

Secret Societies of Théah: Book Four

The
Invisible College™



7th
Sea™
Roleplaying Game

The Invisible College

"Theus created the world and left it to us to discover. Do you think the proclamations of a few torch-wielding fanatics can change that?"

— Gorskelen Leman

The Inquisition has launched a war against learning. All across Théah, it hunts down scholars with ruthless abandon, burning and destroying anything it perceives as a threat. Decades of advancement have vanished in a single bonfire, while brilliant men and women are murdered in the night for daring to speak the truth.

But some fight back.

From a thousand hiding places, the Invisible College continues its forbidden studies. Separated by vast distances, ensconced in the deepest hiding places, its members continue the struggle for learning and enlightenment. From their experiments, Théan science advances. From their teachings, countless mysteries have been solved. From their courage and daring, the people understand the world around them... and learn that tyranny can be defied. The Inquisitors believe they hold the keys to human knowledge; the Invisible College is here to prove them wrong.

The Invisible College includes:

- A detailed history and background of the College, including prominent members, secretive protocols, and the organization's most closely-held secrets.
- New Advantages, Skills, and Backgrounds, a new Swordsman school, and rules for the sinister alchemical art of Blood Science.
- New rules for creating Inventions, plus a list of new gadgets for use by your Heroes.

7th Sea

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Alderac Entertainment Group

The Invisible College

Truth Before Adversity



“Snuff out a candle and a thousand more ignite to take its place.”

– Alvara Arciniega







7th Sea

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Correction

Ty Hammontree wrote some wonderful material for the *Freiburg* boxed set, but his name was mistakenly omitted from the writer's credits there. We apologize for the mix-up, Ty.

Special Thanks

To Ray Yand, for all his hard work on Arciniega.

To Christian Colquhoun, for being a tinkerer, toymaker and scoundrel.

MOOSE would like to thank all the educators who made this subject so much fun, especially Antonio Aurilia, Ph.D. who taught a fantastic course on the history of physics.

Dedication

Les: Dedicated to my loving wife, Crystal, who strengthens the Chain of Knowledge every day with her students.



Table of Contents

<i>Introduction: The Pillars of Heaven</i>	6
<i>Chapter One: Hypothesis</i>	10
Public Face	12
Private Agenda	22
History	22
Protocols	28
Mysteries of the Invisible College	30
Historical Research – The First Mystery	30
The “Mundane” Sciences – The Second Mystery	31
Practical Applications – The Third Mystery	35
Creature Classification – The Fourth Mystery	35
Blood Science – The Fifth Mystery	35
Philosophy	37
Organization	39
Life in the College	43
Relations With Other Groups	45
Safe Houses	49
<i>Chapter Two: Theory</i>	56
Scholars	58
Supporters	65
Arciniega and His Followers	71

<i>Chapter Three:</i>	
<i>Experimentation</i>	76
Joining the Invisible College	78
Special Training	78
The Bonita Swordsman School	79
New Skill	80
New Backgrounds	81
New Advantages	82
Invention Rules	85
New Inventions	89
Blood Science: The Fifth Mystery	94
<i>Chapter Four: Proof</i>	98
Player	100
How to Play a Scientist in <i>7th Sea</i>	100
Playing the Support	102
Gamemaster	104
NPC Secrets	104
Notes on Blood Science	114
The White Plague	114
The Inquisition	115
Hero Templates	122

*The Pillars of
Heaven*



La Ciencia, Castille – 1666

“They’re coming.”

The voice came from the rear of Alvara Arciniega's hidden laboratory, where the shadows pooled together. It belonged to Gruenhild, his groundskeeper, and a friend of the family since her father retired from the same position some fifty years before.

“How many?” Arciniega’s words were firm, practiced.

"I'm not sure," Gruenhild answered, "But they're led by someone new."

Arciniega turned from the stone block resting upon his work bench. A fragment of it had recently been chipped away, revealing a sliver of thin inhuman bone.

“New?” Alvara’s eyes narrowed. This was no time for surprises. “An Inquisitor?”

"I think, but I can't know. He looks... dangerous."

“Curious...” he mused, then sprang into action. Lifting a thick leather case from beneath the bench, he removed its contents – a small but heavy telescope – and replaced it with the chipped block of stone. Strapping the bag shut, he handed it to Gruenhild and ushered her toward the door from which she had emerged.

“Make sure this arrives safely in Aldana, and take Stefan with you. He knows his way around a sword.”

Gruenhild had worked for Arciniega long enough to recognize the urgency in his voice. Without responding, she ducked back into the dark rear corner of the room and vanished. The only sound of her escape was a brief gust of air followed by the click as the secret door locked behind her. The stairwell beyond was all but sound-proofed.

Now then, Alvara noted, drawing his fencing blade free of its thin sheath, on to more pressing matters.

Vaticine City, Castille – 1666

"You have read this material – this 'light prism' nonsense?"

"Yes, your Eminence."

"It's blasphemy. It mocks the glory of Theus and defies all common sense. The very notion that light can be broken down into a – what does he call it? – a 'spectrum.' Blasphemy of the first order."

"I agree, your Eminence."

“This is exactly the threat I have been fighting against for so long. This so-called ‘empiricism’ is a disease in the Church. We must cut it out and destroy it before it devours us all.”

"Yes, your Eminence."

“Alvara Arciniega has committed heresy against the Church with his vile studies, and blasphemy against Our Creator with his horrifying claims. He must pay the price, as the Book of the Prophets dictates. Hang him. Burn his body and commit his scribblings to the flames. Let him stand as an example to all who would follow him.

"Those who put an end to Arciniega will be welcomed into the kingdom of Theus. Tell them they will have absolution from their sins and be cleansed in the purifying light of the coming Prophet. Tell them that Cardinal Verdugo himself proclaims it."

"I shall, your Eminence. Arciniega will pay..."



Introduction

The center of the heavy wooden door suddenly burst inward, showering splinters across the floor and revealing a heavy arm wrapped in smoke-black armor. The arm whipped about until it found the thick plank barring the portal, and ripped it up and away.

The door swung open slowly, revealing a tall swordsman dressed all in black and red, his tabard clearly displaying the Prophet's Cross and his face hidden behind an impressive helmet. Behind him stood a pair of red-clad Inquisitors carrying weapons of varying lethality.

"Welcome, gentlemen," Alvara quipped at the intruders. "Do step in and make yourselves at home."

He considered simply felling all of them now, and making away as the College had planned. But he fancied a bit of fun first.

Besides, he thought as the armor-clad Inquisitor stepped into the laboratory, this one deserves a closer look...

The foot soldiers moved to flank Arciniega, lining the walls on either side as their leader approached.

Alvara took two steps back, placing himself between his workbench and a long low table lined with his latest chemistry experiments. The armored man continued his brisk walk toward the scholar, never pausing, confident that his men would fall in where he expected them to be. When he finally drew his sword, it groaned with the death-cries of a hundred fallen heretics.

No speeches. Alvara braced for the man's first lunge. Thank Theus for small favors.

When the attack finally came, Alvara ducked and kicked outward to the left, upending the chemistry table toward the Inquisitors. Remembering the reaction time of the vials' contents, he swept the knight's lunge aside and rolled to the right, out of range...

The explosion rocked the room and knocked the telescope from its perch upon the work bench, but as it sailed toward the ground Alvara shifted direction and rolled beneath it, snatching it from the air and coming up into a crouching

position. His eyes darted to both sides in time to make out two figures nearing him from the right and one – the knight – from the left.

One direction or the other...

Leaping up onto the work bench, Alvara gauged his distance from the beams above, then leapt upward, depositing the telescope safely between two support pillars and crashing down into two of the three figures. Switching sword hands, he lunged outward at the nearest, catching him along the temple, and then kneed him away. The man's screams confirmed his accuracy; he would be blind in one eye when this was done.

A sudden burst of pain erupted from Alvara's right shoulder as the knight's blade cut through cloth and muscle, and the scholar tumbled forward, through a second work bench and onto the cool stone floor. Righting himself as quickly as he could, he rolled quickly to the left and came up on one knee. Behind them, the knight's swing fell heavily through the air, narrowly missing his neck.

No time. His shoulder throbbed but he still had his rapier. More Inquisitors coming. Many more...

Alvara closed his eyes and focused for a moment, working the arrangement out in his head, visualizing the room and the remaining enemies, the surrounding furniture, the scattered devices, the debris...

Without looking, he reached out and yanked a lever to his left. A gush of hot wind behind him was followed by the knight's screams as an arm of fire leapt from the nearby burner to engulf him. The screams only intensified as the flames leapt about him, creeping into the tiny slits between plates, scalding flesh and bone. Within moments, the screaming was over, however, and only the sizzling within the knight's armor was heard, followed by a thundering crash as it fell sideways and came to rest.

Alvara opened his eyes, and caught sight of the remaining Inquisitor. His face was little more than a pale sheet as he observed the smoldering ruin of his former commander. He



eyed the exit as he dragged his near-blind companion to his feet, but Alvara stepped in front of them.

“Lost your nerve?” Alvara chided them. “Come now, gentlemen. I’m sure you’re responsible for worse...”

Both Inquisitors moved at once, as Alvara dove toward them. One fell before he could make it three steps, the scholar’s rapier catching him along the neck. The second took up an awkward defensive position and moved out to Alvara’s side, hoping to divide his attention.

Crafty devil, Alvara thought as he scanned the floor and surrounding tables. When his eye caught the fallen knight’s blade, he grabbed for it and both arms whipped out toward the Inquisitor, stabbing through his torso in both directions.

But I invented the craft.

Freeing the blades, he wiped his own clean, leaving the second beside its former owner. Then he climbed up onto the work bench and retrieved his telescope, wrapped it in fine cloth, and made his way out to the stables.

The College would be retreating all over Théah by now, and he had to be at the rallying point by dawn.

Introduction

Before the nobility of Théah became fascinated with buried artifacts and arcane knowledge, they treasured the human mind. Throughout the world, the early 17th century was known as the beginning of the “Scientific Revolution” (a term first coined in the nation of Castille, the capital of scholarly study for nearly a thousand years). At the dawn of the 1660s, the world was about to embark on a golden age of discovery and design, when marvelous inventions beyond imagination were expected to change human life forever.

But this was not to be. Though Théah is an enlightened world filled with champions of learning, it is also home to those who believe that such knowledge will only lead humanity away from the benevolent guidance of the Creator, Theus. Chief among the opposition is Cardinal Esteban Verdugo, whose blind faith in the old ways borders on the fanatic. Recently, Cardinal Verdugo has risen to the seat of Grand High Inquisitor within the Vaticine Church (although his role remains largely secret from the nations of Théah), and directed the Inquisition toward an impassioned suppression of all scientific research and invention.

Under Verdugo’s command, the Inquisition has spanned out across the Vaticine capital of Castille and beyond, arresting (and sometimes executing) scientists and destroying their notes and inventions. With the help of the Castillian military (and their own martial units, the infamous Knight-Inquisitors), they patrol the borders of their nation and stand watch in foreign cities and sea-ports, ready to seize and burn anything that might contribute to what is becoming a “hysteria of sin.”

Nearly overnight, the popularity and affluent support of research and discovery has vanished. The nobility of Théah – fearful of the Inquisition and often unwilling to risk themselves – have been quick to withdraw their funding, stranding many of their former wards without the means to flee the new threat. Those with forethought have fled into exile creating new lives for themselves and hiding from their persecutors.

A few of these scholars have decided to fight back.

Calling themselves the “Invisible College,” these renegade guardians of learning have created a new Théan culture – one which meets in palace basements and distant towers (and often even in plain sight) to discuss the state of the world, and how their private discoveries can improve it. Realizing that their work affects society in unforeseen ways, the Invisible College carefully plots where and when their discoveries are released to the public, always striving to reawaken Théah’s curiosity and concern for the future. But they also protect the people of the world from anything that

Introduction

might drive them farther back into fear and rejection, or fuel the Inquisition's rabid campaign against their cause.

At the College's disposal are the tools their researches have gleaned over the last hundred years – marvelous inventions and gadgetry beyond that of accepted Théan technology, and the highly-guarded secrets of Blood Science, which harnesses and blends the sorcerous natures of Théah's nobility through alchemy. With these advances and the strength of their convictions, the Invisible College stands ready to defend free thought and the right to question for all of Théah.

What you hold in your hands is their manifesto.

The first chapter, **Hypothesis**, details the history and background of the College. It explains their goals, their driving philosophy, and the breathtaking discoveries which only they understand. It also includes descriptions of the twenty-four most public members of the College, who risk their lives to draw attention away from their compatriots.

The second chapter, **Theory**, contains descriptions of some of the most important members of the College – the scholars who probe nature's veil, the messengers who distribute their findings to the world, and the men and women who protect them from the Inquisition's flames.

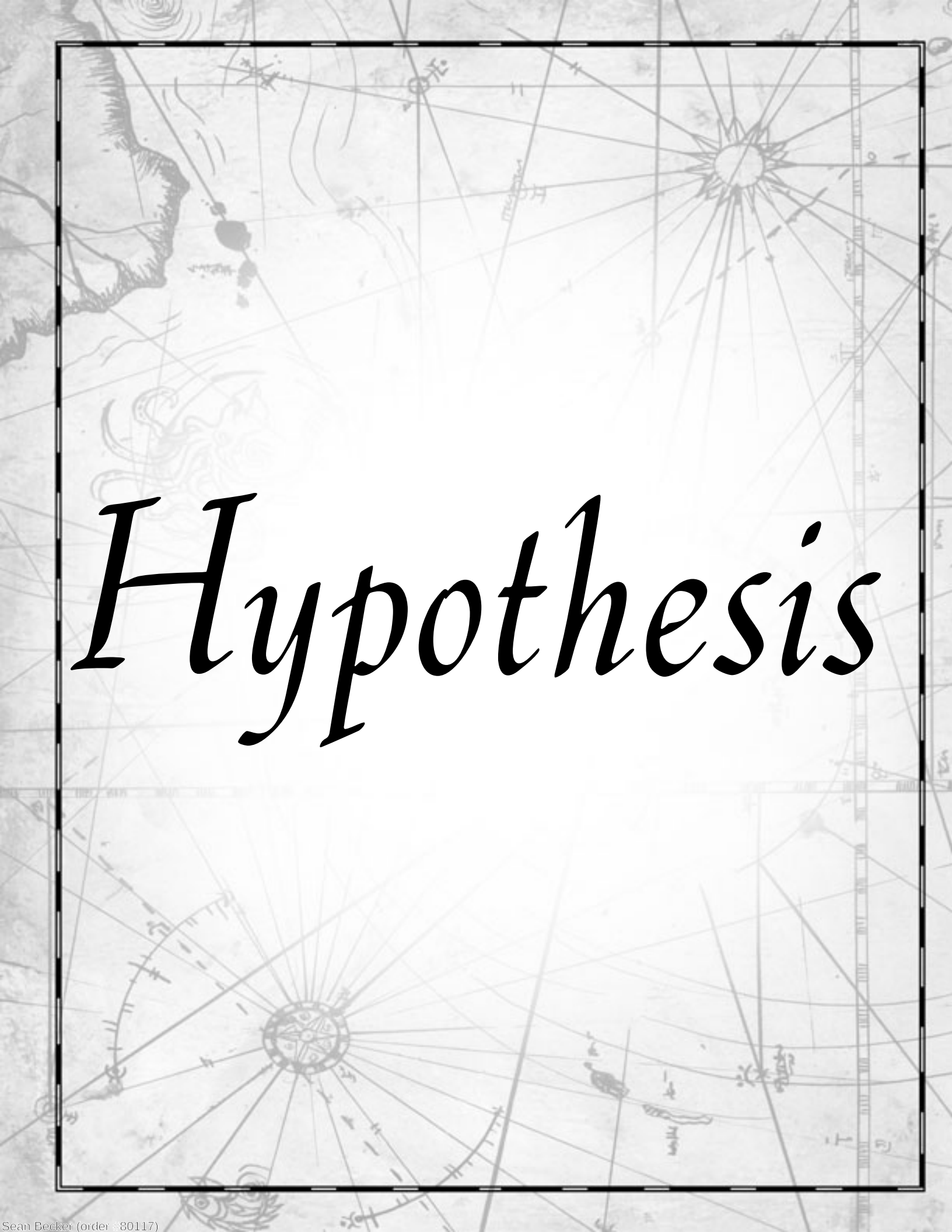
The third chapter, **Experimentation**, includes new rules for the Invisible College: a new swordsman school, new skills and advantages, rules for inventing new devices, and a complete discussion of Alvara Arciniega's dangerous new discipline of Blood Science.

The final chapter, **Proof**, contains essays on playing members of the Invisible College, GM secrets on various topics, and rules on creating members of Cardinal Verdugo's fearsome Knight Inquisitors. Finally, it provides a set of ready-to-play templates for Invisible College Heroes.

The fight for knowledge is more than just an abstract notion in Théah. It takes place every night, and the future of human advancement hangs in the balance. Are you ready to defend the truth?







Hypothesis



Public Face

The public perception of the Invisible College is unlike that of any other secret society on Théah. In most cases, the populace views such groups as inconsequential and ineffectual cults and cabals, whose membership is as limited as it is unknown. Many societies are considered little more than fiction, conjured by the peasantry as players for the pillow books or theatrical characters on the local stage. Others are considered fabrications of the nobility or the military in order to create a desired reaction in the citizenry. But the core membership of the Invisible College, as it is understood by the public, consists of men and women who – until two years ago – were celebrities. Théah’s fascination with the Scientific Renaissance (another term coined by the Castillians) ensured each of the “great minds” of this generation their own place in the history books and made many of them household names.

When the Inquisition declared scientific research a sin, their accusations extended directly to these men and women, who were immediately declared heretics and hunted down as the leaders of a deviant and destructive movement. Cardinal Verdugo used every resource at his disposal to denigrate their names. In some cases (particularly when the scholar’s work was burdened with a political or social message), this defamation of character worked. But in most, it only served to strengthen the public’s existing views of these scholars.

While many members of the public have heard of the Invisible College, few are certain what it actually entails. They know that the College fights for scientific advancement, and they know that its members are in hiding from the Inquisition, but they have little idea of the stakes involved. Most see them as a loose society of “famous academics” and leave it at that.

The Invisible College consists of many more scholars, researchers, patrons, supporters, and irregulars than Verdugo suspects, but the “two dozen” whom he has targeted use his limited knowledge to their advantage. They often draw attention to themselves to reduce the chance that other, less known scholars might complete their work or escape detection. They adopt pseudonyms and trade coded correspondence to attract his attention. They use their cult status with the peasants and nobility against the Inquisition, sparking discontent with the new Vaticine regime.

Many of these illustrious scientists remain in their native lands, or the areas where their greatest researches were conducted. Though they are constantly on the run, their public defiance of the new order outweighs the luxury of studying in relative peace and solitude. These bold (and often flamboyant) propagandists develop vast networks to support them, including local nobility who still harbor faith in their cause, families and friends, militia and clergy, and even members of the Inquisition itself. (Just about the only group that the Invisible College has yet to gain allies with is the Knight Inquisitors, Verdugo’s relentless hunter force.)

The following scholars – called “The Masters” by their peers (see page 42) – represent the public face of the Invisible College. Each has played a vital role in the Scientific Renaissance, and together, they work to continue the Scientific Revolution. Those residing in “friendly” countries (Avalon, Vendel, Ussura, and parts of Montaigne) can operate openly, if cautiously. The rest play a dangerous game of hide-and-seek: living in exile, moving from place to place, and rarely showing themselves in public. It is a burden they accept willingly, for as long as the Inquisition chases them, the rest of the Invisible College will remain safely anonymous.

Avalon

Frasier Baldred

A close relative to one of Queen Elaine's ministers, Frasier Baldred was raised with a firm understanding of politics and polite society. But today, as he approaches his 62nd birthday, this outspoken philosopher and political author has fallen far from grace. His early condemnations of Avalon policy and immoderate ideologies have crept to the surface, and in the wake of the Inquisition's crusade against learning, have overshadowed his noble (though fragmented) literary efforts.

Baldred's chief beliefs lie in the roots of Empiricism (the experimental method by which knowledge is gained through experience and not faith). In his time, he cultured a new branch of science devoted to studying and classifying the world while questioning what "seems right." It was his most ardent hope that humanity would embrace science and inquire beyond their accepted roots.

Frasier Baldred was partly responsible for founding the Royal Fraternity for Scientific Minds (later renamed the Royal Association), the group of scholars which formed the basis of the Invisible College. (For more on this group's origins and how they became the modern Invisible College, see the History section on pages 22–28.)

Of all his fellow scholars, Baldred maintains the closest relationship with Wendel Hargreaves, his personal physician. Since his health began to deteriorate, Baldred has relied upon Hargreaves more and more, straining both their research efforts but building a dedicated friendship that they hope will outlast the current turmoil.

Published Works

Baldred's political aspiration severely hampered his literary efforts, and it wasn't until the death of Jeremy Cook that he could focus entirely on his writing. Since then, he has published only one work: *The New Utopia*, a fictional account of a society dedicated to his own ideals. Baldred is now infirm and not expected to live long enough to produce another volume, a great tragedy given that his incomplete early works (*The Advancement of Scholarship* and

A Matter of Faith

The vast majority of College scholars are Vaticine in faith. Before the Inquisition, the Church of the Prophets was the bastion of learning, and most scientists espoused Vaticine beliefs in order to make use of the Church's vast resources. Even in non-Vaticine nations like Avalon and Vendel, scholars belong to the Church, and though they might not be the most fanatic devotees (many of them accept sorcery, for example; hardly the position of the pious), most academics at least pay lip service to Vaticine doctrines.

Objectionist members of the Invisible College (as well as members of the Church of Avalon) are small in number but growing. Traditionally, they have little to fear from the Inquisition — many can still operate openly — but the death of Jeremy Cook has taught them that no one is safe. Some have begun quietly supporting College activities, while others play a much larger role. The quest for knowledge knows no religious bounds... and Verdugo's reach stretches far beyond his own flock.

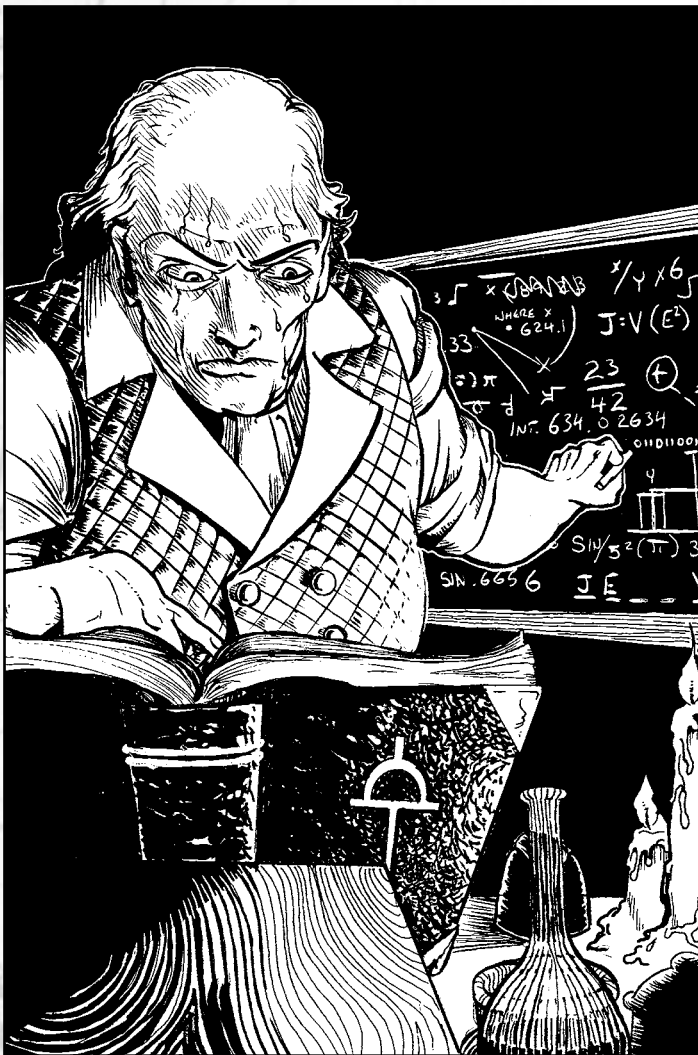
New Visions) contain much of the foundation for modern thought and the convictions of the Invisible College.

Jeremy Cook

Previously described in the *Players' Handbook*, Jeremy Cook was one of the first scholars to perish at the hands of the Inquisition. In 1662, Cook was dragged out in front of his home near Carleon and shot. A note pinned to his chest read, "The Fourth Coming is upon us. Prepare thy souls." This was the work of the Inquisition, of course, though they did not admit to it until their crusade against scholarly efforts become public.

Cook may have been targeted so early because of his role as the founder of the Royal Fraternity for Scientific Minds in 1620. The Inquisition often blames this group (which has since become the core group of Invisible College scholars) for most of the "hysteria" surrounding the scholarly movement.

Before his death, Cook specialized in the concepts of pressure and gas, and was the first to capture gas in a container. This led to Cook's Law, which states that the pressure forced upon a contained gas is spread equally throughout the entire volume of gas. Most recently, Cook was responsible for the acquisition of both the chemical element phosphorus and the man who discovered it, an Eisen alchemist named Herbert Bilgehan, who now hides with the Invisible College until they determine when to release his discovery. (Many groups, including most Théan militaries, could use the element as a weapon, which the College wishes to prevent.)



Published Works

A dedicated skeptic, Cook's greatest work was *The Rational Chemist*, which undermined alchemy and certain outdated methods of the Vaticine Church. Again, this most certainly contributed to his early demise, but it also ensured his place as a martyr by the Invisible College and their allies. Cook remains one of the greatest inspirations for the cause.

Joshua Daylen

One of the oldest public members of the Invisible College, Joshua Daylen is close to ninety years of age. He is also one of the few who remain public after the shift in Vaticine power. Once a scientific advisor to Queen Elaine – and rumored to be an Avalon diplomatic agent – Daylen has friends and favors well up in the Avalon government, who have shielded him from much of the Inquisition's ire.

In his time, Joshua Daylen was a brilliant mathematician and philosopher, but his wandering mind eventually tired of traditional science, and he delved into the hermetic arts of alchemy and astrology. Since then, he has dedicated his scholarly endeavors to disassembling the Creator's message, and unraveling the secrets of the physical elements. He claims to know the secret of transmutation, but has yet to prove it. Many in the Invisible College consider him little more than a quack, but his contributions to Blood Science are unquestionable, and have ensured that he remains a part of the College. (They have also gained him strong allies in both Alvara Arciniega and Don Petrigai of Castille; see below.)

Published Works

Daylen's most famous text, *The Mysteries of Paradise and the Saints*, claims to be an account of non-human beings, who imparted the secrets of the Creator and his eternal message unto Daylen. The volume asserts that these creatures (identified by the Explorers as the Syrneth) still move about Théah today. Daylen's other work is similarly fantastic, and largely ignored by the "proper" scientific community. (Most Théans see it as sensational fiction.)

Wendel Hargreaves

Born and schooled in Avalon, Wendel Hargreaves did not truly acquire his passion for human anatomy until he studied under the masters in Vodacce. There, he learned the fundamental beliefs about the flow of blood through the human body, which he later challenged with his life's work, *The Fluid Heart*. In this volume, he postulated that the heart acted like a pump and was therefore the center of the circulatory system.

The Fluid Heart earned Hargreaves an appointment with the Royal Physicians' College in Avalon, where he has spent all his days since. In due time, he gained the post of lecturer for the College and another as a physician for the Royal Court. These accomplishments (and the people whose lives he has saved over the years) have gone a long way toward distancing him from the efforts of the Inquisition.

One of Hargreaves' regular patients (and one of his closest friends) is the ailing Frasier Baldred (see above), whose weak heart is simultaneously a marvelous opportunity and a cruel misfortune. Baldred knows that he is dying, and has asked Hargreaves to document the event for use in his research, but the sting has not diminished for it.

Published Works

The Fluid Heart, Hargreaves' seminal work on the human circulatory system, is still utilized by many physicians today, often without their patients' knowledge and always without that of the Inquisition.

Ravenild Hibbot

A prolific inventor in many fields, Ravenild Hibbot's most significant contribution to the Invisible College may be her induction into the Royal Fraternity of Scientific Minds in 1657. Before that, the group's membership was exclusively male, but her remarkable accomplishments in nearly every field of modern study made it impossible to ignore her petition to join. Her admission caused the name of the organization to be changed – from the Royal “Fraternity” to the Royal “Association” for Scientific Minds. Hibbot acted as the Association's Curator of Experimentation and continues her work there today.

Hibbot's chief inventions include the spirit level (an instrument for determining a horizontal plane), and the discovery of “cells” in plant life and, later, human bodies. (Hibbot coined the term “cell” after noting that the structures she found in cork looked like Vaticine monastery cells.) She also made several improvements upon the original designs for clocks, telescopes, and the microscope. One of the most skilled mechanics in Théah, Hibbot currently works to apply Cook's Law to a device for gauging pressure, as well as innumerable machines intended to perform repetitive tasks. Finally, her interests in architecture and passion for geometry have led to several buildings in Carleon and Freiburg based on her designs.

Published Works

Hibbot's most well-known work is *The Smallest Division*, which presents her data about cells, as well as her studies on the elasticity of human skin. The work also contains Hibbot's Law – a variation on Cook's Law – which states that strain produced in a stressed body is proportional to the stress.

Castille

Lorenzo Alvarez

One of the world's foremost surveyors of the Firmament, Lorenzo Alvarez was easy to find until about five years ago. Prior to that, he lived on an island called Hafen off the northern coast of the Pösen königreich in the Trade Sea. Fauner Pösen granted him the island and a sizeable sum of money to build a home and observatory there, for her interest in the Firmament mirrored his own.

Using a giant quadrant (a quarter-circular device that measures altitudes and angular elevations), he and his “pupils” – Galeno Rioja and the mysterious “Antonio” – studied the skies. Their work has changed the way that Théans view the stars and other celestial bodies, and rocked the very foundation of Vaticine understanding. By observing supernovas, comets, and the “fixed” locations of objects outside Théah's atmosphere, they have proven that

Terra (the Théan home world) revolves around the sun, and not the other way around.

Unfortunately, Alvarez proved less adept at managing land (and people) than he did at research. His overzealous efforts to charge rent to the island's residents – and the addition of a prison built into the side of his observatory for those who didn't – eventually caused an uprising among the tenants. He was summarily removed from the island, and has been seeking a new patron ever since.

Alvarez has worked with most of the scholars presented on these pages. His interest in alchemy has brought him into frequent contact with Joshua Daylen, Don Petrigai, and Alvara Arciniega. Unfortunately, Alvarez is well-known for his flamboyant personality and tendency to get in over his head. For instance, after losing his nose in a duel, Alvarez has been forced to wear a silver and gold replica. Needless to say, this has made him easy to spot in a crowd, and forced him further into hiding from the Inquisition.

Published Works

Alvarez has yet to publish his own work, though his findings have been properly credited in volumes produced by his students, Rioja and Antonio.



Maria Alverado

Raised and trained as a constable in Eisen, Maria Alverado dedicated her scholarly efforts to the research of static electricity and its applications. She was the first to generate an electrical charge using an ordinary grindstone (by replacing the stone with a ball of sulfur). According to her reports to the Royal Association, she ultimately hopes to improve horse-drawn carriages with this research, as well as build what she calls a “weather monitor.” This latter device will presumably be a 30-odd foot high tube containing water and the small figure of a man, which floats atop the water's surface. In good weather, the man would float high above

the street, while in poor weather, he would plummet to the base of the device. Critics within the Invisible College are reserving judgment of this idea for now.

Published Works

Maria Alverado has yet to publish her findings.

Alvara Arciniega

If the Invisible College has any leader, it is Alvara Arciniega. Educated at the finest universities in Castille, Alvara has since gone on to found his own college, La Universidad de Arciniega in Altamira (see *Castille*, pages 42-43 for more details). He was also a Fellow of the Royal Association before the Inquisition forced him into exile. These positions and his landmark theories (and proofs) in the fields of mathematics, natural philosophy, and astronomy have vaulted him into the public's eye, perhaps more so than any scholar in the world at this time.

Arciniega currently works in hiding, continuing his research and voluminous personal correspondence regardless of the risk to him and his associates. He has also opted to remain in Castille (though his location shifts often, sometimes even daily), where his closest colleagues and confidants live. Perhaps his closest allies in the Invisible College are Joshua Daylen and Don Petrigai Ontiveros de Rioja del Castillo; together, these three scholars are responsible for nearly all the known uses for Blood Science (see pages 94–97).

Note: Although he has an entry in Chapter Two, Arciniega is further detailed in the *Castille* sourcebook (pages 81–82 and 114–115).

Published Works

Arciniega's first volume, *Fundamentals*, is currently being drafted from exile. Presumably this work will be published using one of the Invisible College's underground presses and distributed privately. But given Arciniega's reputation, it shouldn't be long before the work spreads across all of Théah – much to Cardinal Verdugo's chagrin.

Don Petrigai Ontiveros de Rioja del Castillo

Vanity and arrogance drove this physician and alchemist from his native land of Castille, though he eventually found a new home along the southern shores of Vendel, where he somehow secured a position at the University of Kirk. How he managed this feat when virtually no one else in civilized Théah would associate with him is as yet unknown, though it may have something to do with his study and research of Blood Science. The illustrious Alvara Arciniega, who has been known to defend critically lambasted thinkers from scandal and the censure of their fellows, defends Don Petrigai vigorously, which undoubtably helps him maintain his current position.

Regardless of his reliance on obscure mystical ideas, Don Petrigai (called simply “Petrigai” in Castille and Vendel) is frequently correct, and consulted semi-regularly by the nobility and merchant classes alike. His disregard for Franz Deleboe’s map of the human body and insistence on balancing the “minerals of the soul” to preserve health have earned him the nickname *Lieber medicorum*, or the “Lieber of physicians,” after the recent Objectionist Movement. But his methods – however outlandish – are effective (at least most of the time), and his popularity with the fantasists and nobility is at an all-time high.

Published Works

Most of Petrigai’s work remains unpublished, due to his flamboyant nature, predilection for insults, and refusal to utilize textbooks in his university courses (remembering that many publishers were once authors themselves). Of course, having his Vendel students toss what he considers “objectionable literature” into a tall bonfire probably doesn’t help, either.

Galeno Rioja

In one of the most fruitful joint ventures in scientific history, Galeno Rioja utilized the work of his tutor, Larenzo Alvarez, in his greatest discovery – that Terra (the Théan home world) traveled around the sun in an elliptical pattern, along with all the other planets in the system. This discovery revolutionized how people see the Firmament, although it

only further enraged many supporters of the Vaticine Church (including Cardinal Verdugo).

Rioja’s discovery also led to many other marvelous realizations, including his three laws of planetary motion (see below), the refracting telescope (which Alvara Arciniega’s reflecting design recently improved upon), and a number of optical advancements. Rioja is responsible for several enhancements upon the original microscope design, which led to his passion with insects and the creation of the etymology field. His microscope was also useful in his definitions of how people see and what causes rainbows.

Published Works

Most of Galeno Rioja’s discoveries about the Firmament can be found in two volumes, *New Luminaries* (which contains his first two theories) and *Symmetry of Theus* (containing the third).

Eisen

Julian von Henning

One of Petrigai’s students during his tenure at the University of Kirk, Julian von Henning has become a well-respected chemist and physician in his own right. Although he stubbornly clings to mystical beliefs (such as his assertion that water is the fundamental substance in all Creation), von Henning continues to develop new material for the Collective to mull over. His most important offering yet has been the manuscript *Visible Medicine*, in which he describes “invisible spirits” which became visible after escaping the bubbling flasks in his laboratory. He calls these spirits “gases,” and has begun cataloguing them, giving them names like *animus sylvestris* (Numan for “spirit of wood”).

Published Works

Visible Medicine, as described above.

Clarisse Margaret Hadewig

Formally trained in mathematics and the law, Clarisse abandoned the latter in favor of a life of discovery shortly after she entered school. At her father’s prompting, she

extended her interests to include dynamics (the mechanical sciences), which she embraced with unexpected passion. Her specialty rests with clock-making, and many of her mechanical creations – including the towering pendulum timepiece built to her specifications at Hanns-Carsten Square in Kirk – adorn the streets of major cities across the continent.

Clarisse's involvement with the Royal Association has brought her into contact with many of the world's foremost thinkers, and – with the exception of a well-known argument with Alvara Arciniega over his early theories of gravitation – she gets along with all of them. Her correspondence with Derviny and Leman urged her to question accepted practices, and seek challenges in unexpected places. Among her personal challenges, she has developed new methods for grinding and polishing telescope lenses and even observed what appear to be rings surrounding the outermost planet of Volta.

