plotted against space (in cubic parsecs) and through time. The diagram shows the computed demographic surface and the inherent saddlepoint cusp. The probable demographic trajectory is shown as a tessellated path.

to a mathematically precise hyper-trajectory. If this rate of colonisation is not reached then the critical angle of incidence for the demographic profile will not be reached and the plunge into catastrophe will be inevitable.

At this juncture we have to point out that this hyper-trajectory has been plotted and that it demands a colonisation rate of 120 ps/y¹⁵. As you will immediately realise, this figure is at least 7 times greater than previous ones. In fact it is so high that it seems at first sight to be impossible.

An intense study was immediately initiated to define the limiting parameters of the Great Push - if such existed. This study has now produced its first results. The precise mathematical description is attached separately as it requires a holocube for demonstration. Here we shall just present the main results.

1 The space-time geometry of the Great Push must approximate to a hyper-spherical attractor as much as possible - with the spatial diameter increasing smoothly with the temporal.

2 The outer spherical shell of the Great Push, which will precede the colonists must be 'cleansed'. By this we mean that it must be made ready for the colonists arrival - this will mean that the forces of the NTFA must totally eliminate all other intelligent life on these planets - if any such exists - the geometry of the Great Push cannot handle the singularities that would be produced by inter-species conflict.

This will clearly entail a large increase in the power and strength of the military. It will almost certainly be necessary to form extra auxiliary units from criminals and other malcontents to be used as shock troops - the cost to the military might otherwise become unsupportable.

3 The power of the military must be balanced and partially countered by a similar increase in the powers of all the business interests represented by the large corporations. This will hopefully be achieved by relaxing any Tri-Fed legislation that in any way interrupts the exploitation by the business community of whatever or whomever they desire. (Our preliminary historio-economic calculations indicate that these will necessarily occur within the confines of the Military hyper-boundary - and also that a symbiotic relation will eventually arise between the two. Further data on this will soon be forwarded for your consideration).

4 All peoples of the homeworlds must be whipped into a frenzy of colonial fervour. This must be achieved by a complete control of all channels of communication. A new all-embracing Propaganda Agency must be set up with the dual purposes of conditioning the populations to fer-

vent colonialism and, most importantly, to keep all knowledge of any otherspecies' annihilations that are being carried out by the military completely secret. The colonists must, at all costs, think that the worlds they are setting out for have not and never have had indigenous, intelligent life. This will foster a bright feeling of optimism and opportunity which will act as an important component of the Great Push. A spirit of mistrust for otherworld life-forms must be fostered which will make the colonists treat all alien life as vermin - uniform confidence in all things human is essential.

Interstellar Colonisation - The early years

<i>Panhumania (extract)</i>	ALIS D780
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As every child knows, the age of interstellar colonisation began in 3400 with the launch of the first great Colony Arks. The next two decades was a time of waiting. The Arks were predicted to make landfall twelve years into the new Millennium. The message that they would send once they arrived there should arrive back 4 years later. 3416 was the year which found humanity waiting for this message. When it did not come the prestige of the Quorumate tottered. People spoke angrily of the foolishness of the New Millennium Manifesto and eyes began turning once again inwards to the three homeworlds.

The message when it came was such an unlooked for reprieve that even a generation later people spoke of the attendant celebrations as the happiest times of their lives. The voices that a month before had called for the abolition of the Quorumate were raised in a tumult of adulation in its support. The men in the Quorumate that had been strongest in the support of sending the colony became overnight figures of legend.

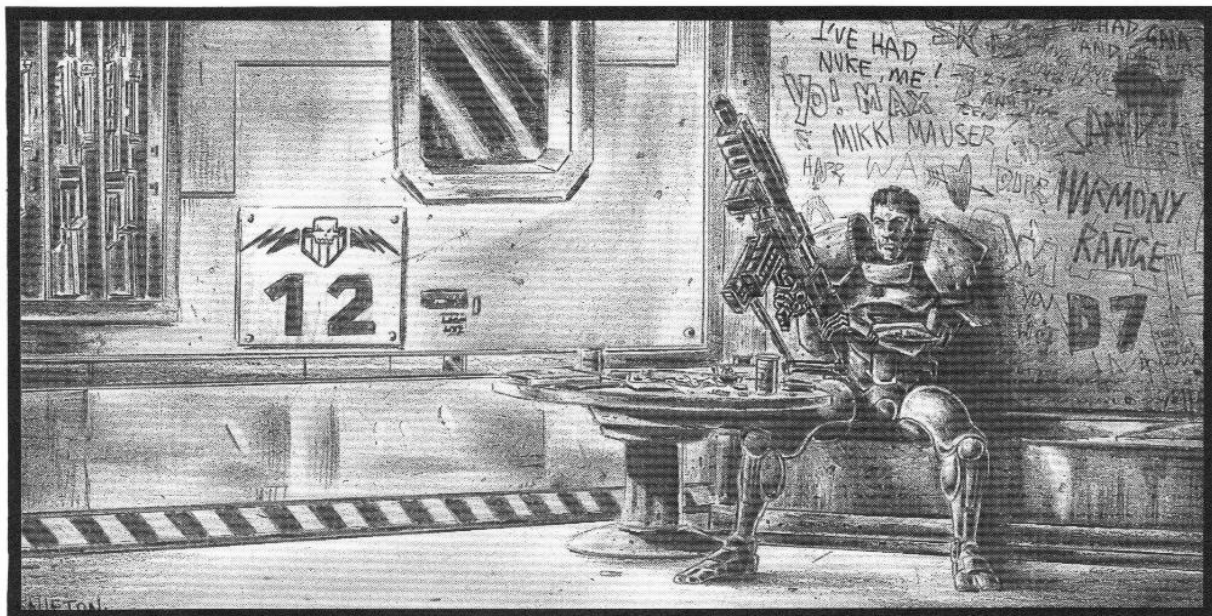
In the next few years economic development leapt forward. The fervour for colonisation continued supported by the stream of messages from Tataris that spoke of the continuing success of the colony there. The double ring of asteroids that lay between Xardil and Aractos was mined as never before. More Arks were built and eager citizens from every world vied with each other to be selected for the new colonies.

Four years later in 3420 the new Arks set off. Three each for the nearby stars Tuvis, Yardillia Minor and Zaphiri. The new Arks exploited the newly developed cryogenic technologies. For their passengers the long journeys would pass like a dream.

Because communications with the homeworlds took so much time centralised control was impossible. The Quorumate tried to maintain some influence over the colonies by sending carefully trained cadres of Nexus personnel with the Arks.

¹⁵ planetary systems per year.





In 3438 the Pandaris Prime corporation invoked widespread disbelief when it announced that it had managed to find a way of transmitting signals at faster than light speeds. This was done by 'folding space' so that two points in spacetime that were at some distance¹⁶ from each other were made to 'touch'.

To demonstrate this discovery Pandaris Prime proposed to receive a message 'instantaneously' from Tetaris IV four light years away. The homeworlds were astounded when a vague but discernible image was broadcast live on vidi-net that was claimed to come directly from Tetaris. When this signal was declared by the Quorumate to be genuine the news was received everywhere with stunned silence. In the next few months the colony on Tuvis came on air. The quality of the signal had increased markedly. It took some time for people to realise that they could now be in

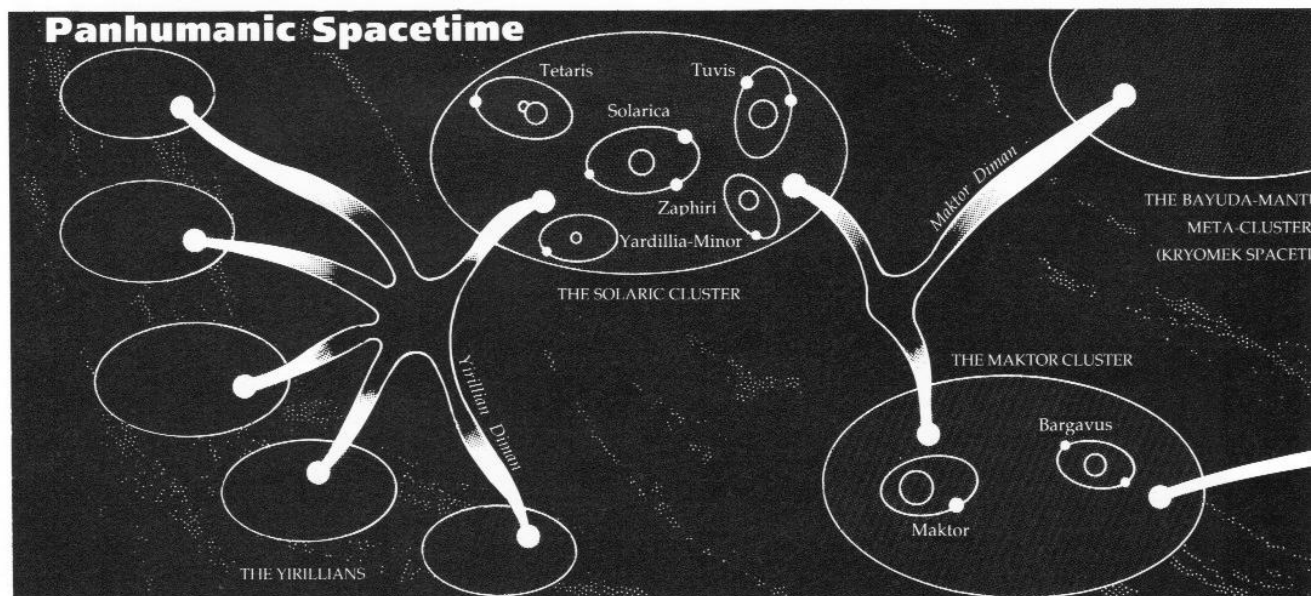
near immediate communication with their impossibly distant colonies.

The political repercussions of this new technology were gigantic. For an enormous fee Pandaris Prime made the new Trans-Dimensional Carrier system available to the Quorumate.

Three years later Hajunka, a huge industrial giant, astounded the worlds when it announced that it had leased the TDC technologies from Pandaris Prime, made its own developments and had now managed to transport a physical entity instantaneously into the Tetaris System¹⁷. It demonstrated this to a sceptical audience by sending a probe there. Its arrival was confirmed by observers on Tetaris IV via TDC. A year later an animal had made the journey and soon after that

¹⁶ these distances having a practical limit around 5-6 light years -

¹⁷ in fact this was close to the practical limits of the technology - for example, a 8 light year 'jump' would require space-folding equipment the size of a small moon and correspondingly enormous amounts of energy.



Irell Dayas became the first man to make a trans-dimensional jump between two star systems. With this the principal of trans-dimensional transportation had become a reality.

Within a few years huge freighters and colonist transporters were using the new space-folding equipment to make instantaneous voyages between the homeworlds and its colonies.

The forties and fifties saw a vast increase in planetary colonisation. The new trans-dimensional spaceships allowed panhumanic space to expand at an unprecedented rate.

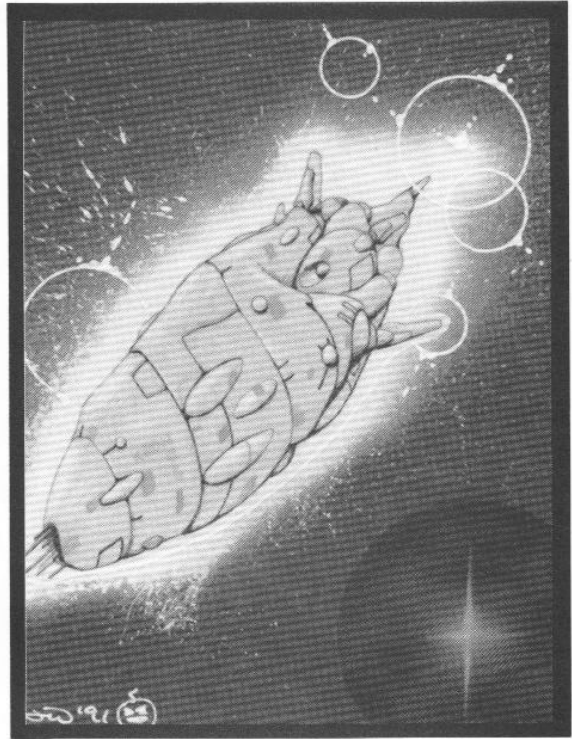
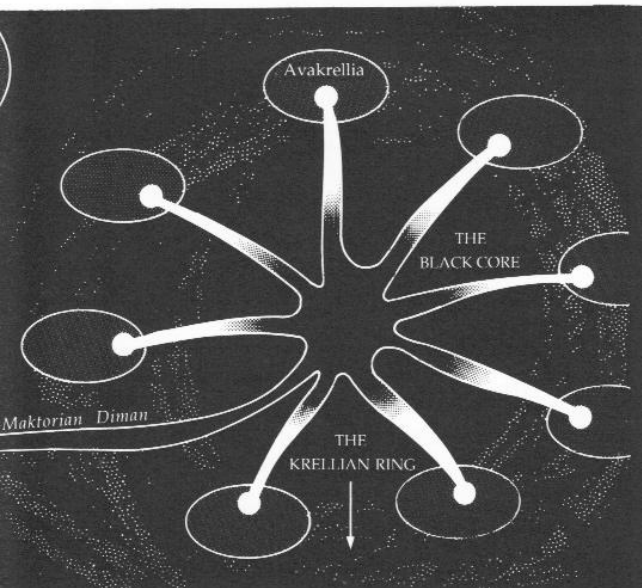
In 3463 the Quorumate announced the Great Push in an attempt to control and reduce the level of anarchy that prevailed in the colonisation process. One of its main aims was to organise existing colonies and manage the planting of new ones.

Hajunka and Pandaris Prime heralded in a new age when they developed systems to exploit a trans-dimensional structure called a dimensional manifold. Up until this time these structures had been merely an interesting and obscure concept in trans-dimensional mathematics.

The new developments opened up vast new areas for colonisation. The dimensional manifolds connected humanity to portions of spacetime that were as much as ten thousand parsecs away, regions completely inaccessible before.

Several dimensional manifolds were discovered and each of these allowed access to new virgin stars clusters.

The first of these to be explored was the Maktor Cluster. At around the same time the Yirillian Diman was discovered and a colonising fleet was sent to the Yirillian Clusters. The discovery of the Trans-Maktorian Meta-Diman (Krellian Diman) opened up the countless worlds of the gargantuan Krellian Ring.



It was at this time that the process began where disaffected members of the panhumanic community took refuge in the Blackcore, the vast region of spacetime that lay within the Ring.

The Planetary Transmutation of Avakrellia II

Article Appearing in a Maktorian holomag	ALIS D377.79
	2 7 0
	0 1 1
10.01.3479 IST	2 0 1

The Kronos drifted like a vast, dark fish through a black ocean. Its hull was etched with the twisting tendrils and parabolas of coruscating light that were the telltale sign that it had just slipped through the trans-dimensional nothingness of a manifold. The glittering curves on its sides flashed ever more faintly as the gravitational eddies abated. Once spacetime was once again smooth there was nothing to indicate that the vast ship had moments before been eight parsecs away.

Somewhere deep inside the Kronos navigational computations flashed through its compcore. Ponderously it swung too pointing its nose towards a small star. Slowly it changed shape, pulling itself from a tight ellipsoid into something altogether more sleek. Here and there rods pushed out from its sides sprouting solgens¹⁸ like leaves. Countless spots started glowing on the flat plates that formed the rear portion of its tail. The spots grew brighter - joined together and suddenly flared. The plates were now like suns spitting their own solar wind and forcing the Kronos forward.

¹⁸ solar generators.



In the homecore¹⁹ faint cold lamps gleamed like underwater light through thick ice. Nothing moved. There were twelve biotrans modules²⁰ like coffins arranged along the deck. Each had a window of glass paler than the plastolene of the casing. A faint mist had formed on the glass. Inside dim shadows indicated the crew of the Kronos. There were seven men. The APT²¹ called them "Planetary Transmutational Engineers". They called themselves Transmutes and were proud of it. As far as they were concerned their job was not unlike that of God's - they too made Edens in the wilderness.

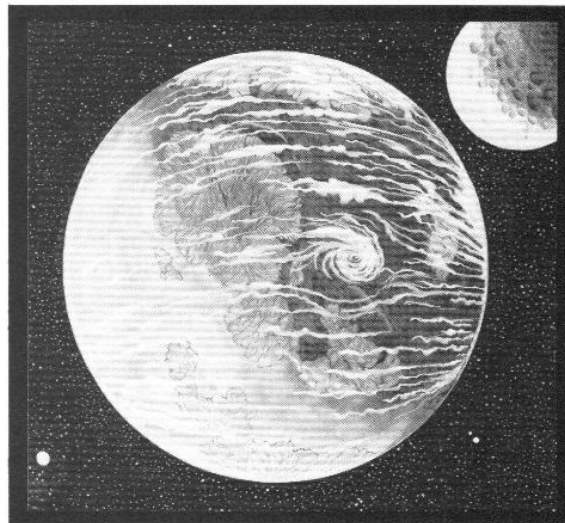
The Kronos drifted silently towards the star for two months. The local diman opening from which they had come was unusually close to the Avakrellian system. A trans-dimensional jump would have used up a lot of the ship's precious energy reserves.

When the compcore brought the transmutes back to consciousness they found that the Kronos was already orbiting Avakrellia II. They did not hurry anything. Biotrans cryogenics was all good and well but it could not stop your limbs getting stiff on a long trip. They had been in stasis for five months already before they made the jump through the Trans-Maktorian Diman.

They got used to being human again. They ate and talked and played mentagames with the compcore. Some would spend hours staring down at the planet. It was orange now but would become turquoise within a few short years. Others, the more philosophical among them, wondered at this new world and what the galaxy would be losing. Even these shrugged - business is business. APT tried very hard to avoid selecting dreamers for its crews.

Then it began. Each of the men sat in his particular visideck. The compcore was programmed to take the Kronos along a standard Mollweide trajectory so that every micron of the planet would be covered. The visidecks swung out on long cantilevered arms through the hull and then out still further. It had been found out by experience that when one was transmuting a planet, it was safer to be out on a limb. Each of the visidecks had a biotrans capsule and had its own propulsion system. Each was capable of drifting free - for years if need be until rescuers would come drawn by its distress beacons. Each visideck was fitted with different sensors - each equipped according to it's transmute's function.

The Transmutor keyed in the release sequence. The Co-Transmutor confirmed it. The Kronos shuddered into life. There was a rumbling in its



belly that could be felt even in the visidecks. Green lights came on under each man's hand. Each transmute's systems were enabled and ready to go. The Kronos reached the alpha-point of the Mollweide trajectory and all hell broke loose.

The belly of the Kronos burst as if it were giving birth. A thin stream of helical descent capsules was paid out so that the Kronos seemed to be a vast spider passing across the planet the first thread of a web. Clusters of stratocombs fell, burst apart and then each sub-cluster burst apart again. Arcs of core-nodules were sown across the sky below. As the helical descent capsules struck the atmosphere they lit like fireflies. Their ceramic cases were protecting their delicate cargoes as they needled through the stratosphere. As the stratocombs hit the atmosphere in their turn they exploded with a blue flash. The fragments would fall through the atmosphere and draw out various harmful trace gases and strange poisonous compounds.

Three hours later the process was still continuing. Only 17.6% of Avakrellia II had been seeded. The light show was beautiful and continuous. The three RAGEM (Reproductive Atmospheric Gas Exchanging Modules) experts monitored the capsules as they spiralled down through the atmosphere. They attempted to guide them to land in favourable spots. When they landed the ceramic case fractured and spewed out a host of repropods. Each one of these analysed its surroundings and sent back data.

Avakrellia II was seeded. The Mollweide trajectory was repeated twice more. All the data from the repropods was checked and rechecked. They had it all. Everything was in place and ready. The planet was carpeted in the transmuting devices.

Kronos slipped smoothly into a loose orbit and then for the next few days the transmutes communed with the compcore. Circuits that had lain dormant for more than a year came alive. Correlation and optimisation of all the data must be

¹⁹ common name for the living quarters on huge vessels.

²⁰ see "Biotran Cryogenics".

²¹ Agency for Planetary Transmutation

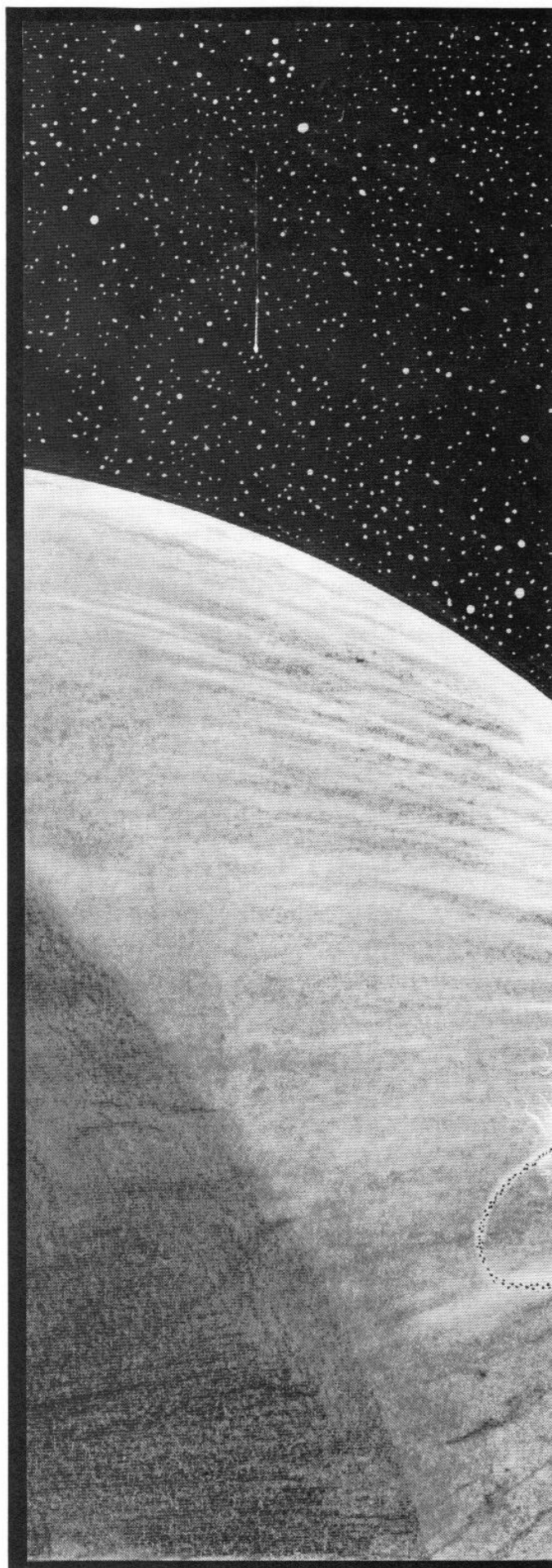
carried out. The repropods must be grouped and regrouped into dominant clusters and efficient flows of control must be determined. The computations required were astronomical and impossible without the aid of human intuitions.