Published Works

As yet, Clarisse Hadewig has only published sporadic designs and theories, all informally. The Invisible College has extended an open invitation to publish her work through its private presses, should she be so inclined.

Goskelen Leman

Young and idealistic, Goskelen Leman is considered by most of his peers to be a certified genius. His natural aptitude with the sciences extends to nearly every branch of modern thought, including mathematics, mechanics, history, geology, and linguistics. But so far his devout Vaticine faith and legal background have hindered his true potential, at least as far as the leaders of the Invisible College (most notably Alvara Arciniega, a scholarly rival) are concerned. They argue that his lack of detachment clouds his scientific judgment. Leman, on the other hand, believes that his faith offers him a unique perspective that many modern scholars lack.

Goskelen Leman has contributed to nearly every field of study, but his most prolific (and well-known, though not particularly well-respected) work focuses on the physical

sciences. His “wildly optimistic” theory that everything in creation consists of units called “monads,” has so far garnered only quiet derision. His claim that a Supreme Monad (Theus), dictates their past, present, and future – and that this proves that science and religion are not at odds – has met with even less approval.

Published Works

Leman has printed several metaphysical discourses, mostly redefining the world and balancing research with faith. So far, his work has yet to catch on with the popular or scientific communities, though he claims (in his typically sanguine manner) that “it is only a matter of time.”

Montaigne

Father Albere

Albere, along with his few guests and assistants, stands at the forefront of research on the White Plague. He served as one of the Church's most renowned authorities, until the rise of the Inquisition forced him to flee. Now he makes his home in the battered remnants of a village which was decimated by the illness. Located high in Montaigne's eastern range, he has used a series of frozen caves only a day's hike into the mountains to preserve a number of victims of the outbreak. The survivors are grateful for his knowledge, and hide him from the Inquisition, which makes his job much easier.

Albere is a man in a crisis. Stocky and gruff looking, the 53-year-old Vaticine priest balances dozens of duties, and the strain is starting to get to him. As a member of the Invisible College, he corresponds with countrymen who have thrown off the church to indulge their every intellectual excess. As a noble, he fears the simmering anger of his former flock and believes that they may someday find him. And as a scholar, he has been forced to hide from his own Church. The stress has slowly taken its toll.

Published Works

Albere has no major works of his own, though he is developing a comprehensive analysis of the White Plague

phenomena. His critiques of other medically-minded books are considered essential reading by Montaigne's medical establishment, although whether this is nationalist pride or the mark of genuine insight is sometimes hotly debated.

Reimar Derviny

This unconventional theorist is best known for questioning everything save mathematics and the fact that humans are defined by their ability to think. From his new home in distant Vesten, he seeks ultimate understanding of all Creation through the stark clarity of logic. He is best known for his work with numbers and human cognition – and for his self-proclaimed crusade to define Theus Himself using them. (For more about Reimar Derviny, see his NPC description on pages 60–61.)

Published Works

Derviny has published three books from his Vesten hideaway, all concerning the nature of human thought. *Method and Mode*, *On Second Thought*, and *Questioning Conviction* are considered essential reading for the open-minded, and are included in all current anti-Vaticine arguments.

Pawel Gabien

Self-indulgent and hyper-critical of others, Pawel Gabien has made few friends in his scholarly career. To date, his greatest contribution to the scientific community has been his open (and often inflammatory) rejection of Vaticine convention. His fervent support of materialism (the idea that everything consists of small components which are often too small to be seen by the naked eye) directly contradicts many commonly-accepted Vaticine beliefs about Theus' Creation. He is one of the few supporters of Goskelen Leman's work (and the idealistic Eisen is grateful), but the propagandist nature of his efforts have led to mockery among his fellows and fueled counter-arguments from the Church, which have undercut his impact on the world. Gabien doesn't seem to care. He knows that he is right and intends to convince the entire world to accept his views.

Published Works

As yet, Gabien is unpublished. Many believe this is because his arguments usually revolve around the ideas of others; others believe he is simply lazy.

Camilia Pascaut

Early on in life, Camilia displayed tremendous untapped scientific and mechanical skill. But this was well before women were socially accepted in scholarly circles, and it appeared that her talents would go to waste. But her father, a highly placed member of Montaigne gentry, didn't accept this. He tutored her at home for many years, and arranged for world-renowned minds to do the same. He even refused to enter Camilia into Montaigne's public schooling system, knowing that the other girls her age were behind her on the learning curve and that the classes focused on culturing women, not educating them.

Her father's efforts paid off, and by her twenty-eighth year – when the Royal Fraternity changed its name and opened its doors to women – she was more than ready to compare notes with the world's finest minds. By then, she already had many accomplishments to her credit, albeit ones that the world hadn't seen yet. For instance, she invented Théah's first calculating machine (a rudimentary device utilizing wheels and cogs set in various positions to represent quantities), the concept for which came to her as she watched her father struggle with accounting while managing his estate. Her device – created some ten years before Goskelen Leman's invention (widely considered to be the actual inventor of Théah's calculating machine) – offered several intriguing embellishments over his later design, and earned her much praise from her fellow inventors. (Pascaut always arrives at her discoveries through unlikely paths. For instance, her greatest contribution to the field of probability came when she was helping her friends – career gamblers – figure the odds for their bets.)

Recently, however, Pascaut's health has begun to fail. Diagnosed with “melancholy from overwork”, she has taken on less stressful tasks, including monthly visits to the Montaigne courts (usually in disguise since the Inquisition started looking for her), and sponsoring prominent artists.

She has also dedicated a large amount of her time to religious speculation, and has been known to defend fellow Vaticanines in court, and even against members of the Inquisition.

Published Works

Pascaut's greatest literary effort to date is *Considerations*, a religious text stating that reason is limited, and incapable of yielding ultimate truths about Theus, man, or Creation. The book suggests that man must rely upon faith, which (unlike reason) is neither ignorant nor corrupt. As expected, this work has set many stout empiricists (including most of this list) against Pascaut, who still defends herself admirably.

Ussura

Valeri Siev Nimzovich

Nimzovich is one of Ussura's leading scientists, a zoologist attempting to classify and document the behavior of as many species of animal life as he can encounter in Théah. He feels that he has already catalogued most of the fauna in his homeland, and has begun to travel abroad in other nations, recording his encounters with new creatures.

Nimzovich is a self-made man. Born to a peasant family, he grew up poor and hungry. Although he had nearly no formal education, he managed to teach himself to read and write in five languages and the basics of mathematics before he reached his fifteenth year. He had considerable help from a visiting Castillian missionary who spent a few months in his village before dying from pneumonia. Valeri kept the man's books and learned from them.

Unlike Constanzo Rodriguez (who Nimzovich considers a fierce rival, see the *Players' Guide*, page 96), the Ussuran is interested in more than simply describing the creatures he observes. He wishes to classify them: to organize them into a coherent system which can accommodate new species once they are observed. Nimzovich's method of classification is simple. First, he divides animals into those that have no bones or shells (e.g., earthworms), those with no bones but shells, (e.g., clams), those with exoskeletons

(e.g., crabs), those with bones and scales (e.g., snakes), those with bones and feathers (e.g., birds), and those with bones and hair (e.g., wolves). Then, he subdivides based on the mode of locomotion: flying, swimming, or on land. Next, he counts the animal's limbs and classifies according to that, then by the diet, and so on.

While this system of classification is far from revolutionary, it is remarkably thorough. Even so, his famous method of taxonomy has earned him less renown than his systematic cataloguing of animal behavior and mannerisms. He observes a species, seeing what it eats, how far it ranges, how it interacts with other species, whether it stakes out a territory, and so on. He is especially thorough with birds and furred animals. His documents show an attempt to translate each animal's sounds, postures, and gestures such as tail wagging into a kind of language. Valeri often says that he has a gift for language, and that he does not see why animals should not have means of communication any less advanced than allowed for by their "society."

Nimzovich's wilderness expeditions keep him out of the reach of the Inquisition. Some of his colleagues speculate that he may not even be aware of the threat.

Vendel

Franz Deleboe

This Vendel-born physician was never satisfied with the incomplete findings of Caspar Gallus, the foremost Church expert on human anatomy. Gallus had completed a map of the human body for the Church in 1610, which advanced Théan medicine by leaps and bounds. At the same time, however, it remained dependent upon outmoded concepts, most prominently the theory of bodily humors. In the third decade of this century, Deleboe endeavored to draft a new map of the human body, one which improved upon the Church's model and eliminated the humor theory. The work was long and laborious, consuming all of Deleboe's time and resources for nearly three decades. It was also gruesome, requiring the dissection of countless corpses and winning Deleboe few friends.

But in 1661, his work completed, Deleboe put all his findings down on paper. Brutally shredding Gallus's earlier suppositions, Deleboe meticulously detailed the human body, naming every bone, muscle, tissue, and fluid that he found. Although he had no idea what many of the various body parts did, he felt confident enough to denounce the humor theory as quackery, setting every concept of Théan medicine on its ear. His revolutionary map advanced the medical field by decades, and has remained the standard for anatomical study ever since.

Unfortunately, like Cook a year later, Deleboe was targeted by the Inquisition for his efforts. A band of fanatics came in the night, burned him at the stake, and left him as an example for others. A note pinned to his chest proclaimed, "The time for science is past." This could have proven a chilling distraction for many scholars, but most see it more as motivation to resist than an admonition to abandon their cause.

Published Works

Deleboe's now world-famous treatise on the human form, *The Mechanical Nature of Man*, remains one of the most important scientific volumes of the age. It is required reading in nearly every medical school in the world, and most reputable doctors keep a copy, even if they must hide it to remain safe from the Inquisition.

Vodacce

"Antonio"

The true identity of the man known as "Antonio" is a complete mystery to the public at large. His fame stems from the allure of his personal struggle against the Inquisition, rather than any specific achievements. He first came to the Inquisition's attention several years ago, when he and two other rogue scholars (Lorenzo Alvarez and Galeno Rioja) published their preliminary maps of the Firmament and the movement of objects through and across it.

The Inquisition has hunted Antonio privately ever since, though their search only became public following the death of the Hierophant. The Invisible College, realizing that it has a propaganda boon on its hands, now uses Antonio's name to "sell" important messages and anti-Inquisition sentiment. The most recent papers published in his name include significant passages written by other authors, who value the increased publicity more than proper credit.

Published Works

Of the scientific portions of Antonio's published work, the vast majority deals with natural philosophy (physics), in particular with the motion of objects. He was the first to determine that all falling bodies accelerated at the same rate, regardless of their mass or density, and also the first to establish the idea that an object moving along a perfectly smooth plane would neither speed up nor slow down



without external stimuli. Antonio's most famous published volume to date is *The Order of Two*, the book which brought the wrath of the Inquisition to bear upon him.

Gismar Arnault

Early notes penned by this visionary astronomer and physiologist hint that he may be working on a comprehensive comparison of humans, animals, and basic machine principles. His incomplete work is, *The Mechanism of Man and Beast Alike*, has captured the interest of both the Inquisition and a number of enthusiastic nobles when references and early (startling) sketches were found in the archives of the Royal Association for Scientific Minds. They have not yet been made public – he wishes to finish the work before publishing it – but the College has leaked enough material to gain the world's attention

Before word of Arnault's bold concepts spread, he was little more than a faceless member of the Association – someone whom the Inquisition would have normally overlooked and left to his researches. But now he has become as much a celebrity as any of the great and proud minds of this generation, and must share their penchant for secrecy as well.

Published Works:

Should *The Mechanism of Man and Beast Alike* ever come to public attention, Arnault's findings could change the face of both science and medicine forever.

Others

There are a total of twenty-four Masters currently active in Théah. We have only mentioned twenty-one here; the remainder have been deliberately left undefined. They exist for GMs to insert their own characters, or to allow a player to portray one as a Hero. All of them are well-known and all have been marked for death by the Inquisition. Other than that, their history, personality, and current whereabouts are up to the GM and the player(s).



A Friendly Spoiler Warning

This section details the private agendas of the Invisible College, and contains some of the most carefully hidden secrets about the scholars and their goals. Those who do not belong to the College, or who wish to be surprised by the backstory of *7th Sea* are advised to stop reading now.

History

The history of the Invisible College does not officially begin until 1620, with the foundation of the Royal Fraternity for Scientific Minds. But several key events prior to that influence their current operations, goals, and structure. The following section details those early incidents.

Rudiments

AV 400: The Appearance of the White Plague

The White Plague first struck in 400 AV, and lasted nearly ten years. It was the worst disease to hit Théah at that time, and many alchemists feared that it would spread across the whole world. But their fears proved unwarranted (for the

time being), and the disease eventually slowed to a crawl, then vanished altogether. No one ever determined the reasons for the outbreak, or the plague's sudden disappearance, but the death toll numbered in the thousands, and reminded Théans of their mortality for many years afterward.

The second and, by far, the most virulent appearance of the White Plague began in the 10th century, and quickly spread to every corner of the known world. This time, it did not simply vanish... at least, not at first. It remained – hidden in silent carriers and pulsing through the ranks of the homeless and the destitute – for four centuries. The second outbreak consumed over a third of Théah's population before its threat finally ended. Again, no reasons for the outbreak were ever discovered, though not for a lack of trying. The Third Prophet, upon his arrival in 1000, claimed that the Plague was “divine retribution for the sins of our sorcerous fathers” and ordered Vaticine physicians to investigate its origin and nature; Castille's affiliation with the Church had spared it the worst instances of the Plague, and the Prophet believed that the Vaticines had the resources to finally defeat it. Despite the backing of the Church and countless manhours spent in research, little conclusive information could be found.

The Plague appeared twice more over the next 500 years, both times in the 14th century. The first emergence came in 1347, at the tail end of the second outbreak. The second arose in 1386, and spread through the Castillian capital of San Cristobal. Both outbreaks primarily attacked those in the noble class, dispelling the rumors that the disease might itself be limited to the peasantry. It also established a pattern that initially went unnoticed, but which the Invisible College would be the first to see... 300 years later.

AV 1402: The First Explorer

As discussed in the *Castille* sourcebook (pages 20–21), the early 1400s saw the first serious efforts at exploration in Théah. Pioneering ship captains set sail for parts unknown, heading west past the Midnight Archipelago into the great uncharted ocean. Unfortunately, most of them met with complete failure. The lucky ones returned with nothing to

show for their trouble. The rest disappeared, never to be seen again. The movement reached its apex in 1402, when the now-famed explorer Cristobal Gallegos sailed from Castille in search of lands beyond the western frontier, hoping to make it all the way around the globe. He vanished without a trace, as did several expeditions sent after him.

At least, that's what the history books say.

Gallegos's disappearance quelled the world's enthusiasm for exploration, and the movement withered soon thereafter. Serious interest in discovery remained dormant until the founding of the Explorer's Society in 1598.

The 1600s: Publish or Perish

With the dawn of this century, the face of Théan academia changed. Knowledge had always been the purveyance of the Vaticine Church, held by monks and scholars, but now the desire for learning spread into other quarters. New inventions and advances excited the public interest. Scholars suddenly became a *cause célèbre* in which the nobility could indulge. For the first time in history, it was profitable to be a scientist or a thinker. The Church answered the challenge by delving even deeper into nature's mysteries and by 1610, a Scientific Renaissance was in full swing.

With the promise of even greater discoveries right around the corner, time and money became more and more critical for scholars. Until recently, a popular saying amongst scholars was “publish or perish.” With wealthy nobility looking for reasons to support academic endeavors, the need for accepted work became more and more pressing. As a result, the first decade of this century saw the establishment of more than fifty scientific journals, and dozens more were printed each decade thereafter (at least, until the Inquisition came to power).

But as the “trend” slowly turned into a culture, and the works of these bold scholars began to have an effect on the larger world, this self-fueled explosion of scientific development came to be known as the Scientific

Revolution. The era spawned more brilliant minds than any before it (or perhaps it simply illuminated those who were already there), and scientists enjoyed a celebrity never known before.

The scientific community grew, and their work started to make the known world seem smaller than ever before. More and more scholars entered each field, and came into regular contact with one another. Soon, some began to form fierce bonds with one another, and in 1620, a small group decided to found the first formal scholar's organization in history.

1620: The Royal Fraternity and the Origins of the Invisible College

The predecessor to the Invisible College was called the Royal Fraternity for Scientific Minds. Founded by the now-deceased chemist and inventor, Jeremy Cook, this group was originally located in the island nation of Avalon, but quickly spread, and included numerous scholars both inside and outside the Vaticine. Its charter included the nurturing and protection of its scholarly members, and a shared pool of knowledge to aid future researches. But in its early years, it was ultimately an exclusive club for a select "elite" within the scientific community.

The Fraternity had an odd effect upon the Scientific Renaissance. While its positive public image drew even more attention and funding, those resources were distributed to only a small percentage of the needy scholars across Théah. This double-edged sword also affected which sciences advanced and which stagnated. Chemistry, astronomy, and natural philosophy, which the Fraternity heavily supported at the time, gained massive funding and much attention, and tremendous leaps were made in those fields. But other areas of research, which were not as well supported by the elitists, languished in relative obscurity for nearly two decades.

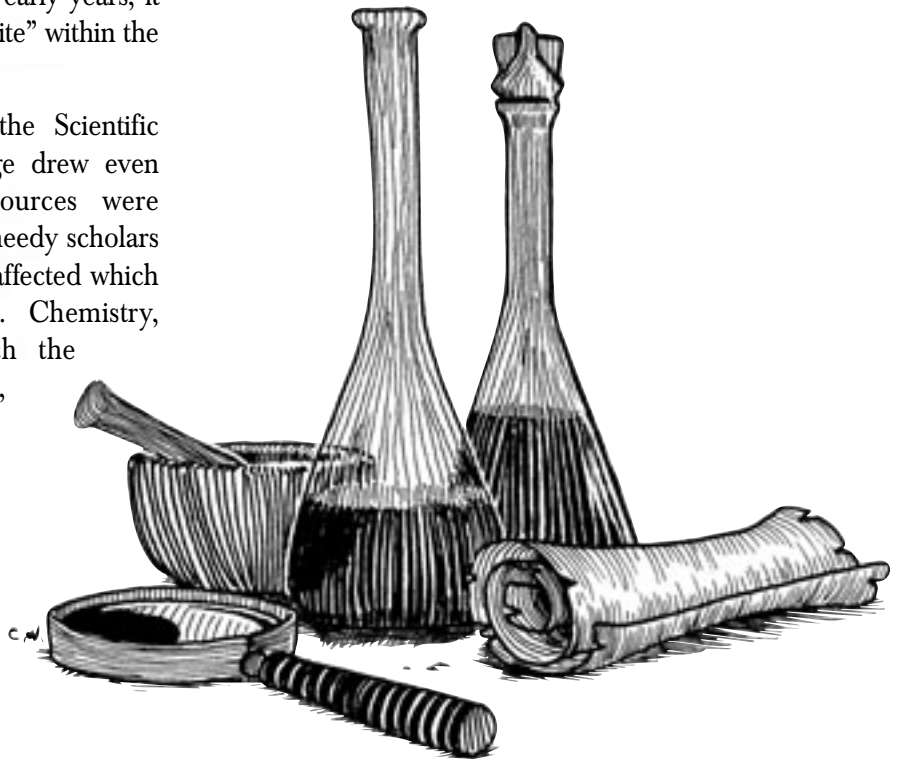
The Fraternity held annual conferences during this period, usually in Avalon's capital city of Luthon. Members would

present their scholarly papers, discuss the merits of various theories, and award medals to each other for "extraordinary scholarship." Conversation and congenial exploration of the sciences were hallmarks of the day.

1638: The Prodigal Explorer Returns

In the autumn of 1638, the renowned physician Gismar Arnauld (then a member of the Royal Fraternity) agreed to accompany an Explorer team into the icy reaches of Ussura, near the towering Wall of Fire that shields Cathay. Rumors abounded of a flaming creature that had slipped through the wall, offering a potential glimpse of Cathayan fauna, and Arnauld wanted to be among the first to see it. But what the group found when they ventured across Ussura was far from what they planned for – and nothing short of stunning.

On their trek to the site, the group stumbled across a splintered vessel spread along a quarter-mile stretch of frozen shoreline, its hull cleaved into pieces and the remains of its occupants buried in three feet of ice. Close inspection



revealed the ship's name: *La Lumbre de Theus* ("The Light of Theus"), the vessel captained by the famed explorer Cristobal Gallegos. After the team chiseled a tunnel into the ice, Arnauld ventured into what remained of the central cabin and found the navigator's logs for the voyage, which proved remarkably well-kept for documents over two hundred years old.

The logs explained that Gallegos' small fleet had sailed well past the outer rim of known trade routes, but eventually came up against some enormous barrier of inhuman origin. The barrier stretched on for days in both directions (the logs accounted for several weeks' journey along the barrier without a break in the mysterious obstruction). Skipping forward in the logs, Arnauld discovered that Gallegos' ship had somehow made it past the barrier, and into an illogical realm where the rules of natural philosophy did not apply. Then, looking to the end of the logs, Arnauld found the last entry, dated 1634, which spoke of a final desperate attempt to find land, followed by a perilous wreck on the shores of Ussura.

Gallegos really had made it all the way around the world, but he'd done it over the course of two centuries, through some strange alien land beyond a seemingly supernatural barrier.

Arnauld's mind raced, but he didn't need to read any more. Recognizing that the information contained in the logs was far too dangerous for the world, he set a trap for the others in the party. He waylaid and killed each and every Explorer in the area, then set fire to the wreckage of Gallegos' ship and all the bodies, making it appear to be the work of the creature they were here to study in the first place.

Arnauld never found the actual Cathay creature, but he secretly returned the logs to civilization and hid them away in the Fraternity vault, where they have been carefully (and quietly) studied ever since. They appear to contain maps, directions, and references to a new world, filled with

fantastic creatures and people who use sorcerous and technological advances vastly different from those of Théah. Unfortunately, the logs occasionally lapse into a nearly indecipherable language in many critical places, which has hampered their complete translation. (For more about Gallegos' journey, see page 23.)

The Birth of the Invisible College

The Invisible College only started to take shape as the organization that exists today over the last four decades. Beginning with the startling revelations of the *Lumbre de Dios* logs, the Royal Fraternity gradually came to realize that dangers lurked in the world which humanity could neither fully comprehend nor entirely control. So it decided to do something about it.

The Fraternity had grown significantly beyond its original membership, but the celebrity of its founding fathers remained largely isolated to about twenty of the most well-known (many of whom are described in the "Public Face" section). This core group, who were already established as a guiding force and administrative body, decided to branch off with a new mission, calling themselves the "Invisible College" (or "College within a College"). They worked to gauge and evaluate new discoveries, attempting to determine if the world was "ready" for such knowledge. While they never curbed new scientific advancements, they stressed the need to understand the moral implications of such advancements and – if necessary – censure them until they could be better understood. The College would study such "dangerous" discoveries, and release them to the public only when they felt it could accept the burden.

Over the next twenty years, the Invisible College remained a very closely guarded secret between the popular scholars of the Fraternity. New scholars were only invited into the College by unanimous vote between all members, and all new inductees were required to take strict oaths upon the book of the Prophets, vowing to remain silent about their new allegiance, and to uphold the standards and intentions of the College at all costs.

1657: New Blood

The Royal Fraternity for Scientific Minds opened its doors to female scholars in 1657, when a little-known renaissance thinker named Ravenild Hibbot petitioned to become a member. Though the Fraternity's charter had always excluded women, Hibbot's obvious talents far outweighed tradition and she was accepted as a full member in good standing within a week of her application.

Hibbot had already discovered cells in plants and humans. She had invented dozens of time-saving and labor-repeating gadgets, and drafted incredible improvements upon the latest clock and building designs. And she had one of the most brilliant minds any of the Fraternity scholars had ever encountered. She was an excellent and valued addition to the Fraternity, which – in honor of her acceptance – changed its name to the Royal Association of Scientific Minds.

Other women followed in Hibbot's footsteps, providing the Association much-needed new blood, and offering the Invisible College a fresh crop of young and idealistic scholars. Ravenild Hibbot repeated her pioneering performance in 1659, becoming the first female member of the College, but she was followed by Clarisse Margaret Hadewig (see page 17) followed in 1660, Maria Alverado (page 16) in 1662, and Camilia Pascout (page 19) in 1663.

Today, the Invisible College's membership is roughly thirty-percent female.

1661–1668: Tumult and Turmoil

The last seven years have been a trying time for the Invisible College. Beginning with Jeremy Cook and his “heretical” work, *The Rational Chemist*, the Vaticine Church has stepped up its anti-scholastic campaign more every year. The Royal Association came under fire as a “heretic house” within weeks of Cook's denouncement. Hooded thugs seized parcels arriving from and leaving their office in Luthon, noble financial supporters were “persuaded” to withdraw their funding, and Association members were harassed ceaselessly. One scientist – Franz Deleboe of Vendel – was actually assassinated, though the culprit

remain a mystery for some time. By the end of 1661, the Inquisition was finally seasoned enough to take direct action, and – with no small spectacle – rallied for Cook's death. But the Royal Association (and in particular the Invisible College) still had enough influence in the Church at that time to counter their demand.

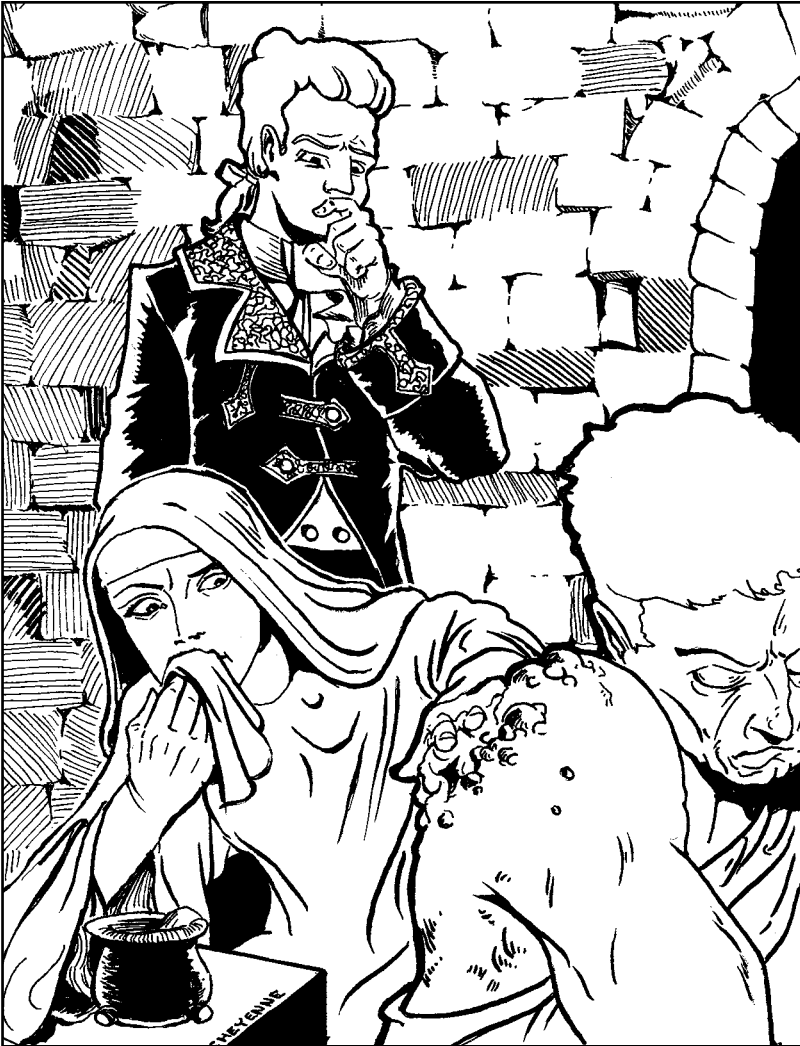
The following year, the very day that Cook was supposed to introduce his latest invention to the College, the Inquisition struck. They attacked the scholar in his home in the lowlands north of Carleon, and killed him while attempting to escape. His new creation, the air pump, was smashed by the Inquisition, and his notes would have burned had the Invisible College not intervened.

Jeremy Cook's fellow scholars arrived to receive the air pump just as the Inquisitors were ransacking the house. They overwhelmed the fanatics through strength of numbers, surprise, and not a little luck, and secured his notes for the College. Though the air pump itself was destroyed, the College managed to recreate it using Cook's notes. But they knew that this victory was only transitory; the Inquisition had countless fanatics at its disposal, while they were mostly a collection of idle thinkers. Soon, the Church enforcers would come for them, and they had to be ready.

Over the following six years, the Invisible College shifted their research and study practices more and more toward defensive means. Emphasis was placed upon Blood Science, gadgetry, and swordsman's training. Though they still devoted as much time as they could to their private goals and research, the need to survive was their guiding force as they prepared for the coming war.

1665–1666: The Silent Enemy

From the early days of Nonus, 1665 to the middle of Primus, 1666, the White Plague reared its head once again. Like every instance of the Plague before, the outbreak's origin and cause were unknown, and it vanished before any committed study could be mounted. But this time, the plague did not vanish without a trace. Richard Kailean, a Church scholar “on loan” to the Knights of the Rose and



wasn't until Don Petrigai, one of the Blood Scientists, compared the disease with his own work that anything conclusive was found.

The results were far worse than anyone feared. The disease appeared to spread through the blood, almost as a sorcerous contagion. Worse, it seemed to be controlled by an outside source. Unfortunately, it was impossible for the scholar to determine who, or what, was controlling the Plague, but he figured that it was only safe to assume that the disease had been controlled from the beginning.

Someone was killing Théans by the thousands – even by the millions – on purpose.

The Invisible College, knowing that revealing this information to the public would incite the wrath of the Plague's controllers, decided instead to study the disease privately. They have dedicated several of their keenest minds to the mystery, but nothing more has been found in the last two years. The College desperately hopes to solve the riddle before the next outbreak, always fearful that next time, it might hit a little too close to home.

1666: The Rise of the Inquisition

As is well documented in the *7th Sea* core material, the Vaticine Church lost its Hierophant two years ago, and the remaining cardinals – unable to unanimously vote a new Hierophant into office – have so far been powerless to prevent the Inquisition's rise to power. This unexpected development caught the Invisible College off-guard, even with their diligent preparations, and forced them to take drastic measures.

Cross, discovered something strange during a dissection of one of the Plague victims.

Unlike all other diseases studied under the recently invented microscope, the White Plague did not appear as a cellular organism.

After checking his findings against dozens of plague victims, Kailean determined that the Plague – whatever it was – was most certainly not biological. After alerting the Church about his findings, Kailean and a small group of scholars mounted a full-scale investigation of the disease, utilizing all the most recent inventions at their disposal (including several that were not yet available to the public). But it

To protect the bulk of their membership (which was fortunately still anonymous), the original founders, prominent figures, and most flamboyant of the College scholars opted to step farther out into the light, where everyone could see them. This made their positions that much more difficult to defend, and their jobs that much harder to do, but it also offered the remainder of the College its best chance to continue its work unmolested.

The Invisible College continues to operate around the needs and philosophies of its “inner circle,” though they do not meet with the other members quite as often anymore. As a result, College scholars have been forced to operate on their own far more than ever before, and most survive based mainly on their independent merits, apart from the rest. This is a new age for the Invisible College – one which will forge a stronger future for the sciences of Théah, or snuff them out forever.

Recent Events, Discoveries, and Innovations

As is to be expected, the operations of the Invisible College have slowed drastically since the death of the Hierophant. Lines of communication between members are far more strained now, and often fail (if a scholar is caught, murdered, or turned), leaving an entire “chain” to its own devices. Some scholars have opted to form small cells with others close to them on the chain, hoping to prevent this from happening, but this tactic often only serves to provide the Inquisition with a larger target. As yet, the Invisible College manages to keep a level number of members, though the chain fluctuates much more than any would like.

Scientists everywhere are flooding to the Invisible College for safety from the roving Knight Inquisitors, though they often present as much a danger to the College as a reinforcement. Loyal scholars can never be completely sure that refugee scientists aren’t Inquisitor swordsmen in disguise. The refugees must be careful as well, never knowing whether a potential Invisible College contact is really there to drag them off to prison, or worse.

To make matters even worse, noble funding for the Invisible College is at an all-time low. With the Montaigne-Castille war bleeding support from both nations, the trade war gobbling the finances of many Vendel and Vodacce, and the Inquisition’s penchant for extending the title of “heretic” to any who support enemies of the Church, it is becoming more and more difficult to convince once-enthusiastic aristocrats to take the risk.

But the fight is far from over. The Invisible College still has several hundred scholars across Théah working against the Inquisition, and it’s only a matter of time before the Cardinals must declare the Hierophant dead and elect a new one.

With any luck, the next Hierophant will favor science.

Protocols

Beneath the celebrated veneer of the public personages of the Invisible College stand hundreds of men and women dedicated to the principles of learning and discovery. These people serve various functions within the College, but all are dedicated to its core objective – the freedom to pursue scholarly advancement without the interference of the Inquisition, critics, or political concern.

Accordingly, all members of the Invisible College may study, research, and create new inventions independently from each other. Individuals are encouraged to continue the work they started before the Inquisition started hunting them, and adopt new avenues of research as they desire. The only *caveats* are that they share their innovations with the rest of the College, and that they take on certain secondary responsibilities. (Some members of the College devote themselves full-time to these responsibilities, ignoring research altogether; see pages 43 and 102–104 for more information.)

Hypothesis

• **Catalogue new discoveries.** The Invisible College maintains a comprehensive collection of data about every discovery, invention, and field research that happens in Théah, but as diligent as they are, they do miss things at times. For this reason, their field scholars must stay on the look-out for designs that have gone unnoticed and unexpected developments. When a new discovery first arises, the Invisible College begins collecting information about it (usually through the scholar who discovered it in the first place). If contact with an outsider is warranted, the scholar in question usually fulfills that duty as well.

• **Watch for potential recruits.** All members of the Invisible College are familiar with the feeling of being hunted. But they also remember the elation when they discovered others in the world who shared their plight, and who worked together to protect each other and their research.

One of the most important tasks of any member of the College is to watch for those who require its aid. Members may induct new members as they see fit, but are forewarned against recruiting without investigation into the prospect's background first. On occasion, scouts for the Inquisition (and particularly the Knight Inquisitors, some of whom are skilled impersonators) have tried to infiltrate the College by posing as exiled scientists.

New recruits only meet the person who inducts them into the College, and rarely learn the identities of any other members unless their inductor dies. This system ensures that no member of the College knows more than two others, and preserves the integrity of the "Chain of Knowledge," which passes on all discoveries and important news.



• **Watch for dangerous knowledge.** Certain discoveries (such as Nezhek Cheremshenavich's rifling technique; see pages 65–66) are too dangerous for release to the general public without careful study. The Invisible College works to safeguard against such devices and discoveries becoming public knowledge before their time, and asks all their members to keep a keen eye out for them.

Unfortunately, the College's efforts in this regard are often stymied by the slow progress of information through their organization. By the time an invention or breakthrough has been deemed unfit for release, news of its creation is often already out. As was the case with Cheremshenavich's invention, the College mounts drastic (and sometimes melodramatic) last-minute operations to capture and suppress such knowledge in time.

The Invisible College confiscates and hides all instances of such knowledge – along with the scholars behind them – until they have been adequately studied and deemed "safe" for the public. This means that scholars and their inventions often vanish for months or even years at a time. Individual Collegians watch their local areas and residents for any subsequent inquiries or security leaks. Any such problems are reported immediately to the next member in the Chain of Knowledge.

• **Watch for Inquisition operations and spies.** Just as the Inquisition has taken a covert approach to the Invisible College since the scholars went underground, so the scholars must do the same. Every member of the Invisible College must watch for possible Inquisition activities, plans, and spies, and to report them immediately through the information chain should anything arise.

This task is especially important for scholars who still work within the Church – "out in plain sight," as it were. Such daring individuals have an insight about the Church that no other College members can match. They have the chance to see Church plans in progress, and to alter inflammatory or revealing Church documents before the Inquisition finds them. Coupled with the second responsibility (watching for dangerous information), these Church insiders can prove a powerful tool for the Invisible College.

Scholars Outside of the College

The Invisible College constitutes only a small percentage of scholars active in Théah. One does not necessarily belong to the College simply because one is a scientist, and not every scholar is under a sentence of death from the Inquisition. The College consists only of those who have reason to fear for their lives and who have been lucky enough to make contact with their fellows. The rest continue their studies as normal, either isolated and alone or without fear of Verdugo's men.

Verdugo's resources are limited, and he cannot be everywhere. He must choose his targets, threatening only the most advanced or "heretical" researchers. The others have less to worry about. Some work in fields which the Inquisition doesn't consider a threat, such as history or architecture. Others are too important to be condemned out of hand – Richard Kailean, for instance, whose search for a cure to the White Plague is beyond even Verdugo's capacity to condemn. Still others are Objectionists or reside in nations far from the Inquisition's influence. While every scholar has reason to fear the Inquisition's wrath, one need not join the Invisible College just to be called an academic.

Mysteries of the Invisible College

In addition to the College scholars' regular aspirations, a number of them are currently engaged in special projects that require close attention or guarded secrecy. There are five such projects at the moment, each referred to in College communiqués as a numbered "Mystery." Most College scholars do not know what the Mysteries are, or who works on them, so the dissemination of information about them is safely contained (for the most part).

The following sections detail the Five Mysteries in which College scholars currently participate in. Only scholars

working on these Mysteries know what they focus on or what their goals are. Scholars assigned to these Mysteries do not speak with other College members about their work, and do not know the names of the other individuals working with them on the project.

Historical Research – The First Mystery

"The First Mystery" in more ways than one, this project focuses upon recovering the lost knowledge of the ancients – the Numan Empire which spread across all of known Théah and the cultures it conquered. By all accounts, the Numans approached (and in some cases exceeded) the level of scientific development that modern Théans enjoy. Their culture was vast and sprawling, yet somehow communication traveled from one end to the other with surprising speed; their irrigation systems and city designs were centuries ahead of their time; and some of the weapons that have been extracted from archaeological sites hint at an understanding of both natural philosophy and human anatomy that rivals the finest minds of today.

The Invisible College considers it one of their greatest obligations to recover and study the remains of early civilization, with a focus upon their scientific advancements. Some two dozen scholars across Théah currently seek out good prospective sites, then follow up on the ones that look promising. They study the few surviving maps of Numan civilization, observe the illicit markets across Théah for items of a scientific nature that may have been extracted from good sites, and listen for interesting stories that crop up among the traders, smugglers, and pirates of the six known seas.

Much of this early reconnaissance is conducted with the aid of the Explorer's Society, whether they realize it or not. College scholars often pose as unaligned archaeologists or interested nobles to join Explorer parties headed for interesting sites, slipping regular reports about their finds back through the information chain. Other scholars simply petition to join the Explorer's Society permanently,

preferring to maintain that cover until something of interest arises.

Once a site is found, College scholars are expected to react as appropriate to the situation. If they find something dangerous – evidence of Synchron influence, for example, or a rare and highly toxic chemical – the scholars report it and begin covering it up until word from an “expert” arrives back down the information chain. Otherwise, the discovery is catalogued and – if possible – procured for future study. With any luck, the discovery will yield some as-yet-unknown truth or advancement.

The best example of this Mystery at work is Petit Charouse, the archaeological site located in the sewers of Montaigne’s capital city. The Explorer’s Society team that ventured into the sewers for the first time contained an Invisible College member who – upon catching first sight of the monstrous astronomy room located several levels beneath the city surface – called upon one of his two contacts for support. The second College scholar arrived quickly, posing as a Vaticine astronomer, and immediately began charting the constellations upon the walls.

Within a few weeks, the astronomer discerned that the stellar positions indicated by the gemstones in the chamber walls – though similar to those of Théah – were actually quite different. In fact, several of the stars that Théah’s finest astronomers had already identified and tracked for several years were clearly visible as part of the design, but their placement in the Firmament was radically different than any ever seen in Théah’s night sky. The astronomer set out to

determine the exact perspective of the mural, which led to a chilling discovery.

Several planetary bodies were also visible on the jeweled mural, including some that none of the Explorer astronomers had been able to identify. By comparing the mural with little-known works of Arciniega, Alvarez, Rioja, and Antonio, the College scholar realized that the planets were indeed Théah’s own.

Backwards.

The mural depicted Terra’s own solar system – from the outside.

Needless to say, the College immediately flagged the discovery as something for which the world was not ready. Within days, they set a plan in motion to impede the progress of the Explorers in the sewers, and turn attention away from the constellation room altogether. They brought political pressure to bear through their noble contacts, influenced *l’Empereur* against Society expeditions, and even sabotaged equipment to keep interlopers out of the tunnels. Should it become necessary, the College scholars on the scene are prepared to cave the room in rather than allow its secrets to be revealed.

The “Mundane” Sciences – The Second Mystery

The scholars of the Invisible College have had to be very careful since the Inquisition came to power. Their researches have gone more slowly, since regular correspondence is not wise under most circumstances, and the rate that their findings filter out to the rest of the scientific community is sluggish at best. But their work does continue, and many of the outcast scholars are on the verge of truly great things. This section breaks those nearing advancements down, according to their branches of science.

Archaeology

One of the least developed fields of study by the Invisible College (due to domination by the Explorer’s Society), few



advances have been made regarding archaeology. Most of what the College has to offer consists of simple mechanical devices for easing the workload of diggers, dusters, and other menial laborers. They have no problems with releasing those inventions directly to the Théan populace when the time comes, and letting the Explorers make use of them when they choose.

Architecture and Construction

The Invisible College's greatest contribution to architecture is still several months off at the least. When it arrives, however, the invention of mass-produced sheet glass will revolutionize Théan construction, making individual houses far easier to design and erect than ever before.

Astronomy

As discussed in the *7th Sea* core rulebooks, enormous efforts have been made to map the Firmament – the stars, planets, comets, and other stellar bodies that revolve around the sun. Astronomy is currently one of the fastest-growing fields of research in Théah, and (for once) the Invisible College is only steps ahead of the rest of the world. Most recently, College scholars have calculated the distance from Terra to Guer, its closest neighbor in the solar system, a feat only made possible because of Alvara Arciniega's new reflecting telescope.

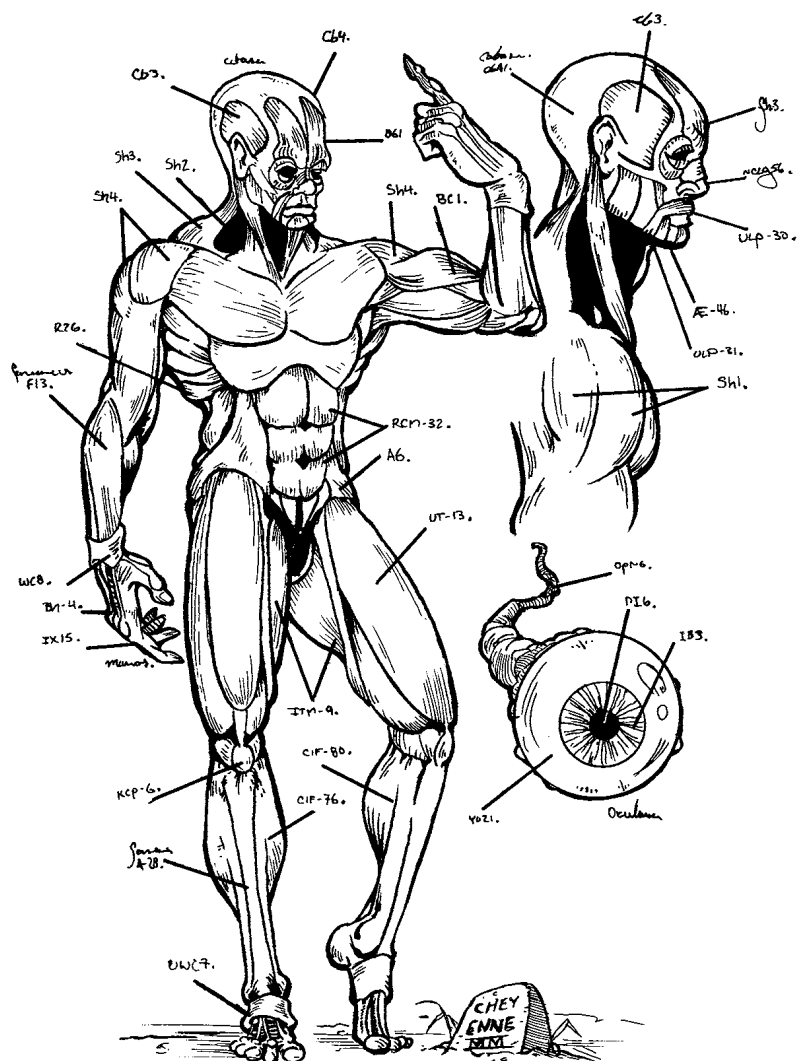
Chemistry

The shift from Théah's scientific roots (which, until recently, were firmly entrenched in the "archaic" science of alchemy) continues through chemistry and medicine. The recent development of the microscope has been pivotal in this shift, and is responsible for many of the discoveries being made each month about the natural world. One in particular has unsettling implications: the discovery of phosphorus. The chemical's destructive nature and applications are bad enough, but the College has not been able to entirely suppress knowledge

of its existence. Several key figures and organizations outside the College know about the mineral, and search for the means to obtain it. The Invisible College is still undecided about how to proceed concerning this dangerous development.

Mathematics

The College has made two important mathematical advancements since the Inquisition started hunting them. The first – integral calculus – has been disseminated throughout the College over the last several months. Indeed, the groundbreaking system assisted the College



scholar who determined the true nature of the constellation chamber beneath Charouse (see page 31); for this reason the College worries about releasing the mathematical system to the public. Everyone knows it's only a matter of time before calculus becomes public knowledge, however, and so the College is currently preparing a contingency plan.

The second mathematical advancement was conceived by a Vaticine priest, currently in hiding somewhere in occupied Castille. The war in his nation forced him to deal with two wildly different numerical systems (one devised by the native Castellians and the other by the invading Montaigne). In response, he recommended a universal decimal-based system of measurement that could be applied all across Théah. The Invisible College overwhelmingly approved, and – based on the strength of his work (and a quick background inquiry) – brought him into the fold.

Medicine

Many of the medical advancements over the last several years have no apparent foundation; they are simply things that Théans know work. The Invisible College can take credit for this state of affairs; it has been carefully feeding medical solutions to the public without explaining the problems. For example, all Théans know that maintaining good personal hygiene, boiling bandages, and keeping sick people quarantined all help prevent the spread of disease, but they aren't sure why. The College has understood the reason behind infection and the spread of disease for some time now, but has been reluctant to reveal it to the world.

Just over ten years ago, Anthony von Leese, an Eisen physician studying a man who recently died of exposure discovered what he called *animalcules* ("little animals") on the body's teeth. He theorized that these tiny creatures – far too small to be seen with the naked eye – were the cause of the man's death, and went to work to prove it. His research led to many incredible discoveries, including the effectiveness of clean bandaging and sanitary conditions, and the proper use of crude antiseptics. Von Leese also realized that the animalcules were prevalent on the skin, mouths, and hair of all living things, and at all times; only

The Dracheneisen Question

The Invisible College would like nothing better than to get their hands on some *dracheneisen*. A super-hard, unbreakable metal would be a godsend to their experiments, and possibly allow them to prove certain important theorems in the realm of natural philosophy. There's only one problem. Dracheneisen cannot be forged by anyone save the *Nibelungen*, and once it has set, it cannot be reforged. Several Eisen members of the College have petitioned the Nibelungen to forge them dracheneisen objects – beakers, tubes, and other experimental equipment – but the smiths have always refused, stating that weapons and armor are the only objects worthy of the wondrous metal. "Dracheneisen is our heritage," they say, "not some trinket for you to putter with." Until the Nibelungen change their mind, the College will have to make do with mundane metals.

More on dracheneisen and the Nibelungen can be found in the *Eisen* sourcebook.

washing diligently reduced their numbers, and then only for a short time.

Once again, the College realized that the world could not adequately interpellate such news. The idea that legions of minuscule creatures constantly besieged the human body was unsettling in the extreme. But the College knew the facts – and knew a few limited ways to fight back – and could not sit idly by and ignore the problem. So they slowly filtered the proper precautions to the public – first to physicians and later to everyone.

So far, the ruse has worked. No one questions why the precautions work; everyone seems content just knowing that they do.

Natural Philosophy (Physics)

Most of the College's current efforts in the realm of natural philosophy revolve around the discovery of new forms of power. Their theories operate on the notions of stress and torque – clockwork creations and the like – but leading



scientists believe that the realms of steam and electrical energy have exciting possibilities. Both energy sources are still quite primitive, and will require at least several decades to bring to fruition.

Navigation

The College is currently working on two inventions in the realm of navigation, though only one is close to being feasible. The first is a chronometer capable of determining the longitude of ships while at sea. If effective, this device will eliminate the need for Porté mages onboard long-range water craft; unfortunately, the scientists have only reached the planning stages at this point. The second invention has been dubbed “geometric-block communications” by the College, and is much further along in development. Using a system of four shadow-boxes, over ten thousand different messages can be transmitted at great distances. Early

estimations of the system’s range indicate that it might even be useful over hundreds of miles, with the proper viewing equipment (i.e., a powerful telescope) at either end. The esteemed inventor Ravenild Hibbot leads the research for this system, and hopes to have a prototype ready by spring of next year. She believes that both the Vendel Guilds and Queen Elaine would sponsor an entire network of such devices, allowing communication to pass through their realms with dizzying speeds.

Weapons and Warfare

Beyond Nezhek Cheremshenavich’s rifling technique (see pages 65–66), the Invisible College currently tinkers with a wide variety of deadly devices. Most of their designs are defensive in nature (i.e., how to defend against them should the concepts ever arrive in the hands of an enemy), and the society guards their existence ruthlessly. Improved grenades



and a new weapon called the “mortar” are both in the works.

Practical Applications – The Third Mystery

Beyond the mundane sciences exist the practical applications of scientific knowledge. Originally inspired by designs brought back from the Explorers’ archaeological sites, this Mystery focuses on creating practical devices for use in everyday life. For instance, the grappling gun – an invention first seen in public use over the last decade – originally came from the Invisible College, and this Mystery in particular. Some of the recent mechanical cranks and locking mechanisms on major sailing vessels were also designs of this branch of the College.

The Third Mystery dedicates itself to creating devices of utility. It tends to focus on non-martial designs, though a few recent advances (including the maligned “musket scope”, based on a simple telescope blueprint) have also made it out to the public. The practical applications branch seeks inventions that benefit all of society (like the windmill-cranked irrigation system and the friction-generated electrical motor for horse-drawn carriages), and concentrates as much on improving existing designs as creating new ones.

On a more personal note, the Third Mystery devises most of the advanced equipment College scholars use out in the field. Underwater breathing apparatus, thin armor to be worn beneath a tabard, and even rudimentary flying machines similar to modern hang-gliders all come from this branch of the College. For more about the Third Mystery and their recent inventions, please see pages 85–94.

Creature Classification – The Fourth Mystery

Like the famed Castillian Explorer, Constanzo Rodriguez, the Invisible College has a keen interest in gaining as much information as possible about Théah’s non-human residents.

“The more we know about these creatures,” scholars of the Fourth Mystery say, “the more we can protect ourselves from them.”

Unlike most of their work, the College ascertains the strengths and weaknesses of these creatures almost entirely in the wild. Not all scholars are prepared for the rigors of creature classification, and those who are suffer a much higher mortality rate than those performing other College duties. Exposure to the elements (often in environments well outside normal human tolerance), primitive living conditions, and subjects that view humans as lunch on the hoof all conspire against scholars who venture into this field of study. But for a member of the Invisible College, the rewards are unparalleled: immortality in Rodriguez’s *Bestiary*, knowledge that your work could save others from the dangers of the creature in question, and unlimited adventure just as close as the next ship.

Few heroes could hope for better.

Blood Science – The Fifth Mystery

Many of Théah’s earliest scholarly endeavors involved the subject of alchemy and the supposed “miracles” it could endow. Over the centuries, that work took on many forms, most recently shifting to modern medicine as the physicians of Théah realized their ancient errors. But there is one last bastion that embraces the old ways: a branch of the Invisible College so carefully hidden away that most of the society’s own members are not even aware of it. In fact, only a small number of scholars actually work for the branch; others act only as consultants or test subjects.

The three most prominent scholars involved are Alvara Arciniega, Joshua Daylen, and Don Petrigai, all of whom have gained a reputation for delving into less “wholesome” fields of study in recent years (see their personal descriptions under “Public Face” for more). For this reason – if not for their actual work – they are the targets of skepticism, ridicule, and sometimes even fear. Most other College scholars consider Blood Science a “bastard” science, and a disgrace to their ethics. But Arciniega – the



founder of Blood Science and perhaps its most fervent supporter – shrugs off their insults, secure with the integrity of the project. He calls Blood Science “the Final Mystery, upon which all things shall eventually be built.”

Blood Science is based upon the original work of Wendel Hargreaves (who discovered circulation) and Ravenild Hibbot (who advanced the notion of blood transfusion), though it is doubtful that either of these scholars would approve of what their work has become. Ostensibly, the field’s exists to determine the nature of sorcery – where it came from, why it passes down through the blood, how to trigger it, and how to cure it. But it has become so much more than that. Today, Fifth Mystery scholars study the blood of different kinds of sorcerers with an eye for how to manipulate it, how to improve upon it...

...and how to blend it.

Through alchemical processes never discovered it, even at the height of the discipline’s golden age, sorcerous blood may be combined, altered, and prepared as a catalyst to trigger sorcerous effects. The Fifth Mystery has succeeded on multiple occasions in transferring sorcerous ability (albeit for an extremely limited period of time) to non-gifted test subjects. It has also successfully transferred that ability into a liquid form, which can be carried about for use at any time. But perhaps most startling of all, they have managed to combine the blood of two or more sorcerers for additional (and often unforeseen) effects, creating new sorcerous powers never before seen. (For more about Blood Science and its effects, please see pages 94–97).

These incredible results do not come without a price. For starters, Blood Science can have a horrendous effect upon its subjects. The developed extracts can be highly dangerous (especially with the test cases), resulting in the death of the subject more often than not. Further, not all of those who survive the procedures benefit from them. Some contract violent ailments or suffer unfortunate side effects, such as unnatural aging, brittle skin, blindness, or worse. For these reasons, Blood Scientists rarely inform their subjects of the dangers, only the possible benefits. Some aren’t even

given the choice – they’re simply incapacitated, strapped down, and exposed to one or more catalysts.

The second drawback – the constant need for fresh sorcerous blood – is rather more gruesome (see the “Harvesters” section, below).

Finally, the Fifth Mystery has progressed to the point where no one knows its final destination. Though originally a purely alchemical process (and still appearing as such), Blood Science has, in truth, become something entirely different. The current work of Arciniega, Daylen, Petrigai and their associates are now firmly entrenched in the realm of the supernatural. They have become what they were supposed to destroy.

They have become Death.

Harvesters

In order to continue their grisly experiments, the Fifth Mystery requires a constant flow of noble sorcerous blood. Such a resource is not easy to come by, certainly not on a regular basis. Furthermore Blood Scientists can’t simply kill the nobles for their blood (since it diminishes an already precious resource), yet allowing them to live risks exposing the Fifth Mystery and its questionable experiments to the world.

So Arciniega and his compatriots employ a small number of servants, called “Harvesters,” who waylay unsuspecting nobles (especially those who venture out into the rougher areas of town at night), render them unconscious with a rag soaked in a powerful sedative based on laudanum and ethera, drag them back to an inn or other quiet locale, and drain them of a set amount of blood. Harvesters have instructions never to take more than two pints, and they usually make do with less (according to the target’s body weight and general health). Fifth Mystery scholars do not want corpses on their hands; they merely need the blood.

The next morning, the targeted noble awakens in a room somewhere, his clothes ravaged and any valuables stolen. He feels light-headed – intoxicated – and finds evidence of an amorous encounter with a Jenny the night before (a pair

of stockings, perhaps, or a torn piece of a gaudy dress). Most assume that they went on some kind of drinking binge and fell in with a disreputable lady of the evening, then stumble back home to clean up.

So far, no one is the wiser.



Philosophy

The Quest For Meaning

Although the scholars of the Invisible College embrace a wide variety of disciplines, experiments, and sometimes even beliefs, there is at least one trait they all share. Each member is looking for meaning.

For over a thousand years, the Church of the Vaticine taught that the Creator made the world as a riddle for humanity to unravel and that information about the world comes from interpretive efforts. What humanity learns may be understood only through the filter of Vaticine dogma, the ultimate interpreter of Theus's riddle. This is part of what caused Cardinal Verdugo to call for all scientific research and experimentation to stop. Without the Vaticine's interpretation, he felt potentially dangerous information would no longer be contained.

Members of the Invisible College see things differently. They believe that information is indeed everywhere, but it exists independently of interpretation. As Alvara Arciniega

has publicly declared, "Beauty may be in the eye of the beholder, but information is all around."

According to the Invisible College, the Church is guilty of confusing information with meaning. The College holds that information is the raw material of the universe and that meaning is the product humanity makes out of it. Therefore, the answer to the riddle of Creation is the *meaning* of information, not just information itself.

Frasier Baldred's development of Empiricism and Jeremy Cook's dedication to the scientific method were crucial steps in bringing this new academic paradigm to light. They taught that meaning comes from methodical experiences and proof, not just faith. To these men and their colleagues, phenomena don't necessarily occur because they were part of Theus' plan. To truly understand a phenomenon, you must understand *why* it occurred — you must understand its meaning. Baldred wrote about this controversial idea in great detail in *The Advancement of Scholarship* and *New Visions*. Even though he failed to complete either book, the College circulated copies of his drafts throughout the academic community and shaped the way every serious scientist since has viewed the world.

Baldred confirmed the Church's belief that the workings of the physical universe were governed by laws but, unlike the Church, he saw that humanity could understand and express these laws in the form of mathematical equations. These natural laws and equations were constant and could be used for accurate predictions, thereby establishing meaning. As Cook's experiments proved time and again, a full description of any physical system applied to Baldred's mathematical laws would yield an accurate prediction of its state at any future time.

Baldred's laws have since been verified in every working level of the cosmos. From the outermost stars studied by Larenzo Alvarez to the cells found under Ravenild Hibbot's microscope, the universe is full of meaningful structures that may be expressed in mathematical terms. This has led most scholars to conclude that, even if Theus does not exist, there must be some kind of intelligence behind the universe (see

The Pledge of the Royal Association for Scientific Minds

I swear by Theus, the Creator of all things, and take to witness the holy Prophets, to keep according to my capability and my prudence the following oath:

To regulate my passions with temperance, sobriety, and decency;

To love my fellow man as myself and be unto all men as I would they should be unto me;

To consider dear to me as my own blood those who share my art;

To use all things that may come to my knowledge for the betterment of life;

To be humble and respectful in my art;

To forever teach and forever learn.

May He whose Creation sustains and inspires me grant the strength, patience, and dedication to adhere to this oath for the rest of my days, that I may purge ignorance and superstition from the world.

the NPC description of Reimar Derviny on pages 60–61 for an example of this).

Because the same laws which control the workings of the universe also control the functioning of the human body, the College embraces the notion that man is just a small reflection of Creation (which allows the more faithful Vaticine Collegians to maintain their faith in the face of new revelations). Any meaning that can be drawn from the universe (macrocosm) can be applied to a human (microcosm). With a true understanding of one, the meaning of all can be reached.

The Importance Of Humanity

Seeing that each human on the face of Théah is a miniature universe unto him- or herself, College members have

become even more fascinated with humanity's potential. Baldred's concept of Empiricism revealed the importance of questioning preconceived notions and old beliefs, and the College knows that there is little to be gained by depending upon knowledge from the past. This is one of the reasons why, the College generally cares little for matters involving the Syrneth. While the Explorer's Society may fawn over the rubbish of an extinct alien race, the College understands the need to focus on human inventions and discoveries.

Each scholar has an individual rationalization for this way of thinking, but perhaps the most interesting and influential was posited by the ever-idealistic Goskelen Leman. Despite the fact that the Church wishes to burn him at the stake, Leman remains a devout Vaticine and works tirelessly to reconcile his faith with his scientific discoveries.

Leman's *Theory of the Best Possible World* (dismissed as "wildly optimistic" by Alvira Arciniega) states that Theus could have created any sort of world he chose. Naturally, since Theus is a perfect being, he chose to create the best world possible. In this best possible world, the Syrneth did not survive because humans were destined to thrive and flourish. Therefore, humans are the best possible creation in the best possible world and only human endeavors have any real importance.

Upon completing his theory, he summarized it into a simple verse that has become a favorite among College members. "Know your own nature, presume not Theus to conceal: in the study of all things, it is yourself which is revealed." (see Leman's NPC description on page 64 for more of his beliefs).

Responsibility

Due to the importance the College places on humanity, College members all have an incredible sense of responsibility. They know that much of their work could alter the fate of the world if it fell into the wrong hands, and take every precaution to ensure that this does not happen. This responsibility also extends to discoveries made by



Hypothesis

those outside of the College, as evident from the recent situation with Nezhek Cheremshenavich. Members of the College rarely destroy any new invention or discovery though, preferring to secret it away until they know that the world is ready and can benefit from it.

Being a persecuted group themselves, the scholars also appreciate the importance of free will. They believe that individuality should be nurtured in every man, woman, and child, regardless of social standing or circumstance of birth. As Pawel Gabien is fond of saying, “You can believe what others say, but you only know what you experience.” This attitude that keeps relations among College members civil. While they may disagree (sometimes strongly) with one another, no one ever forgets to respect his peers.

Sorcerous Scientists

The Invisible College is very open minded when it comes to sorcery. Just as they refuse to judge an individual by sex or birthright, the ability of sorcery has no negative implications to them.

Most scholars dismiss the frivolous notion that sorcery is some kind of “Dark Gift.” Instead, they believe that those with the power to wield magic are simply tapping into unseen natural forces that have yet to be properly studied. They can even explain why sorcery appears to be a phenomenon of the noble class; whatever characteristic that causes it is passed along to offspring like other hereditary traits. Just as an Eisen couple is likely to have a child with blonde hair and a Vodacce couple isn’t, a noble couple is likely to have a child with sorcerous ability while a commoner couple is not.

Like anyone else, the College claims, sorcerers have a role to play within the whole of Creation. The Royal Association of Scientific Minds had many sorcerers as patrons and several even became members. The Invisible College counts sorcerers among their numbers as well since they, too, are hunted by the Inquisition.

So far, no sorcerer has made a dramatic contribution to the scientific community, though this is more a matter of odds

than any lack of ability on their part. Sorcerers are only a small percentage of the population and an even smaller percentage within the College.



Organization

The Chain of Knowledge

As a testament to the clever men and women that comprise its membership, the structure of the Invisible College is quite experimental. Most of Théah’s clubs and secret societies have recognized authority figures, rigid hierarchies, and permanent headquarters. The Invisible College doesn’t.

The College has arranged itself as loosely and efficiently as possible, with both mobility and security in mind. While every member knows about the College’s famous founders (detailed in the Public Face section), most directly know only one or two other members, often by pseudonym. This orchestration makes each scholar a vital link in what has been dubbed the “Chain of Knowledge” after an old Numan myth (see below for more details) and not only hides the group’s true numbers from the outside world but from the members themselves.

The Chain of Knowledge makes the College more of an affiliation of like-minds than a traditional organization. There is no centralized authority, which has proven an important survival tactic. After all, though the death of any single member of the College is tragic, if the Inquisition

seized a hypothetical base of operations or distinct leader, it would be disastrous.

Similarly, permanent meeting houses are few and far between, and exist more as defensive hideouts than anything else. They lie in hidden and/or remote locales, and most never hold more than a few scholars at a time. Invisible College members rarely know the location of more than one or two. (See the “Safe Houses” section, below, for more information.)

The lack of any ranks or stations within the College also provides a working model for the group’s belief in free will, individuality, and responsibility. Rooted in the “publish or perish” regiment that so many scholars were accustomed to in academia, the College judges and respects its members by his or her own works and academic merit.

The Story of The Chain of Knowledge

The Numan myth of The Chain of Knowledge reads as follows:

“Long ago, there lived a very wise but very poor man. People would come from all around to hear him offer solutions to their problems. Without fail, his suggestions were simple, practical, and sound.

“In time, the very wise but very poor man married and had three children: two sons and a daughter. While the children respected their father’s wisdom, they despised being poor. So each one set off into the world to make their fortune. One son became a forester, the other became a troubadour, and the daughter became a merchant.

“Years passed, and word eventually reached all three that their father was dying. As they hurried home, they encountered villager after villager who was mourning not only their father’s fate but their own. ‘Who will solve our problems?’ they cried. ‘Who will have the answers we need to survive?’

“At last, the three siblings arrived at their father’s home. The very wise but very poor man was seriously ill, and he gathered his children close. ‘It is now your duty to help the

villagers with their problems. You must find the answers they need to survive.’

“Before his children could protest, he added, ‘I know you are thinking that you are just a forester, a troubadour, and a merchant, and that you have no answers to offer these people. But I will give you the secret of how I gained my wisdom.’

“The very wise but very poor man reached under his bed and retrieved a faded map. ‘You must travel through the Forest of Insciens to the City of Eruditio. Then you must sail to the Island of Conscientia. It is there you will find the Chain of Knowledge.’

“The very wise but very poor man died shortly after and, in keeping with his last request, the three siblings set out to recover the Chain of Knowledge.

“When they reached the Forest of Insciens, they were besieged by bad weather and ferocious creatures. The merchant and the troubadour were confused and frightened, but the forester put them at ease. ‘Fear not, sister and brother. I know the ways of the forest, and I will see us through safely.’ And so he did, and when they arrived at the City of Eruditio, they were in possession of fresh meat and fine pelts.

“Once inside the city walls, the three siblings were accosted by a gang of footpads and lost all of their money. The forester and the troubadour were confused and frightened, but the merchant put them at ease. ‘Fear not, brothers. I know the ways of the city, and I will see us through safely.’ And so she did, and traded their fresh meat and fine pelts for a boat to the Island of Conscientia.

“When they landed upon the island, the three siblings saw that it was inhabited by hundreds of monsters. The forester and the merchant were confused and frightened, but the troubadour put them at ease. ‘Fear not, brother and sister. I know the ways of music, and I will see us through safely.’ And so he did, singing the monsters to sleep so they could pass.

“The three siblings then scaled a tall mountain, confident that the Chain of Knowledge would be at the top. Instead, they found a beautiful woman draped in a rainbow. ‘Have you come for the Chain of Knowledge?’ she asked.

“Speechless at her brilliant colors, the three siblings could only nod their heads.

“The beautiful woman smiled. ‘Very well. Please take one another’s hand.’

“The three siblings did as instructed, and the beautiful woman was pleased. ‘Look at your hands,’ she said. ‘You are already part of the Chain of Knowledge. It is now your duty to go unto the world, always teaching and always learning and always adding new links.’

“And so they did, thereby fulfilling their father’s dying wish. They pledged to each other that they would continue their father’s legacy, always teaching and always learning and always adding new links.”

Individuality and Teamwork

Though the Chain of Knowledge allows for individuals to shine, it also promotes group cooperation. Scholars separated by hundreds of miles can collaborate on projects by passing facts and figures from one member to the next. The College shares the step-by-step progress of everything from crucial experiments to friendly games of Squares in this fashion and, thanks to an ingrained devotion to detail, the process functions smoothly... with a few exceptions.

Ideally, members only have as much influence in the College as their achievements warrant, but the arrangement is not a flawless one and sometimes subject to abuse. Repeatedly, the College’s more eloquent members have been able to garner support for their undertakings and theories, while their less charismatic associates are overlooked.

The College itself has no written code of conduct, though every member intuitively understands the importance of secrecy and discretion. Some of the older members still adhere to the pledge of the Royal Association for Scientific

Minds (see page 38), and make any new recruits swear the same upon the Book of the Prophets.

Symbolism

Due to the sensitive and often complex methods of communication used by the College, members have learned to utilize symbols and images as much as possible. A good example of this is the group’s seal.

While the Inquisition has declared the emblem to be an open mockery of the Vaticine cross (and this, indeed, was partly intended by its design), its true purpose is to display the core beliefs College members adhere to.

The circle that surrounds the seal represents the entirety of Theus’ creation. It is without beginning or end, perfect, and consistent. The cross symbolizes the four cardinal directions, revealing that knowledge is everywhere. “Factum” is from the ancient Théan tongue, meaning both “work” and “achievement.” The two triangles are the alchemical symbols of fire and the heart, representing passion and devotion. Lastly, the rays of light represent illuminating knowledge, driving away the shadows of ignorance and superstition from the world.



The Masters

Even though the College has deliberately structured itself without a hierarchy or leaders, it does have its share of celebrities. These are the pioneers and founders of the Invisible College, who also serve as its public face (as detailed in the section of the same name). Nicknamed “The Masters” by their colleagues, these men and women are seen by the citizens of Théah as the living embodiment of science and academics, a fact that the College uses to its advantage.

Whenever the College decides that an invention or discovery along the Chain of Knowledge is ready for the public, it is passed to one of the Masters to disclose to the world. The people of every nation have come to trust anything these veritable sages say or do, resulting in a more eager and rapid acceptance of new knowledge and devices.

Naturally, this has caused resentment among some College members, and several have refused to allow anyone else take responsibility or credit for their hard work. Though they risk exposing themselves to the Inquisition, they would rather face the threat than have someone else reap the benefits of their studies. Still, most scholars recognize the practicality and necessity of the arrangement and just look forward to the day when the Inquisition is abolished and they receive their proper credit.

Endeavors of the College

The earlier section discussing the Mysteries of the Invisible College detailed the most important fields of study and the academic efforts in which they currently engage. However, College members are interested in more than just research and experimentation. To make the most of their discoveries and ideas, they know that they must use them altruistically.

The College’s humanitarian efforts run a gamut of good deeds, from crafting toys for orphans to sending anonymous tips to city planners on how to improve waste disposal. But the most manifest effort has been to keep the public’s interest and understanding of science alive.

With the majority of Théah’s top scholars absent from the social scene, old superstitions are surfacing again among the common people. In many areas of the world, charlatans take the place of physicians, selling bogus cures for universal ailments, such as hares’ feet to ward off colic and a diet of three spiders a week to avoid the plague.

The College has vowed to publicly debunk them.

The most famous example of these debunkings happened last year in Castille. A charming Avalon man going by the name of Sir Jasper Wellfellow was selling a salve that he guaranteed would heal any wound received in combat. The foul-smelling concoction was a jumble of assorted herbs, weeds, and (most importantly) moss from the skull of an unburied man.

Diego Torres de Zapeda del Castillo, a scholar working in a nearby office, listened to the man’s sales pitch with little interest until Wellfellow announced how the miracle cure worked. He instructed his clients to keep the wound covered with a clean linen cloth and then take the weapon that had actually done the damage and treat *it* with the salve.

De Zapeda was furious that anyone would try to profit from the suffering of others, especially by offering such a ridiculous cure. He immediately penned a letter to every periodical he could think of, proclaiming that the medication ‘quacked’ about by Wellfellow did indeed have one restorative ingredient. De Zapeda called it *vis mediatrice naturae*, the healing strength of nature, and explained how the ministries to the weapon merely deflected attention away from the wound like a street magician performing a slight-of-hand trick, allowing nature to take its course of healing when no one was looking. To make sure that Wellfellow got the message (and to conceal his own identity), de Zapeda signed his message “Jasper Wellfellow II.”

The missive not only caught the original Wellfellow’s eye, but the imaginations of others within the College. In almost no time, letters from Jasper Wellfellow II sprang up in publications across Théah, all de-bunking ‘quacks’ in the most humorous terms imaginable. The public has

responded very enthusiastically, and an Avalon book publisher is currently printing a collection of letters, entitled *The Wisdom of Jasper Wellfellow II*. (An NPC description of Diego Torres de Zapeda del Castillo can be found on pages 70–71.)

Life in the College

Not Just Scholars And Scientists

The Chain of Knowledge has many links, but not all of them are scholars or scientists. These ‘irregulars’ do not always contribute on an academic level — most aren’t even formal members of the College — but they are still a vital part of the society’s continuing survival.

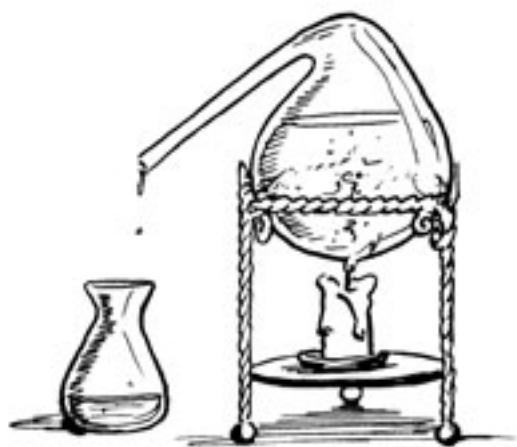
Possibly the most crucial are those men and women who have remained within the Vaticine Church. They work to alter and maintain sundry apocryphal texts, helping suppress concepts the College does not believe the world is ready for or that harm scientific progress. They also spy on the Inquisition and help undermine the sinister operation in any manner necessary. Dozens of scholars are alive today because of the efforts of these “insiders,” whether it be a

timely warning of an Inquisitor raid or an actual dungeon rescue.