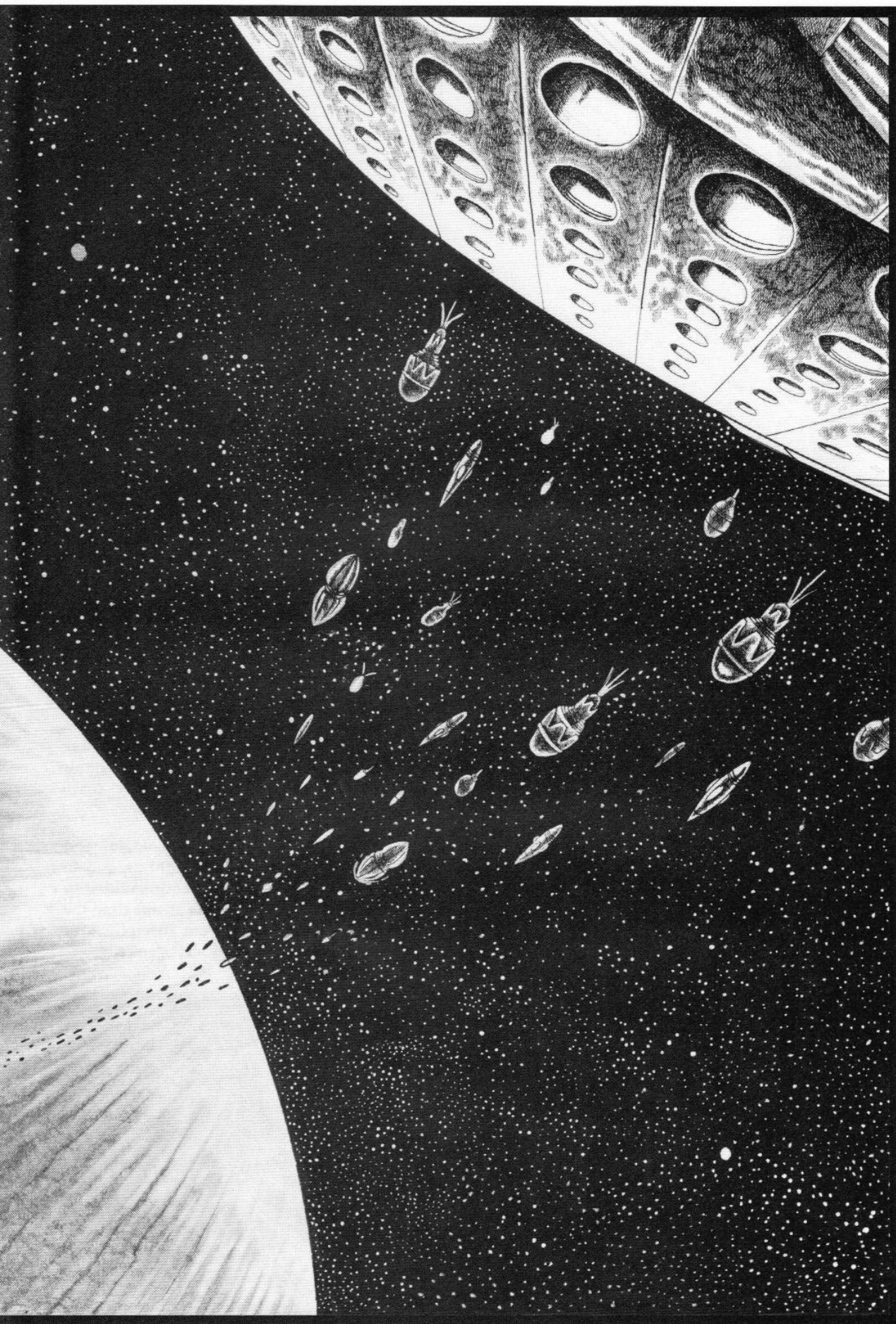
Finally, and for the last time, the Kronos went into a Mollweide trajectory and the transmutes primed each of the repropods so that it knew its position in the scheme of things and its function. Finally a particular procedure of gas exchange was initiated.

Even though they could not see it the transmutes could almost feel it. They could feel the repropods burrowing down into the planet. Others thrust tubes into the air. Slowly they began to absorb gases from the air and extract minerals from the earth. Slowly they grew as they would do so for decades. Creating more of themselves. Spreading like a carpet of vegetation across the entire planet.

The philosophers in the Kronos remained behind to stare at the orange planet that soon would be blue. Then they too joined their comrades in their biotrans modules and fell into cryogenic sleep.

The Kronos swung round ponderously and pointed its nose towards a small star. Below, on the planet, the tiny machines laboured indefatigably. **They were making Eden.**



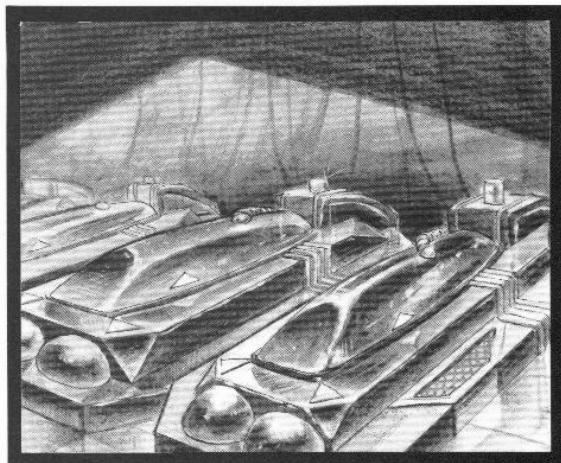


Biotic Cryogenics

Entry in the <i>Encyclopaedia Itallica</i>	ALIS ED472
	4 4 1
	1 0 0
Encubed Imprint 3490 (Visicube 28.1.s099)	1 A 4

The transformation of biotic cryogenics into an important field of physical science occurred primarily between 3416 and 3420. This was essentially a consequence of the enthusiasm that was generated by the successful planting of the first interstellar colony on Tataris IV. The discipline reached the zenith of its popularity in the 20s and 30s with the building of the second generation Colony Arks. At this time work was concentrated on maintaining large numbers of people in stable cryogenic suspension for periods of years that often stretched into decades.

The invention of spacefolding technologies and then of diman transportation brought an end to the massive cryogenic ark-banks and heralded in a new era of development. It was at this time the field split into the two different disciplines of biotrans cryogenics and biostatic cryogenics.



Nexus Technology

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Biotrans Cryogenics

<i>Entry in the Encyclopaedia Irallica</i>	ALIS ED472.7
	6 6 1
	1 0 0
Encubed Imprint 3490 (Visicube 03.8.b223)	3 F 5

Biotrans cryogenics is a development of the bio-transporting technologies employed in the Colony Arks. Used primarily by voyagers in deep space it is a refinement of earlier work which allows comfortable and accurate reductions in metabolic rate to be maintained. Cheap but sophisticated systems allow travellers to slip in and out of consciousness as easily as if the device were nothing more than an alarm clock. These systems have proliferated particularly in areas which are so distant from regular trans-dimensional routes that cryogenically assisted transportation is the only other viable option. More than 89% of journeys between cryo-adjacent worlds are now carried out using a biotrans system.

Application of Biostatic Cryogenic Systems to High Velocity Personnel Deployment Systems

<i>Report presented to the Nexus Military</i>	ALIS AB472.98
<i>Quorumate by the DBCR</i>	1 6 8
	3 0 0
DBCR_SR22245/Dept 5.3/5.5.3492	1 F 8

This department is currently exploring the possibility of grafting transient biostatic cryogenic control systems to two new high velocity Personnel Deployment Systems (PDS).

Both PDS are considered highly promising developments but are currently unusable because of the high degrees of biosystemic stress that is imposed on the operative.

The two systems being examined are the Helical Planetary Descent Capsule System (HePDeCS) and the Ballistic Delivery System (BaDS).

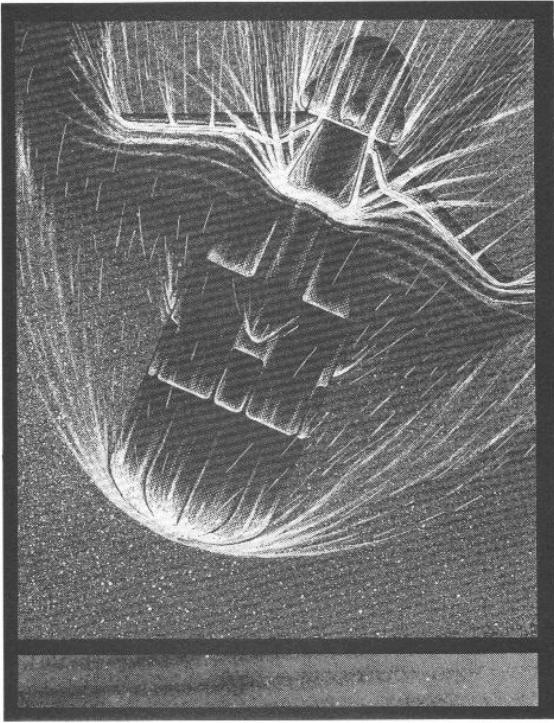
The first consists of a personnel capsule suspended from a fixed ablation resistive rotorwing assembly. The capsule is formed of a double shell of heat resistant iridio-ceramic and contains a low yield life-support system. Its intended use is to allow personnel to be 'dropped' directly from supra-stratospheric craft through the atmosphere and to deploy them accurately on the planet surface.

The trajectory from the launch craft is conditioned to allow a shallow rate of descent. The ceramic shell easily resists atmospheric ablation. The rotorwing is folded behind the capsule and is protected within the confines of its jet stream. On reaching the troposphere the capsule assumes a vertical orientation and the rotorwing is automatically deployed. This immediately causes the capsule to spin around its vertical axis. This motion reduces the vertical velocity of the capsule. The shock absorbing system severely reduces any impact damage.

In experimental drops all subjects were well sustained by the life-support systems. Minimal somatic damage occurred. Metabolic and psychological integrity were however completely upset. Subjects were rendered unconscious and unable even to activate the release levers that open the ceramic capsule. The main cause of this is of course the rotation of the capsule which reaches a rate of 120rpm.

The Ballistic Delivery System is a battlefield PDS that is intended to propel personnel deep into and sometimes behind enemy lines. (The expensive nature of the technology precludes its use except in tactically high yield scenarios.)

The subject is fired in a ballistic capsule. Each capsule is provided with a means of ground at-



tachment which is specific to the local terrain. The velocity of projection is necessarily high and the capsule on landing explodes open. The geometry of this explosion is carefully aligned to a concentric-shell blast and does not cause any damage to the subject. It simultaneously releases the subject and provides a certain amount of stun-cover.

In experiments all subjects suffered severe mental and metabolic disruption. In fact, very few subjects were able to remain conscious beyond the point of impact.

Obviously two separate approaches might be adopted to reduce the biosystemic disruption in both systems. The first would be to modify the operating parameters of the systems themselves, the second to modify the subject so that he was capable of resisting it.

The former approach is unlikely to succeed²² because the operating parameters of each system are already being pushed to the limits. The latter, which represents our approach is showing promise. Biostatic cryogenic modules have been added to both capsules. These record the metabolic and mental state of the subject as he is strapped into the capsule. In flight the modules reduce the subject to a condition of stasis where he experiences little metabolic and mental activity. The module is tuned in to the impact absorbing equipment and carefully controls the smooth resuscitation of both metabolic and mental activity to match the recorded profiles as closely as possible.

Experiments so far carried out have managed to reduce the biosystemic stress to manageable levels and better results are too be expected soon. Subjects exited the capsule suffering only mild nausea and in the case of the Descent Capsule a certain amount of residual 'dizziness'.

The Development of Battlefield Striders

Entry in the Encyclopaedia Itallica	ALIS CD364.71
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Encubed Imprint 3490 (Visicube 30.9.g565)	0 0 0
	0 0 1

Bipedal battlefield chassis are the natural conclusion to a long tradition of mobile weapon platforms which can carry heavier armaments than a human infantryman.

Previous design solutions were essentially wheeled though the wheels might be enhanced and protected by tracks of various sorts. These cer-



²² this is not entirely true. Modifications were made to the HepDeCS by giving the capsule a double shell which forms a roto-buffering sandwich containing a nano-polymerized gel with a temperature related velocity gradient. Similar use was made of this compound in the design of the BaDS impact absorbing equipment.



tainly extended the possible range of terrains for which the vehicle might be considered suitable. However all such solutions suffer from being to some extent terrain specific or even of being ineffective in many terrain types.

Various hovering technologies have been developed which provide solutions to most of these problems. They do however have the great disadvantage that they are a high energy cost solution which can often lead to a compromise in the operative range of the vehicle.

The bipedal solution provides the flexibility which allows the vehicle to handle most terrain types well. A dynamically balanced bipedal vehicle finds stable equilibrium at rest and has a smooth profile in motion - making it an excellent weapons platform. There is additionally an obvious and natural affinity to the mode of locomotion of the human infantryman which produces an important synergy on the battlefield.

23 the Ksirur "Helcat".

Battlefield Cybernetics

by Eyagada Bibarina-Tlesh

Article Appearing in *Scientific Xardillian*

ALIS D359.3

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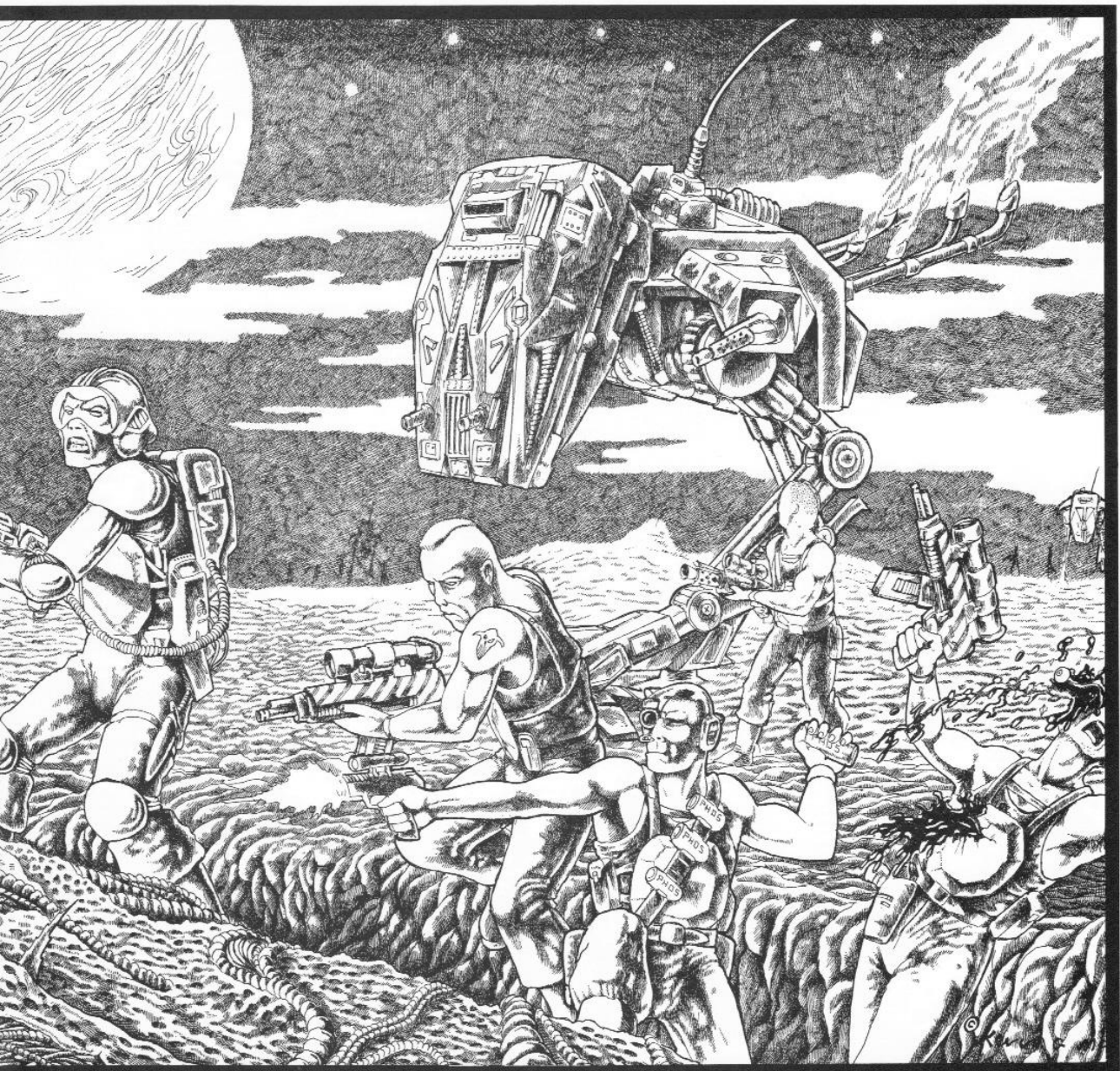
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(Extract) Decarax 3492 IST

Cybernetic systems have been operating on the battlefield for centuries. Most weapons systems will incorporate at least some cybernetic technology. However it is only in the last few years that stand alone cybernetic warrior modules have been seeing active battle service.

The first of these units were small cyberized versions of contemporary battlefield walkers²³. Many are still in service and are useful as expendable frontal assault weapons.

These new classes of cybernetic warriors have been made possible by advances in cyberneural engineering and particularly the Active Cyberneural Matrix (ACM) developed by the





Agarax Corporation. These developments were partially financed by the Nexus Quorumate.

The development of these weapons was a response to lessons learnt on the battlefield during the Hivestone Incursion Crisis: it was necessary to create a frontline battlefield unit that could withstand full frontal assault by the Kryomek.

The Talos Series Battlefield Unit

Pre-battle briefing for Nexus personnel	ALIS AD359.397
to acclimatise them to cyborg units	2 2 A
	4 0 1
	1 1 4

07.07.3490 IST

The Talos series comprises a system of interchangeable modules that allow a variety of cybernetic combat units to be purpose-assembled for a given battlefield.

The basic chassis of the Talos Series Battlefield Unit is analogous to the human endoskeleton. It is made of an iridio-steel alloy interlaced with crystallated ceramic filaments. This is bonded to a core which is a magno-shielding sponge with conducting micro-channels. The structure of this sponge allows for auto-rechannelling in cases of anything other than the most severe impact trauma. This reduces the likelihood of component systems becoming cybertronically isolated.

Atomically welded to this endoskeleton are a number of units each encased in a shell of beryllium-bronze which has a nano-gauge single-molecule mesh embedded as a surface feature. The addition of the mesh was made necessary to help counter the effects of the Kryomek single-molecule blade which sliced through the earlier models with little resistance. Additionally the surface is coated in an active bionetralizing film that will counter some if not all Kryomek biocorrosives.

Articulation of the Talos Unit is modelled closely on the human pattern. Motive power is provided by two high-yield fusion reactors. Each is capable of powering the unit independently. The torque produced by the reactors is transmitted into motion by magnocoupled disc and ball joints which have a very high detente torque.

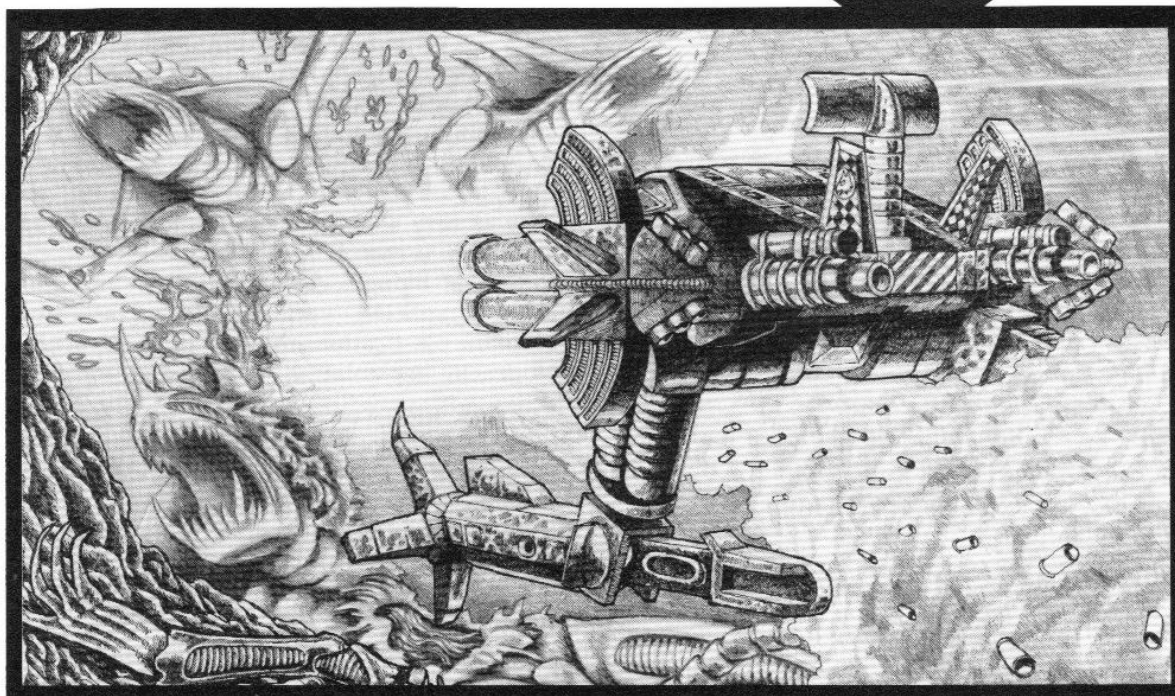
The Talos Unit may be fitted with a variety of fully integrated arm-weapon modules. This module replaces the left arm. The right arm is humano-articulated to match standard human grip indices and will take any standard issue hand weapon.

The unit is a general weapon carrying chassis and does have the facilities for attaching a number of other weapons. These include other specialised somato-prostheses²⁴ such as an integrated head-weapon module.

Tactical delimiters indicate that the unit is best used as a frontal assault weapon. Its strengths are its greater resistance and relentless aggression which are coupled with no self-preservation restrictions. Its main weakness is a consequence of its strength - it is incapable of the flexible response of human personnel.

²⁴ artificial body replacements

visicube 6-BR/5 - [07:05:55] 01/01/3492 IST
operation code: M273.92 DD07/CM1-C01-S01
location: Hive - Karanada-Omicron - Bayuda-Man. 004
subject: [Ksirus Hellcat] - hive - Kryomek Warriors



A Survey of Kryomek Science

*Report presented to the Nexus Military
Quorumate by the NCSS*

ALIS A587.5

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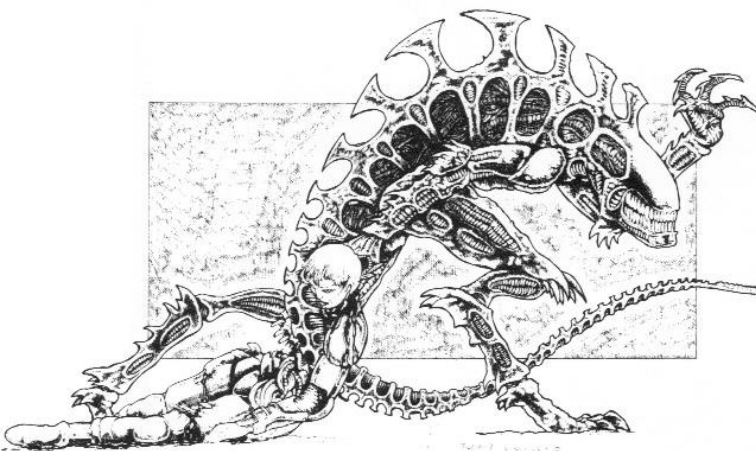
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There are many aspects of Kryomek science that present a great contrast with our own. It is evident that the origins of their science lie in the meticulous management of resources which a Hive system represents. More interesting is the fact that their natural bias for bio-genetic engineering has resulted in the development of technologies which differ so greatly from our own. A simple demonstration of this can be obtained by making a direct comparison between some of our military technology and some of theirs. Human weaponry is essentially based on three complementary systems that of particle beam, MASER and other energy weapons, that of gauss weapons and that of explosives. In contrast, Kryomek weapons are of an entirely chemical and bio-mechanical nature. They make extensive use of powerful bio-corrosives, highly engineered contact poisons and a variety of very sophisticated chemical energy systems. This is complemented by extensive modifications of living forms through synthetico-mechanical splicing, various kinds of assemblo-biomass plastication and all kinds of synthobiogenetic implantation.

Kryomek science owes much of its success to certain inbuilt characteristics of the humblest components of the Hive Meta-System - that is the Hivebrood (this generic name is now used to cover a wide range of quite distinct modified 'worker caste' Kryomek). Paramount amongst these is a quality derived from the hivebrood's function of labouring endlessly on the maintenance of the hive. Over time some specialisation set in which led to this ability being amplified many times so



Kryomek Bio-Technology

45

that castes of creatures evolved from the hive-brood to perform tasks that amongst humanity are performed by scientists.

In its present form this has achieved a high degree of sophistication where a hierarchy of Hivebrood operate under the direct chemical control of the Hivemaster constantly modifying and improving the hive and all its systems. It seems to be certain now that each Great Hive has its own completely independent 'science' (this explains why there is so much variation in spacecraft design, weaponry etc. between one Great Hive and another). There is no standardisation as with our technologies. Instead everything is continuously redesigned according to any new data that reaches the Hivemaster. Neither is there anything that we would call cybernetics. Instead control systems are derived from organic sources, nervous systems are removed from living creatures and imbedded in a bio-mechanical chassis. Even their computers have at their centre organic processing units that are often the brains of the organisms that they prey on - as often as not other Kryomek.

All in all the power and scope of Kryomek science poses a severe threat to our perceptions of what constitutes 'good science' and we are now locked into a technology race with the Kryomek whose ultimate winner is still to be determined.

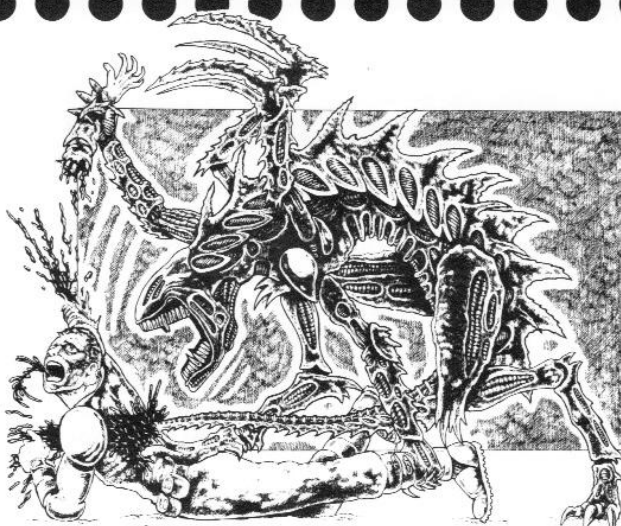
Kryomek Weaponry

Report presented to the Nexus Military
Quorumate by the NMI

ALIS AB587.46
1 2 8
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NMI_SR22245/Dept 5.3/5.5.3492

All information concerning Kryomek battlefield technology has been obtained from two very different sources. The first is that collated from debriefing information - that is from the eye witness



reports of NTFA personnel that have encountered this equipment in the field. This has largely been superseded by the second, more recent data that has been obtained from the careful scientific disassembly and analysis of those pieces of equipment that have been captured from the Kryomek.

The analysis of any equipment of Kryomek manufacture is always attended by a certain degree of danger. Our researchers are here dealing with technologies that often have no counterpart at all in our own science. Furthermore, these technologies are all technologies of destruction and are by their very nature highly unstable.

The first thing that can be safely said about all Kryomek equipment examined thus far is that it demonstrates a close synthesis between biogenetic engineering and more conventional electrograv-mechanics. This is one of the few generalities that can be made. The most startling thing about Kryomek technology is the lack of standardisation. It is this infinite variety that has plagued our researches from the beginning. The other great problem is that Kryomek systems are fused together imperceptibly - nothing has ever been isolated that could properly be called a component.



We are now certain that this equipment is in fact designed to fulfil different functional requirements on the battlefield - so that there are weapons that are clearly intended for anti-personnel use - while others are to be used to assault heavily armoured installations.

Anti-personnel weapons use exotic biogenetic technologies. Some launch biopod shells that disperse various kinds of virulent plasmogenetically engineered algoplasmid vectors. These are encased in high-gradient osmotic membranes that serve to allow them to quickly penetrate even 3 micra thick iridio-plasticated laminates. Initially these weapons were frighteningly effective against our ground troops - though developments in counter-gradial osmolaminates has redressed the balance somewhat.

Other anti-personnel weapons include spore launchers (that fire hyper-metabolic necrotropic mycelia encased in z3-condition resistant casings that have a wide q-dispersal range and impact to cause rapid pernicious mycelium infestation) and a bewildering variety of rapid impulse projectors that generally eject fluid or semi-fluid compounds some of which bear a striking resemblance to our own mutilated isoton-napalm.

Assault weapons also differ widely and are often also used against personnel. The most common use dynamically engineered bio-corrosives. Shells of irregular shapes (that, incidentally, when tested in computer fluid simulations were revealed to have remarkably low drag coefficients in all atmosphere types with visco-penetration parameters higher than 2523) are propelled by high yield biostatic reactions. The most singular property of these is that the initial bio-corrosive gradient is readjusted as each shell is fired and

rapidly converges on an optimal corrosive profile. This has necessitated the NTFA to develop ever more complex nano-polymerized armour laminates - though these become obsolete from one battle to the next.

Recently a host of new heavy assault weapons have been unleashed that consist of critical blends of accelerated, hyper-metabolic genocloned that have the ability to penetrate and structurogranulate even the most resistant of our laminates (thus making them brittle and highly impact sensitive). Unless new materials are produced soon we will no longer have the capability to produce effective armour or to build defensible structures.

Carapace Armour

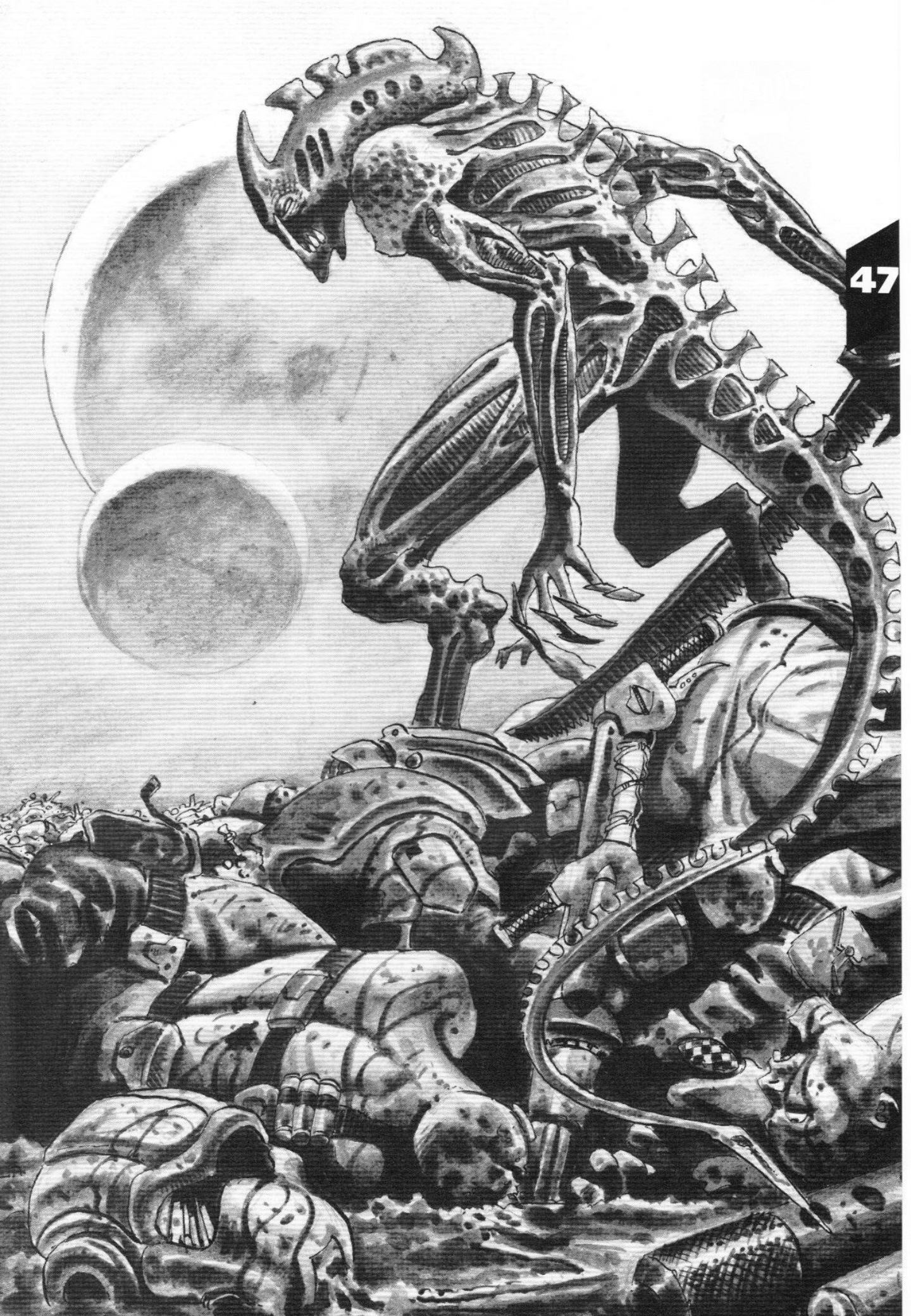
Report presented to the Nexus Military	ALIS DB587.3862
Quorumate by the NMI (Extract)	1 3 A
	1 2 1
NMI_SR22278/Dept 5.3/15.7.3492	1 E 6

Rather than develop artificial external battle armours the Kryomek chose to enhance their somatogenic chitinous carapaces.

Scrapings taken from Warrior Caste carapaces showed a bewildering variety of techniques had been employed in applying strengthening finishes. When analysed, a portion of recovered Warmaster carapace revealed that it had been successively covered by no less than an astounding 2000 separate layerings. Some layers had been applied as aerosolic sprays, while others even revealed the tell-tale feathering of brushwork. Single-molecule films had been finely interleaved over the whole surface and were bonded closely at a molecular level to present a complex shielding architecture. The whole was rubbed over with dense biopolymerized resins.

Under most test conditions the Warmaster carapace easily out-performed iridio-laminates and was found to be more resilient even than crystallated beryllium bronzes - especially to impact damage.

visicube 6-BR/17 - [11:08:07] 31/11/3491 IST
 operation code: M273.71 DD06/SM7-C03-S7
 location: Gamma-I Hegada 2 - Bayuda-Man. 003
 subject: [Kryomek Warrior] + [Single-Molecule Blade] -
 Gamma-Hegada - Gamma-I Hegada 1 - <Battle for
 Gamma-Hegada 2>
 analysis: six (6) centions of SWAT troops destroyed by
 Kryomek Swarm. Nexus troops encumbered by
 envirobattle armour & low gravity. Kryomek suffer no
 appreciable performance degradation. Surface of moon
 obliterated from the orbiting Dreadnought the Katar.



**As long as the
Kryomek held
the interstice at
the other end of
the diman they
were powerless.**

The Hivestone Incursion Crisis

Entry in the Encyclopaedia Irallica

ALIS C799.2

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The Hivestone appeared in the Maktor System on 22.04.3489 IST. It materialised near the interstice of the Maktor Diman. Its appearance was accompanied by a substantial perturbation in the spacetime continuum. The gravitational waves were detected as far away as Gamma-Bargavus 0.45 parsecs away. The first instruments to detect the intruder however were those of the freighter Sidonia which was heading for the interstice. The Sidonia was intending to use the Maktor Diman to jump to the Solarica Cluster.

The Sidonia's communications systems were almost swamped by the disturbance but its crew managed to send a visidata packet transmission to Tau-Maktor, the only inhabited planet in the system. There, Nexus personnel attempted an analysis of the data. They were unable to ascertain the nature of the disturbance beyond the fact that it seemed that it had something to do with the asteroid that had appeared near the interstice. They were however sufficiently concerned to attempt to send a Clearance 6 transmission to the Quorumate on Irallia. This could not be sent for 12 hours because the residual gravitational perturbations made use of the TDC impossible.

By the time the Quorumate received the message the Hivestone had begun to open. At its centre was a complete Kryomek hive. The Swarmfleet broke free of the Hivestone along shafts that had been solidly packed for passage through the diman. Within a few hours the TDC relay was destroyed.

It took sixteen days for the Swarmfleet to reach Tau-Maktor. The inhabitants had seen them coming but could do nothing to stop them. They

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were cut off from any help. The population of the planet was completely annihilated.

On Irrallia the analysis of the last Tau-Maktorian transmission was still in its initial stages when the TDC relay went dead. The Quorumate became concerned when the relay did not come back on line for several hours. There were too many back-up systems for it to be merely a systems failure.

As the period of TDC silence stretched out into days the military throughout the Solaric Cluster were put on yellow alert.

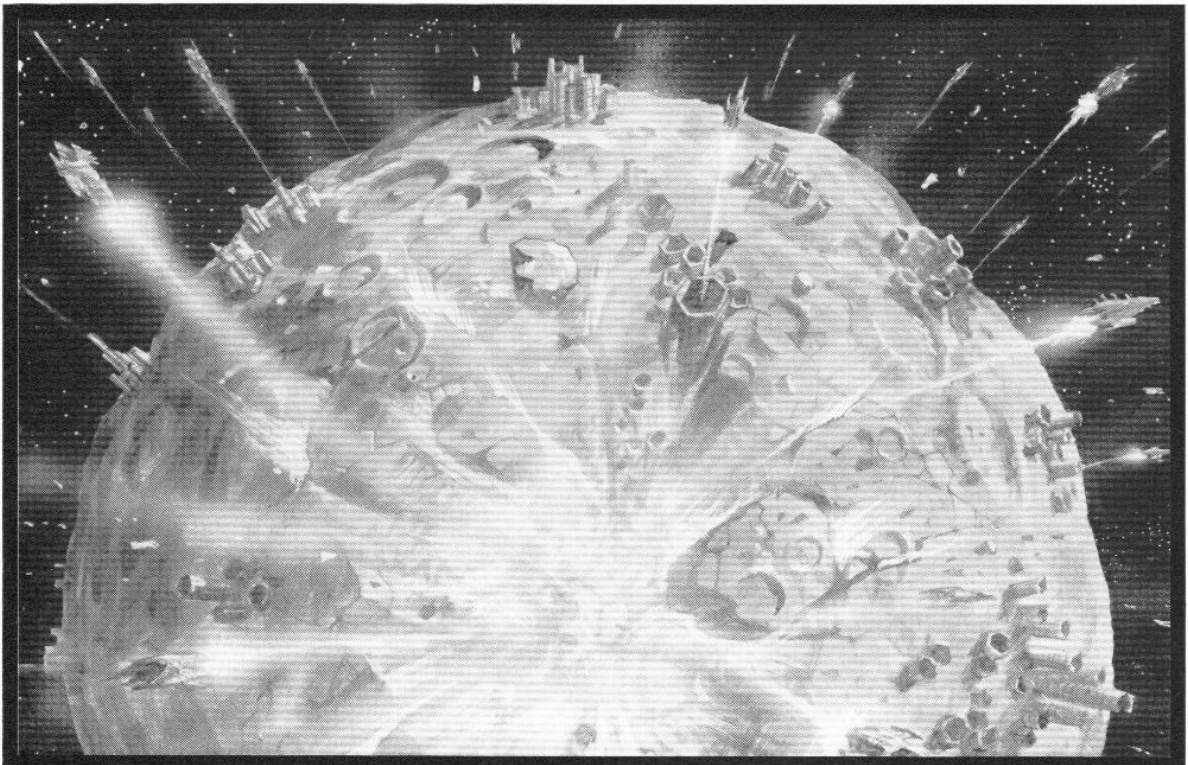
Five days later the diman dreadnought Nemesis set off for the Maktor Diman interstice in the Za-

phiri System. The Nemesis reached it fifteen days later and made the jump on schedule to the Maktor System.

The Kryomek had had time to make preparations. As the Nemesis materialised out of the diman the Kryomek attacked. The dreadnought was still suffering from the systemic degradation that accompanies diman jumps and was quickly overwhelmed.

Panic spread through the Solaric Cluster. The way was open for the Kryomek to invade through the Maktorian diman. They did not come.

There was some relief when the expected invasion did not materialise but, on the other hand,





the loss of the Nemesis made it obvious that the Quorumate was cut off from the Maktor Cluster. The dreadnought had managed to make some TDC transmissions in the early part of the battle so that the Quorumate had some idea what they were up against. In spite of this they could do nothing. As long as the Kryomek held the interstice at the other end of the diman they were powerless. Panhumanic spacetime was effectively split in two.

Meanwhile, the planets in the Krellian Ring were completely aware of what was going on in the Maktor Cluster. The TDC relay at the Bargavus interstice of the Trans-Maktorian Diman was still completely intact. The Nexus authorities on each planet tried desperately to contact the Quorumate but the TDC link back to Solarica was broken.

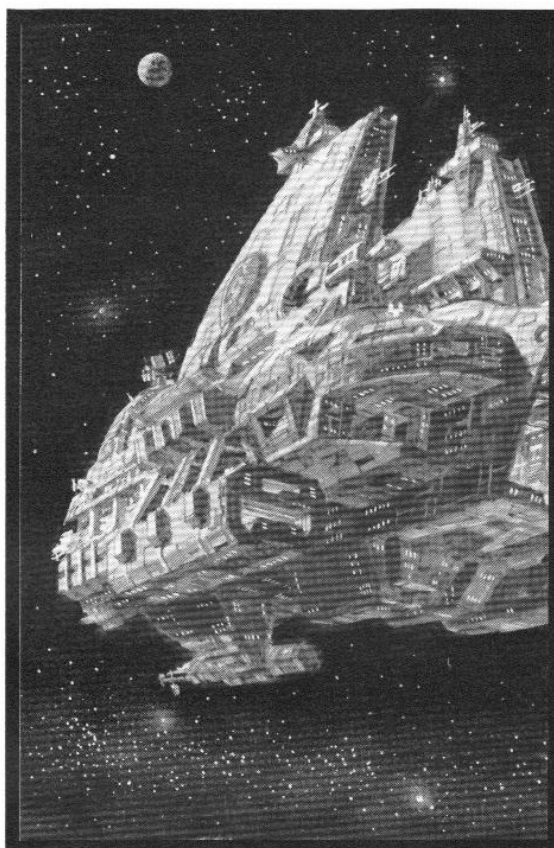
Finally an Emergency Quorumate was set up on the planet Heptor and began to make preparations to invade the Maktor Cluster. Everyday that passed saw the panic increasing as the news leaked out and spread around the Ring. People knew that the Bargavus interstice was an open door to the Kryomek through which they could reach any of their worlds. After all the interstice was less than 2 light years away from the Swarmfleet. Many abandoned their planets and fled into the Blackcore.

The military did not have the resources to quell the disturbances and the Ring worlds fell into ever greater anarchy.

Before everything was ready the Emergency Quorumate received intelligence reports indicating that the Kryomek Swarmfleet had made a trans-dimensional jump into the Bargavus System and thus towards the opening to the Trans-Maktor Diman. Thinking that the Kryomek were moving to invade the Ring, the invasion force, even though it was unready, was immediately dispatched to intercept them - preferably in the Maktor Cluster before they came through the diman.

The three Leviathan class dreadnoughts, the Shiva, the Baal and the Astarte, materialised in the Bargavus System and managed to deploy their weapons systems without any interference from the Kryomek. The Kryomek Swarmfleet retreated before them and jumped back into the Maktor System. The human fleet could do nothing but follow. It was essential to contain the contagion before it infected other systems in the Maktor Cluster.

The Swarmfleet retired before them moving rapidly towards Tau-Maktor. The battle was fought three days later in orbit around the planet. The Swarmfleet was reinforced by forces coming up from the planet. It came to meet them and engaged the human fleet in apparent disorder.



The battle was long. The Astarte and a huge volume of space was completely annihilated by a transient black hole when a Kryomek boarding party managed to access her spacefolding equipment and energise it with an unstable configuration. The Baal was riddled with Kryomek and most of its crew were annihilated. The Shiva managed to vaporise a large portion of the Swarm Fleet and the Astarte implosion took out most of the rest. Thousands of Kryomek deserted the smouldering wrecks of their ships and fell burning like stars into the planets atmosphere.²⁵

Support craft completed the destruction of the Swarmfleet but it took several days for marines and SWAT teams to clear the Baal. A pocket of the original ship's crew survived though many of them were driven insane by their experiences.

Though the fleet was severely mauled it limped its way into Tau-Maktor orbit. It was thought unlikely that the Kryomek would have any forces left capable of assaulting a dreadnought in suprastratospheric²⁶ space.

Scans of the surface made it obvious that the planet was completely devastated. The Kryomek processes of bioregenesis were already well under way. Besides this, with astonishing speed, the Kryomek hivebrood had been at work building a hive.

²⁵ Amazingly it was later ascertained that many of these survived by being contained in some kind of ablative shell.

²⁶ in space - beyond the atmosphere



A Planetary Stratecom was dispatched to the planet surface to attack the hive with a four myriads of marines and one of convicts. At first the Kryomek showed little resistance but then a Swarm sallied out of the partially completed hive and attacked the Nexus forces. These had to retire before the punishing assault.

The myriads were drawn back bloodied into the Shiva and the Baal. Urgent requests were sent back to the Emergency Quorumate on Heptor. The message came back.

"We cannot hazard our troops against the hive on Tau-Maktor. But neither can we leave the hive to grow to maturity. To act is folly. Not to act is folly. There is only one option.....

Burn Tau-Maktor !"

And so it was. The Shiva and the crippled Baal poured nucleonic fire down upon the planet. Tau-Maktor burned.

A single myriad of convict troops was sent down in isolation suits. They approached the melted ruins of the Hive expecting it to be an empty shell and found it full of Kryomek. After the battle the myriad was reorganised and there were barely enough men to make up four centions.

A transmission arrived from Heptor that was the counsel of despair. It handed all decisions in the Maktor Cluster theatre over to the fleet commanders. In desperation the stratecoms gathered for conference in the Shiva. It was decided that the Shiva and all fully operational vessels should move off to attack the Hivestone since it seemed to be the source of the invasion. The Baal and the other ships would remain behind in orbit around Tau-Maktor. The stratecoms both feared that the Hivestone might move into another system in the cluster and hoped that they might be able to destroy the Kryomek at the source of the infestation.

The Shiva approached the Hivestone not knowing what to expect. It seemed completely inert.

Attempts were made to blast the asteroid with nucleonics. The outer surface was fragmented but instruments indicated that the hive itself remained intact. Other attempts were made to drop high yield cobalt fission devices down the shafts but these were defeated by the shaft architecture and exploded near the surface.

At last the stratecoms gave their assent to a troop assault. Their first objective was to secure a foothold on the Hivestone. This was achieved against fierce opposition from the Kryomek. The next move was an all out assault from the foothold.

First all the convict myriads were committed. They took fearful casualties but managed to penetrate some distance down into the Hivestone. When those units had been exhausted a specially

modified nucleonic device was detonated at the deepest point reached.

The marines went in as the second wave of the assault. The stratecoms learnt early on that the Kryomek seemed to react to them as if they were a single organism. A hope arose that at the centre of the Hivestone there might be a single directing intelligence.²⁷ The Hivestone might have an Achilles Heel. The attack was mounted with redoubled intensity.

Finally the marines were so mauled that they too had to be pulled out. The stratecoms played their final card. The SWAT teams were sent down the shaft. Though there were fewer and fewer Kryomek encountered these fought with ever increasing ferocity.

At last the troopers broke through the defenders and penetrated the hivecore. Specially trained convict suicide squads were sent in. Inside they encountered for the first time a Hivemaster. It was evacuated but the troopers were carrying thermonucleonic pulse devices. The blast fused the hive to the molten rock of the asteroid.

Almost imperceptibly the surviving Kryomek slowed down until they reached a state of almost complete inactivity. The asteroid was rigged for demolition. The Shiva retreated to a safe distance as the Hivestone was blasted to powder.

A message arrived from the Baal saying that the

²⁷ Nothing was known at this time about Hivemasters.

Kryomek opposition had suddenly collapsed on Tau-Maktor. The half finished hive there was demolished and all remaining Kryomek were ruthlessly exterminated.

It took several weeks more to make sure that every single bio-fragment of the Kryomek contagion was destroyed. Of course the nucleonics made sure that Tau-Maktor would be uninhabitable for centuries.

The TDC relay at the Maktor interstice was replaced and the two halves of panhumanic spacetime were once again united.