Swordsmen and other henchmen fill an important role within the College as well. While a few scholars have received martial training, the majority must depend upon coupling someone else’s brawn with their brains. Swordsmen perform much the same role for the College as Shield Men do for the Explorer’s Society: guarding against potential dangers so scholars can focus on more important work.

Henchmen, on the other hand, function in ancillary positions, occasionally as a servant but just as often as an apprentice or student. These individuals gather a scholar’s needed supplies, aid in experiments, deliver correspondence, and (for better or worse) field-test new inventions.

But not all of the College’s experiments are scientific in design or nature. The fertile fields of painting, sculpture, literature, and music bloom with talent that obstinately pushes through traditional barriers. In just a short time, artists have already made important and lasting contributions along the Chain of Knowledge, especially with the development of music codification (see pages 44–45 for more details). The College believes that these endeavors help free humanity’s spirit, and supports them whenever and wherever it can.



Pseudonyms

Although the College closely shares their work and knowledge with each other, it is rare for any one member of the College to know the true identity of another. This is for obvious security reasons, insuring that if the Inquisition captured an individual, he or she cannot be forced into disclosing any associates’ names.

While a few members are too proud of their work to ever use a pseudonym, most enjoy inventing an alternate identity, and tend to be very creative about it. Of course, choosing a pseudonym is an entirely personal matter, keeping with the goal of secrecy and the philosophy of free

will. However, most members use one of three methods when deciding an alternate identity.

The first is popular with devout Vaticines – especially those who once held positions in the Church. Wishing to mock the institution that hunts them, they have taken to using the names of Vaticine saints. They never choose these names arbitrarily and usually base them on a relation between the saint's patron sphere and the nature of the scholar's work.

Secondly, the more language-minded members tend to use anagrams, which appeal to their sense of wit and allow them to keep some semblance of their real names. Ravenild Hibbot is fond of this method, using the pen name Baron

Beth Livid in her letters (and rolling her eyes when anyone mentions it should be "Baroness").

Lastly, many College members wish to be known solely by their achievements. These experts either incorporate the name of their work into their pseudonym (i.e. Dashell Telescopic) or just go by the work's name.

Codes and Communications

The Invisible College is scattered across the width and breadth of Théah, with members often separated by hundreds of miles. Communication remains a challenging but vital component of the Chain of Knowledge, and the College has approached the subject with its usual innovativeness.

Many College members use traditional forms of conveying information – couriers, drop-off points and the like – but take pains to disguise the exact nature of their messages. Fearful that their letters might be intercepted (several had been), College members quickly invented codes that muddled their messages to prying eyes. Dozens of methods were used at first, each as eccentric as its inventor. After a while, the more cumbersome techniques gave way to the more elegant, with the clear favorite being based on mathematical formulas and equations from the Numan era.

The "Math Code," as it has come to be known, can be as simple or complex as the person writing it desires. To begin with, the sender assigns each letter of the Théan alphabet a number that he and the receiver have previously agreed upon. The sender then writes a message in Théan, recording the corresponding numbers above each letter. Afterwards, on a separate sheet of paper, the sender creates a math problem for each word so that, when solved, the answer equals the word's assigned numbers. Instead of an obviously coded message,



the receiver gets pages of math problems that must be properly solved to yield their intended information.

While this code works extraordinarily well (Verdugo is baffled by the examples he has retrieved), few guessed it could be used in any medium other than written communications. Luckily, Galeno Rioja and Abrianna Lucilla Fiorenza saw otherwise.

Fiorenza, a Vodacce composer and violinist, presented her innovation of musical time signatures to Rioja, who was working on calculating musical scales from the velocities of the planets when furthest from and closest to the sun. By comparing notes on the relationship between math and music, the two realized that messages could be hidden in musical compositions in much the same way as in letters using the Math Code.

After six months of exhaustive work, they translated the musical scale into a symphonic alphabet, and every variance of pitch, rhythm, and tempo gained new significance. The “Music Code” caught on even faster than the Math Code. In no time, members pounded out postulates and theorems at piano recitals and entire experimental procedures were being disclosed in symphonies. Audiences may have been writing notes during musical performances for over one hundred years, but some are writing much more expeditiously these days.

The College has yet another system in development, although it is far less subtle than the other two. Ravenild Hibbot’s “geometric block communications” (see page 34) have caused quite a stir, and the College believes that they can convince either the Vendel Guilds or Queen Elaine to finance an entire system of towers across their respective nations. While the system would normally be used for government business, only the Invisible College currently knows the code — making it very easy to plant members along the towers. With such a network in place, the College could pass its own messages along with no one the wiser. All they have to do is convince someone to build it.



Relations With Other Groups

Avalon

The birthplace of the Royal Fraternity for Scientific Minds and home to many of the College’s leading scholars, Avalon was once considered an impenetrable stronghold for scientific thought. When the Inquisition murdered Jeremy Cook, however, the illusion of security shattered. The Inquisition’s reach had successfully extended into lands that did not recognize its authority, and scholars and citizens alike were fearful of the foreign menace.

This brutal display of power has actually worked to the College’s advantage. With perhaps the exception of Vendel, no other nation has responded to the scholars’ plight in such a helpful manner. The people of Avalon take pride in fostering and sheltering “their” needful College members, treasuring them as a national resource. Queen Elaine has issued an edict in support of all scholarly learning, and numerous Avalon nobles have offered sponsorship and/or protection to scientists in hopes of earning her favor. Bors MacAllister and his black knights keep a sharp eye out for the Inquisition, both for the scientists’ sake and for the queen’s. Few nations are as openly supportive of the College’s cause as Avalon. Inismore and the Highland Marches have followed her example, and though they lack the academic resources, their isolation has helped College members operate safely within their borders.

Still, the Inquisition remains, hidden deeply amid Avalon's fairy tale kingdom. They have the power to strike and fade away in the darkness, and no amount of public support will save a scientist when they set his house afire. The College knows that their enemies are near, and move carefully even in the relative safety of their pleasant surroundings.

Castille

The nation of Castille has seen the College's most difficult struggles and greatest triumphs. This is the home of the Inquisition and the base of its power. Here the Knight-Inquisitors ride with unquestioned authority, performing the duties of judge, jury, and executioner wherever and whenever they deem necessary. They have hanged dozens of scholars, using moles and a terrified populace to track their prey ruthlessly. The vaulted Castillian universities remain intact, thanks to intense lobbying from the Church's more moderate elements, but even they provide only scant security. To belong to the Invisible College in Castille means being ready to die for your beliefs.

But all hope is not lost.

It was here that Alvara Arciniega famously bested the Inquisitors who came for him that fateful night. It was here that the Church once preached the merits of discovery and funded universities dedicated to understanding Theus' creation. It was here that a thousand years of scientific knowledge spread to all corners of the world. The people of Castille have not forgotten, and entrenched scholars find eager help among a populace that still believes in the power of science.

College members in Castille have learned to live by their wits and rarely remain in the same place twice. They always keep one eye peeled for Inquisitors, and the other one searching for an escape route. One misstep here and you will be burned as a heretic. But no nation has so many intellectuals as Castille, and no nation has seen knowledge bloom so proud and strong. It will take some time for the Inquisition to destroy it all.

Eisen

The muddy wastes of Eisen have proven a blessing to the Invisible College. The disordered *königreichen* are easy to disappear into and there are plenty of deserted buildings perfect for clandestine laboratories. The frazzled masses have enough to worry about without concerning themselves over the stranger who moved into the abandoned farm down the road. Some *Eisenfürsten*, such as Stefan Heilgrund, actively support academic endeavors, and few rulers hate the Inquisition more than Nicklaus Trägue. Anyone looking for privacy can find it easily within Eisen's ashen borders.

This privacy is not without its price. Lone scholars are no match for marauding bandits or creatures lurking in the forests, and many are forced to hire Swordsmen for protection. The isolation also makes communication difficult, so College members here are usually among the last to know current events. Finally, the chaos which works so well for them works just well for their enemies, and the Inquisition can move through the country with relative impunity. If Verdugo's soldiers catch a College member in Eisen, no one will come to help.

Montaigne

Taking refuge in Montaigne is a double-edged sword. Many nobles find it fashionable to hide and even sponsor fugitive scholars, enjoying another opportunity to rebel against an institution that denounces their sorcerous birthright. Groups such as the King's Musketeers consider it their duty to defend those in need, and Montaigne's natural sense of chivalry makes them sympathetic to the College's plight. Unfortunately, the nobles also like to talk about who is being sheltered by whom, and the Inquisition quickly makes use of any information imparted by loose lips. As a result, scholars in Montaigne find themselves on the run more often than not.

The peasants of Montaigne do not make the situation any easier. Most are still devoutly Vaticine and feel it is their duty to report anything unusual if an Inquisitor happens to stop in their village. The Inquisition stands against the hated



Empereur Léon, and the peasantry believes that any assistance they give Verdugo's men will ultimately harm their cruel ruler.

Ussura

Much like Eisen, Ussura is an excellent place for College members to take refuge. Unfortunately, most of those who vanish into this frozen wilderness vanish for good. The country lags behind in its technology and sometimes it almost seems as if the land itself is determined to keep it that way.

Those members of the College who successfully make Ussura their home quickly learn that their neighbors have no patience for elaborate theories and experiments, preferring only honest work and simple pleasures in their lives. A few have managed to secure friends by designing new farming implements or other devices to make the peasants' lives easier, but for the most part, the locals want little to do with them. This gives each scholar plenty of time for his or her endeavors but makes for a very lonely existence. As could be expected, these isolated souls are always happy to receive word from the "civilized" world.

Vendel/Vestenmannavnjar

Ever opportunistic, the Merchant Guilds quickly realized the economic advantage of safely harboring the greatest minds in the world. Although it never publically declared it, Vendel has become the new land of scientific opportunity, and the College knows it. The robust economy has yielded many eager patrons, the nation's Objectionist character limits Vaticine influence, and the power of the Guilder (and fear of ravaging Vestenmannavnjar) has kept the forces of the Inquisition at bay... so far.

Of course, Vendel expects to be compensated for its hospitality. Of all the experiments being conducted within its borders, the mathematical solution to longitude holds immense implications. Once its mystery is solved, the Merchant Guilds will control the future of navigation and they intend to make the most of the advantage.

The Vestenmannavnjar hold a few more risks. They see College members as puppets of the Vendel and are loathe to allow outsiders near their tribal territories. On the other hand, they hate the Vaticine Church, and the Inquisition knows better than to poke its nose in their lands. College members in hiding must work very hard to earn the Vesten's trust, but if they can, then they have earned one of the safest havens in all of Théah.

Vodacce

The Invisible College has found an unlikely ally in Vodacce: the Vaticine Church. The Vodacce clergy, willing to ignore many of the mandates delivered from Castille, do not approve of the Inquisition or its methods and still believe that the scholars are doing Theus' work by answering the riddle of creation. Though a few fanatics lurk within the Church structure, any scientist requesting sanctuary in Vodacce will invariably receive it. In addition, Vodacce's universities — led by the world-famous medical school in Dionna — make research here very easy.

However, the same generosity cannot be expected from the nation's corrupt Princes. College members who have taken refuge among these masters of subterfuge have discovered that their host's philanthropy only lasts as long as their knowledge and skills prove useful. Once their utility has been depleted, they are again cast out into the world, usually with the Inquisition closer on their heels than ever before.

Explorer's Society

The Invisible College looks at the Explorer's Society with a mixture of pity and jealousy. Most College members believe that the Explorers waste too many great minds in an effort to unearth and decipher bizarre junk that, so far, has contributed little to the betterment of humanity or the understanding of the world. While the Society's efforts may stem from noble intentions, the College believes that they are ultimately pointless.



The fact that the Society produces so many “adventurous heroes,” beloved by both the nobility and common people, has caused a small amount of resentment among some scholars (though others are quick to point out that this proves the futility of the Explorers’ enterprise – if the Society’s efforts were as important as the College, the Inquisition would be hunting them as well).

Still, many College members have friends among the Explorers, giving them the opportunity to keep tabs on various findings and ensure that they never uncover anything detrimental to humanity. As the discovery of Gallegos’ ship and logs demonstrated, the College must sometimes take drastic measures to ensure this. They strive to keep these betrayals secret, for they know their discovery would prove disastrous. It remains one of the College’s deepest shames, but one they feel is absolutely necessary.

Die Kreuzritter

Although the Invisible College is oblivious to the continued existence of the Black Crosses, die Kreuzritter has been watching the scholars for some time. Several Knights have infiltrated the College in recent years, offering their martial skills to protect important scholars from their common foe, the Inquisition. These Knights often travel with those working on the Fourth Mystery, where their knowledge of the wilderness has proven invaluable.

For their part, the Black Crosses have not overtly revealed any of the dark secrets their Order keeps, though some have begun to nudge their Collegiate confederates towards making the discovery on their own. One can only guess at the ramifications if and when such a revelation is finally made. Die Kreuzritter believes that the College has the capacity to accept such revelations, and hopes they will ultimately produce a new set of allies.

Knights of the Rose and Cross

Back when it was profitable to be a scholar, many academics used their extra funds to become patrons of the Order of the Rose and Cross. Through this relationship, the

Order perfected much of its surgical skills. The Knights have not forgotten this generosity and still aid their former patrons when needed. They are just careful to keep their support private. The College relies on the Knights as much as they can, but understands that there’s only so much which they can do.

The Order holds a special – and not particularly benign – interest for the scholars involved the Mystery of Blood Science. Arciniega has noticed that the Knights seem to be immune to the powers of *sorte strega*, and he wants to know why. He has already procured several pints of Rose and Cross blood, and studied them thoroughly. Plans are well underway to determine the cause of this phenomenon and duplicate it under laboratory conditions.

Los Vagos

If there is one group the Invisible College owes its life to, it is Los Vagos. El Vago and his followers have saved dozens of scholars from the Inquisition’s flames, helping them flee Castille or find a safe place to continue their research. The College has been so grateful that they have actually donated a few weapons and devices to help the Vagabond’s cause, knowing they will be put to good use. The two groups operate quite closely, and together have helped each other out of more than a few close scraps.

NOM

A few key members within the Invisible College are aware of the ultra-secret society known as Novus Ordum Mundi. Though it may seem strange at first, the College bears the sinister group no ill will. While they dislike NOM’s goals and beliefs, it is difficult for the fugitive scholars to despise any party that wants to usurp the current political structure in favor of something new.

Sticking to the belief that “the enemy of my enemy is my friend,” the College (at least the tiny part of it which knows about NOM) has accepted much-needed shelter, materials, and funding from their shadowy confidants. Of course, the NOM masters are delighted by this turn of events and

intend to exploit the situation to the fullest. They realize, however, that not every member of the College would welcome them as allies and that some would actively fight against them. For this reason, they strive to keep their connection as quiet as possible.

Rilasciare

As a rule, the College does not give the Free Thinkers much credit, seeing them as fragmented rabble with little to offer besides absolute chaos. The Rilasciare, for its part, is aware of the College's existence, but has no idea who they are or how to contact them. Their own activities keep them busy enough to keep from actively pursuing information about the beleaguered scientists.

However, both organizations would be surprised at how frequently they interact with one another. Heated philosophical debates between individual members have erupted in public forums and private letters, nobles often have advisors from both camps in their employment, and some individuals even teach at the same universities, often sharing lecture halls and students. Of course, neither side is aware of the other's true affiliations, which covers their arguments in a veil of mutual anonymity.

There is, however, one clear exception to this rule. The Freethought Society, a faction within the Rilasciare, approves of the College's work so strongly that it has gone out of its way to publicize the College's latest findings. When they find news of a new invention or scientific discovery, they pass it on to the rest of Théah as quickly as they can. The College has noticed this, and makes prodigious use of the Freethoughts' enthusiasm. Of course, it must be selective in the information it leaks, but such a resource is far too vital to be ignored.

Sophia's Daughters

Sophia's Daughters have a vested interest in the work of the Invisible College. It was their subtle manipulations that guaranteed Ravenild Hibbot's acceptance into the Royal Fraternity in 1657, and they have occasionally smuggled

supplies for the College through various channels. The Daughters fully endorse the College's belief in free will and see the scholars' work as a crucial part in achieving equality for all of Théah. As long as the College continues to live up to its ideals, it will have the Daughters' aid.

The Daughters are also well-aware of the Fifth Mystery and have quietly aided its advancement... when it suits them. Their own studies of elixirs and potions are centuries ahead of the College, though none of it involves sorcerous blood. If they wished, they could answer many of the Mystery's nagging questions, but they have no intention of giving away their secrets. Instead, they watch as closely as they can and provide subtle clues when and where they see fit.



Safe Houses

The idea of safe houses is very new to the Invisible College. Permanent headquarters do not suit the College's flexible organization, and the Chain of Knowledge rarely allows more than a few scholars to gather at any one time. The College is permanently on the run, moving rapidly from place to place or residing in exile on the fringes of civilization.

Despite that, the College has established a fair number of permanent structures, which they use as havens and gathering points for their hard-pressed membership. These safe houses arose almost organically during the last few years as an offshoot of the society's desire to survive. They



serve as combination fortresses and think-tanks, allowing the College to conduct its research and plot a course for the future. No member knows the location of more than one or two safe houses, and every member takes careful steps to avoid uncovering them. Most never venture there except in dire circumstances, or if their research makes consultation with other scientists absolutely vital.

Those countries with limited Vaticine presence (Avalon, Montaigne, and Ussura) hold some of the largest and best-known Invisible College safe houses. Safe houses exist in Castille and other Church strongholds, but serve mostly as temporary sanctuaries for scholars fleeing the country. Little (if any) real research is conducted there.

Listed below are the College's permanent safe houses, scattered in various nooks and crannies throughout Théah. The GM is free to create others if he or she wishes (use the Secret Laboratory Creation rules in Chapter Three, page 83–84). All of them have simple names to better disguise their exact location. Each has at least one scholar (usually a Master) who resides there semi-permanently, along with a number of assistants and additional servants. Other scholars come and go, most staying for only a few weeks before moving on. All of them take care to use their pseudonyms while they remain, and some rely on safe house servants to guide them there, in case they are ever captured and forced to reveal the house's location.

Avalon

The Theater

Location: Luthon

Leader: Wendel Hargreaves

Literally the living heart of the Invisible College's presence in Avalon, the Theater is a sprawling manor of mediocre charm in a wealthier district of Luthon. Here, Wendel Hargreaves and Frasier Baldred hold court over the surviving remnants of the Royal Association of Scientific Minds. The mansion itself once belonged to a grateful noble, who turned the location over to Hargreaves for as long as he should need its use. It has seen better days. The solid brick building has suffered no less than three attacks by Inquisition fanatics; the last one tried to burn the building down by driving a flaming hay wagon through the front gates. Since then, Hargreaves has kept several Swordsmen on permanent retainer to guard the mansion, which seems to have stymied the Inquisition efforts. It is rumored that Queen Elaine herself pays the Swordsmen's salaries, as a show of support for the once-proud Association.

The location takes its name from a huge medical theater which Hargreaves had secretly built in the basement. The circular surgery area is clean and well-lit, surfaced in the finest white Castillian tile. Two levels of circular balconies

surround the theater, providing a superior view of operations to observers. The upper balcony is level with the ground floor of the mansion and heavy doors conceal the whole facility from prying eyes. The combination of Invisible College churgeons (lead by Hargreaves himself), a fantastic library of medical lore and the state-of-the-art facility has made the Theater one of the foremost medical centers in western Théah.

Castille

The Fortress

Location: La Sierre de Hierro

Leader: Alvara Arciniega

Set high in the cliffs of La Sierra de Hierro mountains, Alvara's safe house is a veritable bastion of impenetrability. Built long ago by a don whose name has long since been forgotten, this stone castle rise directly out of the mountainside, above sprawling 200-foot cliffs. The fortress itself is an impressive site to behold; its 80-foot outer wall stands flush with the cliffs, and its smooth stone keep rises another 70 feet above that. There appear to be no direct routes through the mountains that can actually reach the castle.

Aside from Arciniega's personal quarters, the Fortress is the foremost location for the study of blood magic within the Invisible College. It holds one of the most complete and expensive laboratories ever built, and contains all the equipment necessary to delve into the Fifth Mystery. Its

caretaker is an unassuming, middle-aged man who never reveals his name and has no aspirations beyond his current station. He simply enjoys the knowledge gained from working alongside scholars and scientists such as Arciniega. Because of this, he is Arciniega's most trusted assistant, and the only full time resident of the Fortress.

The Fortress maintains an almost symbiotic relationship with a number of surviving practitioners of *El Fuego Adentro* (see the *Castille* sourcebook). Arciniega provides them with food, salves, and the occasional medical checkup; in return, they use their mythical reputation and their horrible magic to protect the Fortress from would-be intruders. Arciniega makes it a point to seek them out at least twice a year to conduct complete physicals and give them medical advice. Of course, such examinations always end with Arciniega taking a small sample of blood "for medicinal purposes." The arrangement keeps him on good terms with the fire mages, while simultaneously providing samples of some of the rarest sorcerous blood in Théah.

In addition, only a few local mountaineers and Arciniega himself know the secret path through the mountains which leads to the Fortress. The few College members who study there must travel to a predetermined location in the mountains and wait. The natives patrol the area regularly, and upon sighting the traveler, blindfold him and lead him to the Fortress. In this way, Arciniega protects its location should a member be captured and tortured. Travelers unknown to the locals are driven away or killed unless accompanied by a known member.

The number of Invisible College members who know of the Fortress can be counted on one hand and include Joshua Daylen and Don Petrigai. Lorenzo Alvarez was never invited to the Fortress due to his unpredictable nature. Arciniega himself never stays here for longer than a few months at a time; College business and the realities of being a fugitive keep him constantly on the move. When he is here, he runs the Fortress with an iron hand, and anyone wishing to stay does exactly what he says. When absent, he expects his guests to behave with civility and turns all operations over to his unnamed assistant.



Eisen

The Quadrant

Location: Isle of Hafen

Leader: None at the moment

Lorenzo Alvarez built this structure on a remote island off the coast of Eisen. He was forced to abandon it when the island's tenants revolted against his taxes, but the observatory he designed remains an important meeting point for the Invisible College. The main building stands on the top of a wind-swept hill, an ideal location for making astronomical observations. The main chamber contains a huge quadrant which can be used to study countless astronomical phenomenon, as well as living quarters, laboratories, and even a library (which has since been stripped of all its books). Alvarez was constructing a small

prison beside the observatory, and the incomplete building has enough space to house almost 30 people.

Today, the island serves as an observatory for numerous College astronomers. They never stay longer than a few days, content merely to make their observations and retreat to more hospitable locales. The island's residents — a semi-autonomous mix of fishermen and sheep herders — tend to leave the scholars alone, provided they mind their own business and don't "put on airs like that Alvarez *schwein*." The friendlier ones sell the astronomers supplies and ferry them back and forth from the mainland. Some Collegians worry that the residents might inform on them to the Inquisition, but they needn't worry. Hafen enjoys its near-independence, and doesn't want to ruin it by inviting more attention from outsiders.



The Range

Location: Grünberg (in Hainzl königreich)

Leader: Nezhek Cheremshenavich

This modest farmhouse and the nearby barn are located in one of the many grubby villages hanging on to survival along the eastern edges of Eisen. This safe house has existed for almost as long as the Invisible College itself, but has only recently become important. It currently houses Nezhek Cheremshenavich and his family, who moved here in secrecy after the near-disaster of his invention's debut in Ussura (see pages 65–66 for details).

While Nezhek and his family try to adapt to the differences in culture and clime, the College uses the Range as a testing ground of his “rifled musket.” Nezhek (and the rest of the scholars in his company) know conclusively that his invention works, but no one understands exactly why. With better tools, more time, and growing experience, Nezhek has crafted two more of the incredibly accurate weapons for practical testing. While he and his hosts test the guns on an impromptu range behind the barn, a pair of theorists try to explain the underlying science.

Thus far small bribes (often in the form of precious food) have been sufficient to silence the local villagers. The College has placed a mole in Grünberg and another in Atemlos (the nearest city) with orders to watch for any signs of Inquisition activity. They are ready to evacuate Nezhek on a moment's notice should it become necessary, and of course, they have access to several frightening weapons if trouble comes calling.

Nezhek has placed two stone crocks in the weapons' storage area near the improvised firing range behind the barn. At night he hangs the weapons in a stout locked closet, dangling from trick hooks above the crocks. If the door is opened incorrectly the hooks will let slip, and the primitive rifles will fall into the waiting receptacles. Each crock is filled with some of the strongest acids the College has devised. The weapons are to be destroyed at the first sign of trouble, and the acids will quickly ruin the delicate rifling. The College (and Nezhek) are determined to keep

his invention under their control until they can appraise the possible consequences of this deadly new technology.

Montaigne

The Church

Location: Alciérge

Leader: Father François Albere

In northeastern Montaigne there are dozens of tiny villages, formerly belonging to Eisen, which the nobles largely ignore once the taxes are paid. Two years ago, an outbreak of the White Plague swept into the village of Alciérge, killing nearly three-quarters of the populace. Father Albere, a priest of noble blood and a member of the Invisible College on the run from the Inquisition, had the unique and uniquely horrible opportunity to study the Plague in all its stages. Working from an almost-forgotten church, Albere struggled to save the village from the Plague. The citizens of Alciérge died in such numbers that he could not give final rites and tend to the living at the same time. In an act of desperation, he had many of the bodies moved into ice caves near the village to preserve them until he could find the time to give each man, woman, and child a proper Vaticine burial. By the time the disease ran its course, less than 20 villagers were alive to help the priest continue his work.

Since that day the Church has become a center of research and fevered study. While Albere still holds services in the main hall, the back rooms house a handful of scholars who have come to join him. Albere stores his observations and other records of the Plague (including copied notes of the renowned Richard Kailean) in a small basement study, where College scholars pour over them intently. When new theories or new questions arise, he leads them to the ice caves, where they can perform autopsies on the frozen dead. Albere always performs the last rites when the autopsy is completed, and buries the spent corpse with his own hands.

The Race

Location: Charouse

Leader: Camilia Pascaut

Supported by friends in the nobility, Camilia Pascaut has established a most unorthodox safehouse for her fellow scholars. Some of Camilia's most practical breakthroughs revolved around the determination of odds through applied probability theory. One of her benefactors surrendered the use of his home near a horseracing track outside of Charouse in exchange for odds on the horses. From there Camilia and her cohorts continue to theorize and study, while entertaining local gamblers and the plethora of artists whom Pascaut sponsors (including Abrianna Fiorenza, see pages 61–62). Visiting scholars work in secluded areas of the house, and the constant ebb and flow of people make a perfect mask for their activities. Her abode has become a key link to moving artists and scholars out of Castille.

Ussura

The Camp

Location: The Wall of Fire

Leader: Professor Alexander Braverman

No one has any trouble finding Ussura's eastern border. Walls of fuelless flame burst forth from the ground, reaching for the sky and illuminating the winter nights for miles. Ussura borders the mysterious land of Cathay, and only a handful of men have ever claimed to have passed beyond the Walls of Fire to see this myth-shrouded land.

Professor Braverman can make such a claim.

Only 25 miles inland from the Mirror, the Camp serves as the Professor's base for secret forays into Cathay. He established the camp over a year ago and has recently begun to develop a handful of amenities. A dozen securely-built tents supplement three rough-hewn log cabins, which keep the elements out admirably. Guests, assistants and supplies are relegated to the tents, while Professor Braverman and his aide share the most recently built (and most livable) cabin. The permanent assistants (there are

currently five of them) share another cabin. The third is used to shelter artifacts retrieved from the other side of the flaming barrier. Were a ranking member of the Invisible College to make an appearance, the assistants would move to the tents. A well-hidden trail connects the Camp to the sea, where supply ships provide it with a link to the rest of the world. The trek takes three days in either direction, and the trail becomes impassable for 2–3 months each year when the Ussuran winters descend on the region.

Vendel

The Tower

Location: Kirk

Leader: Don Petrigai Ontiveros de Rioja del Castillo

A darkened tower in the rear quarter of the university campus at Kirk provides the perfect setting for the flamboyant and somewhat moody Don Petrigai Ontiveros de Rioja del Castillo's continuing research into Blood Science. While nominally in hiding, all of Kirk knows where Petrigai lives. He leads classes from the privacy of the tower and maintains personal quarters there. Visiting members of the Invisible College hide among the ranks of students and sleep in dormitories if unable to afford better quarters.

The tower itself provides ample room for instruction on the lower floor. The second floor has become Petrigai's rooms. The third floor holds storage rooms and a laboratory, while the tower's square roof has become the site for experiments involving lightning or requiring extra space. Petrigai wishes to coax down electricity in order to "excite" his queer concoctions, and he believes he is on the verge of a major breakthrough.

Petrigai's flamboyant nature continues to attract students and Knight Inquisitors alike. Although keeps the times of his classes a secret to all save his students, the man himself has come under attack no less than three times.irate students fended off one such assault, while Petrigai's alchemy undid two others. At least one of the attacks was launched by Inquisition assassins. The others may have been the result of Petrigai's researches into the Fifth



Mystery, or simply irate rivals whom Petrigai insulted at one point or another.

Julian von Henning also lectures at the Tower from time to time, but his strong personality and enormous ego clashes with Petrigai in the cramped space of the tower. Von Henning keeps a secret residence in Kirk, but travels often, seeking new materials to continue his research on “gases.” His lengthy journeys and the personal conflicts with Petrigai make his appearances at the Tower rare.

Vodacce

There are no permanent safe houses in Vodacce. The nation’s transitory nature, coupled with shifting politics and the local Vaticine’s tolerance of College ideals, makes such structures a waste of time and resources. Vodacce Collegians tend to congregate in the island cities, and know how to set up new hideouts quickly.

Other

The Workshop

Location: *la Bucca*

Leader: Julius Mendoza

Located on *la Bucca*, hundreds of miles from the slightest Inquisition influence, the Workshop has become the fastest growing safehouse in the Invisible College, and the only one that permanently houses more than a single scholar or two. The Workshop came about more from serendipity than deliberate design. In late 1667, a group of College agents rescuing a minor chemist ran afoul of the Inquisition, and had no alternative but to escape to sea in a fishing boat. Wandering aimlessly, they thought their luck had gone from bad to worse as pirates closed in to snap them up.

With no plunder aboard to speak of (though the pirates mercilessly stripped the little boat to the hull), the scientists tried to barter for their lives and passage to Montaigne. The lead scientist had only one coin to trade: knowledge. He promised that if they released his companions, he would teach them ways to increase their effectiveness: precision

astronomy, new gunpowder mixtures, and ways to careen their hull in half the time it might otherwise take.

The captain belonged to the Brotherhood of the Coast and wasn’t sure quite what he had caught. Intrigued by the scientist’s pleas, he brought the prisoners back to *la Bucca*. There, the College members quickly proved their worth with a number of practical maritime applications, and before long the pirates had released the prisoners and granted them the right to live on the island. For their part, the Collegians had found a place almost entirely beyond the reach of the Church, yet close to the continent. They staked out a set of shacks on the outskirts of town, and quickly traded for enough labor to build a small compound. The Workshop (as the Collegians called it) was born.

The Workshop’s growth went into high gear when Captain Mendoza (see page 68–69) returned from one of his many raids to discover a cell of scholars living on the island. He agreed to assist them in their endeavors and his ship, the *Lady Miriam*, now serves as a combination transport vessel and warship, smuggling scholars out of Castille and occasionally lending military aid with her fearsome cannon.

Since Mendoza began assisting them, the Workshop has grown to support nearly a dozen scholars (mostly too hunted to find shelter on the mainland). They continue to publish their findings, transferring messages through Mendoza to the rest of the College. In order to maintain their anonymity, the entire Workshop publishes under a single pseudonym (“Martin Tinker”), leading many scholars to believe that only one man hides among the pirates.

The scientists keep to themselves, and rarely interact with the remainder of the Brotherhood, who are far too rough for their ivory-tower sensibilities. They interact through the Brotherhood’s leadership: Mendoza, Captain Allende, or whichever buccaneer is in charge of the island at the time. A few of the rowdier pirates sometimes harass the Workshop — smashing equipment, tossing scientists, etc. — but they are quickly chastised by their fellows. The Brotherhood knows that the scientists are a valuable asset and that they will have the first crack at any new advances which the Workshop produces.







Theory

Scholars

Bonita

Those who meet the woman who calls herself Bonita are often left speechless by the loveliness from which she has taken her name. They are further surprised when they discover that she has one of the sharpest mathematical minds on the continent, and they are positively shocked when they find out that she has mastered one Swordsman School and invented another.

This brown-haired beauty with deep eyes and a sultry voice has not made many creative leaps in the field of mathematics. She has, however, demonstrated a remarkable ability to take various innovations of others and bring them together in new and different ways. She has also demonstrated an amazing aptitude for finding and refuting proofs of theorems. When Bonita hears of a new theorem, she can often find a shorter and more efficient proof than the one the original scholar provided. Bonita's few major creative leaps have come in the field of the theory of numbers.

She has also made great strides in series expansions of functions, especially trigonometric and exponential functions, and has dabbled in set theory. She has a great interest in the newly budding field of probability, believing that statistically analyzing her opponents' actions will help her maximize the efficiency of her swordplay.

Her skill with a rapier is phenomenal. Light, quick, and agile, she has refined her reflexes so highly that it sometimes becomes difficult to track her motions. In combat, she epitomizes grace, rarely allowing herself to take a hit. While the style of Bonita swordsmanship is almost totally defensive, she herself makes effective use of timely counterattacks which she learned from her training in the Gallegos school. She developed the Bonita School to allow other scientists to defend themselves, not to turn them into duelists.

The name Bonita is obviously a pseudonym, but no one seems to know her true identity. She never answers to



Bonita

another name and refuses to divulge her origins. No one knows where she acquired her mathematical education, though many believe her to be of noble blood, hiding her name to spare her family any controversy. Bonita has never discussed the matter, and few have been willing or foolish enough to press the issue.

Bonita is a beautiful woman who wears elegant, expensive clothes and mild perfumes. She lives a life of wandering adventure, never staying in the same location for long. When not teaching new students or working on some mathematical theory, she passes her time dancing or playing games of skill. She is polite and charming at all times, even when engaged in mortal combat.

Mus Borwin

Mus used to be a much more outgoing and outspoken man. He lived an adventurous lifestyle while he was a student, brawling at the local taverns and traveling the continent in search of hidden knowledge about the stars. It was during these travels that he became fascinated with maps, ship's maps in particular. He devoted much his time to abstract nautical pursuits — when he wasn't drinking himself mad or roughhousing with the local thugs.

His fiery nature was extinguished during a skirmish in Eisen, where he was observing a set of cannons designed by a former professor of his. He became entangled in mass combat when the battery was overrun, and a cavalry soldier's mount trampled him after he put up a minor struggle. He nearly lost his right leg as a result of the injuries and has not been the same since, abandoning frivolity and devoting himself wholly to his academic pursuits.

Borwin has become obsessed with solving the problem of accurately measuring the longitude, especially at sea. Ships have a hard time determining their exact position east-west, a problem which had no ready solution (save to the Montaigne; see pages 115–117 of *The Pirate Nations* sourcebook for more information). Mus grew increasingly occupied with the dilemma and devoted much of his time to puzzling it out. The difficulty lies in the absence of an

accurate chronometer. No existing timepiece can resist interference in its mechanism caused by the motion of a vessel at sea and the moist sea air. Mus thinks he has found a means of keeping time accurately. It will not be affected by the adverse conditions at sea, because his time-keeping device lies in the heavens.

Each of the four known satellites of the planet Re orbits that planet with its own frequency. Borwin has studied their movements and drawn up tables of their locations at various hours of the night. He has used his existing tables to make predictions of the locations of these moons as far as 30 months in advance. So far, his predictions are accurate. By



Mus Borwin

using these tables he believes that he can determine the longitude to within 40 miles.

This method is not without its drawbacks. First, it requires a literate navigator who is more highly skilled at mathematics than most university students. Second, it requires carrying a table listing the positions of the satellites relative to Re every ten minutes of each night, and a table of hours of sunset based on latitude and date. The navigator must wait for sunset and find Re and its moons, then obtain measurements of each and compare them with their tables, in order to find the time back in Kirk (which Mus has made the reference point in his book of tables). Then he must compare that time with the time of local sunset as indicated in the other table. The longitudinal difference between his current location and Kirk is mathematically dependent on the differences between these two times. If anything should happen to these books, or if there should be an error in their transcription, then the accuracy is lost.