The Glinde Fork

by Yadis Maruganya

Entry in the Encyclopaedia Irallica

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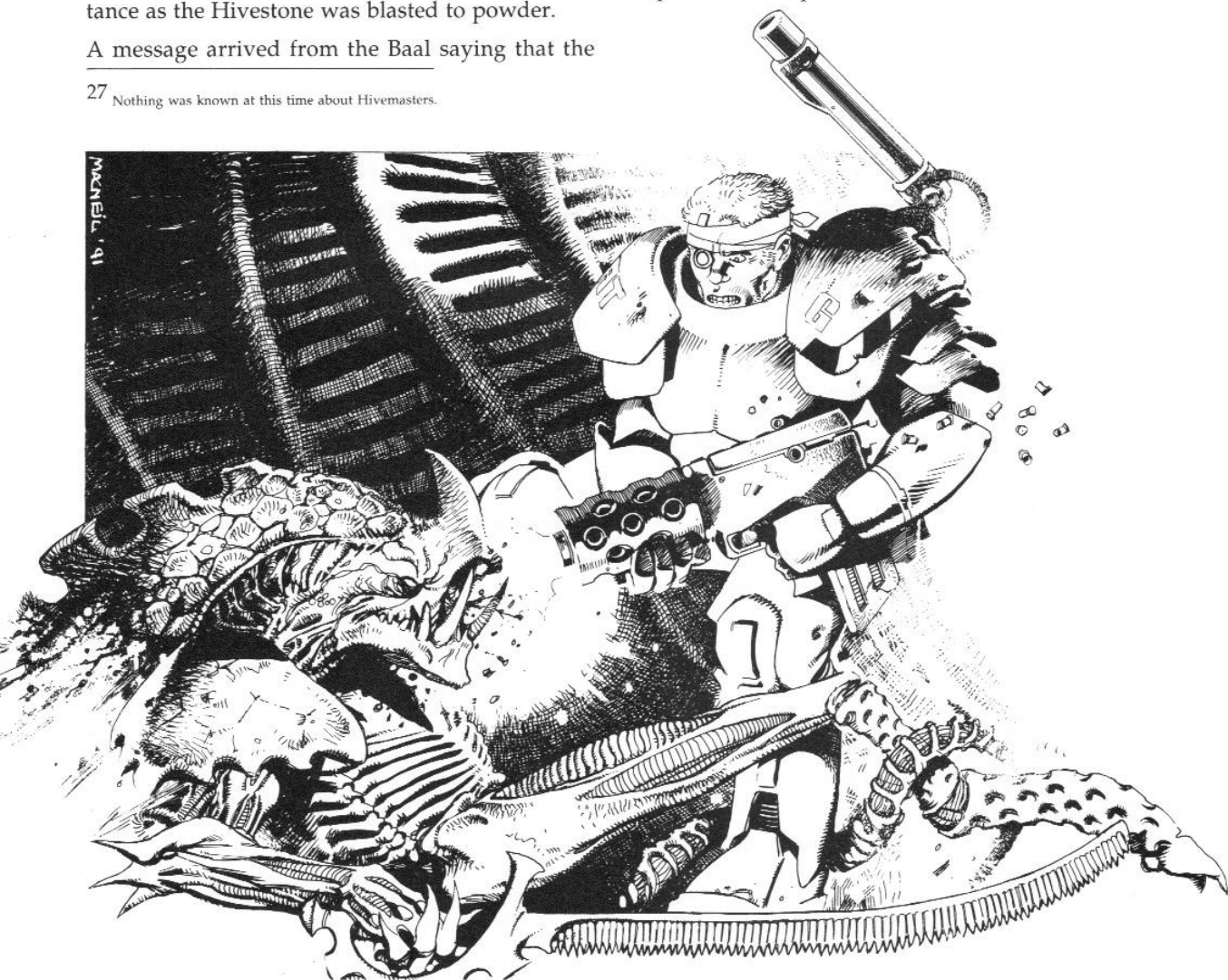
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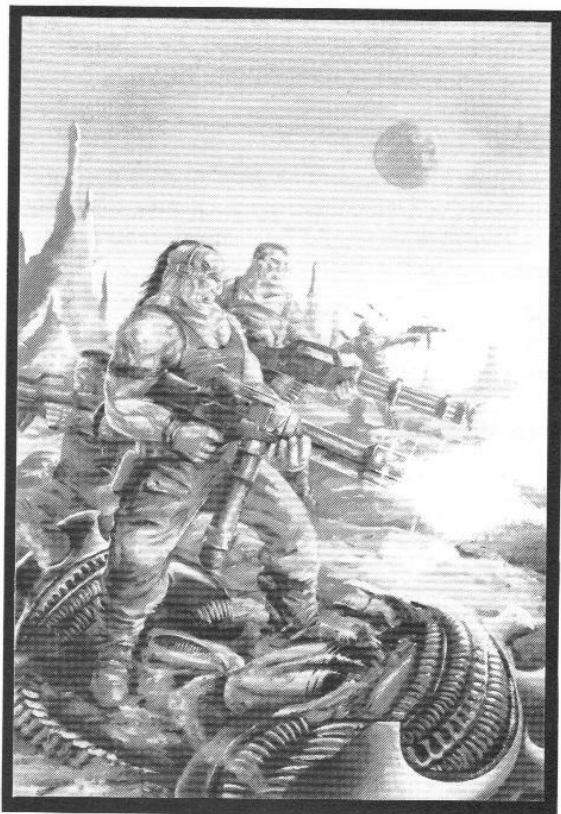
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06.07.3494 IST (to be encubed 3497)

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In the aftermath of the Hivestone incursion the panhumanic society was left in disarray. The Nexus Quorumate had lost not only prestige but also two of its Leviathan dreadnoughts and an enormous number of casualties; the worlds of the Krellian Ring were to sink into five years of anarchy and confusion; and everyone trembled at the prospect that more Hivestones might appear in panhumanic spacetime.





One man came forward at this time of crisis and thrilled humanity with his vision. His name was Tatuya Glindex and he was a Master Strategist and adviser to the Nexus Quorumate. He presented a deep analysis of the crisis. He also proposed a plan of such breadth and simplicity that at first his words were greeted with a stunned silence. This plan became known as the "Glindex Fork".

This plan rested on his analysis. He suggested a theory to explain the actions of the Kryomek. He argued that the way in which the Hivestone arrived in the Maktor system, the nature of the Hivestone itself and the fact that the Kryomek made no attempt to use either of the two dimensional manifolds to attack either the Solaric Cluster or the Krellian Ring pointed to one simple answer. The Kryomek had not mastered the probability mathematics necessary to locate the precise position of the diman interstices.

To the question of how it was that the Hivestone got there at all he answered by asking people to consider that the Hivestone had never demonstrated that it had any kind of motive power whatsoever. He stated that it was not a craft at all. In fact he produced a brilliantly argued polemic that demonstrated that using any conceivable energy source the Hivestone would have had to have huge - and very obvious - propulsion units.

His conclusion was that the Hivestone had been towed to the *neighbourhood* of the Maktor Diman interstice in Kryomek spacetime and then subjected to a vast implosion that tore an opening

into the Diman. On visidata taken at the time he pointed out surface features on the Hivestone that might indicate that it had been vastly greater in size at some recent time. The depth at which the hive was buried in the asteroid might have been necessitated to safeguard it against the gravitational vortices generated by the clumsy method of entry into the Diman.

He postulated that the Kryomek were as yet unable even to locate the rough neighbourhood of an interstice - and perhaps could not even detect the presence of a diman at all. He argued that they may only have located the interstice in Kryomek spacetime because they followed Admiral Mankurian²⁸ back to it.

One of his most harrowing conclusions was that the arrival of the Hivestone in the Maktor Cluster was, in a manner of speaking, fortuitous. After all, if the Kryomek did not have the probability mathematics then it could have just as easily appeared in the Solaric Cluster. The disaster might then have been far greater.

He reminded people that nothing he was saying indicated that the Kryomek might not send more Hivestones.

He demonstrated with the help of a team of probability mathematicians from the megacorp Pandaris Prime that it was theoretically possible to close access to a diman from an associated interstice though this would take enormous quantities of energy. He proposed to annihilate the Maktor Diman Interstice in Kryomek spacetime and thus to deny the Kryomek access to panhumanic spacetime altogether.

His solution, the 'Glindex Fork' was based on the assumption that it was unlikely that the Kryomek would not have fortified the Interstice and that to jump the task force through to it would be suicidal.

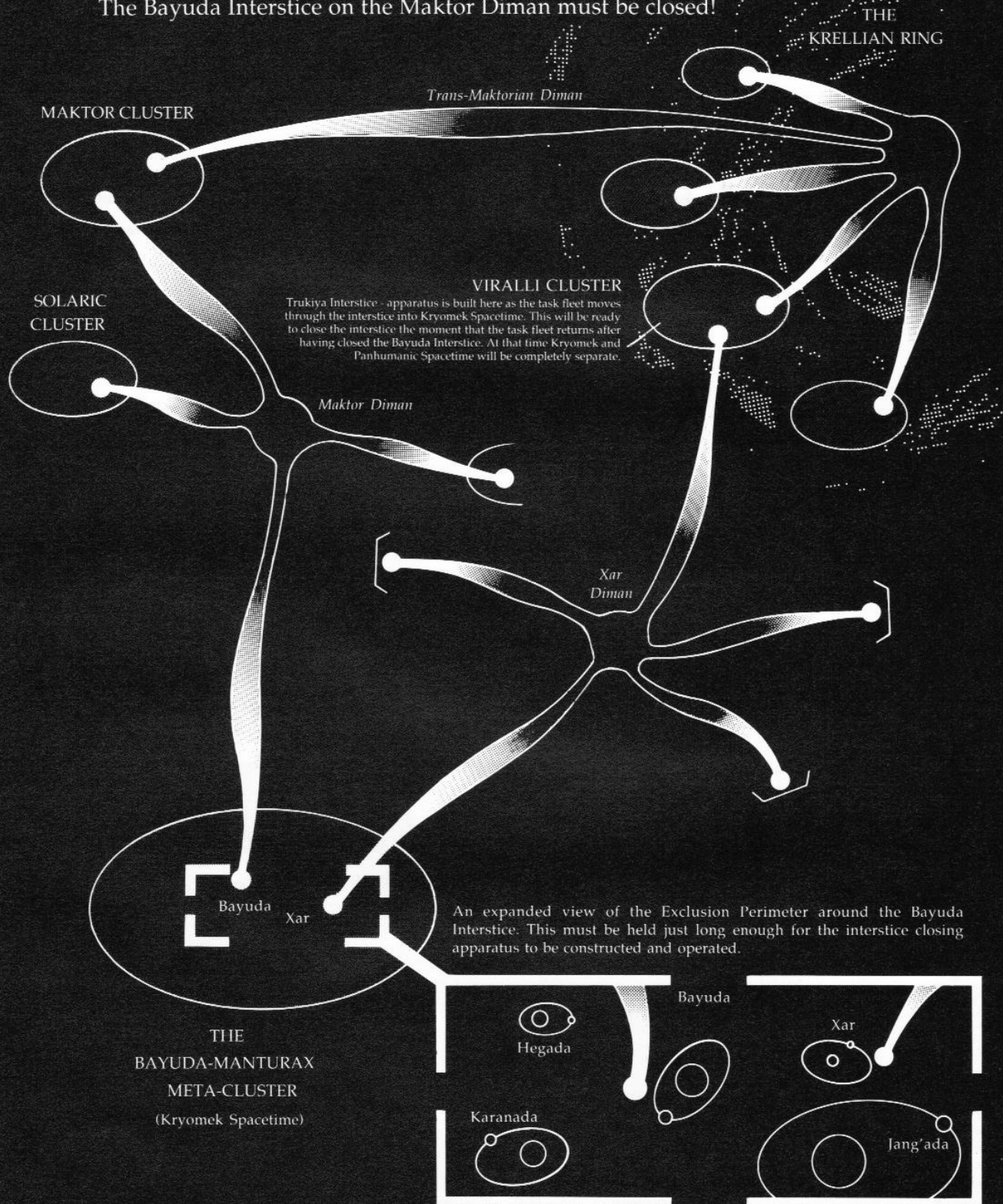
Instead he produced a visicube which he had obtained from Pandaris Prime which showed a number of new diman openings that had as yet been unexplored. Amongst these he indicated one which lay on an otherwise useless diman one end of which was near an obscure world on the Krellian Ring, the other which lay within 0.62 parsecs of the target interstice.

His plan was to send a vast armada through this diman, approach the target interstice from the rear and attempting to obliterate the Kryomek presence there hold the system long enough to allow the Interstice to be closed.

²⁸ see "The disaster at Aleph-Jang'ada III re-examined".

The Glindex Fork

The Bayuda Interstice on the Maktor Diman must be closed!



Xar Exclusion Zone is a specially reinforced part of the Exclusion Perimeter which stops the Kryomek gaining access through the Xar Interstice into Panhumanic Spacetime.

Cyclo

'Three-Eighteen'

Cyclo Squad Three Eighteen achieved a momentary, universal fame when they were chosen by a reporter for "Our Times" as a focus for an exposé of the entire Glindex Fork Campaign.



When the war started I thought that it was someone else's problem. The next few years were a boom time. The meta-economy was growing rapidly. My fortune grew with it. I 'harvested' some of the new wealth directly off the compcores of the megacorps. I suppose that I knew that one day I would be caught again. I was already PCB blue¹ from the last time. A second-time conviction would push my PCB rating into the more serious green band² but, I had been in their prisons once before and knew the scene - I had more than enough tricreds³ to make my stay there more than comfortable. I would do my time quietly and after I got out I would leave Irallia - take a ship to some distant world in the Krellian Ring - buy myself a nice spread and retire there to lord it over the natives for the rest of my days. That at least was the plan.

Then they changed the law. The Quorumate announced that the penal code was outdated and needed reform - of course what they really meant was that they needed more cannon-fodder. By that time the War was really hotting up. Three years before, the Hivestone had appeared in Maktor and put the frighteners on the Quorumate. We were not really allowed to know what had happened but rumours spread about the carnage. Then some crazy egg-head at Nexus Central came up with the "Glindex Fork", or some such claptrap. I laughed myself stupid for days until it became obvious that they really meant it. Our boys in laminates were gathered up from all over the place and popped down a di-man into 'monster land'. I wished them luck and got on with making financial arrangements for my old age.

¹ Penal Code Band Blue - robbery, embezzlement, fraud etc.

² Penal Code Band Green - non-fatal violent crimes.

³ Tri-federational Credits - the standard unit of currency throughout Panhumanic Spacetime.



Cyclo "Moonie", CSF 5.7.3.18, was later awarded the Triangulum First Class for his actions in the Battle for Xar. In addition his PCB rating was reduced to blue and he was to be demobbed out of the CSF. These awards and privileges were later rescinded when cyclo Moonie murdered his centurion.

I was caught by a virtual detector⁴ that crawled down from a compcore onto my terminal. The bug led the tri-feds⁵ straight to me. I went quietly. I was resigned to my fate - as far as I was concerned I had been forcibly retired. I might have been a whole lot less calm if I had known then about the penal reforms.

I was sentenced into the Convict Special Forces in the megatropolis Xirell Nova on 13.04.3492 IST. two months after they changed the laws on mandatory enlistment. Three days later I was transported to the prison moon Gulgatrax.

The reality of Gulgatrax was even worse than that shown in the holopics. I was stripped and left alone in a small cell. Everything was sterile white plastolene. It was only then that I found out how scared a man can get. There was no human contact - just a pair of vidi-scanners tracking me constantly like eyes. I was a rat in a maze.

I screamed and fought like a krelldevil when they came to fetch me for neuro-regulation. They paralysed me with their tancers⁶ and strapped me to a surgo-platform. I blacked out. The next thing I knew I was waking with the biggest headache I had ever had - and let me tell you, I've had some of the worst. I felt my head gingerly. My hair had been removed by gausswire⁷ and my scalp was still tender. The neuro-regulator was like the stump of a unicorn horn. I was back in my single-piece plastolene shell.

The 'shivers' started in the dark when the cell was lit only by the red glow of my neuro-regulator. It was like fever tremors but much worse. I thought that I was going mad. A man came wearing a plastic mask and said that he was my Trainer. He told me that he had something to make the 'shivers' go away. He made me beg for it. He gave me the tantha and soon the 'shivers' stopped. I threw up. My Trainer told me that I had been poisoned and that only regular doses of tantha⁸ would stop the shivers returning. He said that without it I would eventually die in agony.

He trained me like an animal. When I disobeyed he delivered stimuli directly to my pain centres and when I was 'good' he stimulated my pleasure centres. The regulators were both demon and angel - though even the angel had a dark face. Sometimes the regulators didn't work. I saw another cyclo become so addicted to the Pleasure that they had him destroyed.

My body became lean. My hands, soft from the smooth panels of the compcore terminals, became calloused. I learnt to fight with weapons and without. My regulator coaxed miracles of fatigue resistance from my metabolism.

As a passing-out gift the Nexus had our heads surgically tattooed with xaser⁹ sensitive barcodes minutely encoded with everything they knew about us. One of our Trainers was wheeled out to tell us that if we were "especially good boys and girls" that in time we might have our PCBs reduced and then it was quite likely that we would be demobbed and allowed to rejoin the pan-humanic community. Maybe it was the flat tone of his voice, or perhaps the blank look on his plastolene face, but that speech did not raise my hopes over much.

⁴ numerical compcore 'organism'.

⁵ Tri-Federal Internal Security Forces.

⁶ device for delivering various levels of electro-cardial shock.

⁷ electromagnetic depilator.

⁸ erzolar caxumate

⁹ X-ray Amplification by Stimulated Emission of Radiation (X-ray laser).

I was assigned to a myriad of assault troops on the dreadnought Medusa. We were herded into a transport ship. The smell of fear mixed with stale sweat as we left the prison moon.

The journey was long and tedious. Most of us huddled in our berths. At night they turned the lights down. Our regulators burned like fireflies. During meal times we got a chance to look at each other - everyone was looking around thinking the same thing - 'is he going to be a squadmate?'. There were a few fights - but not many because we all suffered when the Trainers turned up the Pain.

The Medusa was in orbit around Nihiri. She lay between us and the sun, black and monstrous. I caught one last glimpse of beautiful Irallia before the Medusa opened one of her dark mouths and swallowed us.

Her belly was as big as a megatropolis. We cyclos had a quadrant all to ourselves. We never saw the regulars - they never saw us. We liked it that way. The Cyclo-Quad had its own laws - and besides, we wanted neither their pity nor their abuse.

A few days after the Medusa had turned ponderously away from Nihiri we were broken up into squads. There was tension alright. Names were read out - that one last time - after that we would only be known by our unit numbers. When it was my turn I was bolted into the xaser encoder. My scalp tingled as it rewrote my barcode.

From then on I was merely CSF 5.7.3.18 or, within our myriad, 'Three-Eighteen' - I was a labelled part of the Medusa - just another component.

I was locked into a 'socialisation cell' with my five squadmates - I had only expected four - I saw immediately that they had not expected me at all. We were supposed to get to know each other - our lives would depend on it. We were also supposed to 'choose' a squad leader.

They were an unsavoury looking bunch - the kind of scum I'd spent most of my life avoiding. I backed up against the wall. One of them smiled at me. The smile made her seem human. It made me realise that scum or not I needed them. She told me her name was Karah and introduced me to my 'brothers'.

First there was Janor - a surly looking brute. I did not need to be an expert in soma-semantics¹⁰ to tell that he and she were an item. Leaning on him was another brute, Svet. One of his eye sockets was covered by a prosthesopad¹¹. The other was well enough to fix me with a baleful stare. Last were 'the twins' - they weren't, but they were actually brothers. One was called Rodix. He seemed to be the quiet one. His brother, Kayfin, was just... strange. He leered at me as if he might want to eat me. I later found out that there had been complications with his regulator - as his brother confided in me tapping his head, "'e's not all there..".

There was little debate when it came to choosing the squad's leader. Janor put himself forward and Svet made his support obvious. Karah was hardly going to protest - and for that matter

¹⁰ body language.

¹¹ enhanced artificial optical replacement.

neither was I - Svet's baleful red eye shut my mouth as effectively as the Pain through my regulator would have.

That was that! We were a family. We would live, eat and maybe die together. To the rest of the myriad each of us was indistinguishably Three-Eighteen. Only amongst ourselves did we have personal names.

When the Medusa made the jump through the first diman, I thought that I was dying - or losing what little was left of my mind. The gravitational eddies play more havoc with your synapses than an amber hit. It was over as suddenly as it had come. We made a small trans-dimensional jump and then another diman jump.

It did not take a brain the size of a planet to work out where we were going. Solarica to Maktor - local cluster jump to Bargavus - then the Trans-Maktorian into the Viralli Cluster.

It was all about the Cyclo-Quad, "the Kryomeks.." They tried to keep our minds off it by arming us. It didn't work.

I was dimanwise by the time we took our third and final diman. Afterwards another cyclo told me that she had seen the stuff that they were building to close the Trukiya portal. She said that it had made the Medusa look like a toy. I don't know - I didn't see it myself. I didn't care!

We arrived at Xar on firework night. The Kryomek had breached the Exclusion Perimeter with a Hivestone. They were swarming everywhere. Even in the Cyclo-Quad we could see the lightning flashes from outside. They told us that if the Qatar and the Shiva had not intercepted the kite swarms heading for us we would have come out of the diman to find them already burrowing into our hull.

I huddled together with my squad. We were already a unit. Janor muttered, "holiday's over." If it was meant to be a joke nobody laughed - apart from Kayfin who never actually stopped - not even in his sleep.

He was right though - the holiday was over. We were briefed by our centurions. We had been making for Bayuda to get a gentle introduction into the War. Now we were going to find out about it the hard way.

We had rarely seen our bicenturion. He was probably a hardened 40. It was difficult to tell. Half his face was metal and the other half didn't look happy. One of his arms looked like the flesh had been melted and then poured back into the mould. He had a conference with our squad leaders and then left.

Janor's grim face was even grimmer than usual. "We're going in by twister..," he said as if giving us a sentence of death. "It's tomorrow". Svet grinned. Only Kayfin laughed.

We spent the next few hours being briefed. Janor had a vidislate: the Kryomek had landed a swarm on Xar itself - they were threatening our bases there - we had to exterminate them before they made a hive. Simple really. Our myriad, the 7th, were going

down first with the 4th and the 5th. The bicenturion had promised that we would have strider and talos support.

"That's something!" I heard someone mutter.

Janor went for the final briefing with the bicenturion. Svet said nothing - he was keeping his one eye on his battleblade as he sharpened it. The Twins were sleeping. Only Karah seemed to want to talk. We confided our fears to each other. Of all the dangers facing us, we were probably most afraid of the twister descent.

When the time came we were ready. We were given a two-day supply of tantha for our auto-hypos. Our weapons were rubbish - as dangerous to us as to the enemy - but we made them as battle ready as we knew how. There were stacks of ammo.

We left the Cyclo-Quad in irregular lines. Cyclos from the myriads not going looked on sullenly. There were few sounds - just a few scuffles - tempers were short.

We took magnoshunts¹² down to the very deepest levels of the ship - down to the twister cannons that would fire us into the planet atmosphere.

The twister capsules looked innocent enough. We moved forward in squads. As each capsule was filled it slid off into the shadows. We waited our turn. Karah was holding Janor's hand. It was like waiting for a ride at the Grand Carnival in Xirell Nova.

It was soon our turn. Inside, the capsule was cramped. There were six berths - just narrow depressions in the capsule wall. There was some nervous laughter as we fell over each other. An attendant strapped us in. He looked even more nervous than us - but then he was not a cyclo. He snapped the cryogenic hoods closed over our heads and then left after sealing the capsule.

Everyone else closed their eyes. My stomach churned. Kayfin's laughter turned into a cough. The capsule lurched. There was a vibration that lasted for some time. Then there was another lurch and silence.

When we dropped my stomach leapt upwards and my lungs expelled at the same moment. Then there was a terrible screaming sound. As the cryogenics cut in it became more and more remote. My body numbed. The world rolled round and round. I thought I could hear music.

There was a sudden bone wrenching thump and then Janor's voice screaming at us, "Get out! Out!"

I stumbled through the door of the capsule into hell. My head was spinning. My stomach was roiling. The air was filled with smoke. Bullets and shells were screaming constantly over our heads. Just behind us there was a massive roar as another twister hit the ground. I turned and looked up. The sky was full of spiralling capsules.

I was suddenly slapped from behind. Janor grabbed my harness and pulled me after him. "Damn you, Moonie! Get forward!," he hissed. More cyclos were spilling out of the newly landed capsule. Other squads moved forward on our right and left.

¹² Electro-grav Transport Tube.

My head was clearing. The twins were running just ahead, bent low. Svet and Janor were on either side of me both of them scanning the grey horizon. Suddenly they froze. I turned to follow their stare. The ground ahead seemed to boil. There was a low rumbling sound. A sound that made my blood curdle - a sound of hissing and of gurgling mucus. The shadows became purple-black spotted with iridescent greens and reds.

I was rooted to the ground with terror as the Kryomek approached like a pack of rabid hunting dogs. I have to admit that I fouled myself. It was only Svet and the striders that saved me.

He slapped me to the ground. The earth shuddered and then a dark shadow passed over us. I raised my head from the mud to see a clawed steel foot as big as a man crash into the earth beside me. The hydraulics in the columned leg hissed and screamed as the foot rose again.

I stumbled to my feet. Svet gave me a quick look of disgust and then ran off to join the rest of the squad nearby. He ran crouched low. Over his curved back I saw the seething mass of Helions foaming towards us. The Goliath was just ahead its ten-tens punching to a regular rhythm. The Helions were exploding as its shells tore through their carapaces but they still kept coming.

As I ran up to the rest of the squad, Janor was getting them into some kind of order. Karah loosed off a couple of grenades but they exploded harmlessly in front of the Helions. There was an uneven line of cyclos stretching to either side.

Somewhere someone started pouring on the juice - the neuro-regulators responded to some distant signal. I felt the adrenalin fill me with fire. My arms and legs buzzed. I tried to fight it for it was forcing me forward - forward towards the tide of monsters. I was losing the battle - like clinging to the edge of a cliff as your fingers gradually lose their grip. Svet lifted his head and roared - his one eye seemed as red as his regulator's. He did not want to fight it - he welcomed the battle lust.

Janor urged us forward with a battlecry. We fired our weapons like madmen. I was thrown forward against my will by the fire in my veins.

Still ahead of us the Goliath was strafing the Kryomek mass. Then another strider appeared, a Fenris. It overtook us easily with a few giant strides. It lumbered forward on our right all three of its Kotor annihilators pounding. They were well named. It swung its massive head and sprayed the oncoming tide with shells until it was decimated. We easily totalled the survivors.

We were jumping up and down congratulating ourselves and watching the two striders lumber forward heavily when the Warriors appeared, their curving anvil heads rocking like steam hammers as they ran forward. They were fast - real fast! The striders tried to train their guns on them but they were already between their legs. One of the Kryomek was squashed with a great hiss as the Goliath's foot came down on its head. It was close enough for some of its spraying serum to strike Rodix and burn his arm.

I ignored his screaming. There was a terrible fascination in the carnage and the fire inside filled me with boundless energy. For a moment time stopped. I was watching a holopic and could see myself as a character in it.

The striders were turning around slowly. Their weapons could not target the Warriors. One of them lifted a curving blade and sliced cleanly through one of the Fenris' steel legs. It tumbled forward and twisted into wreckage as it hit the ground. The Goliath started falling back, trying to get the Kryomek that were plaguing it into its sights. The other Warriors kept hacking at the fallen strider until it erupted with a huge violet flash. One of our squads right in the path of the blast was shredded.

When we picked ourselves off the ground we expected the Kryomek to be dead in the wreckage - but first one, then another anvil head appeared out of the flames. We pointed our weapons at them - they came at us - fast! Svet fired his chain-gun at the approaching monsters laughing maniacally. A handful more had appeared from the murk and crashed down upon the cyclo line. I saw the carnage out of the corner of my eye but the fire inside me burned away any terror.

The acrid smell of the Warriors burned my nostrils. Kayfin laughed insanely as he fired streams of ionised needles into the curving anvil head of the Kryomek in front of him. Its screams were like twisting metal. Its blade would have sliced Kayfin in two if Karah had not blown a hole in its chest with a grenade. It fell back, writhing - its tail lashed the ground to dust.

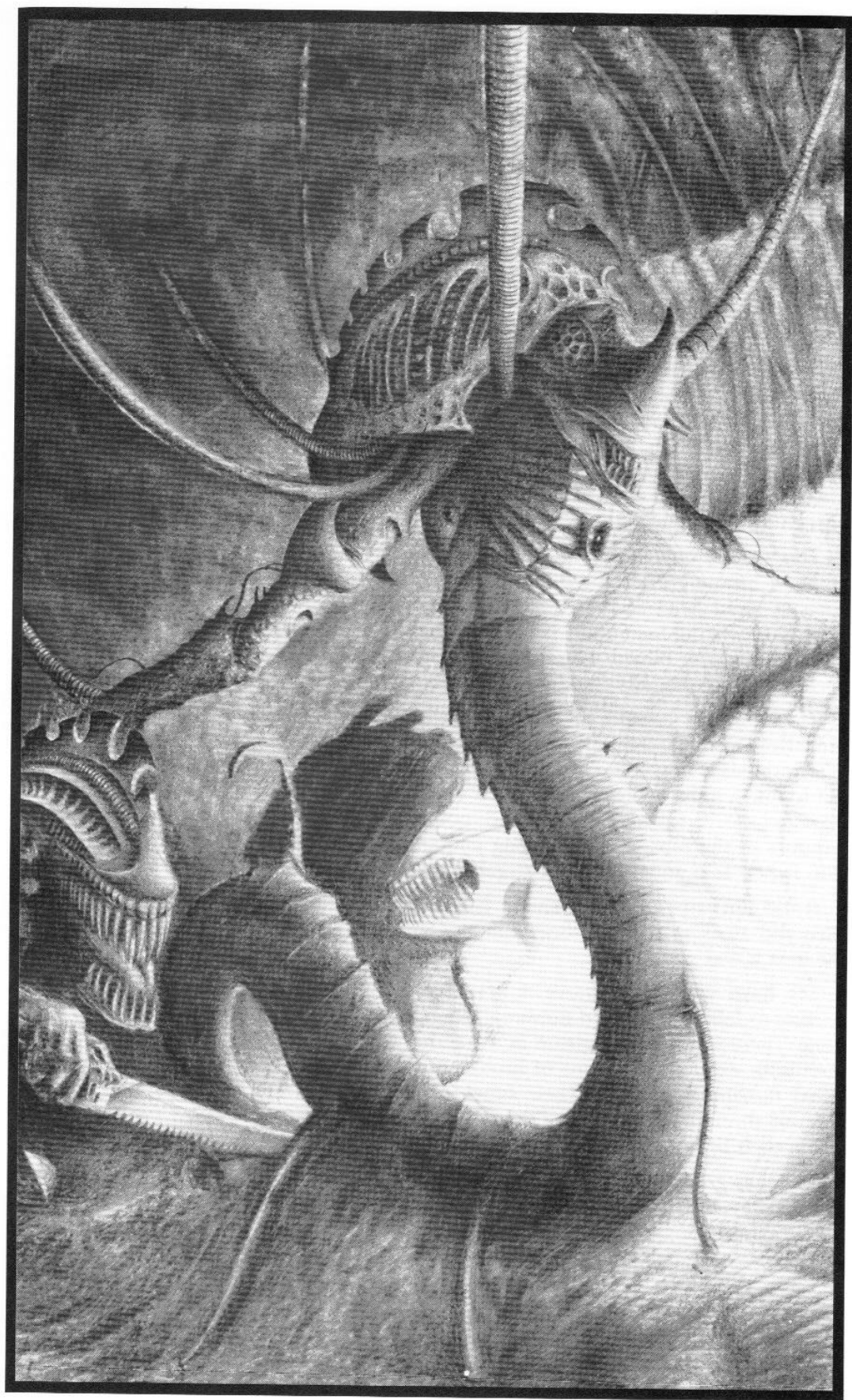
Then I knew a terror so intense that even my regulator was powerless to fight it. Before me rose the great gleaming mass of a Warriors head. It was so close that I could have stretched my hand out to touch it. Its malice was tangible. I was paralysed as it lifted a pronged multi-tubed weapon and pointed it at me. Just the vapours of the bioacid were strong enough to burn my face. My skin itched as it anticipated the stream that would dissolve it.

It did not happen. The monster paused for a split second and then slid away as if it had been called. One moment it was there the next it was gone.

My head would not move. I grated my eyes round in their sockets to follow it. I could not breathe again until it was certainly gone. There was a brassy gleam in the corner of my eye. Five metal men with exposed skeletons of bronze rolled forward like a polished threshing machine. Their synchronicity was perfect. They stepped through the corpses of the fallen cyclos with effortless precision their lifted arms keeping up a constant fire.

My eyes grated round to my right. My squad were wounded or dead. They did not move. Two warriors had their anvil heads wedged in amongst them. The serum leaked out in pools searing the ground.

My eyes were drawn again to the Talos Units. But they stopped before they reached them. There was a shadow there in the murk. A terrible shadow. A lord of monsters. It swayed up higher and higher still on the column of its carapaced tail. I looked back at the



combat between the warriors and the Talos men of bronze, then at the Warmaster. Every motion of the battle was mirrored in its undulations. The Talos Units were the only thing standing between the Kryomek and the rest of my cention. The Warriors were firing their ghastly weapons to great effect. Some of the Talos Units had lost arms, some even their heads. One was trapped powerless in a cocoon of mucous threads. The Kryomek were triumphing. The Warmaster drew itself up to an even greater height. Perhaps it was relishing its triumph.

My hatred for that monster, energised by the rising adrenalin fire, freed me. I fell out of my paralysis and crawled over to my squadmates. Svet was still breathing. If the others were alive I could not tell. The anger grew in me. I prised the chain-gun from Svet's grip and rose to my feet.

I stumbled forward. The regulator burned in my head - the fire spread into my legs. I pounded forward towards the towering horror. The sheen of its carapace sickened me as I came closer. It was holding a massive lance connected by twisting pulsating cords to its head canopy.

I let loose with the chain-gun while it was still swaying back and forth exerting its control over the battlefield. The first shots struck it and flew off as if it were made of lead. It whipped to face me with an ear piercing scream. The great lance swung round like a heavy cannon. I was beyond fear and just kept pouring shells into its hideous bulk. Most of the shells were still glancing off its armour but some were passing through. Hissing fluids gushed from its wounds. I was looking down the length of its lance to the twisted cords that swept up to its carapace. With a sort of fascination I could see them bulging like strings of muscles as it pumped its serum into the weapon. Then I struck lucky. My shells tore through into the soft body beneath and the Warmaster erupted into a fountain of steaming serum.

The lance spouted a huge searing arc of acid but the weight of its massive head as it tumbled to the ground threw the stream to one side. I fell to my knees and passed out.

The Rebellion of 3462

Panhumania (extract)

ALIS C788.53
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Educational Imprint 3485 IST

The mood that attended the anniversary celebrations on Tetaris IV was one of pride. Tetaris had come of age. It was fifty years since the first colonists had made landfall. Tetaris IV was the first human colony outside the Solaric System. Their descendants prided themselves on this. Their grandparents had arrived in the great colony arks in the days before spacefolding had made the business of colonisation a relatively low risk affair.

In those fifty years Tetaris had raised towered cities that rivalled the megatropolises of Irallia itself. The planet had become rich but not so rich that the inhabitants did not resent paying the tribute demanded by the homeworlds. The argument that the motherworlds had needs that they could only meet from their colonies was wearing a bit thin. Most of the tribute was used to support the overweening administrative costs of the Colonial Office. Every year these costs rose as the Tri-Federation had to police ever more planetary systems. Tetariis complained that they were

paying for the setting up of the colonies that only the 'imperialist' Tri-Federation would reap the benefits from. People laughed openly when it was suggested by the authorities that it was only reasonable for them to contribute to the costs of their own defence. Defence from whom!

Three days before the official celebrations were set to begin in the planetary capital Irallika Nova there were some demonstrations. These were centred on the most potent symbol of the so called oppression, the headquarters of the Tri-Federational Colonial Office. What started as a peaceful display of independence turned into a riot. When night fell the whole of the megatropolis could see the great tower of the Colonial Office as it burned. The riot continued lit by the fire.

When morning came the riot had found its leaders and turned into a rebellion. A hastily made flag was erected in one of the city squares and the Republic of Tetaris was declared. By that afternoon Talkruyis(?) had joined the rebels and before night fell only Jangoran of the planet's megatropolises remained loyal to the Tri-Federation.

The leaders of the rebellion were not fools. They knew that the it would not be long before the Tri-Federation arrived with its

marines. They knew that they could not survive by themselves. Systematically they set about fomenting rebellion in other worlds.

Meanwhile the nearest Tri-Federational base, the moon Takeza in the Anubidi System, had been alerted. A force was hurriedly assembled and sent in troop transports to the nearest trans-dimensional transfer point. The transfer was completed successfully and three weeks after the rebellion had started they were in orbit around Tetaris IV.

The rebels had not been idle during this time. Their attempts at precipitating a general rebellion amongst the local systems was meeting with an unfavourable response. However they had managed to assemble enough military hardware to turn Irallika Nova into a fortress. Above all they were counting on the Tri-Federation being reluctant to destroy the megatropolis.

The marines landed near the city and after some preparation they entered its outskirts in some force. The fighting was at first intermittent but as the day progressed it grew in intensity. The rebel's calculations were

proved right - the marines had been given express orders to avoid shooting innocent civilians at all costs. This reluctance to shoot on sight was exploited by the rebels to terrible effect. By nightfall the marines had already lost heavy casualties.

In the ensuing days the Tri-Federational command were sending urgent messages back to their superiors to try and have their 'civilian safety' orders countermanded. The rebels had managed to cut the TDC link to Takeza so that the order never came. By this time the Nexus' forces were hopelessly entrenched in the megatropolis. The Nexus commanders seeking to extricate their troops were driven by desperation to take the responsibility of giving the countermanding order themselves.

The inevitable happened - there was a massacre. Civilians of all ages and both sexes were massacred. In the aftermath the Nexus command gradually lost control. It took several days but eventually the Tri-Federation forces were overwhelmed by the enraged rebels.

The rebels exploited their victory with some vigour. They sent holopics showing the civilian massacre to all neighbouring systems. They also sent pictures of their prisoners - pictures of the Tri-Federation defeated and humiliated.

Counter to all their expectations, however, almost all of the other systems stayed loyal to the Tri-Federation. Only Tuvis showed signs of unrest. There was a rebellion there and its leaders promised to send aid to Tetaris.

When the end came it came swiftly. A large Nexus fleet arrived and the promised aid never materialised. The battle for Irallika Nova was long and bloody but its result was inevitable.

From start to finish the rebellion had lasted 53 days. The rebel leaders that survived the fighting were all tried and executed as an example to others.



Crime & Rebellion: the Colonies

Report presented to the Nexus Military ALIS D788.163
Quorumate by the NMI (extract) 3 3 8
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NMI_SR11491/Dept 2.2/3.7.3446

Currently available data seems to indicate that the colonies are moving towards a headlong confrontation with the authority of the Nexus Tri-Federational Alliance. Our researches indicate that the threat will come from two different directions.

The first will be from criminal elements who, in the absence of sufficient restraining policing from the colonial authorities, will gradually organize themselves into cartels possibly spanning many planetary systems. The second, and perhaps the most serious threat will come from those disaffected colonials who will increasingly resent the pressures put on them by the homeworlds and demand their independence.

Either of these anarchic forces might be capable of precipitating a situation where the homeworlds would become starved of vital resources and also put an end to the continuing and essential colonising process.

Our calculations seem to indicate that the increase in military force required to avoid

such a situation is well beyond the current resource base of the Tri-Federation.

However, these calculations were made assuming that the Nexus maintain its current method of policing. We are making certain proposals (see enclosed Addendum NMI_SR12907-x3) which would entail a radical restructuring of the colonial arm of the Nexus military by replacing planetary based forces with regionally clustered mobile forces capable of rapid deployment.



Military Control of the Colonies (3441-3462)

Entry in the Encyclopedia Irallica

Encubed Imprint 3490 (Visicube 21.4.q075)

The dramatic increase in the rate of colonisation after the invention of trans-dimensional transportation took the Nexus Military Quorumate by surprise. In an attempt to maintain its control intact a vigorous recruitment drive was initiated on the homeworlds

ALIS D788
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to allow it to meet the greatly increased demands placed on its military forces. Myriads of new marines were quickly trained and dispatched as garrisons to the new colonies. Their stratecoms were given the thankless task of keeping the peace.

The consequences of this hurriedly improvised policy were soon evident. By 3447 crime had escalated to unmanageable levels and there was hardly a single week in which some rebellion or other disturbance did not break out in one or other of the colonies. The Quorumate's policing policy was in disarray and, besides, the annual increase in the budgets assigned to the Colonial Office had become insupportable. Indeed, the extraction of tribute from the colonies to pay for these budgets became one of the main factors contributing to the unrest.

In 3448 the Quorumate started to pull its troops out of the colonies and began to concentrate them in regional centres. These centres were chosen for their proximity to important trans-dimensional trans-location points. Large bases equipped with fleets of troop transports were built on suitable moons where the low gravity made space travel economically optimal. The system was designed to allow fast redeployment of Nexus forces to

areas of unrest at a relatively low cost. Within four years the budget for the Colonial Office had fallen to a fifth of its previous level.

At this time extensive reforms were also carried out within the marine corps itself. Where as previously all recruitment had been made on the homeworlds it was now extended to the colonies themselves. Care was taken that recruits would never serve as garrisons in their local systems and a policy was instituted whereby veteran marines were retired to purpose built settlements in the new colonies. On being demobilised these veterans were given generous pensions which would hopefully insure their continuing loyalty to the Quorumate. In the following years there were to be many occasions when would-be rebellions were quashed by the local veterans taking up arms in support of their old employer.



Colonial Marine Interdiction

Squads

Report presented to the Nexus Military

Quorumate by the NCSS

ALIS E362.877

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NCSS_SR11623/CC Q4/16.8.3462

We will soon make available the detailed results of our research project NCSS_62_CC Q4 . In the interim it might be useful for us to summarise the results since you keep stressing the urgency of this study.

This department concurs with the Tiyejudis Committee's basic recommendations that the Nexus immediately reorganise a large proportion of the Marine Corps to form self-sufficient rebel/criminal interdiction units. Compcore simulations have determined that the tactical independence of these units should be set at the squad level - and not as has been hitherto thought - at cention level. Clearly this would make the reorganization more expensive than was first envisaged.

The proposal is to produce a new kind of squad containing command, medical, engineering, heavy weapons - and perhaps most importantly - communication capabilities. This could be attained with a modest investment in a retraining programme combined with a relatively straight forward equipment

development schedule. Suitable manufacturers for the specialist equipment required have already been sourced (see attached addendum)

The new Colonial Marine squads would be capable of fully independent deployment - flexible tactical handling - and be optimally suited to independent operation in both urban and rural environments.



The Use of Convict Units

Report presented to the Nexus Military

Quorumate by the NCSS

ALIS D362.84

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2	2	2
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NCSS_SR11537/CC Q3/7.2.3462

If the Tri-Federation is to hope to maintain its current level of control over the humanic community during the planned Great Push colonisation-drive it must substantially augment its forces. Various recent studies indicate

that it is unlikely that this augmentation can be achieved using traditional recruitment methods.

This department has considered numerous possible solutions of which only two seem to be practicable. The first involves a dramatic increase in the incentives offered to new recruits. The second would make some classes of criminals subject to mandatory enrollment in special convict units.

For reasons of spiralling costs the provision of incentives would become untenable if the casualties incurred during the accelerated colonisation process were even slightly higher than the predicted estimates.

The compulsory enrollment of convict units emerges as the the most plausible solution to the problem. It would certainly provide the Tri-Federation with an inexhaustible supply of recruits which could additionally sustain substantial casualties without an attendant public outcry.

In the past this policy has always been opposed on the grounds that it solved nothing since the convict units would need so

much security supervision that they would consume more manpower than they provided. Certain recent developments provide an answer to this. (Please refer to enclosed reports NCSS_SR11536/CC Z2/13.11.3461 and NCSS_SR11529/CC W2/2.6.3461¹)

Stated briefly, the first is an implant made in the subjects cranium that allows remote stimulation of both the pleasure and pain centres of the brain as well as allowing direct control of the adrenal glands. The second is the development of a systemic poison that is addictive in cerebrally complex animals and which leads to rapid neurological degeneration if a transient antidote is not frequently administered².

Either singly though preferably in tandem, these systems of control do away with the need for any supervision thus making convict units by far the most viable option currently available.



¹ these have been excluded from the present work in the interests of brevity.

² these processes are both theoretically reversible.

GLINDEX FORK

C A M P A I G N

The Assembling of the Grand Fleet

Entry in the *Encyclopedia Irallica*
(incomplete)

ALIS C799.41
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Encubed Imprint 3500 (Visicube 08.7.w275)

It was in the brain of the Master Strategist Tatuya Glindex that the essential strategies for the Glindex Fork Campaign were formulated. Even without the pressure of panhumanic opinion it is certain that the Nexus Quorumate would have adopted his plan - they had no other choice - at any time another Hivestone could appear in Panhumanic Spacetime.

The decision made the Quorumate started gathering its forces. The Grand Fleet was to be assembled in regional centres and then be brought together at the end of the year in the Trukiya System ready for the jump into Kryomek Spacetime.

Meanwhile the megacorp Pandaris Prime were commissioned to confirm their calculations by sending a probe through the Trukiya Interstice into the Xar System. This was done with extreme care for under no circumstances must the probe be detected by the Kryomek.

The megacorp proved its mastery of trans-dimensional probability mathematics when it demonstrated to the Quorumate, by means of

a compcore simulation, how the Interstices were to be closed. They had produced the first blueprints for the interstice closing equipment - the annihilator torus - a ring structure made of elements each as large as a megatropolis.

The contract to build the gargantuan annihilator toruses was put out to tender. Nobody was surprised when the Hajunka bid was successful - the megacorp was already famous for building diman dreadnoughts - the largest single structures ever built by man. Work on the Trukiya Torus began a month later.

By the time that the Grand Fleet was beginning to assemble in orbit around the planets and moons of the Trukiya System, Pandaris Prime could announce that the Xar Diman was open into Kryomek Spacetime.

The time taken to muster the Grand Fleet was underestimated. As the end of the year approached only half of forces had arrived at the mustering point - the Shiva and the Qatar were there with hundreds of ancillary craft but the Baal and the Khott were still in other star clusters picking up troops.

Time was running out. Anxiety grew within the Quorumate each day with the anticipation that a hivestone would arrive

bringing the Kryomek pestilence with it and disaster to all its plans.

On the 19th of Decarax, thirteen days before the new year, Admiral Chandurian was appointed Grand Stratecom³. He was given his final orders in the Council Chamber of the Quorumate itself. He left Nihiri to join the fleet. Twelve days later the Shiva and the Qatar set off for the Trukiya Interstice. They reached it safely and made the jump through the Xar Diman uneventfully - materializing in Kryomek Spacetime on the 4th day of the New Year. The Baal and the Khott were to follow on as quickly as they could.



The First Days

Extract from "The War of the Two Gates"
(en. imp. 3505)

ALIS C799.4
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1 3 B

memoirs of Stratecom Tiyeka Chur 3446 - 3529

The moment that the gravitational eddies subsided from the jump through the Xar Diman our two dreadnoughts began releasing

hundreds of probes to map out the local quadrant of spacetime. On the bridge of the Shiva Grand Stratecom Chandurian was staring into a holochart that was almost blank⁴ save for the pin-point images of our own ships at its centre. As the hours passed the holochart became increasingly more detailed as the data flooded into the ship's compcore from the probes.

I think that it was when he was convinced that there were no enemy fleets within a standard radius hypersphere (?) of his fleet that he gave the order that would start the release of the remote probes. Barely perceptible, transient gravitational shudders began pulsing like a heart at the ship's centre as probes were catapulted one after the other into the vicinity of several local star systems by the ship's spacefolding equipment. The probes dropped TDC boosters as they materialized near Karanada, Hegada, Jang'ada and Bayuda. Gradually more and more of them came on line so that the Shiva's compcore could start building data maps of the distant star systems as well as the local one.

By that time several of the probes travelling in local space were approaching the I-Class planet Xar itself. From the faintest image it transformed slowly in the holochart

to become clearer and clearer as faraway the probes slowly orbited it mapping out the surface.

Before our eyes we saw a grey green world emerge spotted here and there with the blue of water. Chandurian leaned forward peering at a tiny violet spot on the surface concern written all over his face. He commanded the compcore to enlarge the image. Suddenly Xar was there hanging in the air. The violet spot grew more livid and as each probe scan crossed it it grew larger spreading like fungus across the image. I knew that the probes had been programmed to scan for the specific emissions that were peculiar to Kryomek hives - it was one of the things that we had learned from the hivestone incursion⁵. The compcore had been tuned to display these in violet.

The fleet stayed on a heading for Xar. Later that day Chandurian called a meeting of his commanders. We huddled around the holochart our faces lit by its lurid colours. Quickly the strategists called up the by then quite detailed images of the neighbouring star systems, planets and moons pointing out the violet eyes with their surrounding arterial masses that indicated the solid presence of the Kryomek.

³ this was the first time that this rank was used.

⁴ there was some data which had been obtained by the Pandaris Prime probe that preceded the expedition into the Xar System.

⁵ see "The Hivestone Incursion Crisis" KRYOMEK

Last of all they called up images of our two main targets - Xar and Bayuda. Xar was by far the most detailed - it was perhaps the least infested system that had been displayed. Bayuda was altogether different. Almost every planet and moon in the Bayuda System was ulcerated with the now familiar telltale hive signs.

The strategists made comparisons with the data that had been salvaged from Admiral Mankturian's ill fated expedition. It was beyond doubt that the System had seen a vast influx of Kryomek in the past few years.

Most alarming of all they pointed to an insignificant violet speck - enlarged it, and then again until its shape could clearly be discerned. There were those there apart from me that had seen something like it before. There were mutters of "...Hivestone!"

Chandurian raised his hand for silence. He told us that it was imperative that we destroy it before the Kryomek launched it into panhumanic spacetime - but that it would be the greatest folly to attempt an attack until we had been reinforced by the Baal and the Khott. He called up the image of Xar. Pointing at it he told us that there would be our main base for the campaign. He described the setting up of the Xar Exclusion

Zone which would protect our bridgehead as well as our way back home.



Damage Report: the Bayuda Torus

Transmission sent to Hajunka by one of its
operatives subsequent to an attack on the
annihilator torus by a Kryomek force.