Furthermore, the method only works when the sky is clear; cloud cover or rain will hide Re from sight, sabotaging the entire exercise. Borwin has yet to find a way around this particular dilemma, though he constantly racks his brain for it. He has not yet published his theory because he has not yet verified it in the field. He is currently gathering funds to make a voyage at sea to test it, and hopes that the conditions there will help inspire a solution to the method's various bugs.

Mus is a tall, broad-shouldered Vendel. He keeps his balding blond hair very short, and his beard well-trimmed. He walks with a cane because of his injury and still feels pain in his joints from time to time. He is very myopic and wears thick spectacles to correct this. Mus speaks quietly and frequently mumbles, which provokes quite a bit of teasing from his colleagues. "Mus" means "mouse" in Vendel, and his quiet demeanor seems at odds with his height and frame. For all of his nautical interests, he knows little of practical seamanship, and eagerly looks forward to a serious ship's voyage.

Reimar Derviny

"Irreverent" is a word that many use to describe Reimar Derviny, whose diligent skepticism of accepted science is legendary among Théan scholars. His central argument stems from the fact that, in his words, "all perception is subjective, and therefore flawed." According to Derviny, the only pure science is mathematics, which he is currently pioneering with the bold idea that everything in Creation can be systematically categorized and defined through numbers.

Derviny did not arrive at this mechanistic philosophy with ease or speed. Like many of his fellow outcasts, he began his career in the legal profession. But after tiring of law just months after graduating, Derviny opted to volunteer with the Montaigne military, where he hoped a strong "world experience" would offer him direction. Instead of answers, he found only more questions. Months later, after much soul searching, Derviny came to the realization that his own fragile perception was at fault, not what he saw.

This drove him to reconsider how he viewed everything, and to develop a stark and analytical approach to others, the world, and even himself. One by one, he eliminated or cast aside what could not be proven, relying only on what he knew to be absolutely true. Eventually, this stark clarity led him to what he considers the only absolute truth in existence – mathematics.

Derviny knew that he was on the cusp of great understanding, but also knew that his current direction could only lead to derision and excommunication. Knowing how far the tendrils of the Vaticine authorities reached, and anticipating trouble long before the Inquisition took power, Derviny left his homeland, where their influence was strong, and ventured into the tribal northlands of Vestenmannavjnar, where he hoped to evade ecclesiastical retribution for long enough to formulate and put down his ideas.

Vestenmannavjnar has been Derviny's home ever since. From a small cottage along the nation's northern shores, he seeks to rewrite human understanding. Beginning with himself and his immediate surroundings, he has

methodically disproven every thought, action, and event he can conceive – all save one: *ratio probat mundum* (“reason verifies the universe”). This is the only statement he has yet been able to derive that he cannot doubt, and so it has become the core principle from which all his other findings are drawn.

Reimar Derviny is not considered a scientist, nor a philosopher (at least not by the standards of philosophy at the moment). He has branched off into a new field of thought, and caused as much controversy as consideration among his fellow scholars. Yet none can argue with his brilliance, or the startling discoveries he has made since



Reimar Derviny

achieving “clarity.” Most of the world’s foremost observers utilize Derviny’s work with optics and astronomy, and his recent creation of analytical coordinate geometry has taken the College by storm.

Of late, Derviny’s speculations on the nature of Creation have expanded to include animals and other non-human life on Théah. His observations about their behavior and motivations have been invaluable for a great many people, from farmers to botanists to Eisen’s monster hunters.

Derviny is small and thin, with long, flowing hair, a weak chin and a struggling mustache. He speaks with great enthusiasm, but becomes easily distracted and often trails off in the middle of sentences. Conversations with the man are exercises in frustration. He wears traditional Montaigne garb when working in his cottage, but dons Vestenmannavjnar clothing when he travels, to better blend in with the populace. The sight of Derviny trudging through the snow, buried up to his eyes in fur coats, can reduce the harshest Vesten warrior to giggles.

Abrianna Lucilla Fiorenza

Abrianna was born Lucilla Falisci, the only daughter of a minor branch of the Falisci family. Her mother and aunt (the attending Fate Witch) realized immediately that she was a *Senzavista*, a noble girl born without the power of Sorte (see the *Vodacce* sourcebook, page 51). Senzavista live miserable lives in Vodacce, and the two women did not wish to see the infant suffer such a fate. They told the husband that the girl was still-born, then smuggled her out of the estate to be raised as a courtesan.

Abrianna grew up with no real knowledge of her background, only occasional visits from “Aunt Filipa,” whom she assumed was a patron. Her career as a courtesan was exemplary, and when she wasn’t seducing Medico’s husbands, she showed an amazing aptitude for mathematics and music. It was this latter talent that got her into trouble. While she played the violin marvelously, she also expressed a desire to compose music: something Vodacce women could not normally pursue (not without a man to take credit

for the work). After several frustrating years of attempting to find a patron, she decided to leave Vodacce and seek her fortune elsewhere. Her Aunt Filipa helped smuggle her out of the country and quickly found a patron for her — a woman by the name of Camilia Pascaut.

Under Camilia, Abrianna could finally realize her ambitions and she soon had a string of symphonies to her credit. She performed regularly for the Montaigne court and managed to secure her reputation with a stunning rendition of her “Spiderweb Minuet” before the Empereur himself. During this time, she became involved in the Invisible College. At first, she merely assisted her patron in scientific



Abrianna Lucilla Fiorenza

experiments. As time went on, her involvement grew until she was making contributions without Pascaut’s help. She became a member almost without realizing it.

It was Abrianna (along with Galeno Rioja) who first conceived of the Music Code. After developing a symphonic alphabet, she tested it during several public performances. The results exceeded her wildest expectations. Today, Abrianna’s compositions form a foundation of the code, and are used to pass dozens of messages between members. Critics have begun noticing her “bold new style,” but no one has yet drawn the connection between her music and the College. She hopes to keep it that way.

Abrianna is a tall, pale Vodacce woman with long black hair and big brown eyes. She retains her courtesan’s fashion sense, though her dress style is toned down and concentrates more on vibrant colors than revealing skin. She makes conversation easily, and can talk at length about numerous topics. Abrianna is supremely grateful to be in her position; she knows how lucky she’s been and has resolved to make the most of her good fortune. Her activities in the College reflect her desire to help others fulfill their gifts as she has.

Ravenild Hibbot

Many great minds within the Invisible College are known not only for their achievements, but for their eccentricities. Radical thoughts often lead to radical behavior, and no one exemplifies that more than Ravenild Hibbot.

Growing up in the Avalon fishing community of Pomitain, Hibbot was fascinated with the lush natural world around her. Her father, a stern sailor, disapproved of her unending questions and demanded that she simply accept things without worrying about why. Her mother, however, was a refugee from Vodacce and eagerly supported her child’s hunger for knowledge, happy to provide the education that she herself had never experienced.

The studious little girl made few friends among the other children, feeling that their games of make-believe were just

a waste of time. Her seriousness and dedication would eventually yield fantastic results, though. She had a natural affinity for tinkering which, combined with her ability to absorb knowledge, made her an ideal scientist. By her 18th birthday, she had discovered cells in plants and humans and was tinkering with improving clocks. Word of her achievements spread among her mother's friends, and their subtle urgings gave her the courage to take the next step in her life.

Eleven years ago, Hibbot forever altered the course of scholarship when she became the first woman admitted into the Royal Fraternity for Scientific Minds. Even though her brilliant insights equaled or surpassed to anything the Fraternity had ever proposed, her elders still saw her as "just a clever girl." Infuriated at their narrow-mindedness, she knew she had to do something drastic.

One cold morning, the Fraternity members awoke to a brilliant fire in their cobblestone courtyard. Hibbot stood alongside of it wearing only a bodice and pantaloons. The blaze consisted of her dresses, gowns, and other feminine trappings. As the gathering watched in stunned silence, the "clever girl" sheared off her dark locks. "I know it has been difficult for many of you to see beyond my gender," she called. "I've decided to make it easier for you." In less than a week the Fraternity had officially changed its name to the Royal Association of Scientific Minds.

True to her word, Hibbot has dressed like a man ever since (though she allowed her hair to grow back). Amused at the reactions of her colleagues and the populace in general, she decided to milk the scandalous scenario for all it was worth. She has made a habit of maintaining male mannerisms: smoking a pipe, sitting astride her horse instead of riding side-saddle, and reaching the rank of Journeyman in Roary Finnegan's bareknuckled fighting school. Of course, these exploits have made her more famous in some circles than the ingenuousness of her scholastic work, but Hibbot doesn't mind. She has made her rebellion against the traditional role of women yet another experiment – a social experiment – and she eagerly awaits the outcome.

Surprisingly, her social testing has not disrupted her scientific research, and her daring has elevated her to an almost romantic status within the College. She now finds eager support among her peers and has become something of a role-model for other women who dedicate their lives to science. Because she knows so many eyes are upon her, Hibbot presses herself harder and further than most. Her resolve is unquestionable and her contemporaries wait with heavy expectation for the next wonders she will reveal to the world.



Ravenild Hibbot

Goskelen Leman

The term “genius” is often used to describe Goskelen Leman. So are the words “unrealistic” and “optimist.”

Leman is only in his early twenties, but already one of the most recognizable scientific minds in Théah. The son of two devout Vaticine scholars, the handsome youth began his career as a lawyer, like many other members of the College. He soon abandoned the legal field as too limiting, however, and has since endeavored to explore almost every facet of modern science. He has made significant contributions to the understanding of mathematics, linguistics, and possibly the very nature of Creation itself.



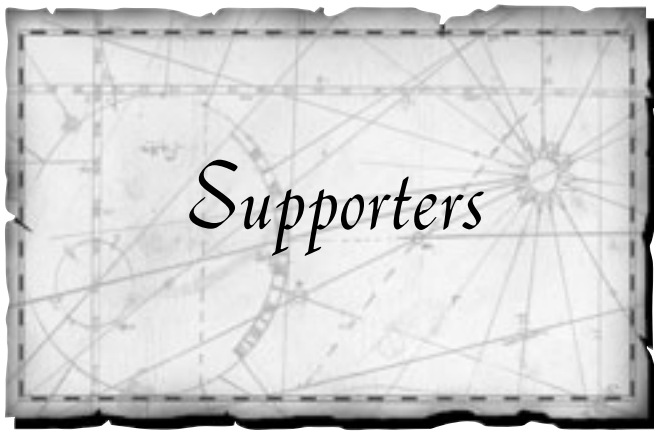
Goskelen Leman

Like other young men his age, Leman would like to find a sweetheart. Love is one commodity that he has never been able to explain fully in his experiments. Unfortunately, he approaches members of the opposite sex as if they were experiments themselves, something few can tolerate for any length of time. Until Leman learns the finer arts of conversation and courtship, it is doubtful he will ever find love. For now, he must settle with science as his mistress, and she is keeping him very busy.

Both his Vaticine upbringing and his lawyer’s education convinced him that everything in the universe is strictly ordered and functions in accordance to the designs of a perfect, benevolent deity (see page 18 for details about his belief in monads). However, these concepts and theories have led him to a chilling conclusion that he has not dared tell anyone.

Following the logic he introduced in developing the notion of monads, Leman saw that it would be perfectly possible for humans to have six fingers on each hand or even three. However, there is no possible world that would allow for both at the same time. Even though both are possibilities, the actualization of one disallows the actualization of the other. Leman defined this as “compossibilities,” possibilities that are compatible with each other as opposed to possibilities that are not. The total of any one set of compossibilities would make up a possible perfect world. What has really spun Leman’s mind around is the concept of an indefinitely large pool of possibilities. If his theory is correct, then Théah is only one of an infinite number of possible worlds. Leman is deeply troubled by this idea and desperately tries to reconcile it with his Vaticine beliefs. He wishes to find a confidant to share his concerns with, but knows that few people will take him seriously.

Leman is a tall, sharp-featured man with a penetrating gaze and an easy smile. His natural love of life has been tempered somewhat by his grim discoveries and he rarely appears at ease these days. He dresses haphazardly and often wears the same clothes for days at a time while engaged in experiments. The habit has not helped his social skills.



Supporters

Nezhek Cheremshenavich

A second son from the frozen northern reaches of Ussura, Nezhek has no formal education, making him an oddity among the refined minds of the Invisible College. In fact, the only reason that he is among them at all is that he has invented perhaps the greatest weapon of all time.

A devout family man, Cheremshenavich lived with his wife and two sons at the edge of Ussuran civilization until several months ago. An avid hunter, Cheremshenavich had always lamented the poor accuracy of muskets, and tinkered with many crude ideas to improve it. One day, while his sons were sledding down the first slick ice of the new season, he realized how much control they had over their direction. He noted the curving (almost spiral) angle of the slope they were playing upon and then opened up one of his guns and went to work, filing away at the inside of the barrel.

Though he didn't know it at the time, Cheremshenavich had invented rifling.

After testing his new invention, Cheremshenavich showed it to several of his neighbors, and excitement over the idea grew. Had he only known what trouble this would bring, he might have destroyed the weapon instead, but – as it happened – word about Cheremshenavich's marvelous new rifle attracted people from far and wide.

Luck was on Nezhek's side, and the Invisible College got to him before anyone else did. (Luck was with the Invisible College as well, as they rarely venture in Ussura, but on this occasion a loyal scholar was visiting old friends nearby, and intervened before the weapon fell into the wrong hands.)

Knowing that the Inquisition would only destroy the invention and kill Cheremshenavich and his family – as well as anyone else who claimed to understand the mechanism behind the weapon's advancement – the Invisible College smuggled the Ussurans out of the nation and back to one of their safe houses in Eisen. Then they carefully covered up his tracks and convinced the locals that Cheremshenavich's demonstrations of the weapon had been fraudulent. Using a mock weapon that they had subtly sabotaged, the Collegians convinced those who had seen the "rifle" in action that simple luck caused its amazing accuracy, and that the modifications to the weapon did nothing.

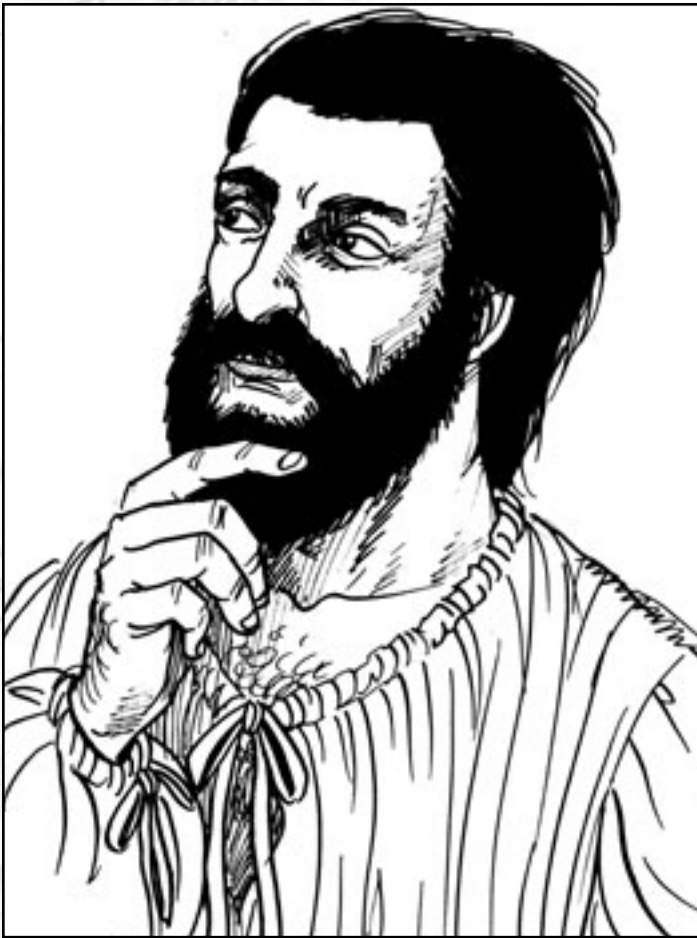
By the time the Inquisition arrived, they found only Cheremshenavich's disillusioned neighbors, angry that they had been duped. Fortunately, Cheremshenavich hadn't detailed what the modifications to his musket were, so no one could explain them, let alone duplicate them. For the time being, the secret of rifling was safe with the Invisible College.

Since then, Nezhek Cheremshenavich and his family has lived with members of the Invisible College and their allies, in a safehouse near the Eisen city of Atemlos. There, he helps refine his new weapon while the College tries to puzzle out the physical laws behind its wondrous accuracy.

The Inquisition has not abandoned its search for him, however. They suspect that the Ussuran knew something they could use to their advantage, and his sudden disappearance only heightened their suspicions. But for now, at least, he is safe, and he has no intention of falling into Inquisition hands.

He'll kill himself first.

Nezhek is tall and thin, with wiry muscles and a thick brown beard. His idyllic farmer's life did little to prepare him and his family for their new covert lifestyle, and Nezhek is a bit



Nezhek Cheremshenavich

overwhelmed when speaking with the well-educated scholars that house him. He understands the danger his inadvertent invention has placed him in, but still struggles to overcome the challenges of a life in hiding. He takes it as Matushka's will and tries to make the most of it. He asks countless questions of his hosts and has even expressed an interest in learning mathematics. His children have begun to study reading and writing, and he hopes that their "Eisen adventure" will have a permanent impression on them when they finally move back home.

Richard Mutz

(More information on Mutz can be found on page 55 of The Sights of Freiburg in the Freiburg boxed set.)

A lifelong resident of the city of Freiburg, Richard Mutz had little interest in science. Though extremely well-educated, he preferred reading fiction and poetry to the tedious tasks of observation and deduction. He made a living selling books and giving open-air dramatic readings on street corners. He was a good enough brawler to fend off the gangs that hit him up for protection money, and a good enough salesman to afford a pair of bodyguards. By the time Nicklaus Trägue reopened the city, Mutz owned one of the largest book collections in Eisen. He operated a large emporium that catered to academics of all sorts, and was known in certain circles as far away as Avalon. It was there that he first made contact with the Invisible College.

Many College members frequented his establishment, and he had unknowingly done business with the secret society for years. When they approached him, he thought at first that they simply wanted more books from him. But they had something larger in mind: his shop was the perfect front for a printing operation. They offered to pay for printing presses if he could provide them with a secure locale and use the equipment to publish whatever they wished. Mutz was ecstatic, and instantly agreed to their terms. He formally joined the College soon thereafter.

Today, the Book Emporium serves as one of the College's most important facilities. Mutz runs a set of gigantic printing presses in the back room, publishing all manner of scientific documents brought to him by fellow Collegians. He passes them on by hiding them in books, which he then sells to the appropriate member. He has devised a cunning method of hiding printed documents in the spines of his books, allowing him to smuggle them without drawing attention to their true nature. He communicates with his "special clients" through the Math Code, and knows them only by pseudonyms in case they are ever compromised; he has only actually met two of them. The cosmopolitan nature of Freiburg means that he can operate without fear of reprisals, but he keeps things quiet just in case. Should anything

happen to him, the College's ability to spread information would be severely damaged.

In his spare time, he often goes out to nearby Shouter's Square (see *The Sights of Freiburg*, page 55) and distributes leaflets containing his poetry. Few people ever actually read them, but he doesn't care. The College has given him a chance to indulge his muse and he has taken full advantage of the opportunity.

Mutz stands about five feet, eight inches tall, with sandy brown hair and the dreaming eyes of a poet. His clothes are often stained with printer's ink and he keeps the nearby laundry (Klein's on page 43 of *The Sights of Freiburg*) busy



Richard Mutz

getting the marks out. His success has allowed him to hire more bodyguards — a necessity for business owners in Freiburg — and he keeps them on the constant lookout for possible Inquisitors. A devout Objectionist, he has no interest in letting Verdugo's fanatics burn down what he has worked so hard to achieve.

Father Conal Martin

The Vaticine community of Inismore is small and closeknit, as much for personal defense as for spiritual support. One never knows when a gang of Inish rowdies will decide to get drunk and go beat on some Vaticine in a besotted attempt to gain favor with the Sidhe. Equally dangerous are the older Inish, whose love of argument can keep them on topic for hours. Vaticines of weak faith often fall prey to such discussions and leave the Church, much to the consternation of those who remain.

Conal Martin learned quickly to defend himself, both physically and philosophically. Always a strong child, he came to the defense of many other bullied children, Vaticine and otherwise, and was soon very popular among the downtrodden youths of Tara. Personally devout, he became an altar boy at the earliest possible age, and made ready for a life of religious study. He attended Burke University in Tara, taking degrees in natural science and philosophy. After graduation, he took Holy Vows and, under the patronage of the Archbishop of Avalon, traveled to Castille for further study.

He attended La Ciencia in Vaticine City, and continued his practice of standing up for the meek. More importantly, however, his time at La Ciencia included meeting young Salvador Garcia. Both felt a little lonely, and each found in the other something they lacked. Martin discovered a strength of personal conviction in Garcia beyond anything he had ever seen. Garcia saw in Martin a staunch supporter of justice... and a crazy Inishman who would stand up to anyone. The two became fast friends and developed a deep trust for one another. Though Martin was older due to his later start in education, the two took degrees the same year. Martin returned to Inismore, while Garcia moved directly to

a teaching position at the famed institution. The two stayed in touch, practicing ciphers in their correspondence just to keep things entertaining.

Martin settled in at Burke on his return, teaching the subjects he loved, natural science and theological philosophy. He also sang mass regularly. In his forties, he became a Bishop in the Church, and Headmaster of Burke. He supervised the few priests who operated in Tara, and continued his teaching duties. He has published many works on the various sciences, and is considered one of the foremost scholars in Avalon.



Father Conal Martin

When the Hierophant died and the Inquisition overran Castille, Salvador Garcia paid his old friend a visit. Martin shared Garcia's horror at the Inquisition and its tenets, and jumped at the chance to join what Garcia called the Invisible College.

Today, Martin serves as Garcia's favored backchannel for storing information. The Castillian sends him all manner of notebooks, packages, inventions, paintings, sheet music — anything the Inquisition would otherwise destroy. Garcia's (and Martin's) logic in this is impeccable. What better place to keep things safe from the Inquisition than a nation that will deny them even a berth to dock a ship? Martin carefully archives everything he receives, and has one of the largest collections of forbidden scholarship in Théah. He keeps them faithfully, waiting for the day they can be widely seen again.

Conal Martin is an old man. He has little hair left, and leans heavily on a stout cane. He can still swing his walking stick with surprising power (as many unruly youths can attest), and few can withstand his logic. He is also politically active in Inismore. He keeps abreast of news from all across Avalon, and corresponds with several dozen academicians worldwide. He has a taste for puzzles, and uses a half-dozen different ciphers in his communications.

Captain Mendoza

Julius Mendoza is far from the College's most scintillating intellect. A Vodacce student of engineering and the elaborate mathematics of navigation, his scientific exploits have been mostly the slow, plodding development of rigorous proofs for other mathematician's flying leaps of logic. He likes to think of it as buttressing the Invisible College's knowledge. Despite his lackluster academic record, he knows the names and locations of more Invisible College members than anyone else. He's the cavalry.

Mendoza once served as a navigator aboard a smuggler's ship which was seized and boarded by the Castillian navy. He spent five years laboring in *la Bucca* before the revolt made him a member of the Brotherhood of the Coast.

Freed from his chains and placed in charge of his own vessel, Mendoza turned to the pirate's life with ease. His skills on the waves proved to be a valuable asset to the fledgling nation, and he led his ship, the *Lady Miriam*, to numerous victories against both the Montaigne and Castillian fleets.

It was during one such mission that the Invisible College established their workshop on *la Bucca* (see page 55 for details). Mendoza had spent months at sea and was unaware that the scientists now had a safe house on the island. When he returned to port, he was delighted to discover the enclave and volunteered his services to their cause. His academic skills, unused for years, finally had an outlet, and his abilities as a ship's captain would come in tremendous handy. With a capable crew of pirate marines, a respectable broadside of modern cannon, and the mobility provided by a fast ship, Mendoza could show up nearly anywhere with more military power at his disposal than anyone would reasonably expect of "a bunch of addle-brained academics."

Since then, he and the *Lady Miriam* have divided their time between aiding the College and more traditional pirating activities. Mendoza is something of a trump card for the College, having waded into battle more than once on the society's behalf. He often lies in wait off the shores of Castille, then swoops in to pick up fugitives being smuggled away from the Inquisition. His cannons have sent more than a few Knight Inquisitors packing, and he once engineered the daring rescue of a Collegian imprisoned in a harbor gaol. Personally, he prefers the more stealthy duties of ferrying his fellow scholars about, but between the trade vessels left unattended by the warring fleets and the fees he collects from grateful scientists, Mendoza keeps the Brotherhood's coffers full.

Mendoza often points out the advantages of the Workshop to terrified escaping scholars, and has recruited several of them to the island's enclave. Most Collegians dream of reaching Avalon or some other safe haven. While he is willing to make such journeys (or at least make arrangements with a trustworthy vessel), his glowing description of the island, backed by subtle reminders of

Jeremy Cook's unfortunate end, has changed several escapees' final destination.

Mendoza is a small, stocky man with a bushy mustache and a sharp gaze. He commands his ship with a firm but good-natured hand, wielding the carrot and the stick in equal proportion. During his brief stints at *la Bucca*, he spends all of his time at the Workshop, pestering the scholars with countless questions about their experiments. They have allowed him a small amount of lab space, where he diligently works at bolstering their already-proven theories. It's not much, but he knows how valuable he is to the College, and he feels they owe him.



Captain Mendoza

Diego Torres de Zepeda del Castillo

Diego Torres de Zepeda del Castillo is considered by most to be a mild-mannered accountant and something of a fop. In reality, he is an active supporter of the Invisible College. Or at least he was.

Diego was born in what is now occupied Castille, raised by the renowned swordsman, Alejandro de Zepeda and his wife, Anita de Torres, a poetess of some acclaim. As a child, he desired nothing more than to learn the secrets of science. To his frustration, his father would not hear of it and demanded that the boy become his apprentice instead. After much begging, Diego changed tactics. He made a



Diego Torres de Zepeda del Castillo

wager that, if he could ever best his father in a duel, he could attend the university. Laughingly, his father agreed.

From that time forward, Diego was the devoted servant of two masters. By day, he practiced his forms with the blade. At night, in flickering candlelight, he poured over the works of Daylen and Cook. This was his constant habit for four years and, on the morning of his 15th birthday, the young Castillian walked into the yard and challenged his father to a duel. It was a tremendous struggle but, in the end, Diego triumphed.

Proud and good to his word, the elder swordsman sent his son to Aldana. While at the university, Diego progressed by leaps and bounds in his studies, making new insights into the fields of chemistry and applied mechanics. Not one to retreat from a challenge, he made friends and enemies quickly, settling arguments in duels or the lecture halls with equal grace.

It was here that he met Mariana de Aldana, a young woman who proved his academic equal in every way. Diego was instantly smitten, but Mariana felt the occasionally uncouth lad was socially beneath her. However, with the same determination that helped him outduel his father, Diego memorized every nuance of proper etiquette. In no time, he swept his true love off her feet and married her in a large Vaticine ceremony.

The last few years, however, have been incredibly painful for Diego. The outbreak of White Plague took the life of his father and, in her grief, his mother began penning poems about the Church's inability to find a cure. She was arrested a short time later and executed as a heretic.

To make matters worse, stories of his "notorious mother" drew the scrutiny of the Church into Diego's home and work. When they deemed the research that he and Mariana were conducting into chemistry "an affront to Theus," the Inquisition offered them a choice: forsake their sinful ways or be purified by fire. Mariana had just become pregnant and, putting the life of their unborn child above all else, the couple publicly renounced their devotion to experimental science.

The ordeal has seemingly crushed his spirit. Diego now works as a bookkeeper, but his love for science still secretly burns inside him. Whenever he can, he funnels money from his wealthier clients and donates it to the Invisible College, always happy to help but longing to do more.

Diego appears as an overly-dressed Castillian with uncharacteristically short hair and a pair of elaborate spectacles on his face. The emotional injuries inflicted upon him have taken their toll; his face has a haggard look beneath his finery and his eyes look glazed and dead. Only when the topic of the College comes up does his countenance change: his face lights up and he speaks with breathless excitement.



Arciniega and His Followers

Alvara Arciniega

More information on Arciniega can be found in the Castille sourcebook, pages 81–82 and 114–115.

Alvara has belonged to the Invisible College for over twenty-five years and made his mark on the scientific community long before then. His academic studies stood at the forefront of Théan learning, and the foundation of Arciniega University (see *Castille*, pages 42–43) ensured him a permanent place among Théah's most renowned scholars. Even his fixation on alchemy and Blood Science couldn't erase his achievements, though some of his colleagues laughed at his wild theories.

Since his admission into the Invisible College, he has proven his worth time and again. His growing fame has earned the organization countless grants, and his political advice became as invaluable as his scientific discoveries. It was he who first supported Ravenild Hibbot's application to the Fraternity, and he who laid the groundwork for the College's current structure. He also had extensive contacts among Théah's nobility, which ensured a steady supply of money, and training as a swordsman, which few in the College wished to test.

Arciniega realized before any of his colleagues that the Inquisition might pose a serious threat to academic learning. Most of Théah pointed to the Vaticine's hallowed history of knowledge, and never believed that a small band of fanatics could stop it. Arciniega knew better and when Jeremy Cook died, he managed to convince the College to prepare for the worst. He used his contacts among the Vendel and Vodacce to establish several remote safe houses, and coaxed his colleagues towards a more defensive state of mind. When the Hierophant died and Verdugo's soldiers ran rampant, the College was ready. Most of the Masters disappeared before the Inquisition found them, and through the Chain of Knowledge, they have kept in contact ever since.

Unfortunately, Arciniega himself paid the price for his foresight. His growing fame ensured that he topped the list of the Inquisition's targets. A small band of Knight Inquisitors reached him before he could expedite his escape, and he was forced to kill them before fleeing in the night. He is now one of the most wanted men in Théah, and lives a life of permanent exile. He seems to be coping well, however. He relishes his increased fame as a "gentleman fugitive" and the anonymity has allowed him to pursue the Fifth Mystery (and other "unwholesome" sciences) away from the prying eyes of his colleagues. Thanks to the College, his findings continue to reach the public, and he considers exile a small price to pay for the cause of science.

Alvara is tall, over six feet, with long, dextrous fingers and a sallow complexion. He shaves his hair short to hide the gray creeping in and wears a long, flowing wig when not



Alvara Arciniega

experimenting. His dark eyes smolder behind his pince-nez and he speaks with deliberate care. Since his run-in with the Inquisition, he's carried a dueling sword with him at all times. During his few public appearances, he complements it with a brace of loaded pistols.

Duc Auguste Danceny du Rosemonde

A bitter and hateful old man, the Duc du Rosemonde cannot recall a time in his life when he was truly happy or satisfied. His family's wealth failed to bring him a childhood of merriment. His career as a Musketeer did not bring him fame. His talent with *Porté* never developed beyond the

abilities of an apprentice. Only two things ever held his dour interest for long: politics and the legends surrounding alchemy.

Auguste proved to be a natural player in the Montaigne court. His keen eye, sharp tongue, and rabid intolerance of foreigners grew to almost mythic proportions, but his icy mien would not allow him to take pleasure from his status.

His constant studies of alchemy kept him from enjoying his sister's parties, his pretty young wife's attention, or the bliss of raising his daughter. It was only when the girl eloped with a minor Vodacce noble that Auguste showed any interest, and then only because a foreigner had taken something that belonged to him.

The Duc sent Swordsmen across Théah to retrieve his wayward child, only to discover that she had died giving birth to his granddaughter. The loss hit Auguste surprisingly hard, and he swore to raise the infant, Gabrielle, to the best of his abilities.

He doted upon her with every means at his disposal, hiring and firing nannies and tutors with alarming frequency and purchasing anything the child's heart desired. When she grew spoiled from his excesses, the Duc sent her away to a proper finishing school. Angrily, he lost himself again in his studies.

This time, his alchemical inquiries brought him into the orbit of Alvara Arciniega, who was looking for someone to help finance a secret project on the alchemical uses of sorcerous blood. Even though Auguste distrusted the man because of his nationality, he was intrigued with the notion of increasing his own lackluster *Porté* ability. At first, he contributed only the most meager funds. Later, he donated some of his own blood. Finally, he began imbibing Arciniega's potions... and became addicted.

The Duc is now convinced that he can at last achieve happiness and satisfaction in his life. The potions are his key to the perfection that has always eluded him. Without realizing it, he has become Arciniega's slave and will do anything to make sure he continues to reap the rewards of the Castillian scholar's work.



Duc Auguste Danceney du Rosemonde

The Duc is a sour old man with little to live for beyond his alchemical potions. He wears rich clothes on the cutting edge of Montaigne fashion, but his face is pressed into permanent frown lines and he peers down his long nose with disdain at the rest of the world. He has taken to travelling with a bodyguard and often conveys his wishes to other people through him. The less he interacts with the rest of the world, the happier he seems.

Skyla Koenraad

Skyla comes from a family of five sons and three daughters. Because of their large number, the economic prosperity

enjoyed by the rest of Vendel eluded her household completely. As the oldest child, her parents expected her to provide a source of income. So, with the dream of apprenticing to the Actor's Guild, Skyla packed her few possessions and journeyed to Kirk.

Life in the city was far less romantic than she had imagined. While luxuries of all kinds were available to tourists and those with money, Skyla found herself always on the outside looking in. At last, she secured an appointment before the Actor's Guild and read a sonnet to display her performance ability. To her anguish, the Guild directors did not even let her finish, laughing the poor country girl off the stage.

When it was over, an older woman confronted her and told her that, while she might be beautiful enough to be an actress, she had no talent and would find better employment at the Jenny's Guild.

That's exactly what she did.

Uncomfortable at first, Skyla quickly came to enjoy her work, especially the influence she had over her customers. In a peculiar way, she felt liberated, and was pleased to be able to send so much money home to her family. Of course, she could not bring herself to tell them her true profession, and let them believe that she had indeed become an actress. Things continued to go well until a Montaigne noble and three of his friends assaulted her. The experience traumatized her to the core and she felt she would never be able to recover. That is when Alvara Arciniega walked into her life.

He took her into his care, nursing her back to physical and emotional health. He then offered her a job that promised to let her get back at those that had done her harm. Without hesitation, she accepted.

For the next three years, Skyla trained with the fury of a woman possessed. She learned how to move silently, climb walls, and physically overpower a man twice her size. She developed the acting ability she always knew was inside and mastered the art of disguise. She learned all about anatomy, the heart, and circulation. When Arciniega was finished, he had trained the perfect Harvester.

Skyla now gathers sorcerous blood for Arciniega's experiments. Her typical *modus operandi* is to use her seductive skills to lure an unsuspecting target back to her room at some secluded inn. That is the last thing the noble remembers of the night's activities. Upon awakening, the victim feels a little weak and disoriented, which he usually dismisses having too much fun the night before. She has honed her abilities to an art form, and considers her blood theft the highest form of seduction. Of course, the money that Arciniega provides doesn't hurt either. She now has enough to keep her family comfortable forever, and still maintains the posh lifestyle she coveted for so long.



Skyla Koenraad

Skyla is a beautiful blonde woman with an enticing come-hither smile and fierce predator's eyes. Years of living in Kirk have not dulled the farmgirl's apples from her cheeks and she dresses in the finest fashions she can procure. As a Jenny she has few peers, and as a Harvester, she sets the standard. She still considers herself something of an actress and has become quite adept at mimicking foreign accents. She invents new "roles" to play every time she takes another client.

Devoren Rivinova

Devoren Rivinova was born in a small village along the northern shores of Ussura. Her people lived predominantly off of the land, and she was trained as a child to hunt, fish, and trap for food and clothing. But while she lived from the land, she also learned to respect it. "Matushka is a fickle provider," her father used to tell her, "and will quickly turn on those who take too much."

This statement remained with Devoren for many years before she considered it again, though she was always careful to mind her father's warning. While hunting, she never took more than she and her family required, and their shelters were never larger than necessary. The wilderness became a part of her, the strength of the land coursing through her veins and guiding her at every turn.

But then, one day, the land changed. The forest grew dark and brittle, the waters became warm and bloody, and the skies roiled and danced with angry storms. The creatures in the area began to die, and Devoren's village began to die with them. With nothing to eat and no way to protect themselves from the elements, the old and feeble quickly perished, leaving the young and healthy to fend for themselves.

"Matushka!" Devoren screamed to the heavens. "Why have you forsaken us?"