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Encubed Imprint 3500 (Visicube 03.3.w93)

The first thing that needs to be stated is that the Torus⁶ has sustained far less damage than was at first feared. It is true that two of the compressor stacks have been knocked out of alignment and that his has twisted the foundation ring. I quickly judged that the shear on the ring seemed to be located at two distinct, local points and the ring-core appeared to be substantially unaffected.

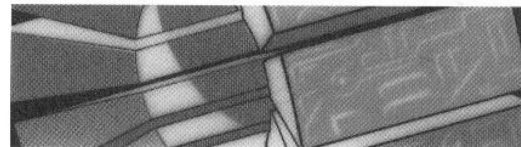
To confirm this I felt it would be best to check the ring myself. As I had suspected the core of the ring was only nominally damaged and once some repairs had been effected along its length I was able to proceed along it by magnoshunt. The lateness of this report is due to the delay occasioned

by those repairs which meant that I could only complete the full circuit of the ring in five hours - four times the standard for the run. In that time I did however stop off to examine the coupling pylons for the two damaged stacks. Only one of these will require substantial reconstruction - minor repairs will however be required for all six.

The attack will in the end probably necessitate an additional 30-40 day extension to the completion schedule. This is of course dependent on the PP⁷ operatives arriving in time to effect the realignment of the two damaged stacks.

Currently six compressor stacks are in place and coupled to the ring. The seventh stack has now arrived and is being manoeuvred into place. I have ordered that it be attached one position further on so that this will not be affected by the twisting in the ring. Just before the attack the first spatial compression test was carried out successfully even though it demonstrated that the alignment parameters will have to be tightened up.

If we sit on this hard we should be able to deliver to the military the ability to close the interstice within a time frame that is acceptable to their requirements.



6 The annihilator torus being built to close the Bayuda (?) interstice

7 Pandaris Prime - the megacorp whose mathematical theorists had designed the annihilator torus

S W A R M S

FIRST ENCOUNTERS

Master of War

Extract from "The War of the Two Gates"
(en. imp. 3505)

ALIS C799.4
9 A 6
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memoirs of Stratecom Tiyeka Chur 3446 - 3529

Few men in the horror of those battles could fail to feel awe in the face of the Kryomek. The terror of their assault was something difficult to withstand even by those who there were veterans of many campaigns. But in the midst of that carnage I saw a vision of death - the sinuous, sinister dance of that lord of battles, the warmaster.

Rearing its curving carapace like an ancient helm of bronze above the battle it swayed. In the tumult of war it issued the silent and inexorable commands that made the seething mass of Kryomek monsters move as mere extensions of its controlling mind. The noxious miasmas billowed and ebbed as it played its spectral music: as complex as any symphony. It was well named; a master of war - a grandmaster of this chess game of death. The alien channels of its mind a perfect machine in which there was room for nothing but the strategies of annihilation: no thought; no compassion; no emotion. Cool, calculating, selfless in the pursuit of the malice of its species: the perfect general.



Miasmic Shielding

Report presented to the Nexus Military
Quorumate by the NMI
attached to a technical study
NMI etc

ALISB587.3867
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This abstract is only intended to give the briefest description of what is by its very nature a complex, technical matter.

The study itself is the culmination of many investigative projects and collative studies - many of which were carried out in far from ideal conditions⁸.

The Kryomek battlefield miasma is a fully developed shielding technology of great refinement and subtlety. It seems likely that it developed initially as a means of masking control substance transmission⁹ by enemy warmasters in the context of the constant warfare between the Great Hives¹⁰.

On the battlefield it manifests itself as a chemical 'fog' whose composition and structure ranges wildly across a number of chemical indices. At first the miasmic cloud was

⁸ ie. on the battlefield

⁹ since it has been determined that when the particular 'hive flavour' is imitated lower caste Kryomek (ie. helions and warriors) will obey any warmaster's control substances whatever its Hive of origin.

assumed to originate from controlling warmasters themselves. It has now been determined that in fact the cloud is the 'sum' of all the emanations made by the Kryomek within the dominating influence of a warmaster. This realization was confirmed by the discovery in Kryomek of all castes of implanted chemico-synthesis organs.

On-going anatomical studies are still struggling to fully comprehend the nature of Kryomek bio-implants in general - not only how they function but also how they relate to each other and how they are controlled. Nevertheless we can reasonably surmise that the capacity for producing the miasma is potentially inherent¹¹ in all castes since implanted 'miasma organs' have been found in every specimen so far dissected.

On the battlefield these organs are stimulated by a warmaster using its control substances. The resultant cloud is dynamic in not only time but space - being denser in some areas than others and changing constantly. Transient chemical gradients in the cloud are minutely manipulated by the warmaster so that the cloud is selectively transparent to its particular control substance emissions. If one takes into account that it is estimated that the basic 'carrier' signal for these control emissions

could possibly range over at least a trillion distinct channels, and also that every few seconds a warmaster is capable of 'tuning' its carrier signal to anyone of these, one begins to see how statistically unlikely it is that a rival warmaster could superimpose its control through the cloud.

However, although work is being carried out to see whether it could be possible to intercept or even mimic the control emissions, clearly it is the 'sensory blocking' nature of the miasmic cloud that most affects human military personnel. Very little reliable data concerning Kryomek sensory organs has as yet been determined though it seems likely that warmasters at least might have access to a very wide range of the electromagnetic spectrum. What is certainly unquestionable is that the miasmic cloud becomes transparent to narrow band electromagnetic radiation so chaotically and so rapidly that it has an inevitable 'blinding' effect on our personnel no matter the imaging equipment provided.

Presently, imaging equipment is being developed that would allow a dynamic frequency change in response to the rapid changes in miasmic cloud transparency. However, this current study concludes that recent battlefield reports indicate that these

developments might already being outpaced by the Kryomek. It seems likely that the Kryomek have become increasingly aware of our sensory limitations and that they are modifying their miasmic clouds by implementing ever more sophisticated sensory blocking strategies.



Chitin, Markings & Armour

ALISC587.3863

Extract from pre-battle briefing for

1 3 A

Nexus personnel during the Glindex

1 2 1

Fork campaign

1 E 7

28.10.92

It would be misleading and even dangerous for me to suggest to you that we have anything more than a vague grasp of the bug's armour technologies - there has been little time to do anything like an exhaustive analysis; the stuff is all alien, and anyway, its not going to be a big surprise to you when I say that the techies just can't get enough

¹¹ in fact certain 'naturally occurring' organelles have been identified that might have originally been used for producing a much weaker and more localized miasma.

uncorroded samples. Saying this we have learned something.

In previous briefings I have often made a big fuss about how different their weapon technologies are from ours - and basically that it was all sort of part of their bodies - somatogenic is the techie's buzz word. You've seen the bug weapons - and that they're obviously some sort of modifications of their basic organism and not natural - but you're not to be blamed if you thought that their carapace shells and all that colour marking stuff was something they had from the egg. On the other hand a lot of your bicenturions were reporting things like that you guys thought that the blue ones seemed more resistant to fire and the black ones were not. Well it turns out that you're right - at least to some extent.

I would stress at this point that a lot of this is guess-work - that now the techies are going to get all serious on the bug's colours and stuff - and that it will probably turn out in the end that the stripes and things are just the bugs being artistic or something! One thing we always have to be careful of is making big assumptions about the bugs - after all, in spite of all the surgical digging around with the plastolene gloves, the techies have not yet

managed to find anything that they could be certain was an eye or anything even close. They could be blind. They could see from one end of the electromagnetic spectrum to the other. Who knows!

You all know that bug carapace - and bug almost everything else - is basically chitin - not exactly the same stuff as what we normally mean by that word - but close enough! This basic stuff varies from a reddish purple to a purple-black in colour. It's strong but it won't stop a machine pistol bullet. The techies think that the redder the chitin the more it is reinforced - though conversely they've found that some of the really dark stuff is covered in hundreds of thin layers composed of sheets of microscopic filaments set at angles to each other. This particular armour adaptation is probably resistant to molecule blades.

The other main, easily seen armour type is the blue-turquoise variety. The techies have subjected fragments of turquoise reinforced chitin to our most powerful acids and the worst damage caused was some brownish spots! The bluish covering may be alive being composed of a complex of engineered bacterial phages and fungal mycelia - which may or may not mean something to some of you.

What's really important is that this armour type is also quite resistant to fire and radiation though more vulnerable to impact weapons.

The spongy muscle bundles and non-chitinous tissue are normally brightly coloured. We don't know why! Bug serum is, as you have reason to all know well, a sort of greenish grey and almost transparent - so that's not the reason. The bundles and things are often flaming red or iridescent green. The techies are working on a hunch that these have been treated with some sort of flexible armouring agent - certainly the exposed bundles are much tougher than the internal ones.

Unfortunately - after all is said and done - there are other finishes that have all kinds of exotic properties: elasticity, hardness, anti-corrosive, acid resistance, anti-porosity and so on. The problem with these is that with most of them you could only tell them apart under a microscope - and even the ones you can't you still have to get pretty close - close enough to touch with your hand. This may not be one of the techie's most useful pieces of information!



WARZONE

BAYUDA MANTURAX SECTOR

The Talos MS

by Eyagada Bibarina-Tlesh
(cyberneticist)

ALISB359.398
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Letter appearing in Scientific Xardillian
(Extract) Jideva 3494 IST

In response to Dr. D. Tagahada's arguments in his article "Cybernetics & the Kryomek War" in last month's issue of your periodical I have this to say:

It was the development by Cerebex of its new ACM¹² X6 and not Ksirus' Talos MkII chassis that has made it possible for the Agarax Corporation to produce its new Talos MS CBU. It is true that Ksirus¹³ have been working on the MkII chassis since 3491¹⁴. It is also true that Cerebex only started development of the X6 in 3492. What Dr. Tagahada evidently did not know however was that the X5 ACM with all its cooling and shielding systems could not be accommodated in the much smaller frame of the Talos MkII - the MkII chassis necessitates the far more compact X6 ACM to work at all!

What I would also like to point out to Dr. Tagahada is that the reason that the new Talos MS is enjoying such high initial sales to the Quorumate is not in fact its 'human size' but rather the new features that are built into

its sophisticated X6. These new features include not only a greater degree of cybernetic isolation¹⁵ but also (paradoxically) they allow the units to be cybernetically networked so that they can function on the battlefield in teams much as the Kryomek seem to manage to do. Surely it is because the Quorumate hope that the MS will be capable of effectively countering the Kryomek that has led them to buy so many of the units.



The Karanada Incident I

Extract from "The Karanada Incident"

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by Tagena Tetari (war correspondent)

First Published in "Our Times" 8.2.95

On the 24th of Muja last year five centions of the new Talos MS CBUs massacred two full strength myriads of Nexus marines.

It is a sign of our times that it has been possible for the Quorumate to cover up this disaster for so long.

¹² Active Cyberneural Matrix
¹³ a subsidiary of the Agarax Corporation

¹⁴ apparently in response to Quorumate requests for a human sized CBU that could use the standard human battlefield delivery systems

¹⁵ capacity for independent action

Media censorship is nothing new. I have been reporting from the Bayuda-Manturax war zone since 93 when the whole show began. Like everyone else I struggle daily with the Quorumate's campaign of misinformation. But this is different. Sure, they always report their disasters as if they were minor mishaps - a cention lost here a few more there - after all it is war! They always play it down - make it seem routine - unthreatening..but they do report something.

The 'Karanada Incident' is different - it was completely hushed up. There was not a single report - not a mention in passing - not a whisper leaked out.

I bet that I'm not the only one that went pale when the rumours started spreading. Which of us had not stood talking to a bunch of marines while one of those Talos MS was somewhere nearby in the background? Sure they were menacing - they're made to look that way - and we knew they were dangerous - why else build them. But we thought they were on our side - under someone's control.

The old, standard Talos CBU's came through the dimans with the Shiva - the first dreadnought into Kryomek spacetime. They were new then and I made a big effort to see one - I managed to sneak in on one of the

briefings that the marines were being given about them. I was curious. The first one I clapped eyes on gave me the shivers. The thing you notice first when you stand near one is that the bottom of its 'rib-cage' is on a level with your eyes. They are big! Real big! Then you look up and see the slit where its eyes should be - sometimes you look straight into the muzzle of a rotary pistol where the mouth should be. Seeing a stationary talos unit is nothing to seeing them moving. You're standing some way off and you figure "it sure weighs a lot - bet it moves real slow". Then it moves - smoothly, quickly - with an absolute minimum of movement it moves - faster than a man. In a way it's almost beautiful - elegant - but as it slides perfectly towards you with only the slightest click or hiss from its joints it takes guts to stop yourself running away from it.

I think that was everyone's reaction at first - fear - unease. But then the troopers started returning from the battles knowing that many times it was only a talos that had stood between them and annihilation - and then the attitude changed.

So when they announced the arrival of the new talos - the Talos MkII MS - I expected more of the same except a bit more impressive.

I was wrong -they weren't - if anything they were less impressive. For one thing they were smaller - not much bigger than a man. For another they now had acquired human-like movement. In fact they looked a bit like metal troopers - except for their heads and that they were painted - red for ferrous rich terrains - white for ice planets etc - like the corresponding marine camouflage.

They were put into action almost immediately - going down in twisters like the regular troopers. Like the regulars they operated in squads. When the men came back from that first hive assault they were full of respect for the Talos MS. In operation they were as fearsome as the MkIs but they found that because of their size they were easier to relate to. Soon the MkIs were already being talked of as being obsolete.

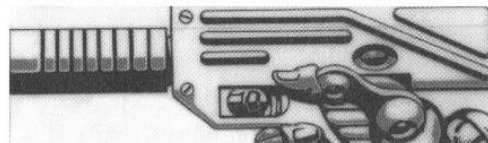
When a new hive was located on Karanada-Omicron the new talos units must have seemed the obvious choice to bear the brunt of the fighting. The fleet jumped into the Karanada System and sent the new talos down in strength to support a couple of myriads of marines.

I found it easy to believe the reports that the mission had run into unexpectedly stiff opposition. The Kryomek were constantly

seeding new hives inside the Exclusion Perimeter and this kind of 'mopping up' operation was a common occurrence - with all its attendant hazards. What I had difficulty in believing was the eventual casualty list. Even the Quorumate could not hide for long the fact that there was not a single survivor. There had always been a few who returned - however virulent the Kryomek attack - there were so many different lines of defence that we always managed to get some of them out when we saw a massacre brewing. For a few weeks there was frightened was talk of a new Kryomek super-weapon.

Shortly afterwards, when the new Talos started disappearing, my suspicions were roused.

It took many months of tedious detective work before I eventually converted those suspicions into hard facts. The truth was very simple...**we had massacred our own boys!**



16 Nexus High Command (Bayuda Manturax Sector)
17 a measurement of hive development on the Yihtar Scale.

The Karanada Incident II

Emergency Report sent to the Nexus

Military Quorumate

from the NHC4¹⁶ by TDC

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NHC4_SR9855/24.6.94

From: Yahegua, Grand Stratecom, Dreadnought Shiva, Karanada-Omicron, Bayuda Manturax.

To: Nexus Quorumate, Nihiri, Solarica Hail!

Six days ago information was brought to me that indicated that the Kryomek had managed to seed three hives in the Karanada System. The hive on Karanada-Omicron had reached YS 5¹⁷ and might soon reach YS 6. I judged that it must be immediately terminated. I took the Shiva and the Medusa into the Karanada System.

Today we launched the first attack. Anticipating that the Kryomek already had large numbers of Warriors I made the decision to send in three centions of Talos MS to support the two myriads of human personnel. Analysis of battlefield performance of the new Talos from eight separate landings had led me to believe that they were operating substantially more effectively than the standard Talos units.

The force located the hive and used a standard approach pattern. The initial reports indicated that the operation was proceeding well within normal casualty parameters. Then something went badly wrong. Initial data suggested that the Kryomek had made an unexpected and overpowering counter-attack. Certainly back on the Shiva we were seeing an alarming increase in the casualty gradient. With increasing speed we lost first the squad-links and then the cention-links. Before the myriad links went down we received some level-7 encrypted transmissions.

Reconnaissance scans of the battle zone indicate that there are no human survivors. I ordered an immediate compcore decryption of the last two myriad transmissions.

I have these transmissions in my hand. Apart from myself only Admiral Xarungis and Planetary Stratecom Hirek have any knowledge of them.

These transmissions reveal that our two myriads were annihilated, not as it seemed at first by the Kryomek but by the three centions of Talos MS. Without a lot more detailed analysis we can only guess at what happened. We currently believe that one or perhaps more than one of the Talos MS suffered cyberneural damage - as you know this does

sometimes occur with the Mk I's. We suspect that it was the cyber-networking between the units that somehow or other caused the effects of the cyberneural damage to be passed from one unit to the other.

In short we may have suffered from a flash event of universal cyberneural damage. I have sent coded instructions to all Nexus commanders in the Bayuda-Manturax theatre to isolate their Talos MS Units until further notice.

I await your instructions.



The Kryomek Counter-Attack

Entry in the Encyclopedia Irallica (incomplete)

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Encubed Imprint 3500 (Visicube 05.9.q554)

With the benefit of hindsight it can be seen that the Kryomek announced their great counter-attack long before it actually materialized. In the period of time between 3491 and 3494 the Kryomek breached the

Exclusion Perimeter no less than two hundred times. Of these incursions most were merely probes many of which managed to seed planets within the Perimeter with hives. Only once, in 3492, did the Kryomek launch a major attack by throwing a hivestone right into the middle of the Exclusion Zone. This attack was repulsed with some difficulty. The rest of the time the Nexus forces were constantly being required to detect and destroy the seeded hives. The incidence of these incursions was constantly subjected to comp-core analysis in a bid to find a pattern. Nothing of statistical significance arose from the data - the Kryomek seedings seemed to be completely random.

The reason that no pattern was detected was because the analysis was being performed on the wrong data. It was not the frequency of the attacks that held significance but rather their composition.

As early as 3492 marines were reporting that many of the Kryomek they were now encountering 'looked different'. This was ignored. At the time it was thought, wrongly, that all Kryomek were basically the same. Persistent rumours circulated for months just prior to the attack of great shadowy monstrosities that many swore they had seen.

Along with the other sightings this evidence was dismissed as the ravings of the battle weary.

Unnoticed by the theatre strategoms the weaker alpha-strain Kryomek were gradually being replaced by the more virulent beta and gamma strains. Amongst these there were, almost certainly, a small number of the huge battlefield swarmmasters. Now it seems likely that the Kryomek were testing the human defences and preparing their assault.

When it came it was almost irresistible. The attack was spearheaded by two hivestones. The first was thrown into the Bayuda System while the second breached the Xar exclusion zone. The hivestones threatened the two interstices in these systems - threatening to close the only two gateways back to pan-humanic spacetime.

Grand Strategom Yahegua¹⁸ fearing that the Kryomek might manage to slip through the dimans into panhumania or that the Nexus fleet might be trapped in the Bayuda-Manturax Cluster cut off from possible reinforcement from human spacetime - ordered all her forces to make an immediate assault of the hivestone in the Bayuda System.

She was gambling on Glindex's hypothesis¹⁹ that the Kryomek did not have the

¹⁸ the Nexus supreme commander in the Bayuda-Manturax Sector



capacity to detect the presence of an interstice - she hoped that the undefended Xar Portal would thus be hidden from the Kryomek.

By the time that her five dreadnoughts jumped into the Bayuda System it was already overrun by the swarms from the invading hivestone. The annihilator torus had already been damaged.

Swarm kites assaulted them in great milling clouds. These were eventually overcome by the combined fire of the dreadnoughts and its squadrons of fighters - but only at a terrible cost - the carnage was worse than anything the Nexus had yet faced. The Kryomek were using new weapons of awesome power.

Though the swarm fleets were annihilated they managed to screen the hivestone long enough for it to enter the interstice. The entry into the diman was effected with such imprecision that the resulting perturbation of spacetime sent gravity waves crashing through the entire system. All the dreadnoughts were affected. Bad as this was it was nothing to the destruction of the annihilator torus. In its building it had consumed countless lives and a vast flood of materials for years - and it had been close to completion.

The interstice portal was open and the gate that was to close it was shattered.

Once the gravity tsunami had subsided sufficiently to allow electromagnetic communication, Yahegua on board her flagship the Shiva received a mass of reports from the admirals of her fleet. The other dreadnoughts were all temporarily disabled. The Baal and the Medusa were suffering from multiple instrument failures. The Qatar was still overrun with Kryomek. The Khott was badly holed having suffered particularly badly from bioacidic attacks - its crew were struggling to reinforce its bulkheads against the massive loss of atmospheric gases. Only the Shiva was relatively unaffected. A few hours would be enough time to patch her together.

Yahegua was faced with a terrible dilemma. She knew that the other swarmfleets must be approaching and that if they arrived before the dreadnoughts had been repaired they would surely overwhelm them. A message from the Rama on its way to rendezvous with the rest of the fleet decided the issue. She handed the Shiva over to Admiral Xarungis and ordered him to follow the hivestone into panhumanic spacetime through the nearby interstice. She remained behind to await the Rama. With it she would try and

hold the Kryomek long enough to prepare her fleet to deny them entry to the interstice.

Meanwhile the Shiva made the jump through the diman into the Maktor Cluster only to find that the Hivestone it was following had materialized in the Solaric Cluster instead. Xarungis had to decide whether he was going to follow it. Panhumanic Spacetime was turned upside down. A barrage of panic-stricken messages assailed him from every side.

Without further ado he assumed the position of Grand Stratecom of the Solaric and Maktorian theatres of war - there was no other choice open to him - all the other Nexus Grand Stratecoms were with their dreadnoughts back in the Bayuda-Manturax Sector.

Fearing that the Kryomek might close access to the Solaric Cluster he decided that he would have to follow immediately. He signalled the Dreadnought Titanos to join him - it was the only dreadnought left in panhumanic spacetime. Fortunately it was currently nearby - within the Maktorian Cluster. He gathered what reinforcements he could and then took the Shiva back to the interstice and ordered the Titanos to follow him as quickly as it could. He made the jump through the Diman into the Solaric Cluster.

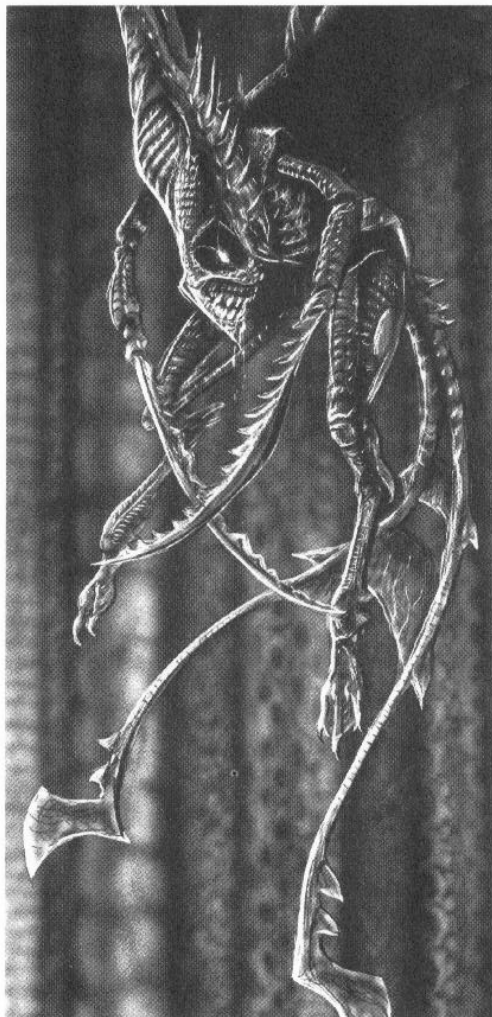
His strategy was to hold the Zaphiri Interstice long enough for the Titanos to follow him. With the two dreadnoughts together he might have a chance to destroy the hivestone - he was counting on the Hivestone being severely weakened from its massive losses in the Battle of Bayuda. In the short term he would have to wait helplessly as the reports flooded in from planets under assault by the Kryomek. They were seeding man's home star cluster with hives.

Xarungis attempted to harry the hivestone but he could not risk an all-out confrontation. He was in hourly contact with the Quorumate on Nihiri. Coded transcripts flew between the Nexus High command and their last hope, the Shiva.

At last the Titanos arrived. Xarungis knew that the only hope lay in the fact that the already weakened hivestone was weakening itself further by its feverish attempt to seed as many of the human worlds as possible.

However, his resources too were limited: the Shiva was still recovering from its part in the Battle of Bayuda and the Titanos was one of the first two dreadnoughts to be built - it was 25 years old²⁰. Nevertheless he ordered the two dreadnoughts to prepare to engage the hivestone.