But there was no answer. Devoren and her dwindling village were alone in the wild, without friend or faith. Some of her closest friends gave up, abandoning their homes for the safety of life across the seas or beyond the mighty rivers to

the south. But Devoren refused to flee, and stood her ground, prepared to face the worst wrath of the elements, no matter what they brought.

Three months later, a cadre of Explorers found her struggling through the bog that was once her home. Her mind had been unhinged, and she had reverted to a primitive state, more animal than human. But it was obvious that she was the only one who might know what happened to the area. They transported her to Carleon, where the Explorers hoped to find a way through her hysteria.

Early efforts to communicate with Devoren met with only marginal success. No one seemed able to catch her attention unless they carried food, in which case she attacked them without mercy. Just when the Explorers were about to give up, a breakthrough was made. Alvara Arciniega, who had been consulted concerning the odd weather patterns and strange animal deaths in the area, approached the “primitive”, seemingly out of curiosity, and spoke to her.

She did not respond immediately, but eventually, she cast a pleading glance toward the scholar. A simple gesture, but it was enough. The young Ussuran fascinated Arciniega, and he asked to spend more time with her, in the hopes that he might bring her back out of her withdrawal. He worked with her for months, engaging her in simple exchanges that slowly grew into conversations. Arciniega claimed that his interest in Devoren was purely scientific – that she was a fascinating case study – but many who watched them as they talked saw something strange, as if he was appraising her somehow.

Over the course of the next ten years, Devoren slowly returned to the world. With Arciniega’s help, she came to realize that she had not caused Matushka’s anger, though she also realized that she had been its victim. This changed Devoren. She became quietly resentful of her homeland, and – by extension – all of nature.

Today, Devoren’s only loyalty is to Arciniega. Through him, she eventually joined the Invisible College, though not in any scholarly capacity. Instead, her talents as a tracker and hunter have been directed at acquiring things that the



Devoren Rivinova

College needs (especially obscure items, such as rare animal parts, physical elements, and the like).

Devoren Rivinova is thin and lithe, and looks oddly out of place wearing the clothes of civilization. Her eyes usually burn with feral fury, and her muscles are rarely relaxed, like an animal ready to pounce at any moment. It is obvious that Devoren is a dangerous woman, as explosive as she is brooding. She wears her long, wavy black hair bunched up and coiled beneath a fancy hat when she is in town, though she lets it down in the wild. Devoren’s favorite weapon is the dirk, though Arciniega is training her to use a proper woman’s rapier as well.





Experimentation

Introduction

This section contains new rules intended for the Invisible College. It includes new Advantages, Skills and Backgrounds, a new Swordsman School, invention rules, and details on the Invisible College's resources. It also includes extensive rules on Blood Science, as well as the unique dangers which that particular form of study entails.

Joining The Invisible College

Belonging to the Invisible College is a 5-point Advantage, which may be purchased at the beginning of Hero creation (see page 136 of the *Players' Guide*). If a player wishes to join later in the campaign, he should consult his GM. The College has a more public face than most secret societies, so Heroes may be able to locate and approach existing members with a desire to enlist. The GM should decide the particulars of such a meeting (perhaps expanding it into an entire adventure) and the conditions for joining. The College will probably require a test of loyalty as well as a basic knowledge of scientific principles (though uneducated Heroes can serve as bodyguards, messengers, or spies). Given the society's loose organization, little more is needed as long as the College trusts the Hero not to betray it to the Inquisition. As always, the GM has the final say.

Everyone belonging to the Invisible College receives the following benefits:

- College members receive an annual stipend of 10-100 guilders each year (from noble patrons and whatever funds the College scrapes up). Roll a die and multiply the result by 10 to determine the exact amount. These funds are intended to be used for scientific research or other society-

related purposes, but there's no way to be sure. Heroes are on their honor to use the funds properly.

- College members know two other members of the society (not including fellow party members). They may know them only by pseudonym, and they may never have seen their faces, but such colleagues can provide advice and assistance when necessary. They are considered 1-point Connection Advantages due to their lengthy distance, but players may spend extra Hero Points to make the Connections closer if they wish. (See page 131 of the *Players' Guide* for more information.) Keep in mind that these contacts represent only full-fledged members of the College. They do not include students, assistants, messengers, or other incidental links in the Chain of Knowledge.

- All College members understand the concepts behind the Math Code and the Music Code, and can spot examples of it when they see it. Actually translating the code requires Mathematics or Music Knack (depending on the code) of 2, as well as a knowledge of the sender's particular permutation. See page 44–45 for more details on the codes.

- Due to their advanced understanding of science, all Invisible College members treat the Astronomy and Natural Philosophy Knacks as Basic Knacks rather than Advanced. This condition only applies to Knacks under the Scholar Skill.

Special Training

It is possible under certain circumstances to reach Rank 6 in certain Knacks. First, the Hero must have a Rank 5 in the Knack to begin with. Then he must find a fellow Invisible College member sufficiently knowledgeable to instruct him and convince him or her to pass on what they know. Instruction costs 25 XP and can take anywhere from one month to one year, depending on the circumstances (the GM has the final word). If these conditions are met, the

Hero's Rank increases to 6. Keep in mind that the Hero is unable to teach a Rank 6 Knack to others; it simply means that he has it himself. Normally, only NPCs and retired Heroes have a Rank this high.

Three members of the Invisible College have attained Rank 6 in a Knack, and can teach what they know to others:

Mathematics: Reimar Derviny, Vestenmannavnjar

Research: Ravenild Hibbot, Avalon

Natural Philosophy: Alvara Arciniega, Castille

The Bonita Swordsman School

Country of Origin: Castille. Any Invisible College member may pay 25 points for the Bonita School, or 20 points if the character already knows the Gallegos School. Only members of the Invisible College may learn this school.

Description: The Bonita style teaches its students to hold their ground against multiple opponents, waiting for a chance to escape. It was created to allow a student to keep the attacking Inquisitors at bay while his assistants gather up his journals, allowing his work to escape with him. It is an almost totally defensive school of fencing, relying on repetitiously practiced parries for defense and a swift pair of feet for escaping. Students of this style know when to hold ground, and when to run. They keep a careful eye on the terrain, and try to fight on constricted ground whenever possible so as to bottleneck their opponents. The school exists to buy time for one's colleagues while minimizing the risk to oneself.

The weakness of this school is its relative lack of offense, and the constant movement of the parrying rapier. A person who knows its weakness can detect the rhythm of the parries and find ways to exploit it without fearing a counterattack.

Students of the Bonita School do not automatically gain membership in the Swordsman's Guild. Instead, they gain an extra Rank in one of their Swordsman Knacks for free.

Basic Curriculum: Athlete, Fencing

Swordsman Knacks: Bind (Fencing), Disarm (Fencing), Wall of Steel (Fencing), Exploit Weakness (Bonita)

Apprentice: Apprentices of the Bonita School have learned to play a waiting game, watching for attacks and opportunities to escape. You receive one Free Raise when Parrying with a Fencing Weapon. In addition, when you Hold an Action, increase the Phase showing on that Action Die by 1 at the end of the Phase. Thus, if you roll a 5 for Initiative and Hold that Action in Phase 5, the die is considered to be a 6 at the end of Phase 5. This makes you more likely to go first in the later Phases, allowing you to escape when your opponent is low on Actions.

Journeyman: The Journeyman has practiced escaping from pursuers, and knows how to mentally prepare for a chase before it happens. You start with an extra Raise at the start of any Chase. In addition, you may add your Wall of Steel Knack Rank to any Active Defense attempts you make with Parry (Fencing).

Master: Masters of the Bonita School are seldom caught in a situation where they cannot defend themselves. When out of Actions, you may spend one Drama Die to perform an Active Defense. In addition, you gain 1 Free Rank of Parry (Fencing), which may increase it to a 6. If it does not, the character may later increase from Rank 5 to Rank 6 by spending 25 XP.

New Swordsman Knack

Wall of Steel: Your sword is an ever-moving blocking device, flitting from parry to parry. You use it like a tortoise uses its shell. If you have not attacked yet this Round, then each Rank of this Knack raises your TN to be hit by 2 if you use Parry (Fencing) to determine your Passive Defense.

New Skill

Professor

Professors are academics who have decided to spread their knowledge to the best and the brightest students in Théah. Rather than spending their lives locked in laboratories or libraries, they dedicate their time to instructing classrooms full of eager young scholars. They write textbooks, give lectures, and see to it that their courses receive adequate financial support.

Basic Knacks

Oratory: Sweet words of praise flow as easily from your lips as whispered words of poison. Oratory allows you to persuade your listeners more easily of any argument.

Research: What is unknown can prove to be the most valuable part of any endeavor, and you know how to ferret out vital information. You have studied the ways that knowledge is gained – where to look and who to ask.

Writing: Your quill flies across the page with the gift of prose, setting down words that can entertain the reader, outrage the nobility, or call the people to arms. Your words can make beggars into kings or topple the most entrenched tyrants. This Knack encompasses poetry, plays, and other written works.

Advanced Knacks

Law: Laws differ from country to country, sometimes from day to day as well. Even the most clearly written can be twisted against you unless you understand them. With this Knack, not only are the current laws of a country known to you, but you also know how to manipulate them to your favor in order to extricate yourself from sticky situations.

Mooch: With a combination of entertaining conversation, hollow promises, and sheer audacity, you can convince others to provide for your needs. Care must be taken not to

do this in one place too long, however, as even the most flattering guest must eventually wear out his welcome.

Natural Philosophy: Natural philosophy is the study of both chemistry and physics. You have an understanding of the (mostly) immutable laws that govern the physical world such as gravity and inertia, and you may be able to make things such as weak acid or steel, if you can just remember the formulas.

Occult: With the occult, there is precious little hard knowledge to be learned. You have acquired some of it and know how to use it, be it a trivial fact about a certain brand of sorcery or the solution to an ancient puzzle.

Politics: Politics is power, and the truly clever courtier understands this. You can sense the ebb and flow of a noble's influence and determine whose coattails represent the quickest ride to the top.

Theology: Divine will is a difficult subject – everyone feels that he's right. You, however, have studied all the faiths dispassionately, looking for correlations and unseen connections, regardless of your own beliefs. You know who they all pray to, how they worship, and how their daily lives have changed because of it.

Tinker: See below. Tinker is also considered an Advanced Merchant Knack.

New Knack: Tinker (Advanced)

This Knack indicates a practical knowledge of repairing or constructing mechanical objects. It can be used to fix or improve small items such as clocks or musical boxes, as well as constructing new objects from abstract designs.

At the GM's discretion, previously created Heroes with either the Mathematics or Natural Philosophy Knacks may be granted a Tinker Knack at rank equal to their highest ranking in Mathematics or Natural Philosophy. The Hero should have a proclivity to tinkering activities and the GM may adjust the rank up or down if he or she sees fit.

New Backgrounds

Contentious Theory

You have seen a deep secret of Theus's puzzle, a hint of things for which man has not yet found the words. You gathered your thoughts, researched your insight, put words to paper to describe this powerful vision of the Truth. Then you published. Obviously other souls, even other members of the College, weren't ready for the Truth yet. They mocked your efforts, scorned your sources, and debated fine points of semantics until no one could hope to understand what you had discovered. But you'll show them. You'll show them all! The more points spent on this Background, the more widely distributed your work or the more bitter the opposition. It is up to you and the GM to decide whether your position is in fact the correct one. Staunchly defending a false or poorly conceived position has as many dramatic opportunities as championing a new truth. You must have the Published Advantage to take this Background.

Invention (Invisible College Only)

A few years ago, people who invented marvelous or useful things were praised and rewarded for it. These days, the exact opposite seems to be the case. You have created such an invention, and are now living with the consequences of it. You are faced with a dilemma: should you make it available to the public and risk being hunted down by the Inquisition, or keep it hidden, despite the good it could bring about? The more points you spend on this Background, the more important your invention could be to society, and the greater the threat from the Inquisition.

The player should come up with an appropriate invention, create one using the rules on pages 85–88, or select one from the available list on pages 89–94.



New Advantages

Alchemist (10 Points)

Much like Faith, true alchemy relies on the utter conviction that it actually works. For this reason nearly all dabblers in the art meet with nothing but failure. With the systematic debunking of alchemy by some of the Invisible College's greatest minds, the practice of true alchemy has become even more rare.

The devout practice of alchemy revolves around the transformation of the spirit, a technique first developed through the transformation of base matter. The true alchemist realizes that turning lead into gold and other myths ascribed to alchemy may not even be possible, but that such transformations aren't actually the point. By transforming his surroundings, the alchemist hopes that he too will be transformed.

Characters with the Alchemist Advantage may eventually achieve a true transformation in themselves. Choose one Trait at character generation. The maximum limit of this Trait is increased by 1, to a maximum of 6. In addition, alchemy forms the basis of Alvara Arciniega's "bastard science," Blood Science. The Alchemist Advantage is required to successfully perform extractions and prepare viable Blood Science formulas. The details of Blood Science are discussed on pages 94–97. More traditional aspects of alchemy are described in the *Rose and Cross* sourcebook and will be further explored in later supplements.

Age and Wisdom (1 or 2 Points)

The character is older than most starting characters (who are generally assumed to be between 16 and 25). For 1 HP, the character is Middle-Aged (see Aging, *GMs' Guide*, page 167) and is affected by the penalties and the bonuses listed there. For 2 HPs, the character is Old (*GM's Guide*, page 167), and receives the bonuses and penalties listed for it. In addition to these effects, the character gains one Free Raise

per Hero Point spent (1 or 2) for all rolls involving the following Knacks: First Aid, Haggling, History, Leadership, Storytelling, and Weather.

Brilliant (3 Points)

This character's mind works in amazing ways. He is constantly making intuitive leaps of logic that allow him to devise new technologies and branches of science. He rolls an extra unkept die when he makes Conception Checks (see the Invention rules, pages 85–88).

Handy (3 Points)

Similar to Brilliant, this character has a natural aptitude towards building things. He instinctively understands how to put things together and can transform an abstract diagram into a practical object with little more than a few tools. This Advantage gives a Free Raise to any Construction Checks the character makes (see the Invention rules, pages 85–88).

Odd Sleeping Habits (1 Point)

This character has grown accustomed to an unusual sleeping pattern. Perhaps he takes five one-hour naps during a 24-hour period rather than sleeping at night, or perhaps he sleeps four hours a night and takes a two-hour nap during the afternoon. In any case, he needs less sleep than the average character to get by, and has additional study time because of it. This character gets a Free Raise to all his rolls involving the Research Knack.

Protégé (2 Points, Invisible College Only)

The Scientist is training a promising young student, in hopes that he too will join the Invisible College. Treat the Protégé as a 50-point Henchman (designed by the GM, or by the player with GM approval). The Hero may teach this student anything he sees fit, for as long as he sees fit, and the

Protégé is expected to assist him in his research and experimentation. The Invisible College will eventually pressure the Hero into allowing the student to graduate and become a full-fledged member in his own right. If a Protégé dies in the service of the Hero, this Advantage is lost until a new Protégée can be found and sponsored.

The Protégé gains XP at the same rate as the Scientist. At any time, the Scientist can declare that his Protégé has graduated and allow him to become a Scientist in his own right. When the Protégé has gained at least 51 XP, the Invisible College will insist that the Scientist allow him to graduate.

Published (1 or 2 Points)

One or more of your theories has been published, increasing your reputation among your colleagues. Those in the right circles recognize your name, and your work receives more attention than it would if it were unpublished. For every point you spend in this Advantage, your Reputation increases by 5 points and you gain a small stipend of 10 guilders, representing sales of your text.

Research Library (1 Point, 3 Points)

The Hero has a private library of books which he can use to assist in his research. Anyone who spends at least one month in the library gains an extra XP (usable only on Civil Knacks) at the end of each Story. Only 1 XP may be earned in this manner, no matter how many libraries the Hero visits. In addition, any member of the Invisible College may use the library to lower the TN of his Conception check by 5, provided he spends at least half of the required time in the library (see “Invention Rules,” pages 85–88 for more). This bonus also applies to Design Checks.

At 1 point, the library is incomplete, or contains erroneous texts. Before the Conception check, the GM makes a secret roll. On a “9” or a “0,” the library *adds* 5 to the TN of a Conception Check, instead of deducting 5.

Secret Laboratory (Varies, Invisible College Only)

The character has a secret laboratory where he independently carries out his research. The size of the laboratory affects the number of experiments that may be performed there, as well as the raw materials that may be stored there for use in chemical experimentation. It also dictates the number of assistants who work there. Assistants can help with experiments as well as provide security to the building. They are considered Threat Rating 2 Brutes, each of whom has 2 Knacks associated with the fields of interest of the laboratory’s scientists. No more than two experiments may be conducted in a given room at a given time. Scientists are qualified academics who work at the laboratory, including any Heroes who have contributed HPs to the laboratory. Any scientists who are not Heroes are considered 75-Point Henchmen (designed by the GM, or by the players with GM approval), and no more than one is a formal member of the Invisible College. The others are students or qualified assistants who have not yet been inducted into the Secret Society. Obviously, the larger the laboratory is, the more experiments it can perform, and the more funding it can generate from interested patrons.

In addition to the benefits below, the Secret Laboratory gives a Free Raise to all Design Checks performed within its confines (see the Invention Rules, pages 85–88, for more).

1 Point: Small

- 1 Scientist (the Hero)
- 1 Room
- 2 Assistants
- 150 Guilders per year

3 Points: Medium

- 2 Scientists (the Hero and one Henchman)
- 3 Rooms
- 4 Assistants
- 400 Guilders per year

5 Points: Large

3 Scientists (the Hero and two Henchmen)
6 Rooms
12 Assistants
1,000 Guilders per year

Contact (2 Points)

One of the laboratory's scientists has a connection with the local Vaticine Church, who can warn him or her of any Inquisition activities. Treat this as a "Confidant" connection, as detailed on page 131 of the *Players' Guide*. It is available to every member of the laboratory, though there is only so much the contact can do. The Inquisition hangs collaborators just as quickly as it hangs scientists.

Secret Entrance (3 Points)

The laboratory can only be accessed from below ground, behind a storefront, or even through a secret door. Only the scientists and assistants involved with the lab know where it is and how to access it. They may also use it to escape if the

lab is compromised. In terms of the Chase Rules (see pages 169–172 of the *GMs' Guide*), it give lab members an additional 4 Phase advantage over any pursuers.

Secret Compartment (2 Points)

The laboratory has a hidden niche, strongbox, or safe which can store important papers or small inventions. Only the scientists and assistants involved with the lab know where the compartment is, or how to access it. All others must make an active search (taking at least 15 minutes) and a simple Wits check at TN 25 to find it. Actually opening the compartment without the proper key requires a Finesse + Lockpicking Check at TN 20.

Secure Building (5 Points)

The laboratory is in a strong, solid structure, with stone walls and stout locks on the doors. All Climbing and Lockpicking rolls made in relation to the building add +10 to their TN.



Spark of Genius (2 Points)

The character has an intuitive understanding of one academic field. He is able to solve difficult problems related to that field without the use of scratch paper or referring to his notes.

Pick one of the following Knacks: Accounting, Astronomy, Cartography, Composer, Cryptography, Drawing, History, Law, Logistics, Mathematics, Musician, Natural Philosophy, Occult, Philosophy, Sculpting, Singing, Strategy, Tactics, Theology, or Writing. Whenever you make a roll based on this Knack, you get a Free Raise.

Tenure (2 Points)

The character has a permanent position at one of Théah's universities. He draws a regular income, even when on sabbatical. The income is 15 guilders per month and the player should determine which university his Hero belongs to. (Strong candidates include La Ciencia University in Castille, Dionna University in Vodacce, *Le Grande Université* in Montaigne, Bedegrane University in Avalon, and the University of Kirk in Vendel.)

Invention Rules

The following rules allow Collegians (or any scientist, for that matter) to construct new gadgets and inventions. Many such inventions correspond to actual innovations in our own world: calculus, for example, or the lightning rod. Others have no real-life associations and spring solely from the Théan imagination: a rotating cannon or a flying machine.

There are three steps to the process of invention in *7th Sea*: Conception, Design, and Construction. Conception involves the inventor imagining a device or theorem and defining how he wants it to work. Design occurs when the inventor attempts to translate his vague idea into a more solid concept, such as a blueprint for a device or a write-up of a

theorem. Finally, Construction happens when the inventor attempts to create a working model of a device he's designed. Theorems do not need to be constructed.

Step 1: Conception

To begin, the player should write up a brief description of the invention or theorem his Hero wants to invent, including a suggestion for how it should work in *7th Sea* game terms. The GM will then calculate a TN based on the modifiers on the Conception Table, below. This process takes no game time to accomplish.

Once the GM determines the TN for the Conception check, the Hero spends 1 Drama die and rolls his Wits against the TN, adding any bonuses he receives for Conception checks. If the check fails, the Drama die is wasted. If the check succeeds, then the Hero can now proceed to the Design stage, below.

Leaps of Logic

The GM may rule that inventing an object without first designing important intermediary steps in its development (such as inventing artillery without first inventing calculus, or inventing rubber tires without first inventing galvanized rubber) requires a Leap of Logic. This makes the task significantly harder (as shown on the Conception, Design, and Construction Tables below) and also requires the expenditure an additional Drama die during the Conception check. The GM may assign one Leap of Logic for each step he feels is being skipped in the invention's creation, incurring the penalty for each.

Conception Table

The Base TN for any Conception check is always 5.

Add to this:

- +1 for every year in the future a similar invention or theorem was invented in our own timeline. Thus, inventing the weather barometer (1672 in our timeline) would have a modifier here of +4, while the atomic bomb (1945) would have a modifier of +277.
- +10 for each Leap of Logic assigned by the GM.

- -2 for each assistant (up to your Wits) helping you whose Wits is at least as high as your own.
- +10 if the GM rules that the invention or theorem was truly pivotal to the development of the modern world (such as calculus, or the printing press).

The invention is automatically impossible if:

- It can't be built even with today's technology.
- It requires a material currently unavailable to the Hero (such as rubber or electrical power).

The GM can automatically disallow any invention which he feels unbalances the game, or which he believes cannot be realistically created.

Example 1: The Blood Transfusion (1677)

The blood transfusion was invented just 9 years in the future in our own timeline, which increases the TN to 14. The GM rules that the Théans know enough about medicine to deduce that blood transfusion is possible and to figure out a way to do it (indeed, Ravenild Hibbot has already made several advances in the theory), so no Leaps of Logic are necessary. However, the GM rules that blood transfusions were significantly pivotal to the development of the modern world, raising the TN to 24, with the Hero having to spend 1 Drama die each time he attempts the Conception check.

Example 2: The Lightning Rod (1752)

A bit leery of why his players want to invent the lightning rod, the GM decides to not only impose the +84 modifier for inventing it 84 years ahead of time, but also to assign 2 Leaps of Logic: one for not understanding the nature of lightning, and the other for not understanding how electrical conductivity works. This brings the TN to a grand total of 109, with the Hero having to spend 3 Drama dice each time he attempts this Conception check.

Step 2: Design

Now that the Hero has come up with an idea of what he wants to invent, he must have the skills to make it a reality. The GM now decides which Knack is most important to the invention's design, referred to as the Primary Knack. The

GM then determines what modifiers apply by looking at the Design Table, below. Once he determines the TN, the GM makes a Wits + Primary Knack roll for the Hero in secret, and makes a note of the TN minus the result (referred to hereafter as the Design Roll). Do not tell the Hero whether he succeeded or not. He won't know until he attempts to build a working model (or until another theorist disproves his theorem). This process takes a number of weeks to complete equal to the TN divided by 5.

Design Table

The Base TN for any Design check is always 5.

Add to this:

•Size Modifier (Invention only):

+20 Small (Handheld or less)

+10 Medium (Man-sized to two-handed)

+5 Large (Wagon-sized to horse-sized)

+10 Enormous (Up to room-sized)

•Complexity Modifier:

+20 Very Complicated (Difference engine, water clock, chronometer, theory of relativity, Fermet's last theorem, etc.)

+10 Complicated (Wind-up toy, multi-barreled firearm, Newton's laws of motion, etc.)

+5 Uncomplicated (carriage springs, bifocals, etc.)

-5 for each hard-to-get or expensive material (silver, gold, etc.) used in the construction (Invention only.)

-10 for each incredibly rare material (dracheneisen, etc.) used in the construction (Invention only.)

-2 for each assistant (up to your Wits) helping you whose Primary Knack is at least as high as your own.

+15 for each Leap of Logic assigned by the GM.

Example 1: The Blood Transfusion

Having come up with the idea of the blood transfusion, it's actually fairly easy for a good doctor to figure out how to perform one. He still has the problem of blood types ahead

of him, but designing a simple device for extracting and infusing blood is a matter of applying existing principles of medicine. The Hero decides that the device is somewhat bulky (Medium), and the GM assigns a Common Sense Complexity to it, for a total TN of 20. The GM also rules that the Primary Knack will be Surgery, the closest related Knack in the game. Since the TN is low, and the Hero's Wits and Surgery are both high, the player decides not to use any exotic materials in the construction in order to keep costs down. Rolling, the GM gets a result of 35 and writes down -15 as the Design Roll for later. He tells the Hero that it took him 4 weeks (20 divided 5) to come up with a passable working design.

Example 2: The Lightning Rod

Persistence and luck (not to mention plenty of Drama dice) have paid off, and the Hero actually hit his TN of 109. Now he has to design the lightning rod. The GM rules that the rod is Large, and has an Uncomplicated Complexity, for a total of 15. However, the GM assigned it 2 Leaps of Logic in the Conception stage, bringing the TN to a total of 45. The GM rules that the Natural Philosophy Knack is the most appropriate and makes the roll. He gets a 34, 11 less than the Hero needed to successfully design the rod. However, he does not inform the Hero of this. He simply says that the Hero has taken 9 weeks (45/5) to come up with a passable working design and writes down +11 as the Design Roll. The flaw in the design will become apparent when the rod is finally built.



Step 3: Construction

Finally, if the Hero actually wants to build a working model of his invention, the GM must determine how many Primary Components he wants the Hero to build. For instance, a gun might require three: a barrel, a trigger mechanism, and a cocking mechanism. Each Primary Component must be built separately; the GM determines the TN for each using the Construction Chart, below, assigning an appropriate Knack, and rolling Wits + Knack secretly for each. If any roll fails, the GM should also make a note of it.

The cost of each Component is set by the GM, but should average around (TN x 1G) if the Hero makes it himself or has a friend build it, or (TN x 2G) if the Hero contracts the work to someone else. Obviously, simpler or more exotic items should cost less or more to construct, respectively. It takes number of weeks equal to the TN divided by 10 to build each Component, but they can be constructed simultaneously by different people.

Should one of the Construction checks fail, the resulting device is flawed in some way. When the Hero first uses it, the GM may opt to have it malfunction — refusing to work, breaking into pieces, or possibly destroying itself, its user, and even the surrounding area, depending on how dangerous it is. If an invention is destroyed, the Hero must try building it again: gathering the materials and rolling Wits + appropriate Knack as before. Generous GM may allow a Free Raise or two to reflect what the Hero has learned from the initial failure.

Construction Table

The Base TN to construct any Primary Component is always 5. The TN cannot be reduced below 5.

Add to this:

• Size Modifier (Invention only):

+20 Small (Handheld or less)

+10 Medium (Man-sized to two-handed)

+5 Large (Wagon-sized to horse-sized)

+10 Enormous (Up to room-sized)

• **Delicacy Modifier:**

- +20 Very Delicate (A clock spring, a lens, etc.)
- +10 Delicate (A gun barrel, a finely carved wood piece, etc.)
- +5 Forgiving (steel bar, metal frame, etc.)

- +20 for each Leap of Logic assigned by the GM.
- 2 for each assistant (up to your Wits) helping the Builder whose Knack is at least as high as theirs.
- 10 if the device is a modification of an already existing device

The Design Roll

Example 1: The Blood Transfusion

The GM decides that there's really only one Primary Component to the blood transfusion device: a pump that collects blood from one person and puts it into another. He decides that the most appropriate Knack for the pump is Glassblower, and that the pump is a Forgiving, Medium Component for a TN of 20. Then, taking into account the -15 Design Roll, it drops to a 5. Normally, it would go down by another -10 since the pump is a modification of an existing device, but the TN can't be lowered below 5. This roll is easily made, and the device works as planned, having cost 15G (the GM increased the price since it was using glass) and 1 week of the designer's time to build.

Example 2: The Lightning Rod

Here too, the GM states that only one Primary Component is needed, a long metal rod. He decides that it is a Large, Forgiving Component, bringing the TN to 15. However, the 2 Leaps of Logic once again complicate the procedure, raising it to 55. Lastly, although the rod is a modification of an existing device, the Design roll is +11, neatly cancelling that bonus and adding 1 more on top of that, for a final TN of 56. The GM rolls Wits + Blacksmith for the Hero, and gets a 37, nowhere near high enough. Thus, the Hero has spent 5 weeks and 20G (the GM lowered the price since it's just an iron rod) to build a lightning rod that will certainly attract lightning, but will most likely to channel it directly into the house it's attached to rather than grounding it out.

Modifying Existing Inventions

Although it may seem harsh, the process for modifying an existing device or theorem is the same as inventing an entirely new one. The GM and Hero simply go through the process listed above – the GM is just far less likely to impose Leaps of Logic, and the Hero gains the -10 bonus as noted on the Construction table.

Some Inventions/Discoveries and Their Possible Conception TNs

The following is a brief list of scientific innovations, along with the real-time dates when they were produced and the suggested Conception TNs for a 7th Sea Hero to come up with them. Keep in mind that Théan science stands slightly ahead of our own in 1668; the dates listed here are not necessarily the dates when Théah will first see them. These are just suggestions, and GMs should not feel constrained by the numbers.

- Calculus (1669): TN 16 (+10 pivotal)
- Weather Barometer (1672): TN 9
- Tourniquet (1674): TN 21 (+10 pivotal)
- The Speed of Light (1675): TN 22 (+10 pivotal)
- Pressure Cooker (1680): TN 17
- Croissant (1683): TN 20
- Thimble (1684): TN 21
- Champagne (1688): TN 25
- Steam Engine (1690): TN 47 (+10 pivotal, 1 Leap of Logic)
- Binary Arithmetic (1703): TN 40
- Flintlock Machine-gun (1718): TN 75 (2 Leaps of Logic)
- Ship's Chronometer (1728): TN 75 (+10 pivotal)
- The Flying Shuttle (1733): TN 70

Players and GMs interested in other discoveries of the period are urged to consult *Isaac Asimov's Chronology of Science and Discovery*, a fine reference guide on the course of human advancement.

New Inventions

The Third Mystery of the Invisible College concentrates on transforming abstract concepts into practical scientific designs. The result is a series of often-bizarre but undeniably useful inventions, which the College makes prodigious use of in their battle against the Inquisition. A description of some of the most successful designs can be found below. If a player wishes and the GM allows it, he may have access to one or more of these items. Depending upon the campaign, he may even be the inventor of the device in question, and now uses it to carry on the work of the Invisible College. Details are up to the GM.

Keep in mind that only a few copies of each invention exist. Sometimes, there is only the prototype, pressed into service due to some dire circumstance.

None of these inventions is widely available,

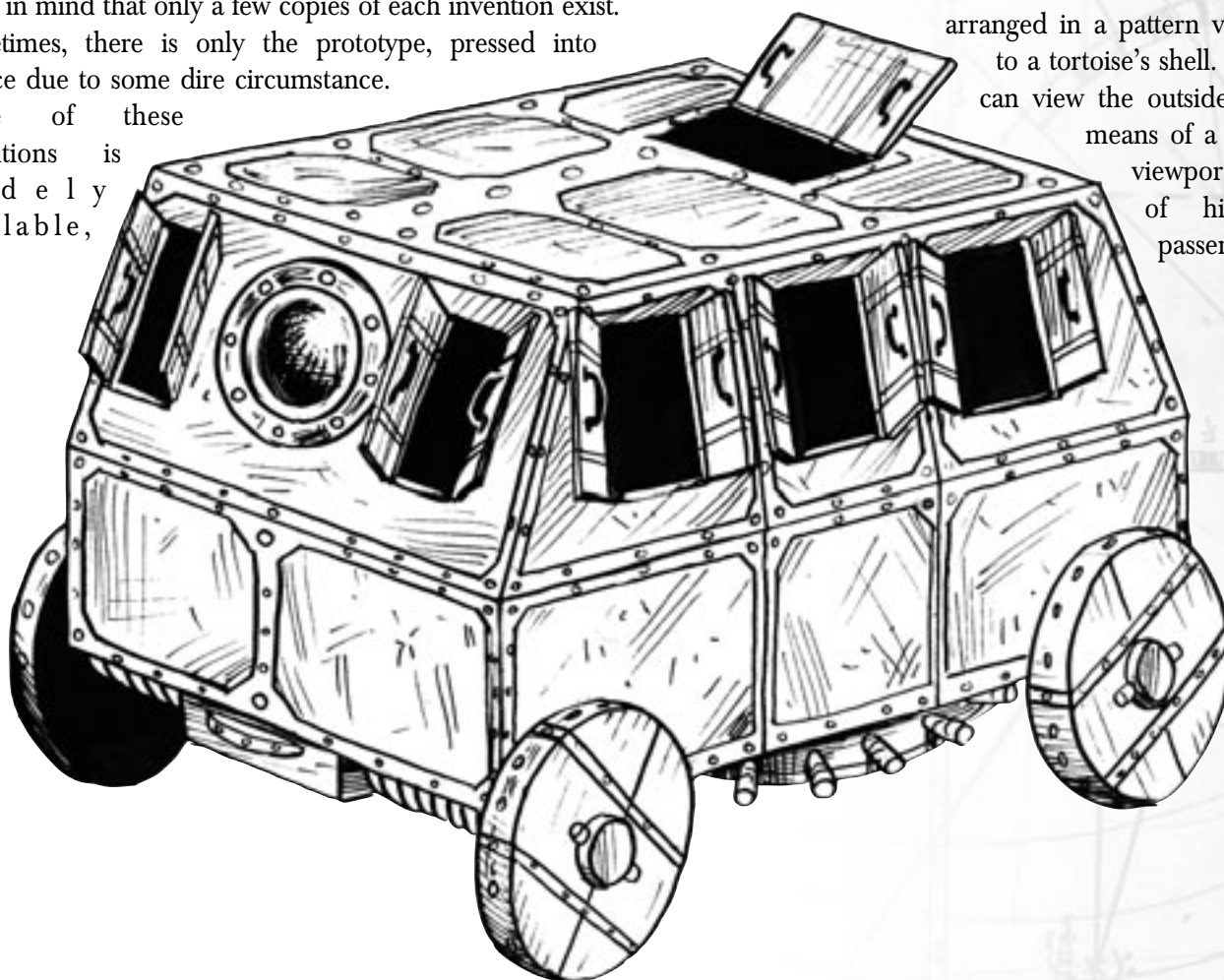
and Heroes may use them only at the GM's discretion. It is recommended that no more than one or two inventions be made available to the party at any given time.

Assault Vehicle

Conception TN: 70 (+10 pivotal, 2 Leaps of Logic)

The assault vehicle is a slow-moving armored shell on four wheels which can transport a driver and two passengers. The wheels are spring-driven and because of a remarkable differential transmission system, may be set to go forward, backward, or stop. The device travels at eight miles per hour on level ground, and its two springs allow it to continue for twenty minutes when fully wound. The

armored shell consists of metal plates arranged in a pattern very similar to a tortoise's shell. The driver can view the outside world by means of a thick glass viewport in front of him. Each passenger has a



firing port from which he could fire a crossbow, pistol, or musket.

Anyone sitting inside this vehicle is considered to have +15 to the TN to hit them and all attacks that do hit them keep one less die of damage. The TN to hit the vehicle itself is 5; for purposes of taking damage, it is considered a Henchman with 7 Ranks of Brawn and Resolve. The passengers themselves can wind the springs while the vehicle is in motion. It takes 20 Actions to completely wind a spring. Driving the vehicle requires the Drive Carriage Knack, with all TNs increased by 5.

Automatic Cooking Spit

Conception TN: 15

This device rotates food over a fire without requiring a person to turn it. Several fins are placed along the ends of the spit, designed to catch convection currents of hot air rising from the fire. The hotter the blaze, the more quickly the spit turns, preventing the meat on it from burning.

Bicycle

Conception TN: 35

This is a single-speed, two-wheeled vehicle for one person. It has a wooden board with a padded leather saddle for a seat, a crossbar for handles, and two pedals that turn a gear, driving a chain that is linked to the rear wheel, causing it to turn as well. So far, no braking system has been developed. In order to slow the bicycle, the rider must touch the soles of his feet to the ground, or he can come to a halt more gradually by veering from side to side, slowing his forward progress. Riding the bicycle requires use of the Ride Knack with all TNs increased by 5.

Diving Apparatus

Conception TN: 45 (1 Leap of Logic)

By using this invention, a man can comfortably remain underwater for 30 minutes. It is intended to allow men to



enter the water and observe what goes on beneath it or, in more militant circumstances, attack ships from underneath. The apparatus consists of a pair of glass goggles, a watertight leather diving suit, flipper-shoes for the feet, webbed gloves, two wineskins full of air, a cutlass for cutting nets and mooring lines, and a manual drill for putting holes in the hulls of vessels. The diver breathes in through the mouth and out through the nose, allowing the air in the wineskins to properly circulate.

Encoding Device

Conception TN: 35

This device resembles a harpsichord, and can even function as one with a little modification. The principal difference is that it also has the ability to play music from thin keys (usually made of tin or wood) that are fed into a slot in the device. A series of teeth on the edges of the keys tell a tumbler what notes to play. When used properly, it can convey written messages to the user. A switch near the keyboard changes from the reading mode to a writing mode, allowing a user to compose messages as well as read them. In this state, the machine will punch out teeth on blank keys corresponding to notes that are played on the device.

The machine reads every other note in play mode, but records every note in writing mode. Right-hand notes represent letters and left-hand notes represent numbers,

common words, and symbols such as “and,” “the,” “of,” “is equal to,” “is proportional to,” “squared,” “square root,” “plus,” “minus,” “multiplied by,” “divided by,” “therefore,” and “so that.” These notes can be played by putting the keys in backwards, so the encoded messages must be written both musically and backwards. College members familiar with the Music Code can easily adapt the machine to work for that particular brand of communication.

Folding Furniture

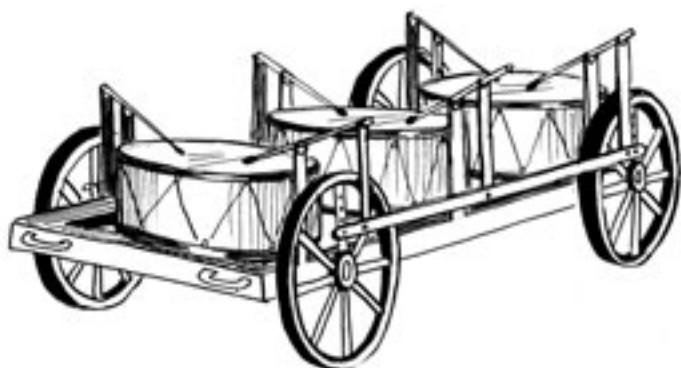
Conception TN: 25

Often, a scientist finds himself in the field studying and recording natural phenomena. On these occasions, penmanship often suffers due to awkward and uncomfortable writing positions. This invention was designed with such a dilemma in mind. It consists of a table and a chair with hinged arrangements of legs and struts, with locking nuts and cloth coverings. Each of them folds down to compact carrying case form. The same locking nuts that hold them in their other configurations holds them securely while collapsed. The table is two and a half feet wide and four feet long and folds into a case that is two feet high, two and a half feet long, and about one foot thick. The chair folds into a case that is two feet wide, two feet high, and six inches thick.

Mechanized Drum

Conception TN: 42

This military device is used to set a pace during a march or other soldierly exercise. It consists of six sticks which are connected via cogs and gears to a pair of carriage wheels. The sticks strike a set of three large snare drums arranged along the carriage. Based on the shapes of the cogs, the drums may play different patterns, and the users may adjust the cogs to fit their particular cadence. A series of peg holes along the wheel spokes allows each drum to be connected to up to three cogs at a time. The first cog produces a regular, steady beat, the second is smooth and produces no beats for silent moving, and the third produces another





rhythm, designed to be unique to the unit to which the device belongs.

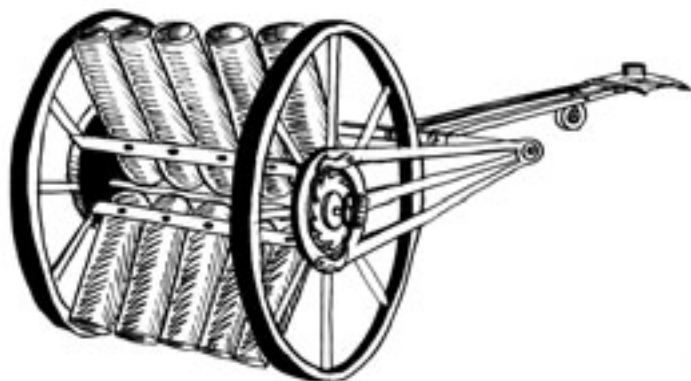
Multiple Barrel Artillery Pieces

Conception TN: 56 (1 Leap of Logic)

This device has three sets of five small cannons mounted on the axle of a pair of large wheels. An anchoring arm extends behind it, with a heavy iron spike at the end. The spike is driven into the ground before firing to steady the device during recoil. After the first volley is fired, a handle on the anchor spike allows it to be lifted and a small rear wheel drops down so the whole device can be rolled forward to move the next row of guns into firing position. The ratcheted outer axle ensures that the wheels don't roll backwards when the guns are fired, but can be released by turning a handle so the wheels can move freely.

Each row of guns shares a common lighting point and the fuses are measured so that they fire at approximately the same time. All three rows of guns are loaded at once, then each row's fuse is lit as they are rolled into firing position.

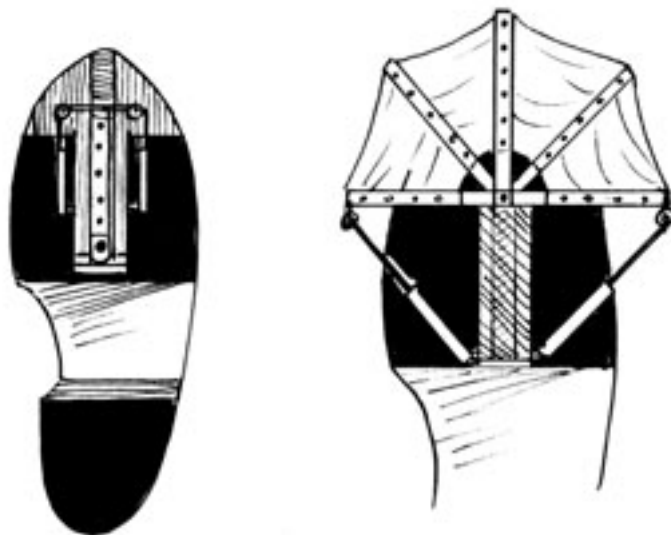
The artillery consists solely of boarding cannons (anything else is too big), and due to their special arrangement, no more than two people may contribute Actions towards loading each gun. Otherwise, they function just like the cannons described in *The Pirate Nations* sourcebook, (reprinted in the chart below). It takes ten Actions for the next row of guns to be brought forward by the carriage's advancement. A Hero hit by a cannon suffers one Dramatic Wound, plus one more for every 5 by which he fails his Wound Check, rounded down.



Paddle Boots

Conception TN: 12

While most swimmers prefer to tread water with bare feet, they might think twice after using paddle boots. The user slides a retractable fan out of the boot's heel, locking into place at the toes. The fan then spreads out and again locks into position. This creates an effect similar to the webbing on the feet of aquatic amphibians, allowing the wearer to swim twice as fast as normal (double the movement rate).



Boarding Cannon				
Damage	Range	Short Range	Long Range	Reload
6k5	200'	+15	+25	30 Actions



Parachute

Conception TN: 35 (+10 pivotal, 1 Leap of Logic)

This invention is used to slow the descent of its cargo to a safe rate, allowing them to fall great distances without harm. The device consists of a square frame made of light wood and two bent poles connected to the corners of the frame and crossing each other. A cloth attaches to the frame and the poles, and straps link the apparatus to its payload. Unfortunately, the relationship between the surface area of the parachute and the weight of the load is not yet fully understood, so no parachutes yet exist which can be safely used by an adult human being. So far, working models have allowed payloads of up to 45 pounds to fall safely. For purposes of determining falling damage, objects attached to a proper parachute (i.e., one large enough to handle their weight) are always considered to land on a soft surface (see the *GMs' Guide*, page 175).



Pontoon Bridge

Conception TN: 68 (1 Leap of Logic)

This prefabricated bridge consists of wooden slats placed upon large floating bladders which are filled with air and then lashed together. It can be carried in a carriage with an army, allowing troops and horses to travel over rivers in locations with no available existing bridges.

Porté Dampener

Conception TN: 10

At first glance, this device appears to be nothing more than a complex locket, consisting of two mirrors facing each other into infinity. On second glance, a tiny mirror ghost can be seen inside, screaming in silent horror and pounding its absent fists upon the glass. This easily transportable trinket snuffs out all Porté magic within a thirty-foot radius. Woe to the owner, however, if the device ever breaks and the spirit escapes. Rules for mirror ghosts can be found in the *GMs' Guide*, pages 156–157, and the *Montaigne* sourcebook, page 115.

Rope Descending Device

Conception TN: 15

Invented by a member of the College who, due to his amorous tendencies, often had to leave buildings through windows, this simple device allows the user to descend along a rope at a controlled rate without risking lacerating his hands. It consists of a wooden cylinder about as thick as a walking stick and one-and-a-half feet long. A smooth spiral groove has been cut along the cylinder's outer surface, just large enough to hold the rope with which it is intended to be used. The user fits the rope into the groove and then encloses the whole cylinder within a hinged wooden case with leather grips. He then attaches the top of the rope to a firm support, and lowers himself down the rope by holding the case with both hands. The pressure on the rope, caught between the case and the cylinder, allows the user to tighten his grip and slow his rate of descent (or stop completely), or slacken his grip and descend more quickly.

Sword-sharpening Scabbard

Conception TN: 16

The sword-sharpening scabbard is everything its name claims it to be. Using strategically placed whet-rocks inside the scabbard, it sharpens the sword every time it is pulled from or returned to its resting place.

Table Lamp

Conception TN: 23

This oil lamp consists of a large glass ball full of water, within which sits a second glass cylinder that houses a flame. A valve on the ball allows water to be drained or poured in. The water acts as a lens, intensifying the light. Dyes may be added to the water to change the color of the light.

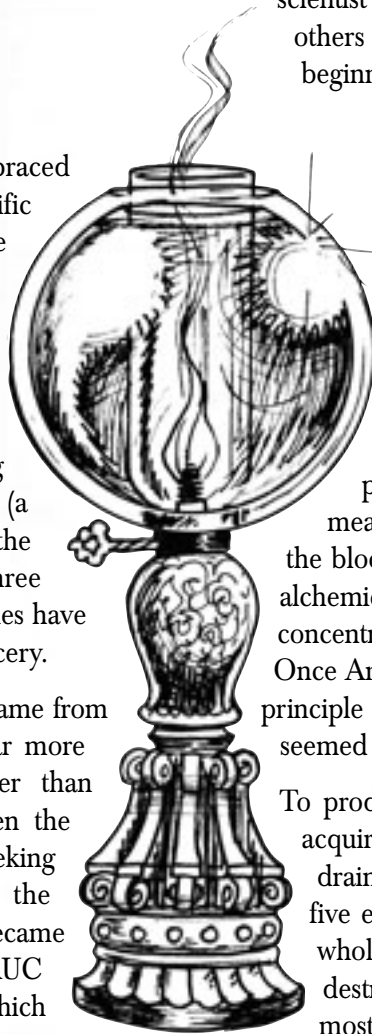
Blood Science: The Fifth Mystery

While most of the Invisible College has embraced a new age of logical thought and strict scientific methodology, a few remain entrenched in the ancient practice of alchemy. Creating a fusion of modern medicine and ancient secrets, Don Petrigal, Joshua Daylen, Alvara Arciniega and others have opened up a whole new branch of alchemy rendering immediate, tangible, and terrifying results. Calling the new art "Blood Science" (a term coined by Arciniega in wry homage to the studies that made it possible), these three scholars and their handful of trusted colleagues have made tremendous strides in the study of sorcery.

The initial breakthroughs in Blood Science came from Arciniega, a master of secrets who knew far more than his peers could comprehend. Rather than looking at the awesome differences between the various forms of sorcery, Arciniega began seeking common links between them. Through the examination of several arcane texts, he became aware of the Numan Senators' Bargain of AUC 724, the pact which created sorcery, and which

suggested that they all had a common source. Though not every line of sorcery came from the Bargain, it was enough to formulate several key axioms in his mind.

He made a second critical observation after examining the genealogy of certain noble families: sorcery is inheritable. Even the peculiar rune magic of the Vesten and the oft-hinted-at power of the Ussuran nobles seems to obey this basic law. With the observation that sorcery follows bloodlines (as the term was commonly understood), he speculated that the sorcery might have its basis in the blood itself. A more ethical researcher might have quailed at the challenges involved in extracting noble blood, but not Arciniega. With the dark certainty of success, the scientist began his experiments. He soon enticed others to join him, and together they founded the beginnings of a new dark art...



Extracts

The basic components of all Blood Science creations are "extracts," the result of rendering down sorcerously charged blood, removing the gross biological materials and concentrating the physical traces of sorcery into a single elixir. This should not be mistaken as a purely chemical process. The raw blood produced no measurable effects. Mere boiling or evaporation of the blood also had no beneficial result. Only through alchemical reaction could the sovereign properties be concentrated sufficiently and brought to the fore. Once Arciniega and his colleagues developed the basic principle of extraction, the possibilities of Blood Science seemed limitless.

To produce an extract, a quantity of blood must be acquired from a sorcerer. Killing and completely draining a sorcerer provides enough to produce five extracts. Practical realities usually prevent such wholesale exsanguination (among other reasons, it destroys an otherwise renewable resource), so most Blood Scientists prefer partial draining. They

often employ Harvesters for this purpose, as outlined on pages 36–37. Removing enough blood for a single extract causes one Dramatic Wound. Two produces 3 Dramatic Wounds. Removing enough blood for three extracts produces 6 Dramatic Wounds, and four extracts produces 10 Dramatic wounds. Obviously, few can survive such extreme loss.

Reducing the blood to a usable state is called *rendering*. The rendering process requires a full laboratory of alchemical equipment and a full day's efforts by a character with the Alchemist Advantage. Each Extract produced requires the expenditure of a Drama die (to infuse the blood with power) and 1 point of Reputation (if the blood was taken against the donor's will), but success is automatic. Only the blood of a single person may be used (no batches from multiple people) and the blood is ruined if the Resolve + Extraction roll fails.

Extracts from different types of sorcerers are unique in appearance and may easily be distinguished by a character with the Alchemist Advantage. The blood of twice-blooded donors (those with two sorts of sorcery in their veins) cannot be properly rendered at this time, and all attempts automatically fail. The blood of non-sorcerers (with certain rare exceptions, see below) also produce nothing but failed batches, making extraction a difficult but effective way of testing for sorcerous ability.

An Extract may be drunk immediately or combined with other Extracts to create an Cordial. The effects of drinking an Extract depend on the type of sorcery the “donor” possessed, as described below (note that sorcerers gain no additional benefits from imbibing either Extracts or Cordials, though they may use the liquids' powers as others do).

Glamour

Anyone who consumes this glittering gold liquid gains one level of the Appearance Advantage until the next sunrise or sunset. If the imbiber already has two levels of Appearance, then he is temporarily considered to have Unearthly Appearance (+3 unkept dice for all social rolls). An imbiber may only be affected by one Glamour Extract at a time.

El Fuego Adentro

Anyone who consumes this fiery orange liquid becomes immune to fire- and heat-based damage until the next sunrise or sunset. In addition, any equipment kept in close contact with the imbiber (such as worn clothing) shares in this immunity. Arciniega has yet to determine whether this is due to a field generated by the extract or whether the imbiber's skin itself causes the immunity.

Porté

Anyone who consumes this deep crimson liquid gains the ability to “blink” once during the next 24 hours. In *7th Sea* terms, the imbiber may automatically succeed on one Active Defense attempt by disappearing and reappearing after the attack has passed. If the ability isn't used within 24 hours, it fades away.

Pyeryem

Anyone who consumes this brown, earthy liquid can speak to and understand animals just like an Ussuran sorcerer until the next sunrise or sunset. Note that any animal with a particularly keen sense of smell will be nervous around the imbiber for 24 hours after the Extract is taken.

Lærdom

Anyone who consumes this pale yellow liquid is immediately healed of all Flesh Wounds as well as 1 Dramatic Wound.

Sorte

Anyone who consumes this inky black liquid immediately gains 3 Drama dice that last until the next sunrise or sunset. These Drama dice cannot turn into XP, and an imbiber may not drink another Sorte Extract for 24 hours.

Zerstörung

This dark green liquid is used not by imbibing it, but by throwing it (using the Throw Knack) on a non-living object. Any object which touches the liquid is dissolved as though immersed in an extremely powerful acid; up to 10 cubic feet of material can be eaten away in this manner. Dracheneisen, Synchron artifacts and other mystical metals are unaffected,

as is a particularly high grade of glass which the Blood Scientists use to store the liquid.

This extract is exceedingly rare — only two samples have ever been confirmed, and it is uncertain where Arciniega acquired the blood for them. GMs may disallow the extract entirely if *Zerstörung* no longer exists in their campaigns.

Brewing Cordials

Cordials are magical formulae created by mixing Extracts together in certain proportions and spending a number of Drama dice as described below. This process takes 1 Action for each Extract used in the Cordial. Only a character with the Alchemist Advantage can create Cordials. The following are some of the known Cordials. GMs can create others as they desire:

Daylen's Cordial

Ingredients: 1 Sorte, 1 Glamour, 1 Drama die

This Cordial is black with veins of gold running through it. Anyone who consumes it temporarily benefits from an incredible streak of luck. Roll a non-exploding die. Fortune favors the imbiber for that many Rounds. During this time, the Imbiber may spend a Drama die to re-roll any roll they make, including Damage rolls. This may be done as often as the imbiber desires.

Petrigal's Cordial

Ingredients: 1 Porté, 1 Pyeryem, 1 Drama die

This Cordial has the appearance and texture of partially clotted blood. Anyone who consumes this Cordial immediately loses 1 point of Brawn permanently. However, if thrown, the Cordial explodes with the force of a Rank 5 Explosion.

Arciniega's Cordial

Ingredients: 1 *El Fuego Adentro*, 1 Lærdom, 1 Drama die

This Cordial glows a bright yellow. Anyone who consumes it immediately bursts into flames for 1 Round, but suffers no damage from the fire. They inflict one extra unkept die

when attacking barehanded during this time, and anyone who grapples (or is grappled by) the burning imbiber suffers the effects of being set on fire (starting at 4 dice, but not decreasing until contact with the imbiber is broken off).

Magebane Cordial

Ingredients: 1 Extract (see below), 1 Drama die

This is the only Cordial that can be created from the blood of a non-sorcerer, and then only if the donor has the Faith or Miracle Worker Advantage. Any Sorcerer who drinks this potion loses all of his sorcerous abilities for 24 hours. It has no effect on Shamans or other non-sorcerers.

The Great Cordial

Ingredients: 1 of each Sorcerous Extract (including *Zerstörung*, if it exists), 5 Drama dice

Although Théah may have seen the last of this Cordial, Arciniega once managed to brew some of the rainbow-colored liquid and may have a little left. None of his colleagues know whether he rendered a *Zerstörung* Extract or simply discovered a substitute for it, and he isn't talking.

The imbiber of this Cordial is granted immortality for 5 Rounds. During this time, no force on Théah can harm him. He suffers neither Flesh Wounds nor Dramatic Wounds under any circumstances. When it wears off, however, he falls unconscious for 24 hours and cannot be revived by any means during that period.

GMs may forego the *Zerstörung* requirement for this Cordial if the bloodline no longer exists in their campaign.

Side Effects

While all of the alchemists working on Blood Science hope to minimize the sometimes gruesome side effects, uncontrolled and unexplained reactions continue to maim and even kill some of the test subjects. Whenever a character consumes any one of these formulas, roll two non-exploding dice. If either die is a "1", read the other die and apply the result from the following table. Characters may spend a single Drama Die before rolling to roll a third die

Experimentation

and keep the two dice he prefers (thus avoiding any ill effect unless he rolls multiple 1's).

1: Madness! The formula has caused a sorcerous reaction within the drinker with catastrophic results. The Drinker immediately contracts a rare form of blood fever which drives him irreversibly mad. His Brawn and Resolve increase by 2, his Wits are reduced to 1, and he blindly attacks anything and everything in sight. Each hour, the formula inflicts one Dramatic Wound upon the character until he has been incapacitated. Once he has reached this state, he falls into a fitful sleep and will die within a few hours. The process is irreversible, but on the bright side, the formula's effects last until the character dies. This has led to a number of rampages amongst doomed test subjects, which the Blood Scientists haven't always kept a lid on...

2: Tremors. After the formula has run its course, the character is left severely weakened. Tremors and a sense of helplessness seize the character. The character loses one point of Brawn permanently. This reduces the character's maximum possible Brawn by one. If it reduces the character's Brawn to 0, the character is strictly bed-ridden until (and if) the character is able to amass enough experience points to increase his Brawn back to 1.

3: Deadly Poison. The character who drinks this suffers the effects of arsenic as described in the *Game Masters' Guide*, page 185.

4: Swollen Joints. The drinker suffers a permanent swelling of the joints, arthritis, and a weakening of the tendons which severely hamper his or her motion. The character loses one point of Finesse permanently. This reduces the character's maximum possible Finesse by one. If this reduces the character's Finesse to 0, the character is strictly bed-ridden until (and if) he or she can amass enough experience points to increase his or her Finesse back to 1.

5: Poison. The character who drinks this suffers the effects of yellow lotus as described in the *Game Masters' Guide*, pages 185–186. The character does not gain any of the yellow lotus's sorcerous benefits.

6: Forgetfulness. The formula leaves the drinker noticeably glassy-eyed and forgetful. The character loses one point of Wits permanently. This reduces the character's maximum possible Wits by 1. If the character's Wits drops to 0, the formula has reduced the unfortunate victim to a drooling vegetable with no hope of recovery.

7: Coma. After the formula's effects end, the character collapses into a coma. Barring Sorte interference, he or she will remain comatose for a period of 1–10 weeks (roll a die to determine the number). The player may expend a Drama Die to cut the coma time in half.

8: Fever. After the formula wears off, the character is immediately consumed with a fever. After one hour, the character suffers –1 Resolve. After 2 hours, he suffers from a –1 Brawn. If this reduces the character's Brawn or Resolve to 0, he dies of delirium. The effects of the fever last for 1–10 days (roll a die to determine the number).

9: High Fevers. As the formula works its magic, the character is gripped by a mounting fever. After half an hour the character suffers –1 Resolve. At the end of the hour the character suffers –2 Resolve (total). The next hour, he suffers a –1 Brawn, and after two, he suffers –2 Brawn (total). If this reduces the character's Brawn or Resolve to 0, he dies of delirium within an hour. If not, the character still suffers from mild hallucinations and the fever breaks within 4 hours of having imbibed the formula. The effects of the formula last for the duration of the fever. This result, more than any other, is the cause for deaths among test subjects. Since they can command wild magics throughout the experience, it is one of the effects researchers most dread.

0: Fits. The drinker's psyche is permanently scarred by the brush with sorcery. Tiny nervous twitching and "false starts" plague the character for years to come. The character loses one point of Panache permanently. This does not reduce the character's maximum Panache, and regular therapy (buying back the Trait with experience points) will minimize the problem. Characters who are reduced to 0 Panache are still functional... barely. In combat rounds they may take a single action on Phase 10 and are considered to have an initiative total of 0.





Proof

Player

How to Play a Scientist in *7th Sea*

Roleplaying a scientist may seem daunting to some players, but it really is not as difficult as it may appear. Players with scientist Heroes should keep in mind that, while their characters may have advanced knowledge of chemistry or physics, they themselves don't need it. Your Hero will be familiar with numerous theories and formulae that you really don't need to worry about. Your GM should not hold you to such knowledge; the appropriate Scholar Knack on your Hero sheet should be more than enough.

You can take a few easy steps to make your scientist Hero more engaging without having to drag out your old high school biology books. The first step is to pick your scientist's field of specialty. Some scientists accomplish breakthroughs in more than one field (especially in *7th Sea*, where knowledge is truly a multi-headed pursuit), but by focusing your Hero on one specific field, you can lend him a sense of character as well as a short-hand notion of his intellectual pursuits. Common fields can be found in the Knacks encompassed by the Scholar skill, and include chemistry, natural philosophy (physics), astronomy, and mathematics. Biology and medicine fall under the Doctor skill, and you can easily create new Knacks for different fields such as geology or botany if you wish.

Each of these fields can be further refined into a specific branch of that science, which gives your character something specific to pursue. For instance, an astronomer could focus on the motion of a particular planet, comets, the stars, or the moon, while a physicist could study kinematics, mechanics, electricity, or optics.

The second step is to determine your scientist's style of working. How much of his time and energy does he spend performing experiments? How much does he spend deriving formulae and dealing with theoretical models? The answers to these questions can differentiate between a scientist with a more practical bent (one who, say, invents a new kind of alloy) and a scientist who tends to pursue abstract theories (one who explains why that alloy has the properties that it does).

The third step is to determine the scientist's current project, a device or theory that he wants to develop and publicize. It could be a life-long pursuit — a single endeavor taking years — or it could be one in a long string of similar projects. If you don't have something specific in mind, you might want to check the list of inventions on page 89–94, or consult a reference book for something new. Find a theory or device dating from the late 17th century that sounds interesting, and have your character pursue it as his driving goal.

The fourth step is to develop a personality for your scientist, as you would for any other Hero. Numerous theories and inventions reflect the personal quirks of their creators, and having a strong idea of your Hero's characteristics can give you a sense of how his research proceeds. Perhaps he is near-sighted and his efforts to improve his glasses lead to the development of a new microscope. Or maybe he hates insects and studies them to come up with new ways to exterminate them. Anything else that goes on in his life is likely to have some effect on the work he does.

Below are a series of scientist concepts designed to give you a rough idea of how varied the field can be:

The Absent-Minded Instructor

This scientist is always forgetting something — maybe his notes, maybe his spectacles, maybe the lunch date he had with an important potential patron. He tends to focus so much on his work and the possibilities it entails that everyday things such as buttons and appointments easily slip his mind.

The Brash Young Upstart

This scientist has freshly graduated from the university and wants to show his professors how brilliant he truly is. He is pursuing some grand project that would make his name famous, were not for the current problem with the Inquisition. He is cocky, arrogant, and smug, and likely takes any criticism of his work as an offense against his personal character.

The Classic Nerd

This person has more brains than agility. His physical prowess leaves much to be desired and he has little training with guns or swords. His social skills have atrophied from years in the lab, and he concerns himself far more with science than society. Heroes based on this stereotype will need careful development in order to make them fit in with a group of adventurers. They should be useful to the group and they must have a reason for remaining with the other Heroes. If, for example, the Hero happens to be very rich, then he could employ some of the other characters as bodyguards or “professional companions.” Or if he needs some rare compound, he could take a perilous sea journey with the other Heroes to get it.

The Dabbler

This character is not serious about science. To him it is a hobby, not an occupation. Besides a few points spent on the Scholar skill, he should be roleplayed as any other Hero. Such characters are usually financially well-off, allowing them to spend large amounts of money on their pastime.

The Mad Scientist

Science has limits, and this character wants to break them. Other scientists wish only to discover a new form of flower



or find a way to make surgery safer; this one wishes to construct a powerful weapon or find a way to reanimate dead tissue. Such Heroes tend to concentrate on grandiose or dangerous projects, and never fully acknowledge the implications of their work. It never occurs to them how dangerous their inventions might be, only that they *must* be created. The pressures of such intellectually challenging endeavors often wear on them, creating tense personality traits or the occasional facial tic.

The Renaissance Man

This Hero has many endeavors, science being only one. He also pursues music, medicine, sculpting, architecture, politics, and any number of other fields. Science is important to him, but so are all of his other pursuits. As a character, this Hero can be great fun to play, but his academic pursuits may ultimately be hampered by the numerous other projects he works on.

The Unexpected Scientist

The character is everything that the stereotypical scientist is not: a young good-looking individual, socially comfortable, with perfect vision, solid dancing skills, and good posture. Or an athletic outdoor type with a love of danger and a thirst for the unknown. Whatever his traits, he tends to throw people off when he mentions his occupation. He likely has some level of expertise with a weapon or two, and can converse about subjects unrelated to academia if he so chooses.

The Wizard

This character knows quite a lot about science, but never actively pursues any particular project. Instead, he uses his knowledge in a practical manner: repairing things, improving existing designs, or jury-rigging new devices for one-time-only use. He probably has a set of small tools, including files and a small knife blade, which he uses for a wide variety of tasks. He specializes in using materials at hand to solve his problems, and while he rarely discovers anything on his own, he has a natural affinity for refining and improving upon the discoveries of others.

Playing the Support

The scientists of the Invisible College sometimes need a little help to stay ahead of the Inquisition. They often have a number of supporters, assistants, and contacts to aid them in their work. Some feed them information about the Inquisition's activities, while others protect them and give them the security they need to conduct their experiments. Such supporters do not always belong the Chain of Knowledge nor are they always familiar with the College's various communication codes. Some don't even belong to the College, although most are aware of its existence and work to further its cause. But without their efforts, the society would not survive.

Non-scientist College members tend to concentrate more on the society's practical concerns — safety, protection, intelligence-gathering — rather than academic pursuits. They keep an eye on the Inquisition, watch for potential trouble, and ensure that the Chain of Knowledge functions smoothly. In these respects, they resemble any other secret society, immersed in intrigue and struggling to protect their interests against their enemies. While they focus on immediate threats, the scientists can perform their esoteric experiments without fear, and the course of knowledge can advance.

Keep in mind that while these character types often play supporting roles in the College, they are not necessarily beholden to the scientists with whom they work. Indeed, many of them have their own goals and interests which have nothing to do with the pursuit of knowledge. A spy, for example, would consider the exact whereabouts of a Knight Inquisitor more important than helping some mathematician prove an abstract theorem. They may be “supporters,” but that doesn't make them subservient. This is especially true in the case of Heroes: no one likes playing second fiddle to another character, and a player shouldn't be forced into a secondary position just because his Collegian isn't a scientist.

Players interested in the Invisible College, but who don't wish to create a scientist, should look into the following concepts for their Heroes. Alternately, GMs could use them

to design NPC servants for a scientist Hero, or an unusual contact in the Chain of Knowledge. Each concept fulfills a specific purpose within the College unrelated to science or academics.

Bodyguards

Bodyguards serve as fighters and protectors for the College's scientists. They monitor nearby areas for suspicious activities, watch for the Inquisition, and lend their military skills to the defense of scientific progress. If the Inquisition attacks, these swordsmen either protect a given scholar until he can escape, or escape themselves with notes or an invention in tow. Most bodyguards don't formally belong to the College and remain outside of the Chain of Knowledge. Many of them have little interest in science or academia, content to strike back at those who would harm the College.

Spies

Just as the Inquisition works to ferret out College members, so does the College work to identify active Inquisitors. By keeping tabs on Verdugo's men, the society can anticipate potential threats, and act before the hammer falls. Numerous spies for the College lurk within the Vaticine Church, disguising themselves as simple priests or bureaucrats. They work to pierce the veil of secrecy surrounding the Inquisition, identifying members and tracking their movements across Théah. Others work in the church's archives, altering texts to protect the College or rescuing important facts from obscurity. A few hide within the Inquisition itself, acting as double agents and warning the College of impending dangers. Certain spies don't belong to the Church at all, but seek out Knight Inquisitors hiding in mundane Théan society. Spies for the College often play deadly games of deception and subterfuge, shadowing their Inquisition counterparts in an effort to keep the society safely anonymous.

Couriers

Couriers serve by exchanging messages between College members, conveying vital bits of data along the Chain of Knowledge. Their efforts keep the Chain flowing and permit the College to make the best use of its resources. Most couriers hold travel-intensive jobs, which allow them to mask their real duties. They often collect notes and other information through pre-chosen rendezvous spots, or pick them up from secured drop-off locations. Like other Collegians, they usually know only two fellow members — typically a pair of scholars whom they ferry information between. They rarely ask for details; the less they know about their contacts, the better.

A courier concept makes a great “low maintenance” College character. Heroes could serve the organization without devoting a great deal of time to its inner workings. They simply pass messages along from one place to the next without worrying what those messages entail.

Artisans

The College needs artists and musicians to help them communicate. Performances on pianos and violin can convey important messages through the Music Code, while composers can relay entire manifestoes through a single orchestral symphony. While not as directly influential, painters and sculptors can use their works to inspire creative thought, or earn funds in support of the College's activities. Artisan Heroes who belong to the College often develop new forms of communication through their work, or perform particular pieces at particular times and places in order to pass important information on to fellow Collegians within their audience. Such performances may allow the GM to explore a new city, as the Heroes journey away from their usual haunts to attend their companion's performance.

Harvesters

Harvesters work to procure sorcerous blood for use by the Fifth Mystery. They identify new targets, stalk them until a proper moment arises, then stun them, drug them, and remove small amounts of blood. They must operate with the utmost secrecy — not even their victims can know what



has happened – and need to know how to perform their duties without killing their targets. A dead sorcerer is a lost resource as well as an innocent victim, and Harvesters have no wish to cause loss of life (most of them, anyway).

Almost every Harvester works for Alvara Arciniega or one of his Blood Scientist colleagues. Most believe that they are doing the right thing, and make efforts to minimize the trauma to their targets. Harvester Heroes should be sure to define their ethics carefully and keep their activities as secret as possible. It is recommended that any Harvester Hero take the Scoundrel Advantage as a matter of course.

Game Master

The following section contains sensitive information that players should not have access to. Ignoring this warning can spoil countless surprises during the game. If you're not a GM, proceed at your own risk.

NPC Secrets

This section contains secrets of the characters in the **Hero** chapter which are too hidden for the players to see. They are intended to help the GM portray the characters more accurately, or perhaps provide adventure hooks for his or her Heroes to become involved in.

Bonita: Hero



Brawn: 2
Finesse: 2
Wits: 5
Resolve: 3
Panache: 5
Reputation: 67
Background: True Identity
Arcana: Adaptable

Advantages: Appearance (Stunning), Combat Reflexes, Membership (Invisible College) (Swordsman's Guild), Castille (R/W), Théan (R/W)
Courtier: Dancing 4, Etiquette 3, Fashion 3, Gaming 3, Oratory 2, Seduction 3
Scholar: History 2, Mathematics 4, Philosophy 2, Theology 3
Spy: Cryptography 4, Shadowing 3, Stealth 4
Athlete: Climbing 3, Footwork 5, Leaping 2, Rolling 2, Side-Step 5, Sprinting 5, Swinging 3, Throwing 1
Bonita (Master): Bind (Fencing) 5, Disarm (Fencing) 5, Exploit Weakness (Bonita) 5, Wall of Steel 5
Fencing: Attack (Fencing) 5, Parry (Fencing) 6
Gallegos (Master): Exploit Weakness (Gallegos) 5, Feint (Fencing) 5, Riposte (Fencing) 6, Tagging (Fencing) 5

Bonita's real name is Marisol Verdugo. She is one of Cardinal Esteban Verdugo's second cousins, although they have not met since she was a small child. When she ran away from home to seek a life of adventure, she adopted her pseudonym to avoid staining Esteban's honor. At the time, he was rising through the ranks of the Vatican Church, and she did not want to hinder his professional advancement. Her instructor in mathematics and swordplay was Don Miguel Rivera de Gallegos, who has since passed away from old age.

Bonita is now ashamed of her cousin's actions, and feels guilty that hiding her name earlier has helped him reach his current position. She dares not reveal her identity now, however, because doing so would cause Cardinal Verdugo to single her out for special attention from the Inquisition.