²⁰ The Titanos and her sister ship the Astarte (destroyed by the Kryomek in the previous hivestone incursion) were actually delivered to the Quorumate in 3468 - so they were 26 years old.



The battle was fought near the Iyegedi System and even though the hivestone was very weak the battle was almost lost. The Titanos was boarded and later the Shiva was forced to send a myriad of cyclos over to her to help destroy the Kryomek invaders. In her lower decks they found the beginnings of a hive.

During the next two years Xarungis fought a battle against time as he used all the resources available to him to exterminate the Kryomek hives that had been seeded by the hivestone. They were everywhere - decimating humanity. The colonising work of a hundred years was undone in less than a few months. Some of the oldest human colonies were completely obliterated by the Kryomek plague.

The Quorumate's greatest fear was that enough of the hives would reach phase 6 and that the Solaric cluster would become hopelessly overrun. As it happened only three hives were discovered to have reached that level of maturity but this did not stop a mass migration of people fleeing to other star clusters. In fact the Quorumate itself evacuated Nihiri - its base since it was founded - and moved to a new base in the Maktor System where it could better maintain control over both the Solaric and the Bayuda-Manturax Theatres.

In the Bayuda-Manturax Sector, Yahegua had finally managed after a gargantuan struggle to reinstate the Exclusion Perimeter.

The Kryomek had been repulsed but in the aftermath of the conflict the Solaric Cluster was so weakened that it lost forever its primacy in human affairs. The Quorumate survived but its forces were severely depleted and its name had lost some of its previous lustre.

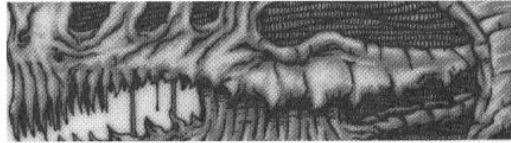
In the year following the Kryomek attack civil unrest started reaching alarming proportions throughout the whole of panhumanic spacetime. The Quorumate had fewer resources with which to control the situation and those that it did it was using to shore up the defences of the Exclusion Perimeter. There were alarming signs that the Kryomek were planning another offensive. Logic dictated that the Kryomek must be resisted at all costs.

Throughout 3495 the Quorumate resorted to a series of measures that in effect put panhumanic spacetime on a war footing. The unrest turned to open conflict in the streets of a hundred megatropolises. In 3496 panhumanic spacetime was put under martial law.

The Quorumate was forced to divert valuable military resources internally to

maintain order and to safeguard supplies to the warzone.

In 3497 began the Great Rebellion that was to cost humanity such a heavy price.



The Great Rebellion

by Yadis Maruganya, 3.11.3518 IST

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Article appearing in "Historica", Tihirix 3519
a Maktorian holomag

Xarungis was taking the dreadnought Shiva back into the Kryomek warzone when the widespread disturbances broke out that were to be called the Great Rebellion. The news was brought to him on the fortress moon Xiteh where he was conferring with the Nexus Military Quorumate while his ship was being refitted. It is said that he received the news while he was standing staring down at the burnt face of the planet Tau-Maktor²¹, and that he was heard to say under his breath that 'this was the beginning of the end'.

Whether this stories true or not, it was certainly true that even the most inept of military analysts would have been able to predict that the Quorumate, struggling as it was to meet its commitments to the Kryomek War as well as having to police a thousand worlds, was in no position to easily put down a wide-spread rebellion.

The Exclusion Perimeter was being maintained with great difficulty by Yahegua but her resources were stretched to breaking point - brilliant strategist that she was she still desperately needed the Shiva to give her a mobile reserve. She had been suing the Quorumate for some time to have it returned to her and had only recently been successful.

But in panhumanic spacetime the Shiva was the only force left that was powerful enough to overawe the rebels²². For the past few years she had been busy exterminating the multitude of hives seeded throughout the Solaric Cluster by the Kryomek incursion of 3494. Before that she had been the flagship of Yahegua herself in the Warzone and before that she had had the glory of having saved humanity by destroying the first Hivestone. She was probably the Quorumate's most potent symbol of power.

The Quorumate deliberated its response knowing that the Shiva might possibly be crucial to both areas of conflict. In the end the decision was made for them when the unrest spilt over from the Krellian Ring into the Bargavus System threatening to cut the link between the Ring and the rest of panhumanic spacetime. Two days later fully refitted and with a large contingent of marine and cyclo myriads as well as cybernetic and armoured support, the Shiva left its orbit around Xiteh and made her first dimensional jump across the Maktor Cluster heading towards the Bargavus System.

Xarungis had been appointed Grand Stratecom in the Maktor Cluster and had been given similar powers in the Krellian Ring. His orders were to avoid bloodshed if at all possible but to use whatever force was necessary to suppress the unrest.

Perhaps Xarungis lost control of his troops or perhaps both he and they were too used to fighting the Kryomek. The Bargavus campaign became a blood bath. At one point it even looked as if the Grand Iralllic Library²³ might be destroyed.

News of the atrocities committed by the Nexus troops spread into and around the Krellian Ring. Always the most anarchic por-

²¹ Destroyed in the Hive Incursion Crisis (see Kryomek)

²² save for the dreadnought Titanos - but this was currently occupied with completing the extermination of the seeded hives in the Solaric cluster.

²³ This had only recently relocated from Irallia.

tion of humanity the Krellians were not cowed but instead the news inflamed them further and the unrest turned suddenly into a vast conflagration. By the time the Shiva came through the Trans-Maktorian Diman more than half of the worlds in the Krellian Ring were in full and open rebellion against the Nexus Quorumate.

For several months the Shiva appeared and disappeared like a wraith. Xarungis resorted to violent reprisals when his threats went unheeded and to outright terror when the violence did not bring the results he wanted. In a series of lightning campaigns brilliant in their audacity, Xarungis slowly broke the back of the rebellion. By this time he had acquired the epithet "the Wolf". It is possible that he had already become insane. His atrocities lost even the excuse of purpose -

he began to wreak terrible revenge even upon those that had surrendered to him. The rebellion was made lean and desperate by his terrorism.

Xarungis the Wolf was undone by his madness. He became careless in his arrogance and finally when the Shiva was making a punitive attack on Yetagana the Rebels managed to board and take the dreadnought. Xarungis escaped with several of his strategists and some centions of elite troops loyal to him. But having lost the single most powerful weapon in the Ring to the Rebellion he was reduced to relative powerlessness.

The Quorumate had overlooked his excesses because they too were desperate. The Rebellion had spread throughout the Maktorian Cluster and the war against the Kryomek was not going well. Xarungis was their only chance. With the loss of the Shiva

the Quorumate lost all hope of putting down the Rebellion.

Seeing panhumanic spacetime slipping into hopeless anarchy, anticipating the collapse of the Nexus forces in the Kryomek warzone if they were not supplied with men and materials and fearing a Kryomek incursion that would result in the extinction of humanity the Quorumate abdicated their role in the government of the panhumanic society.

In 3507 the Quorumate passed the Statutes of Disestablishment and passed the ruling power to the megacorps in exchange for their treaties of feudal loyalty.



SWAT Hivestone Incursion Units

HEAVY HIVESTONE INCURSION UNITS

(NOTE : These are the Quorumates shock troops, the best lead and equipped, and more than a match for any other units)

1. HEADQUARTERS AND COMMAND UNITS

Up to 1 Headquarters Squad consisting of
HQ Squad 2 SWAT Officers (V,E : AC5 :
MP SMG CR GR)
3 SWAT NCO's (V,E : AC5 : Any SWAT issue)
Guard Squad 1 SWAT NCO (V,E : AC5 :
Any SWAT issue)

2. SWAT INFANTRY

Up to 3 SWAT Infantry HQ's each consisting of

1 SWAT Officer (V,E : AC5 : Any SWAT issue)
4 SWAT Infantry (V,E : AC5 : Any SWAT issue)
Up to 9 SWAT Squads each consisting of
1 SWAT HVY WPN (V,E : AC5 : Any SWAT issue)
4 SWAT Infantry (V,E : AC5 : Any SWAT issue)
Up to 3 SWAT Heavy Weapons Squads
each consisting of
1 SWAT NCO (V,E : AC5 : Any SWAT issue)
4 SWAT HVY WPNS (V,E : AC5 :
Any SWAT issue)

3. TWISTERS

These may be purchased as required

4. TRANSPORT

APC's may be purchased as required

5. HEAVY ATTACK UNIT

Up to 3 Attack HQ Squads each consisting of
2 STRIDERS, or 2 RAVENS, or 2 AFV's
Up to 6 Attack Squads each consisting of
2 STRIDERS, or 2 RAVENS, or 2 AFV's
Up to 6 Assault units each consisting of
2 COLOSSUS

SWAT ISSUE WEAPONS

Heavy Weapons (RR HF CG)
Infantry (GR CR LF MP SMG GL SG)

HERETICS

The Disestablishment of the Nexus Military Quorumate

by Parabada Tiryenqu

ALIS B799.64

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Article appearing in the 3508 IST Indavas issue of "The New Corporation"

Following last year's shock announcement from the Nexus Quorumate that it was to stand down as the legitimate governing head of Panhumania political and metaeconomic developments have been fast and furious. In fact the previous structures are being replaced or remodelled so quickly that the 'old systems' are already looking historically distant. The problem is that though all the traditional panhumanic power balances have been dismantled it is not really certain what they are being replaced with. Perhaps it is time that the business community consider where things might be going.

First of all there is the matter of the "Statutes of Disestablishment". These do not represent as is commonly believed a complete abdication of power by the Quorumate. They do however represent a dramatic climb down. After passing the Statutes the Quorumate divested itself of the administrative responsibility for the vast majority of Panhumania. Instead it retains merely the

"overlordship" of Panhumania and those star systems that are immediately pertinent to the continuing of the war against the Kryomek²⁴. Incidentally the Quorumate also lays claim to the Bayuda-Manturax Meta-Cluster. The rest of Panhumania is divided by the Statutes into "domains" each of which is given over to one or other of the megacorps to administer on behalf of the Quorumate. The idea that the megacorps are going into "partnership" with the Quorumate is now appearing to be a fiction - the Statutes effectively give the megacorps complete freedom of action within their 'domains'. Only within the domains of the Quorumate itself is it likely that Irallie Law will be maintained intact.

Secondly there is the matter of the compulsory "Contributions" that the Megacorps have agreed to make to the Quorumate in return for their domains. These contributions (which are really a sort of tribute) consist of materials and resources which the Quorumate need to fight the Kryomek. This year Agarax gave the Quorumate three myriads of its T83 cybernetic battlefield units - while Hajunka presented them with three new Moloch Class Dreadnoughts. These represent a vast undertaking by the respective megacorps. If the 'contributions' for the next

²⁴ the Maktor System and the Viralli Cluster - both of which include the interstices that open into the Bayuda-Manturax Meta-Cluster.

few years are on this sort of level then we can expect to see big political and legal changes within each megacorp's domains as it struggles to extract the tribute contributions from its subjects. With no external protection the inhabitants of these regions are going to find that they are effectively 'owned' by their lord, the megacorp.

Thirdly there are already signs of friction between the megacorps. Bitarkis' announcement last month that it was 'regionalizing' Hajunka's subsidiary the Manguqa Works in the Avakrellian System is possibly a sign of things to come. Hajunka has not yet retaliated - but how long will Bitarkis' subsidiary Bubaratek continue trading located as it is within the Hajunka domain?

All the evidence suggests that as long as the megacorps continue to pay the Quorumate tribute they will be left alone. Metaconomic pressures and the rivalry that already exists between the megacorps will push them into a ruthless exploitation of their domains and eventually, I think, it might even push them into open conflict.

In this event the question I ask myself is whether the megacorps, many of them with large armament manufacturing divisions, will

then resist the temptation to settle their differences in open warfare.



The Taking of the Shiva

Extract from "Seven Rebels"

(en. imp. 3536)

memoirs of Ksaros, Rebel Heptarch 3507 - 3528

ALISC799.634

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It was Hanktas who planned the taking of the Shiva. We were desperate and even though many thought it madness the Leadership heard her out. The Wolf Xarungis had his jaws at our throats - we were almost finished. There were few there who did not hate him for if he had not cast their loved ones into the nucleonic flames he had at least burned the life out of their hearts with ten long years of merciless war. The Wolf had harried us and killed our comrades from Eyehedi to Heptor. His name was a bitterness in our mouths but so also was the name of his ship, Shiva. She was the chief instrument of our torture, the dark angel that we had often seen in the skies of our worlds spitting out death like bullets.

When Hanktas proposed her plan to the leadership I was there. She was young but even so many respected her - they had seen her kill. There was less laughter than I expected - for was her plan not the ultimate folly? What laughter there was was choked by the fear that she spoke into that room. The shadow of the leviathan dreadnought darkened our souls. Still she spoke and when she was finished there was silence and people looked into each other's eyes. It was madness but we all knew that we would die anyway. Though no one would admit to it Hanktas words had put a little flame of hope in our hearts.

We drew Xarungis to Yetagana like a madman draws a wolf into a cave. It was certainly madness - for it was an undefendable position. But our Wolf was cunning and would only accept the bait if he knew for certain that the cave had no other exits. Yetagana had none - once the Shiva was in position around the planet there was no escape.

Yetagana is a planet of storms. Hidden beneath its roiling magnetic clouds we drew pebbles from urns as the Shiva moved distantly above us. Normally we used a compcore to randomly select units for special missions. But this time we used stones - stones painted black and white. We used stones because those that pulled out a black stone would die. Their deaths would prove to the Wolf that he had finally won - that we were finally

defeated. There had to be bodies for him to see - enough of them to be within the margins of statistical deviation of his compcore data.

I drew a white stone but I did not celebrate the fact. Someone else, perhaps a friend would draw the black stone that I left behind in the urn.

The 'chosen' dug themselves in and waited. We too dug ourselves in and waited. The only difference was that they were meant to be found.

The twisters spun down from the clouds like seeds. As they came close I pressed myself hard against the earth squeezing my ears shut against their scream. They fell all around us. It was as if the sky was raining lead. The ground shuddered as each capsule hit throwing up waves of wet earth.

There were voices shouting commands. I could hear them even over the storm and the dull thuds of the capsules landing. I could not see the cyclos as they deployed but I had seen them often enough before. They were men like us - at least they were until they were put into their battle frenzy.

Their cries became fainter as they went off to kill our comrades. The capsule thuds receded into the distance as they were dropped in the arc that we had predicted.

We waited, waited until there was no sound apart from the monotonous buffeting of the wind. Then I was nudged into movement.

We ran close to the ground between the twisters. It was like a dead forest of branchless trees. I ran to the nearest capsule. It was leaning drunkenly closed shut. I scraped the mud off fumbling for the controls. The door opened and I almost fell in.

Inside it stank of urine and old plastolene. I wondered how many times it had been used - how many atmospheres it had drilled its way through. I closed the door, opened one of the cryoberths and slipped in. A few moments after I pulled the hood down over my face the cryogenics cut in and I drifted from terror into sleep.

When the stratoglidiers came to pick up the capsules we felt nothing. It was a crucial part of the plan that we should be in biostatic stasis when they came - the ascent would be murderously fast.

The weakest part of the plan was the next part. There we were lined up in rows in the belly of the dark angel - asleep! Hanktas had explained that part of her plan something like: "...then we wait... until a technician notices that one of the capsules' cryoberths is on.. or until someone opens it to clean it.. Once it is switched off our man will overpower the technician and quickly release the others."

Even at the time it had seemed insane. Thinking back it seems unbelievable that we could have hazarded everything on such a chance. Except of course that it worked.

I came out of stasis feeling groggy - thought I was about to vomit but then started feeling better. I stumbled out of the capsule into the Shiva.

I took a quick look around - there was not much time for sight-seeing. We were in a vast gloomy hall studded here and there with violet lights like eyes. The capsules were ranged in every direction like eggs. My comrades were 'hatching' all round me.

We formed into squads and made straight for the magnoshunts. Our only chance was surprise. Fear made the short journey long. The deck numbers flashed as we hurtled upwards.

The doors opened and the killing began. Each cention had its objective. Our cention were supposed to neutralise the cyclo myriads by closing off the Cyclo-Quad. We only vaguely new where it was.

There was a scream of frustration when our centurion realised that we were on the wrong level. We found a way up to the next deck and then to the one above that. The Shiva was like a city. We emerged near the Cyclo-Quad to find that the cyclos were already streaming out to meet us.

There was a moment when they just stopped running to stare at us and we just stopped running to stare at them. In slow motion we raised our weapons and they raised theirs. In a moment the plastolene floor and walls would have run with blood but then a massive brute his face deeply scarred wielding a huge chain-gun leapt out before us and roared, "we're with you - death to the Nexus!"

Both sides stared at him in disbelief. There was a moment of indecision and then we all turned as a mass of marines came crashing out of the tunnel openings. With another roar the cyclo brute swung his chain-gun round and opened fire. A marine bicenturion took the full force of the blast on his chest. The shells cut through him and started scything through the men on either side.

It was all it took. Within seconds the marines were in flight and we chased them - rebels and cyclos intermixing like comrades.

The rest is history. We overran the Shiva. The great dark angel was ours. But our victory was not complete for Xarungis escaped us. He fled our wrath with a handful of his minions and cheated us of our revenge.

The day was ours - both rebel and cyclo - though afterwards many of our men denied this, maintaining in the face of all the evidence that we could have done it alone I have always said that were it not for the cyclos we would have lost that

day. I have always said this - even though some of my old comrades grew to hate me for saying it. I say this for it is true. We owed a debt to the cyclos.

That debt was one that some day we would have to pay in full.



Heptadic Rebel Battlegroups

Report presented to the

Agarax Board of Directors

ALISB362.895

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A Heptadic 'battlegroup' is more like a collection of rabble than a military formation. However it does share some functional similarities with the latter. Not least of these being that it forms part of the command structure of the Rebel forces.

A battlegroup normally consists of seven customized Hajunka Storm Striders (various models and specifications), various other support vehicles and theoretically seventy assorted personnel. This arrangement probably does not conform to any functional military

parameters but merely relates to the Rebel's childish obsession with the number seven.

Although each battlegroup belongs to one of seven distinct heptads²⁵ there are in practice only three different kinds of unit and this depends on whether it forms part of a Krellian, a cyclo or of the single Nexan Heptad.

All battlegroups share several basic similarities. They are capable of operating as fully independent military units. All personnel are expected to be conversant with the required areas of expertise so that there is a built in skill backup in case of casualties. The personnel seem to have close sexual and genetic ties this being particularly the case for the Krellians which seem to function like extended families. Battlegroups have been encountered on campaign that contain children! Additionally battlegroups from the Nexan Heptad are known to include T51s²⁶ and more rarely T61s²⁷.

In the field the battlegroup moves rapidly. Personnel travel either in the striders or in the large number of support vehicles - often preceded by small scout flyers. The striders are the core of the unit providing most of its offensive and defensive capability. These vehicles bear only a passing resemblance to those used by other megacorps or even the

Quorumate. They are often fitted with frames and specialized weapons mountings. The former are used both to carry baggage and to transport the personnel across the battlefield.



The Rebel Heptarchy

Entry in the Encyclopedia Irallica

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Encubed Imprint 3532 (Visicube 07.3.q321)

With the taking of the Dreadnought, the Shiva, the survivors of the Great Rebellion gave birth to the Heptarchy. The capture of the Shiva saved the Rebels from extinction. Not only was she a mighty engine of war but the Nexus Quorumate did not have any forces left in the Ring that could oppose her. It is possible that the loss of the dreadnought forced the Quorumate to pass the

Statutes of Disestablishment as a reaction to the increasing anarchy through Panhumania which it could no longer hope to control.

The Rebels found that they possessed not only a huge mobile base but also all the armaments that such a great ship carried: vehicles, CBU's, military equipment of all kinds and the centions of cyclos and deserter marines that threw their lot in with the rebel cause.

In the ensuing reorganization of their forces the Rebels took inspiration from the registration number of the Shiva²⁸. They appointed a council of seven members to lead them; four for the original rebels, two for the cyclos and the last for the deserter marines who were not native to the Ring and wished to stay apart from the rest. As their badge the newly constituted Rebels took the Irallie number seven.

When the Quorumate issued the Statutes the Heptarchs repudiated them - declaring that the Quorumate did not have the legal right to hand Panhumania over to the megacorp's. Later they announced that since the megacorp's had felt free to seize the assets of

the panhumanic society they would, as representatives of that society feel equally free to appropriate the assets of the megacorp's.

In 3508 the Shiva descended on the moon Xo in the Bargavus Cluster, a moon where Agarax talos units were assembled. They removed what they could and destroyed the installations.

Agarax reacted by declaring that it would assemble an army of talos units with which it would exterminate the Heptarchy.

In exchange for a huge consignment of military hardware the Heptarchy formed an alliance with Hajunka promising that it would leave the megacorp's assets undisturbed.

Knowledge of the alliance became public. Agarax was enraged that Hajunka was arming its enemies. There were bitter recriminations between the two megacorp's.

On the 7th of Xikeya, 3509 IST, Agarax declared a trade war against Hajunka.



²⁵ a heptad is one of the seven divisions into which the Rebel forces are divided. Each heptad has as its commander-in-chief one of the Heptarchs.

GREAT SWARMS

THE COUNTER - ATTACK

The New Kryomek

by Jardus Manturikan

A letter appearing in Scientific Xardillian

Novus (extract)

ALISD587.347

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Tihirix 3495 IST

Less than a year ago the stakes were suddenly raised in the Bayuda Manturax Warzone - the Kryomek made a bid to capture the two diman interstices either of which would give them an open door into Panhumania.

As is well known, the attack was spear-headed by two hivestones closely supported by vast auxiliary swarmfleets. In this respect the attack was like other smaller, preceding ones. What was new and seems to me to be perhaps of more significance was the biogenetic composition of the Kryomek forces themselves. For intermixed with the castes which have become familiar to soldiers and scientists alike there were new castes - or perhaps, more accurately, strains - and these brought with them - apart from their weird new forms and adaptations - fearsome new engines of destruction.

These new strains - which I will label beta and gamma (as the original, known strain can be labelled alpha) - had perhaps been evi-

denced in Kryomek swarms even a couple of years prior to the counter-attack. Going by the welter of contemporary reports from the marines on the ground it seems possible that they had been gradually forming an ever increasing proportion of the swarms in the Warzone. Whatever the reality of this, by the time of the attack they already formed at least two-thirds of every swarm encountered.

For some reason most observers have seen little of note in this - stating that, like many other things concerning the Kryomek, this is unfathomable and insignificant. The only prominent debate seems to concern the impact that the increased virulence of the new strains might have on the War. But surely, I would argue, the very fact that these new strains seem more specialized²⁹ - that they have suddenly appeared in great numbers at exactly the same time as the counter-attack was made - surely these things suggest that something new is happening within the impenetrable strategic thinking of the Imperial Hivemasters. Could it not be that humanity have only thus far encountered the peripheral forces of the Kryomek, have only impinged but lightly on the ruling minds of this virulent species? Could it not be that only now are the Imperial Hivemasters bending

²⁶ Talos Mkl with X5 ACM

²⁷ Talos Mkl with X6 ACM

their full will and malice to the extermination of mankind?



Battlefield Swarmmasters

Report presented to the Nexus Quorumate
by the NIX

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Holocubic confirmation (see enclosed) of the irrefutable existence of the 'shadow of Xar' was obtained on the morning of 23.12.94. There can be no doubt of this identification with the reported phenomena.

The xenoid organism could be as much as fifteen xitega³⁰ in height. In fact when it was glimpsed through the miasma it was so large that it was thought to be some kind of vehicle or even an architectural structure. It moved surprisingly fast and exhibited a remarkable capacity to overcome its obviously vast inertial mass.

The mass of holocube information that was obtained before our forces were evacuated from the battlefield was immediately beamed to the Rama for analysis. (The clearest data is contained on the enclosed holocube.) Initial opinions differ as to what exactly the creature might be. It is considered to be highly unlikely that it is in any way related to any of the warrior-caste Kryomek. The huge 'kidney' swellings on the rear of the upper thorax seem structurally analogous to the organs already observed on both swarmmasters and hivemasters that are responsible for the production of the imperial control substances. We are currently working on the hypothesis that this new xenoid is some monstrous form of swarmmaster - an awesome battlefield form. Another conjecture, though vastly more improbable, is that it might be a mutated hivemaster.

The 'battlefield swarmmaster' consists of a massive carapace with associated organelles linked to an unusually swollen and laterally armoured thorax. This complex is lifted up on a huge columnar mass analogous to a war-master spongiform tail - but on a far greater scale. Incidentally, this structure exhibits a peculiar tripartite linked form which bears no obvious relation to any other Kryomek bio-

genetic form previously encountered. The aforementioned (and conjectured) imperial control organs sit like two great round shields at the top of this structure where it meets the thorax.

The thorax itself has four chimney like extensions that might well be related to the knob like protrusions seen on swarmmasters which have been identified as the attachment points for wings that are now of course vestigial.

The carapace is cantilevered to the 'tail structure' with bundles of what can only be described as organic 'hawsers'. The underside of the carapace is a convex body pierced with countless tubules which might well be implanted or even natural somatic weaponry. Two complex structures that are underslung on the edges of the carapace are obviously attached weapons. They seem to be similar in form and function to serumic pipes and seem to be fed with serum directly from the body of the creature through the huge tubes that pass around the edge of the carapace and into the tail structure proper.

Our troops were evacuated before the xenoid was engaged but alarmingly enough it was observed that when it appeared all the Kryomek went into a terrifying frenzy - it was this that caused the planetary stratecom

²⁸ The Shiva was registered as the seventh dreadnought of the Nexus Quorumate Fleet.

²⁹ beta strain Kryomek seem to be specialized for close combat while the gamma strain excels in the use of ranged weaponry.

to pull them out - the casualties were simply becoming insupportable.

Reports have been coming in from all the other systems within the Perimeter of sightings of similar xenoids. This gives credence to the current hypothesis, suggesting that they are in fact some kind of 'subsidiary' swarm-master with control of a planetary swarm.

We have just received an unsubstantiated report from one of the planets in the Bayuda System claiming that one of these xenoids obliterated a full strength cention of goliaths. The report claims that it was impervious to the shells of their HAK 1010s!



Transomatic Artillery

Report presented to the Nexus

Quorumate by the NIX (extract)

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The advent of new Kryomek strains and weaponry is alarming enough - especially in

the short term - but it is the appearance of transomatic artillery which might pose the greatest threat in the medium term.

This new artillery combines the capacity to project fearsome destruction over great distance with terror - a factor which is important enough in the present conflict not to need to be discussed any further. Besides this these weapons all have demonstrated a capacity to damage and penetrate our most resistant battle armours.

All artillery so far encountered conforms to two different design forms and is normally carried by groups of warrior-caste Kryomek. The first form has been termed a ballista because it bears a striking functional resemblance to an ancient weapon of that name. The second has been called a serumic pipe.

Ballistae consist of tensioned structures that are loaded with spheroid missiles. These are projected great distances when the tension force is released. It has not yet been possible to analyse an intact missile of this type but they are thought to consist of a body of viscous bio-acidic fluid contained within a flexible, tough membrane. Holocube sequences show that the missile 'bounces' on impact and disperses quantities of the fluid in

a wide radius. It appears that the membrane becomes porous under extreme pressure - thus releasing fluid at each 'bounce'. The bio-acid is extremely corrosive and will affect even the toughest reinforced laminates.

Serumic pipes of various sizes and operating at various ranges have been observed. The weapon generally consists of a bulky cylinder which is capable of forming direct somatic links with its 'crew'. The muzzle emits a sort of jelly which is probably an organo-sponge heavily impregnated with extremely concentrated serum. Impact occurs at extreme range and produces a wide dispersal incidence cone not unlike many other Kryomek weapons.

The most pertinent question is whether these weapons are just a part of the Kryomek armoury that we have simply not encountered before or whether, as seems more likely, they are a tactical reaction to the Nexus advantage in firepower? If the latter is true this could usher in an arms race which we might find it difficult to win.



Appendix A: Dimensional Manifolds

A Dimensional Manifold or Diman is a structure of space that links together several points that are distant in spacetime. These points, the entrances to the diman, are called interstices and though these move in spacetime they can be located using probability mathematics.

Spacefolding equipment can be used to open the interstice and allow a spaceship to pass through the diman. More probability mathematics is used to choose one of the possible exits from the diman. Diman transportation is virtually instantaneous.

Appendix B: Dimensional Manifolds (Technical)

A Trans-Dimensional Manifold or simply a Dimensional Manifold or in common usage, a Diman is a structure of 13 dimensional space that transcends the four dimensions of space and time.

A diman is categorised by having a number of **pseudo-points** which within the diman are effectively a single point. Each pseudo-point has a manifestation in spacetime which is termed an **interstice**. At these interstices the diman is **continuous** with spacetime. The interstices drift in spacetime though their position can be determined by using probability mathematics.

An interstice is an opening into the diman which would be traversable by a black hole singularity. To allow larger entities to enter it a section of spacetime must be **folded** and passed through the singularity. This has been achieved by producing a black micro-hole around the interstice and allowing it to instantaneously collapse. The effect of this is to fold a hypersphere of spacetime with hyperdiameter proportional to the macrodiameter of the black micro-hole. This is whiplashed through the singularity into the diman.

Though effectively all pseudo-points in the diman are identified to a single hyper-spatial point, they do actually shear to form every possible pairing of two pseudo-points. Which of these shear trajectories are accessed is determined by a probability-pattern of gravitational eddies generated by the spacefolding process. In effect this means that if these patterns are set up in a particular way the entity will pass into and out of the diman in a controlled way and thus make a jump between two of its interstices.

These shear trajectories are classified according to the mean distance between their two corresponding interstices in space-time.

Type	Mean Distance
0	1 parsec
1	2 parsecs
2	4 parsecs
3	16 parsecs
4	256 parsecs
5	65536 parsecs
6	4294967296 parsecs

Appendix C: Megacorps

Pandaris Prime

Pandaris Prime finances huge research projects in the field of psycho-communications. It pioneered and now monopolises the probability mapping of dimensional manifolds. The Megacorp has made notable advances in historio-mathematics and psycho-historical control theory.

Agarax

The primary user and developer of cybernetic technologies, Agarax believes that Man's destiny lies in robotics.

Cerabex

An Agarax subsidiary which developed and now manufactures the Agarax Cyberneural Matrix.

Ksirux

A subsidiary of Agarax which manufactures bipedal battlefield vehicles. Its profitability soared with the release of the Talos Series Battlefield Unit.

Vector Space Developments

This is a missile development company best known for its battlefield missile weapons: the V7 "flamedart" and the V12.

Hajunka

Hajunka, perhaps the biggest of all Megacorps, specialises in heavy industrial structures. It has a panhumanic monopoly in the construction of the big diman (dimensional manifold) spaceships. In spite of this, its most famous product is the space folding equipment that has allowed Man to colonise the Galaxy.

MOA

This Hajunka subsidiary manufactures specialised transport systems. Probably their best known products are the wide range of bipedal battle chassis which are becoming such an important part of the Nexus military machine.

Hardon & Kluvis

The weapons division of Hajunka is the main producer of the standard issue light, medium and heavy equipment for the Nexus. Its name is synonymous with the HAK 109 Series rifle.

Bitarkis

This Megacorp specialises in bio-genetic technologies. Initially it started as an agro-genetic combine. Later it began moving into sophisticated bio-somatic remodelling of livestock strains. Most recently the Megacorp has begun to experiment with humano-somatic remodelling.

Biagrotech

Initially a company producing complex and exotic agricultural equipment it has now become effectively the Bitarkis weapons division. It produces chemical and bio-chemical weaponry such as the BAT mina (musculated isoton - napalm) series 23 cannon

Appendix D: "Cyclos"

Sentence-enrollment into the Convict Special Forces is mandatory for criminals of green PCB rating or higher - though it is only quite recently that this has been extended from the yellow into the green categories of offenders. Once a citizen becomes a cyclo it is unlikely that he or she will ever return into civilian life.

On enrollment the criminal becomes a cyclo by the dual processes of neural-regulation and addictive systemic poisoning. Both of these are theoretically reversible.

The neural-regulator device is implanted in the forehead and forms transient neuro-linkages with the subject's cortex. It also acts as a receiver for control signals from the unit's centurion. It allows the cyclo's basic metabolic and several of his higher functions to be controlled. Cyclo units can easily be put into battle frenzy and the access that the neuro-regulator provides to both the pain and pleasure centres makes them obedient to the wills of their centurions.

The systemic poison administered to the subject on enrollment is byzantanol tetraprolene which unless it is neutralised with regular doses of Tantha (erzolar caxumate) - its natural antidote - will cause the subject to experience accelerating nervous system disfunction which will eventually lead to complete systemic collapse and

death. This ensures that each individual cyclo has a vested interest in keeping the chain of command intact so that it can continue to regularly deliver the antidote.

Demobilisation is possible for cyclos that have performed some exceptional service beyond that required of them. This has never happened for a red category cyclo.

Appendix E: Terms in common usage

admiral	task force commander
ACG	Assault Chain Gun
ACM	Active Cyberneural Matrix
b-squad	military unit of 10 men
bicention	military unit of 200 men
bicenturion	commander of a bicention
bimyrriad	military unit of 2000 men
bimyrcom	commander of a bimyrriad
BWP	Battlefield Weapons Platforms
cention	military unit of 100 men
centurion	commander of a cention
DBCR	Department of Battlefield Cryogenic Research.
diman	Dimensional Manifold
dreadnought	task force unit with both trans-dimensional jumping and diman capabilities.
hegemony	a political grouping of independent states with one state acting as the leader.
I-Class	Refers to planets that are of the Irallie type and perfect for humanic habitation.
IST	Irallie Standard Time
ISY	Irallie Standard Year
Metaconomy	the panhumanic economic complex
myriad	military unit of 1000 men
myricom	commander of a myriad
NCSS	Nexus Centre for Strategic Studies
NMI	Nexus Military Intelligence
panhumanic	'of the whole of humanity'
PCB	Penal Classification Band
quorumate	Ruling committee with a fixed number of members.
squad	military unit of 5 men
stratcom	military commander
strategion	a military force consisting of more than two myriad
Taloric	of the Talos Series Battlefield Unit - generally this term refers to stand alone cybernetic systems with a high level of integrated responses and reactions.
TCDS	Tri-planetary Centre for Demographic Studies.
TDC	Trans-Dimensional Carrier

THE MEGACORPORATIONS

12/4/2003

encubed by Alar Sloar 10.06.3511

The rise of the Megacorporation shaped our age as no other event has, including the invasion of the Kryomek. While the background factors and political events that led to the unprecedented power of the Megacorporations have been covered in a variety of articles, this article focuses on their overall organization and key products, as well as their security troops.

Pandaris Prime (psycho-communications, dimensional mapping, historio-mathematics)

- Biotekrak – human biogenetic and psychological research
- Meriden Mapping – dimensional mapping, space exploration, astral navigation equipment and software
- HM-Pandaris – historio-mathematics, statistical and data mining software

One of the first Megacorps, Pandaris Prime finances huge research projects in the fields of psycho-communications. It pioneered and now monopolizes the probability mapping of dimensional manifolds (Dimans). This Megacorp has made notable advances in historio-mathematics and psycho-historical control theory. Specializing in numbers, psychology and practical application of abstract theory, Pandaris Prime has demonstrated that huge amounts of money can be made through research breakthroughs. Perhaps more than any other Megacorp, Pandaris has benefited from the Great Push into new regions of space. Perhaps more than any other Megacorp, Pandaris has more to lose from the Kryomek Invasion.

While Pandaris Prime has been less visibly violent than the other Megacorps, they are vigorous in defending their facilities and concessions. Pandaris security troops are well equipped, and seem to favor red uniforms, especially the Corp Marines. Rival Megacorp execs have accused Pandaris of industrial espionage and the extensive use of double agents, rumors that Pandaris execs deny.

Agarax (cybernetics, robotics)

- Cerabex (cyberneural systems)
- Ksirus (Talos)
- Vector Space Developments (missiles)
- IndRobSys – industrial robotic systems, enterprise management systems

Agarax rose to prominence as the primary user and developer of cybernetic technologies, believing that man's destiny lies in robotics. While their initial growth came from the rapid expansion of the market for industrial robots, the Great Push and the associated riots provided the opportunity to market combat robotics. Creating the Ksirus subsidiary with AI scientists from Cerabex and mechanical engineers from IndRobSys, Agarax was the first to deploy effective Cybernetic Battlefield Units (CBUs). The R&D funds and profits from their military contracts gave Agarax such an edge that rival firms either went bankrupt or were bought by Agarax.

Agarax security troops usually dress in dark blue uniforms, including the armor of their Corp Marines. To date, Agarax appears content with the Cobra Marine armor, none of the more advanced Brodie suits have been identified. As such, their primary weapons seem to be combat rifles and autoshotguns.

Hajunka (biggest megacorp, heavy industry, spaceships)

- Moa (bipedal chasis (stryders))
- Hardon & Kluvis (rifles, etc. 'HAK')
- Van Kyling Manufacturing (space ship building)
- Standard Mining
- Mik-Guryev (heavy ground transport)

Hajunka, perhaps the largest of all Megacorps, specializes in heavy industrial structures. It has a panhumanic monopoly for the construction of the big Diman (Dimensional Manifold) spaceships. In spite of this, its most famous product is the space folding equipment that has allowed Man to colonize the Galaxy. As a result, Hajunka received what other Megacorps claim is a disproportionate share of the concession territories granted by Nexus. Rival Megacorps fear that the Nexus military's reliance upon Hajunka for dreadnoughts will cause them to allow Hajunka to seize facilities from other Megacorps. Hajunka claims that they are in fact the target of not so clandestine raids on their facilities, as smaller corps seek to steal Hajunka technology and products.

Hajunka security troops utilize camouflage patterns more than any other Megacorp, especially black/grey/white combinations for urban use. Hajunka Corp Marines quickly adapted the Brodie Armor suits from Tiko Megacorp, and currently manufacture it under license. Analysis from reports of Megacorp raids indicates that Hajunka security troops use more vehicles and combat cybernetic units than is typical.

Bitarkis (biogen)

- Biagrotech (chemical and biotech weapons)
- Genrad (general research and development)
- Maxim (genetic and bio-enhancement)
- LifeGen – medical and pharmaceutical products

Bitarkis Megacorp specializes in bio-genetic technologies. Biagrotech started as an agro-genetic combine, which moved into sophisticated bio-somatic remodeling of livestock strains. Recently, the Megacorp has been rumored to have experimented with humano-somatic remodeling, despite Nexus regulations against it. The Bitarkis Weapons Division produces chemical and bio-chemical weaponry such as the BAT series napalm weapons. The Maxim subsidiary has received extensive R&D funding from Nexus to investigate and analyze the Kryomek.

Bitarkis security troops wear green uniforms, suggesting the life sciences that Bitarkis specializes in. Bitarkis has not upgraded their Corp Marines as many of the other Megacorporations have, staying with the Cobra Marine level of armor. Recent rumors of genetically enhanced human warriors, with quicker reaction times, unusual strength, and awesome tactical sense have emerged from competing Megacorps. When asked, Bitarkis spokespeople have denied any research or involvement into human genetic engineering.

Tiko

- Sable (retail stores and distribution)
- Universal Computer Technologies (UCT) – handheld devices and software
- Gurtman Weapons Development
- Brodie Systems – combat armor and individual weapon systems

The fifth firm to achieve Megacorp status, Tiko is less specialized than any of the other Megacorps. The original corporation, and still the primary source of profits for Tiko, is the Sable Corporation. Completely dominating the retail sector with its motto of “Low prices, no matter what the cost”, Sable now handles 90% of all retail sales. As such, it can dictate prices and distribution terms to its suppliers. Immensely profitable, Sable has acquired selected corporations that offered attractive profit margins in other industries. The three corporations listed above are the ones most related to the Nexus Military, which gave Tiko the power to get one of the six concessions during the recent shift of power. Although the Nexus Quorumate has refused to purchase Brodie Armor for the Nexus Military, all of the Megacorps have. Brodie armor is the best armor available to the Megacorps, with an armor rating of 6, self-contained nuclear power unit, and high powered GR(ER) weapons. Brodie equipped troops can operate in any environment, including space.

Many people wonder about the name Tiko, since it doesn't seem to relate to the business of the Megacorp, nor is it tied to the name of the founding family. Actually, the name is tied to the founder of the Sable Retail Corporation, Walton Sams. Somehow he acquired the nickname Tiko during his college days. Years later, his grandchildren found out and used to tease him. When they brought the corporation to Megacorporation status, they adopted his nickname as the Megacorp title to honor his memory.

Tiko security troops are primarily dressed in light blue uniforms, with a circular Tiko Megacorporation patch on their left sleeves. Primary weapons include the GR(ER) for Corp Marines, combat rifles and autoshotguns for security troops. Other security units have been known to refer to the Tiko Marines as ‘blue boys, despite the Corp Marines frequent use of brown camouflaged battle armor.

Centauran/Wolf (originally two competing ground/air vehicle corps, have branched out since the merger in 3475)

- Victoria Lines – space transport and intra-planet travel (airlines, rail, ship)
- Akme Universal Mining
- Akme-Coyote Retail
- Keretaka Korporation (personal weapons, surveillance systems)
- Dash Transportation Industries (aircraft)
- Randall-Hollings (vehicles, Randall was from Centauran, Hollings from Wolf before the merger)

The last Corporation to achieve Megacorporation status, and to acquire a concession area from Nexus, is Centauran/Wolf. The original Corporations at the core of this Megacorp were deadly rivals, both competing to have the largest share of the vehicle market. After the assassinations of the CEOs of both firms, their successors decided that a merger would be more profitable for

everyone, and less deadly. Although the merger was first marked by considerable acrimony, the synergies have since proven immensely profitable. In particular, the combined Akme Universal Mining has a near monopoly on the metal ores that are essential for spaceships and military hardware. Protecting these often isolated mines has been very difficult, and Centauran/Wolf maintains the largest contingent of Corp Marines.

Security troops are primarily dressed in grey uniforms, with the megacorporation badge on their left arms. The badge consists of black triangle pointed down, containing a wolf's head, with a horizontal white rectangle across the upper portion saying 'Centauran'. This is a combination of the two previous corporate logos. In some isolated areas, security troops and facilities may still use their original corporate logos, though this is a violation of the current 'one company' policy. Corp Marines are primarily armed with variants of an SMG from Keretaka, with RR as supporting weapons. The Corp Marines are often referred to as the 'Grey Wolves', a holdover from their Wolf days. The elite troops are referred to as the 'Black Wolves' due to the black operations that they conduct, and are rumored to wear all-black uniforms.

Furtherman Arms (not a Megacorporation yet, but close)

- Testron – cyber devices for transplant into humans (still have the medical prosthetics division that founded the company)
- Furtherman Athletics – chain of retail sporting goods and clothing stores supported by a large number of factories producing the items sold in the stores.
- Furtherman Repeaters – the original arms manufacturing division, focused on individual weapons, defensive attire, etc.
- Stallion Motors – military and off-road vehicles of all types, specializing in wheeled and tracked vehicles. Have recently begun production of the Wind series hovercraft under license from Nexus (see article).

Furtherman Arms has expanded considerably beyond the projectile throwing weapons company that founded the empire. Originally focused on the leisure industry, Furtherman held a profitable niche that was unchallenged by other large corporations. With the coming of the Kryomek, Furtherman recognized the opportunity to enter military markets, supplying both Nexus and other Corporations with vehicles, weapons, and related technology. The success of this strategy is evidenced by their continued growth, despite the disruption of the Nexus and Colonial economies by the Kryomek. In particular, sales of weapons to the Colonies have grown by over 1,000% due to the inability of the Nexus Military to supply arms. Furtherman has also benefited from the growing demand for small personal weapons by corporate executives fearing assassinations. The current fashion of openly wearing a sidearm as evidence of an executive's value to the corporation has made the Furtherman logo both well known and a status symbol.

Executives at Furtherman Arms have been trying to use this new found fame to achieve Megacorp status. The current six Megacorporations have strongly opposed this, fearing both the loss from their concession areas and the competition from a new rival. Not restricting their opposition to the political arena, facility raids, arson, and assassinations have all increased. Since many Furtherman Arms facilities are in concession areas held by the rival Megacorporations, protecting them has become a significant drain on Furtherman resources.

Security troops are primarily dressed in green uniforms, often in camouflage patterns. This dates back to the origins of the corporation as a primary source of hunting equipment. Corp Marines

are primarily armed with combat rifles and chain guns. The Corporate emblem is a red hexagon with a horizontal bar saying 'Furtherman Arms', worn on the left sleeve.

Bee-Dins (not a Megacorporation, but growing)

- Brandonski Corp - Agricultural products and equipment. Products include a variety of food and drinks including beer, processed meats. Primary supplier of rations to the Nexus Military.
- Steven AG – insect related industries including foods such as honey and medicines derived from insects. Recently contracted to conduct detailed studies of Kryomek anatomy and psychology.

Bee-Dins Corporation (BDC) came to prominence as a result of the Kryomek invasion. BDC has the foremost experts in insects, and they were quickly able to identify many similarities between the Kryomek and insects. The Nexus Military immediately granted several large R&D contracts to BDC to investigate weapons and tactics that could be used against the Kryomek. BDC scientists have also been very valuable in analyzing Kryomek strategies, and their cultural organization. While BDC is nowhere near large enough to become a Megacorporation, their rapid growth and tremendous profitability have given them political clout far beyond their size.

BDC security troops wear black and yellow color schemes, including their recently formed Corp Marine contingent in Brodie Armor. Their primary weapons are the GR(ER), supported by recoilless rifles. BDC has been working on nerve agents to disable or kill the Kryomek, and some of their Corp Marines have been spotted in Kryomek infested zones with grenade launchers and howitzers. If they can develop a gas that kills the Kryomek but doesn't harm humans, that could be the answer to the continued attacks by the Kryomek.

Ferguson Enterprises

- Roberts LLC – metal products in a variety of forms including cast and rolled. Provides specialty metals to other Corporations. Primary supplier of combat armor to Nexus.
- Peters AG – atmospheric and trans-atmospheric craft. Specialize in short production run, special purpose craft.
- Shirlee Products – ceramic products ranging from artistic products through ceramic armors that are acid resistant.

Continuing with our examination of large corporations that could make the transition to Megacorporation in the near future, we come to Ferguson Enterprises. Probably the oldest, and most venerable firm of those we've studied, Ferguson Enterprises has not acquired or merged with other corporations to the extent that other firms have. While this has slowed their growth, they have retained dominant positions in their existing markets. The growing need for military armor and equipment has greatly increased their business, and analysts predict that Ferguson Enterprises will have the net value to achieve Megacorporation status within 3-5 years. Their growth has strained relations with the existing Megacorporations, resulting in some contract and raw material difficulties. Recent changes in the Ferguson Enterprises security forces may indicate a shift in tactics by the board of directors.

Ferguson Enterprises security troops follow a medium blue and white color scheme, the corporate symbol being a rectangular blue patch with a white X extending from corner to corner. To date, only Cobra Marine armor has been spotted, but rumors of Brodie Armor equipped troops are spreading.

Martini Corporation

- BPI – information technology integration company, most Megacorps use software developed by BPI to run their operations. Provide combat simulation software to Nexus.
- SEAN LLC – public and political relations firm. Develop marketing campaigns for many Megacorps, run political campaigns for politicians throughout human space time
- MSF Inc – accounting and auditing firm, provides services to most corporations and planetary governments. Prepares and monitors Nexus Military budgets.
- Deetzah Inc – the firm that first created the inter-planetary communication system that allows IPC enabled devices to almost instantly exchange data. Deetzah continues to manage the Nexus Interplanetary Communication System (NICS or in digit-head slang, the Net) for Nexus. They also provide advanced communication systems and software to other companies.

Recent mergers have catapulted the Martini Corporation into the spotlight. Fearing their destruction at the hands of the larger Megacorps, the corporations that formed Martini banded together for greater financial and military security. A number of execs have expressed concern over the foremost accounting firm joining with rival manufacturing and IT firms. They believe that the inside information that MSF and BPI possesses will allow Martini an unprecedented inside view of the other corporations. This information could be used to gain competitive advantage, or to target key facilities and executives of rival firms. Martini has been very aggressive in denying these fears, and claims that all proprietary information gained by their subsidiaries is compartmented at a low enough level that Martini execs cannot get access.

Despite these assurances, rival firms point to the rapid recruiting and equipping of a large Corp Marine force by Martini as evidence of their hostile intentions. Martini spokespeople point to the threats made against them by rival corporations, and claim their build up is purely defensive in nature. However, the recent appearance of their red suited Corp Marines in Brodie Armor at all Martini facilities, brings into question the need for such a rapid expansion of security forces. Well equipped with the latest Wind Vehicles, security walkers and similar equipment, the Martini Corp Marines seem particularly well equipped for defense.