Mus Borwin: Hero



Brawn: 3
Finesse: 2
Wits: 5
Resolve: 4
Panache: 3
Reputation: 28
Background: Defeated
Arcana: None

Advantages: Age and Wisdom 1, Avalon (R/W), Castillian (R/W), Eisen, Montaigne (ACQ), Théan (R/W), Vendel (R/W), Large, Membership (Invisible College), Specialty: Cartography, University
Archer: Attack (Bow) 2, Fletcher 1, Snapshot 2
Athlete: Climbing 2, Footwork 2, Lifting 2, Sprinting 1, Swimming 2, Throwing 1
Doctor: Diagnosis 1, Examiner 1, First Aid 3
Fencing: Attack (Fencing) 3, Parry (Fencing) 3
Rider: Ride 1
Scholar: Astronomy 5, History 2, Mathematics 4, Natural Philosophy 4, Occult 2, Philosophy 1, Research 3, Theology 2
Specialty: Cartography 3
Spy: Conceal 2, Cryptography 3, Shadowing 2, Sincerity 3, Stealth 3
Wrestling: Grapple 3, Bear Hug 2, Break 1, Escape 2, Head Butt 1

Borwin lost his faith during that battle in Eisen, the one which cost him the use of his leg. He had been an Objectionist, if not a devout one. Following his experience, he came to believe that no deity worth worshipping could have allowed him to suffer so much pain. Borwin tolerates those whose faith remains secure and tries to mention Theus in his works so as to blend in with the other members of the Invisible College. He is publicly still an Objectionist, but privately he is more of an agnostic. His physical injuries may have healed, but the spiritual scars will remain for some time to come.

Reimar Derviny: Hero



Brawn: 2
Finesse: 2
Wits: 5
Resolve: 1
Panache: 2
Reputation: 46
Background: Contentious Theory, Hunted
Arcana: Focused

Advantages: Montaigne (R/W), Théan (R/W), Vendel (R/W), Brilliant, Membership (Invisible College), Published (2), University
Courtier: Dancing 1, Etiquette 1, Fashion 2, Mooch 3
Oratory: 2
Hunter: Fishing 1, Stealth 2, Survival 3
Scholar: Astronomy 3, History 5, Law 4, Mathematics 6, Natural Philosophy 3, Philosophy 5, Research 5, Theology 5
Commander: Strategy 1, Tactics 1
Firearms: Attack (Firearms) 2

Reimar Derviny is precisely what he claims to be – a scholar in the midst of a grand quest for meaning in Creation. Outside of his heretical effort to define Theus, he has no secrets.



Abrianna Lucilla Fiorenza: Hero



Brawn: 2
Finesse: 3
Wits: 3
Resolve: 3
Panache: 4
Reputation: 45
Background: Obligation (Aunt)
Arcana: Creative

Advantages: Avalon, Montaigne (R/W), Théan (R/W), Vodacce (R/W), Above Average Appearance, Membership (Invisible College), Patron (Camilia Pascaut)

Artist: Composer 4, Musician (Violin) 4, Musician (Piano) 2
Courtesan: Acting 2, Conceal 3, Dancing 4, Etiquette 4, Fashion 4, Gossip 3, Jenny 3, Masseur 1, Politics 4, Seduction 3, Sincerity 3, Unobtrusive 2

Performer: Acting 1, Dancing 1, Oratory 2, Singing 1

Scholar: Astronomy 2, History 2, Mathematics 4, Natural Philosophy 3, Philosophy 1, Research 3

Knife: Attack (Knife) 3, Parry (Knife) 2, Throw (Knife) 4

Cappuntina Swordsman School (Apprentice): Exploit Weakness (Cappuntina) 2, Pin (Knife) 3, Throw (Knife) 4, Trick Shooting (Knife) 3

Rider: Animal Training 2, Mounting 2, Ride 3

Fiorenza's Cappuntina skill means that she receives no off-hand penalty for throwing knives, and may draw and throw a knife as a single action. The Pin Knack allows her to make a called shot with a thrown knife: she adds 10 to her TN to hit, and if successful, she has pinned her opponent's arm to a nearby surface (he drops whatever he is holding and must spend 1 Action freeing himself). The Trick Shooting Knack allows her to subtract 15 (5 for every Rank) from any penalties to her shot with a thrown knife. It cannot lower the TN below her base TN to hit or be counted towards her Raises to Damage, but it can be applied to Called Shots. More on Cappuntina can be found in the *Vodacce* sourcebook, pages 95–96.

Fiorenza's success has not gone unnoticed in her home country. Some of the more conservative elements of

Vodacce society would like nothing more than to silence her music forever. Her popularity in the Montaigne courts keeps them at bay for now, but Abrianna knows it's only a matter of time before someone tries to end her career permanently. She plans to be ready when they do; Camilia has already agreed to hire a bodyguard and Abrianna herself has begun honing her Cappuntina skills in preparation for an inevitable confrontation.

Ravenild Hibbot: Hero



Brawn: 3
Finesse: 3
Wits: 6
Resolve: 5
Panache: 2
Reputation: 52
Background: Hunted
Arcana: Intuitive

Advantages: Avalon (R/W), Eisen (R/W), Théan (R/W), Vodacce (R/W), Legendary Trait (Wits), Membership (Invisible College), Small

Courtier: Dancing 1, Diplomacy 3, Etiquette 5, Fashion 5, Gossip 2, Oratory 3

Doctor: Diagnosis 5, Examiner 5, First Aid 5, Quack 1, Surgery 5

Scholar: Astronomy 4, History 3, Mathematics 5, Natural Philosophy 5, Philosophy 3, Research 6

Finnegan (Journeyman): Bob 'n' Weave 4, Corps-à-Corps 4, Disarm (Barehanded) 5, Exploit Weakness (Finnegan) 4

Pugilism: Attack (Pugilism) 5, Ear Clap 3, Footwork 4, Jab 4, Uppercut 5

Rider: Animal Training 3, Mounting 5, Ride 5, Trick Riding 5

Wrestling: Bear Hug 2, Break 4, Escape 4, Grapple 5, Head Butt 1

The Bob 'n' Weave Knack allows Ravenild to circle her opponents in a fight, always ducking to their weak side. When an opponent misses her (either because of Active or Passive Defense), she may lower her next Action die by 4 (1 for every Rank in this Knack). She may not lower an Action

die below the current Phase. More on the Finnegan school can be found in the *Avalon* sourcebook, pages 95–96.

Despite adopting masculine clothing styles and habits, Ravenild Hibbot is very feminine and proper behind closed doors. She is also very honest, and remains oblivious to the two secrets lurking in the shadows of her life.

The first is that her mother is a Fate Witch. Hibbot has been groomed to be strong and independent since birth and would have been approached by the enigmatic Sophia's Daughters had she not drawn such attention to herself. With the Inquisition hot on her heels, she is simply too much of a liability for the Daughters at the present time. Nevertheless, they occasionally come to her aid, giving her a place to stay and needed funds without her ever being the wiser.

The second secret is what Alvara Arciniega and the Blood Scientists are doing with some of her work. Hibbot made the first blood transfusion in Théah's history, a clumsy process between a healthy sheep and one that had been mauled by wolves. The wily Arciniega copied all of her notes and is perfecting a way to transfer blood between humans, along with any sorcerous properties it might contain. He knows what Ravenild is capable of and intends to use her brilliance to perfect his forbidden art.

Hibbot would be horrified to learn either of these secrets and would take heroic steps to set them right. Until then, she happily continues her current work on geometric-block communications and ruffles the feathers of anyone who thinks science is just a man's study.



Goskelen Leman: Hero



Brawn: 2
Finesse: 2
Wits: 5
Resolve: 2
Panache: 2
Reputation: 76
Background: Contentious Theory, Hunted
Arcana: Perceptive

Advantages: Avalon (R/W), Castillian (R/W), Eisen (R/W), Montaigne (R/W), Théan (R/W), Vodacce (R/W), Brilliant, Faith, Membership (Invisible College), Published (1), Spark of Genius (Mathematics), University

Doctor: Diagnosis 3, Examination 3, First Aid 4, Quack 1

Merchant: Glassblower 2

Scholar: Astronomy 5, History 4, Law 5, Natural Philosophy 5, Theology 5

Rider: Mounting 1, Ride 3

Leman's troubling theory has implications which even he cannot fully understand. The issue has put his faith to an agonizing test and he prays every night for Theus to grant him peace. In his weaker moments, he regrets ever conceiving of it, and wonders if a life of ignorance under the Church might not be preferable to the chilling ramifications of what he has wrought. Thankfully, such moments are few and far between, and most of the time, Leman remains resolute. He tells himself that Theus intended for him to make this revelation, and that the Creator would had never have done so had He not believed Leman capable of carrying the burden. If he can simply find someone trustworthy enough to share his theory with, then he believes he can shoulder the awesome responsibility with no further torment.

And indeed, the ultimate fate of Leman and his theory depends on who he shares it with. Some would see it as evidence that he has gone mad. Others would declare that he has solved the mystery of the Syrneth. And others would believe every word... and reluctantly slit his throat with a knife made of shadows.

Nezhek Cheremshenavich: Hero



Brawn: 3
Finesse: 3
Wits: 2
Resolve: 4
Panache: 3
Reputation: 36
Background: Hunted
Arcana: Stubborn

Advantages: Indomitable Will, Membership (Invisible College), Toughness

Hunter: Ambush 4, Fishing 3, Survival 4, Tracking 4, Trail Signs 3

Archer: Attack 3, Fletcher 2

Athlete: Climbing 2, Footwork 4, Leaping 2, Long Distance Running 3, Sprinting 4, Swimming 1, Throwing 3

Firearms: Attack (Firearms) 5, Reload (Firearms) 4

Heavy Weapon: Attack (Heavy Weapon) 4, Parry (Heavy Weapon) 2

Though he worries a great deal about the Inquisition, Nezhek worries even more about the various military powers in Théah. An army equipped with his rifles would be devastating in the field, and the world's generals would stop at nothing to acquire one. Considering the wars in Castille and Ussura, the ambitions of Eisenfürsten like Fauner Pösen, and the brewing dispute between Vendel and Vodacce, it makes him very nervous. He knows he must keep his weapon a secret from everyone, not just Verdugo. As a result, he is deeply suspicious of anyone he doesn't know, masking his normal good nature beneath a dark cloud.

Nezhek misses his homeland deeply and fears that he may never see it again. He occasionally contemplates destroying his rifles and fleeing back to Ussura with his family. Though he knows it would put him in great danger, he trusts Matushka to protect him. In his more lucid moments, however, he knows he is doing the right thing. The Invisible College must understand his invention before someone else recreates it, and his longing for home must not be allowed to interfere.

Richard Mutz: Hero



Brawn: 1
Finesse: 2
Wits: 4
Resolve: 3
Panache: 3
Reputation: 13
Background: None
Arcana: None

Advantages: Castillian (R/W), Eisen (R/W), Théan (R/W), Membership (Invisible College), University

Artisan: Drawing 1, Musician 1, Writing 2

Merchant: Accounting 3, Calligrapher 2, Scribe 1

Performer: Acting 1, Dancing 1, Oratory 2, Singing 2

Scholar: Astronomy 4, History 4, Law 4, Mathematics 4, Natural Philosophy 4, Occult 4, Philosophy 4, Theology 4

Streetwise: Shopping 3, Socializing 3, Street Navigation 3, Underworld Lore 2

These stats are expanded from the brief description provided in the *Freiburg* boxed set, and are considered definitive.

Mutz pays a street gang called the Mailed Fist to keep an eye out for Inquisition activity in Freiburg. While they normally do a decent job, their natural bullying tendencies have lead to a few unfortunate incidents. Several innocent Vaticine priests have been roughed up under the auspices of looking for the Inquisition. Mutz feels terrible about the incidents and has tried to buy of his conscience with several anonymous donations to the Church. He also worries that such incidents will draw Verdugo's attention, leading to an increased Inquisition presence in the city.



Father Conal Martin: Hero



Brawn: 1
Finesse: 1
Wits: 5
Resolve: 3
Panache: 2
Reputation: 24
Background: None
Arcana: Willful

Advantages: Avalon (R/W), Castillian (R/W), Théan (R/W), Age and Wisdom (2), Membership (Invisible College), Ordained, Research Library (3), University
Doctor: Diagnosis 1, First Aid 3, Quack 1
Priest: Diplomacy 3, Oratory 4, Philosophy 4, Theology 5, Writing 3
Scholar: Astronomy 2, History 2, Mathematics 2, Natural Philosophy 4, Occult 4, Philosophy 4
Heavy Weapon: Attack (Heavy Weapon) 4, Parry (Heavy Weapon) 2
Pugilism: Attack (Pugilism) 5, Ear Clap 4, Footwork 4, Jab 4, Uppercut 5
Wrestling: Bear Hug 3, Break 5, Escape 3, Grapple 5, Head Butt 5

Conal has struck a bargain with the local druids to keep his library safe. He doesn't believe in their pagan poppycock, but he wants allies outside of the Church in this endeavor, and trusts the druids enough to keep their mouths shut. The library lies near one of their gathering places, in a quiet woodland near Tara, and they have promised to guard it closely in exchange for the right to study its texts. He considers the bargain both fair and reasonable, and the druids have thus far adhered to it. Conal has not yet told Garcia about this development; he doesn't want to worry his old friend, and besides, the Castillian would never understand.

More information on the druids and their practices can be found in the *Avalon* sourcebook, pages 32–34. More information on Salvador Garcia can be found in the *Castille* sourcebook, pages 82–83 and 115.

Captain Mendoza: Hero



Brawn: 3
Finesse: 4
Wits: 3
Resolve: 3
Panache: 3
Reputation: 32
Background: None
Arcana: Insightful

Advantages: Avalon, Castillian (R/W), Vodacce (R/W), Commission (Ship's Captain), Membership (Invisible College)
Merchant: Shipwright 3
Sailor: Balance 3, Cartography 5, Climbing 3, Knotwork 4, Navigation 5, Pilot 4, Rigging 3, Swimming 4
Scholar: Astronomy 4, History 2, Law 3, Mathematics 2, Natural Philosophy 1, Philosophy 1, Research 1
Athlete: Climbing 3, Footwork 3, Leaping 2, Sprinting 1, Swinging 2, Throwing 2
Captain: Ambush 4, Gunnery 4, Incitation 2, Leadership 3, Strategy 4, Tactics 3
Fencing: Attack (Fencing) 3, Parry (Fencing) 2
Firearms: Attack (Firearms) 3, Reload (Firearms) 2

Besides the location of the Workshop, Mendoza has few secrets to speak of. He knows the coast of Castille very well, and has discovered a few hidden coves which he uses to avoid detection by the Castillian navy. Other than that, he is exactly who he appears to be.

The Lady Miriam: 25 point Man O' War

Brawn: 6
Finesse: 4
Resolve: 4
Wits: 3
Panache: 4
Modifications: Concealed Gunports (2), Overgunned (2), Smuggling Compartments (3)
Flaws: Small Keel (2)
Draft: 4
Crew: 4

Cargo: 4
Reputation: 13

The *Lady Miriam* was originally a Castillian naval vessel that made the mistake of approaching *la Bucca* just after the revolt. She has since served the Brotherhood under Captain Mendoza. Her relative speed and mighty guns have made her a proud addition to the Brotherhood's pirate navy.

Diego Torres de Zepeda del Castillo: Hero



Brawn: 2
Finesse: 3
Wits: 3
Resolve: 4
Panache: 3
Reputation: 11
Background: Defeated
Arcana: None

Advantages: Castille (R/W), Montaigne (R/W), Théan (R/W), Castillian Education, Handy, Noble, University
Courtier: Dancing 2, Diplomacy 2, Etiquette 2, Fashion 4, Oratory 1, Politics 2, Sincerity 4
Merchant: Accounting 4, Scribe 3
Scholar: Astronomy 1, History 3, Law 3, Mathematics 4, Natural Philosophy 4, Philosophy 2, Theology 3
Aldana (Journeyman): Exploit Weakness (Aldana) 4, Feint (Fencing) 4, Riposte (Fencing) 4, Tagging (Fencing) 5
Athlete: Break Fall 2, Climbing 4, Footwork 3, Leaping 3, Sprinting 2, Swimming 2, Swinging 3, Throwing 1
Crossbow: Attack (Crossbow) 4, Fletcher 1, Reload (Crossbow) 4
Dirty Fighting: Attack (Dirty Fighting) 3, Attack (Improvised Weapon) 1, Parry (Improvised Weapon) 3
Fencing: Attack (Fencing) 4, Parry (Fencing) 5
Rider: Ride 3

Diego's spirit is far from broken. The personality of a meek accountant is merely a deception to keep the Inquisition at bay. He is determined to end the injustices he sees afflicting his homeland and has gone a step further than anyone else

in the College to do so. Inspired by the popular exploits of El Vago, Diego has donned a mask and a belt of gadgets, taking to the rooftops and alleyways. He stands against both the Montaigne and the Inquisition wherever he is needed.

Mariana aids her husband with minor inventions and devices, but wishes he could settle down to hard science and finish the research they started. Still, she wants a better world for their daughter, and understands that drastic times call for drastic measures.

Diego's gadgets are based on his and Mariana's efforts in chemistry and applied mechanics. While he is always trying something new, he often relies on nonlethal forms of combat. Being a man of science, Diego respects life and avoids taking it unless absolutely necessary. He uses small crossbow bolts coated with ethera (a knock-out drug), as well as nets and other ensnaring devices. Those who have seen him believe he belongs to Los Vagos; he is content to let them go on believing it.

Alvara Arciniega: Villain



Brawn: 4
Finesse: 5
Wits: 5
Resolve: 4
Panache: 4
Reputation: -43
Background: Hunted
Arcana: Overzealous

Advantages: Castillian (R/W), Montaigne (R/W), Théan (R/W), Vendel (R/W), Vodacce (R/W), Castillian Accent (Soldano), Alchemist, Castillian Education, Connections (Many), Extended Family, Linguist, Membership (Invisible College) (NOM), Noble, Research Library, Secret Laboratory, Spark of Genius, Toughness, University
Scholar: Astronomy 5, History 3, Mathematics 5, Natural Philosophy 6, Occult 4, Philosophy 4, Research 5, Theology 4

Servant: Accounting 3, Etiquette 3, Fashion 2, Hagglng 3, Menial Tasks 3, Unobtrusive 5

Spy: Bribery 3, Conceal 4, Disguise 3, Forgery 3, Poison 3, Shadowing 5, Sincerity 4, Stealth 4

Athlete: Climbing 3, Footwork 5, Leaping 3, Side-step 5, Sprinting 4, Throwing 3

Fencing: Attack (Fencing) 5, Parry (Fencing) 5

Soldano (Master): Double-parry (Fencing/Fencing) 5, Exploit Weakness (Soldano) 5, Tagging (Fencing) 5, Whirl (Fencing/Fencing) 5

Valroux (Journeyman): Double-parry (Fencing/Knife) 5, Exploit Weakness (Valroux) 4, Feint (Fencing) 4, Tagging (Fencing) 5

Knife: Attack (Knife) 5, Parry (Knife) 5, Throw (Knife) 4

These statistics are updated from the *Castille* sourcebook, and reflect the new rules presented in this volume.

Arciniega's Soldano Skill gives him the following abilities:

- His off-hand penalty is negated when using a Fencing Weapon in each hand.
- He receives 3 Drama Dice at the start of each Battle (which, if unspent, disappear at the end).
- If he inflicts damage on an opponent, he may spend a Drama die before they make their Wound Check to decrease by 5 the number required for them to take an extra Dramatic Wound.
- If engaged with a Villain, he may use an Intimidation action against the Villain without spending an action (add 1 to the roll for each Brute he's killed in this fight and 5 for each Henchman), and if he wins, he steals one Drama die from them, plus an additional Drama die for every 5 he won the roll by. His Whirl Knack allows him to add 10 to his attack roll (2 x his Whirl Rank) when attacking Brutes.

More on the Soldano school can be found on page 96 of the *Castille* sourcebook.

As stated in earlier products, Arciniega is an important member of the sinister secret society known as NOM. Indeed, he serves as one of NOM's leaders, having inherited the position from his mentor, Don Iselo Arciniega

de Aldana. He controls a large number of servants and lackeys in both secret societies, some of whom are detailed in this volume. His efforts have quietly linked the Invisible College to its dark counterpart and he hopes one day for the two organizations to become one – with himself at the head, of course.

His current research into Blood Science is the perfect example of this. The College (at least the part of it that accepts his studies) benefits from increased insight into the nature of sorcery, and NOM benefits from a powerful new weapon to be used as it sees fit. As time goes on, he believes such activities will merge the goals of the two secret societies into one.

It was Arciniega who revealed Jeremy Cook's location to the Inquisition. He knew that a blow against the College would send them in search of allies and allow him to exercise greater control over its organization. After all, what better way to control the College than by providing an enemy to "save" it from? Though he regrets the loss of Cook's brilliance, he felt that only such a loss – and in the heart of Avalon, supposedly safe from Verdugo – would instill the proper sense of urgency. He's pleased with how well his colleagues reacted to the incident.

When the time was right, he brought the conflict to a head again by deliberately revealing his discovery of the light prism. As he anticipated, Verdugo began a holy war against all scholars and the College was forced into hiding. The Chain of Knowledge structure, which he had helped create years before, allowed him to sink his claws deeper into the organization.

It almost backfired, however. The Inquisition moved faster than he anticipated, and a trio of assassins set upon him in his villa before he could make an escape. Were it not for his considerable skills as a swordsman, he would have burned that night, ending all of his careful planning in a fiery blaze. He counts himself lucky that he survived the incident, and has resolved never to underestimate Verdugo's forces again. The stakes are just too high.

Duc Auguste Danceny du Rosemonde: Villain



Brawn: 1
Finesse: 2
Wits: 3
Resolve: 2
Panache: 4
Reputation: -40
Background: Fear
Arcana: None

Advantages: Castillian (R/W), Montaigne (R/W), Théan (R/W), Alchemist, Membership (Invisible College), Noble, Research Library (1), Servants, University
Courtier: Dancing 4, Diplomacy 4, Etiquette 4, Fashion 4, Gaming 2, Gossip 5, Lip Reading 2, Oratory 3, Politics 5, Scheming 4, Sincerity 2
Scholar: Astronomy 3, History 2, Law 2, Mathematics 3, Natural Philosophy 5, Occult 4, Philosophy 2, Research 3
Fencing: Attack (Fencing) 4, Parry (Fencing) 4
Knife: Attack (Knife) 1, Parry (Knife) 1
Porté (Apprentice): Attunement 2, Bring 1, Blooding 1, Pocket 1
Rider: Mounting 3, Ride 4
Valroux (Journeyman): Double-parry (Fencing/Knife) 4, Exploit Weakness (Valroux) 4, Feint (Fencing) 4, Tagging (Fencing) 4

Even Alvara Arciniega does not realize the full extent of the Duc's addiction. He thinks of nothing beyond the *Porté* extracts, and lives for the day he can finally master his atrophied sorcerous abilities. Auguste has suffered the side-effects of several imperfect samples, but it hasn't stopped his thirst for more. If the Blood Scientists don't perfect their techniques soon, he'll drink one extract too many and the world will be less one decrepit Montaigne nobleman.

It was Auguste who recently revealed to Dominique du Montaigne l'Empereur's true motive in sending Montegue off to Ussura. He knew she would somehow get word of the betrayal to her husband, and he now eagerly awaits the General's return home (see *The Lady's Favor* in the *7th Sea Game Master's Screen* for more details). The Duc is hoping for some kind of civil war that will kill as many nobles as

possible, which will give Arciniega and the other Blood Scientists the opportunity to take as much sorcerous blood as they need to continue their work.

Auguste's only concern with his plan is his granddaughter Gabrielle. She has returned from her finishing school a refined (and unworldly) young lady, and he worries that she may fall victim to the approaching bloodshed. He has begun preparations to move her out of the country, and will go to great lengths to insure her safety when and if the fighting starts.

Skyla Koenraad: Scoundrel



Brawn: 2
Finesse: 2
Wits: 2
Resolve: 4
Panache: 5
Reputation: -8
Background: Obligation
Arcana: Greedy

Advantages: Avalon (R/W), Montaigne (R/W), Vendel (R/W), Dangerous Beauty, Membership (Merchant Guild), Patron (Arciniega)
Courtier: Dancing 3, Etiquette 3, Fashion 3, Lip Reading 2, Oratory 3, Seduction 5, Sincerity 4
Doctor: Diagnosis 1, First Aid 3, Quack 1
Merchant: Cooking 2, Jenny 5, Masseur 3, Seamstress 1
Performer: Acting 3, Singing 3
Spy: Bribery 2, Conceal 4, Disguise 5, Poison 3, Shadowing 3, Stealth 5
Streetwise: Socializing 4, Street Navigation 3, Underworld Lore 2
Athlete: Climbing 3, Footwork 3, Side-step 3, Sprinting 1, Throwing 1
Dirty Fighting: Attack (Dirty Fighting) 3, Eye-Gouge 3, Kick 2, Throat Strike 3
Fencing: Attack (Fencing) 4, Parry (Fencing) 3
Knife: Attack (Knife) 4, Parry (Knife) 1, Throw (Knife) 3
Rider: Ride 2

Skyla is not a cruel or evil person. She fervently believes that Arciniega is doing mankind a needed service by attempting to understand the nature of sorcery. She considers him quite noble and even harbors a secret crush for him. Taking the blood of nobles has been very therapeutic for her and, though it has not erased the trauma of her assault, it has allowed her to deal with it. She has yet to find her assailants, and does not know what the outcome will be when she does.

Skyla's parents still believe that she is an actor. They are very proud of their daughter's achievements as a thespian and, now that their children have grown, they plan on visiting Kirk and catching one of her performances.

Devoren Rivinova: Villain



Brawn: 2
Finesse: 4
Wits: 3
Resolve: 2
Panache: 4
Reputation: -32
Background: Vendetta
Arcana: Overzealous

Advantages: Montaigne, Vodacce, Indomitable Will, Membership (Invisible College) (NOM), Patron (Arciniega), Toughness

Criminal: Ambush 4, Gambling 1, Lockpicking 4, Quack 1, Scrounging 5, Shadowing 4, Stealth 5

Hunter: Fishing 2, Skinning 3, Stealth 1, Survival 5, Tracking 4, Trail Signs 4, Traps 4

Athlete: Climbing 4, Footwork 2, Leaping 3, Long-Distance Running 3, Sprinting 4, Swimming 3, Throwing 1

Fencing: Attack (Fencing) 3, Parry (Fencing) 2

Knife: Attack (Knife) 4, Parry (Knife) 4

Soldano (Apprentice): Double-parry (Fencing/Fencing) 3, Tagging (Fencing) 2, Whirl (Fencing/Fencing) 2, Exploit Weakness (Soldano) 3

Deveron's Soldano skill allows her to negate her off-hand penalty when using a Fencing weapon in each hand; she receives an extra Drama die at the start of each Battle (which vanishes if unused by the end of the Battle). Her Whirl Knack allows her to add 4 to her Attack roll when attacking Brutes. For more on the Soldano school, see the *Castille* sourcebook, page 96.

Everything stated about Devoren is true, but she serves more than just the Invisible College. She also serves as a courier and hunter for the criminal organization known as Novus Ordum Mundi. Realizing that his fame would hinder his NOM activities, Alvara Arciniega has cultivated a large number of "assistants" who handle such duties when he cannot conveniently reveal himself. Devoren is one such resource. She specializes in moving packages and messages about during her field work for the Invisible College, and obtaining less common (or savory) necessities for Alvara and her other NOM masters. On occasion, she has even committed murder for the cause, believing that her loyalty to Arciniega far outweighs any morality she once knew.

Devoren was recently entrusted with the delivery of a unique scroll to Vincent Bernvadore, the head of the Explorer's Society. The scroll contained a single page copied from an aged logbook, which explained the final landing of a long-lost vessel upon Ussura's eastern shore. The missive is signed by Cristobal Gallegos, the famed explorer who disappeared in the western seas over two hundred years ago. Arciniega's reasons for releasing it are as yet unknown, though the scroll will certainly increase tensions between the Explorer's Society and the Invisible College.

Arciniega knows what caused the blight upon Devoren's village so many years ago (her father helped a Porté sorcerer escape the Gaius, and Matushka retaliated), and holds onto the information in case it becomes necessary to destroy her. If Devoren knew the truth about her village, she would almost certainly return to an animal state, probably for good.

Notes on Blood Science

In addition to the obvious costs and dangers associated with Blood Science (detailed in Chapter Three) there are two other serious considerations. One, nearly all Blood Science formulas must be ingested (with the associated risks). There is no way of producing Blood Science-powered devices, and administering the potions to animals seems to have no magical effect (although the toxic properties still exist).

Second, these formulae result from concentrating existing sorcery to a potentially devastating degree. Even Arciniega doesn't know what the prolonged effects of such tampering might be. Were the Black Crosses ever to make the connection, the few practitioners of Blood Science are likely to find a new, deadly enemy waiting for them in the shadows...

The White Plague

While the Invisible College has made great strides in their study of the White Plague, they have only begun to grasp the significance of this terrible disease. Studies of Plague records revealed disturbing patterns in its spread and disappearances. Sometimes it spreads like wildfire. Other times it vanishes after devastating a small, yet specific area. Every instance has cost lives, but its baffling recurrences and disappearance defy all efforts at explanation. Some in the College believe that the Plague is some sort of attack, though against whom and for what purpose, they dare not speculate. They see the outbreaks as part of a larger pattern, and hope to unravel it and reveal whatever sinister force lies behind it. Others scoff at such a notion, believing that the seemingly "deliberate" outbreaks have a perfectly natural explanation; they believe that if they can find the root of the disease, then the source of these strange patterns will become clear.

Don Petrigal's ground-breaking work with Blood Science has suggested a third possibility: that the Plague is somehow rooted in sorcery, and that practicing magic increases the potential for an outbreak. Petrigal's findings are still preliminary, and he has yet to formulate a concrete theory on this sorcerous connection.

These discoveries and others like them have brought the College to the brink of a critical realization... but the last pieces of the puzzle continue to elude them. Until they can find the answer, the White Plague will remain a terrifying mystery, its origins and possible cure forever out of reach.

Early Signs

One of the most horrible aspects of the plague is its certainty. When you catch it, you know. The disease first manifests as a general feeling of unease, followed within an hour or so by aches, coughing, and a rash of white blotches on the skin, particularly the cheeks. Without make-up this immediately marks the character as a victim of the Plague, and usually triggers a wave of hysteria among those around him. Some victims have responded to this death sentence with terrible acts of cruelty or recklessness. A town in the early stages of the Plague can become a madhouse as doomed souls indulge their every whim while terrified neighbors often set fire to the homes of the afflicted (a sometimes effective tactic against other diseases). Since no one knows how the disease spreads, the fear and violence often spirals out of control. Hysterical mobs have destroyed entire towns long before the disease runs its course.

The early symptoms last for about a day for each point of Brawn and Resolve the character possesses.

First Stage

At this stage the Plague begins to wear down the victim's defenses. Every four days after the early signs period ends, the character receives one permanent, incurable Dramatic Wound. The pain becomes nearly unbearable as the disease begins to affect blood circulation, nerve endings, and the digestive tract. The victim begins to hallucinate, and his

judgement and morals become more and more impaired. Mild, but not incapacitating fevers increase the victim's tendency to run amok. The blotches spread, beginning to link up in bizarre piebald patterns.

As the Stage continues, the victim's fevered sweat takes on a milky coloration. Common folklore says touching this vile fluid will bring the plague down on you, and the unaffected public often turn violent towards any sick individual bearing the "white sweat." Only in recent years, through Father Albere's desperate efforts and the more clinical observations of Richard Kailean, has Théah determined that the white sweat is not contagious. Unfortunately, this hard-earned knowledge has yet to sink in with the general populace, who continue to cling to their irrational fear.

Second Stage

Once the Plague has inflicted enough Dramatic Wounds to Cripple the character, the effects become dramatically worse. The sites of the original white blotches become puffy and grossly swollen. The increasing pain drives the victim into a sort of thrashing madness, and if not restrained, they are almost certain to run riot, hastening their inevitable demise. The disease continues to inflict Dramatic Wounds during this period at the same rate as the First Stage.

Final Stage

When the Plague finally incapacitates the character to the point where he can no longer function (when he has suffered a number of Dramatic Wounds equal to twice his Resolve), he quickly slips into a delirious, fitful sleep and dies within 6-10 hours. By this stage the skin is entirely white, and the white sweat simply oozes off the person.

This grizzly and certain demise, visited on the inhabitants of Théah over the centuries has raised the White Plague to one of the worst horrors of truth or folktale known. Its resistance to prayer, science, or sorcery, combined with the certain fatality for those afflicted has created a mood surrounding it that often kills more than the disease itself. Every outbreak is accompanied by extreme secondary

chaos, as afflicted victims run rampant and their terrified neighbors go to extreme lengths to keep the disease from spreading. Where the Plague kills hundreds, the panic kills thousands. The Invisible College has made strides towards defeating the disease, but their ongoing battle with the Inquisition has hampered their efforts. Until someone finally identifies the cause and the cure for this terrible affliction, no man is truly free.

The Inquisition

One of the greatest enemies of the Invisible College is the Inquisition of the Vaticine Church. The following section is designed to help Game Masters portray these implacable foes of the Invisible College. More on the Inquisition can be found on pages 89–90 of the *Players' Guide*, and extended details will appear in the upcoming *Church of the Prophets* sourcebook. Details on Cardinal Verdugo can be found in the *Gamemasters' Guide*, pages 46–47 and the *Castille* sourcebook, pages 76–77 and 112.

The secrecy and terror tactics of Inquisition partly caused the formation of the Invisible College in the first place. Only their fanaticism – their iron-clad belief that science is heresy – necessitated such drastic measures on the part of their victims. However, their reach is far from infinite, and the College has eluded them by staying away from their bastions of power. In order to be effective, they've been forced to adapt to different situations all over Théah and work with people they consider "undesirable." In some cases, they must hide as deeply as the men they hunt. In some cases, they must do a great deal more.

The greatest strength of the Inquisition is the fervor with which its members go about performing their tasks. Each Inquisitor truly believes in the rightness of their cause, and honestly wants to see all sorcery destroyed and all scientific research brought to a standstill in preparation for the coming of the Fourth Prophet.

Organization

At the head of the Inquisition stands the Grand High Inquisitor, Esteban Verdugo. Beneath him are the High Inquisitors, the men and women who fulfill specific goals for the organization. Beneath them are the simple Inquisitors – a vast network of lackeys, spies, and servants who obey the High Inquisitors in all things. Verdugo issues orders directly to the High Inquisitors, who then carry out his orders through the Inquisitors (and any contacts or informants they have procured).

Knight Inquisitors and Defenders of the Faith

When Verdugo first took over the Inquisition, he discovered that certain High Inquisitors had military training or knew how to move about unobserved. He found them particularly useful in hunting down heretics in hiding or performing the Prophet's work in areas which didn't agree with his way of thinking. He separated them from the other High Inquisitors and gave them a new title, "Knight

Inquisitors", to symbolize their new roles. The lackeys below them became "Defenders of the Faith" and currently serve as the Inquisition's military might. They are the principle foes of the Invisible College, deadly assassins whose only goal is the destruction of the Vaticine's enemies.

Verdugo assigns each Knight Inquisitor to a specific geographic region. They report to him regularly via messages carried by ship, and he informs them when and where he wishes them to strike. He monitors their activities very closely, but his duties rarely permit him to leave Castille. Knight Inquisitors outside of his direct jurisdiction receive a symbol of his authority: a golden ring engraved with the Prophet's Cross. These Knight Inquisitors then lead their fellows in discovering, tracking, and destroying any heretics in their assigned territory.

The remaining High Inquisitors operate mainly out of Castille. They conduct interrogations, record confessions, and keep track of potentially heretical individuals within the



Castillian borders. Some of them maintain contact with the Knight Inquisitors abroad and assist them in tracking down “fugitives from the Prophets’ justice.” In terms of ranking, Knight Inquisitors are considered equal to High Inquisitors, while Defenders of the Faith hold the same rank as ordinary Inquisitors; Verdugo makes no distinction between his servants.

Secret Operations

In many instances, the Inquisition must work in secret in order to avoid attracting the wrath of local governments. In these cases, they work to establish mundane identities within the local community and blend in as much as possible. Most of them hold public positions within the Vaticine Church, but in particularly unfriendly locations, they must take further steps. Some appear as shopkeepers or travelling merchants, some take positions as mercenaries or guardsmen, and a few even appear as Objectivists, to further obscure their true affinity.

In these guises, they ferret out sorcerers, academics, and other heretics. When they discover one or deem him to be a threat to the Church, they ride forth to destroy him in the fiery attacks for which their organization has become infamous. During these assaults, they don masks bearing the Prophet’s Cross and refer to each other by names chosen from the Books of the Prophet. Inquisitors and Defenders of the Faith wear red robes and a red mask with a gold Prophet’s Cross, while High Inquisitors and Knight Inquisitors wear black robes and a black mask with a blood-red Prophet’s Cross. Knight Inquisitors also don black armor in conjunction with their robes, if appropriate. On those instances when Verdugo has made a public appearance, he has dressed in white robes and a white mask with a black Prophet’s Cross. When dressed in this manner, the other Inquisitors refer to him as “Grand High Inquisitor Tobias.”

In general, unless operating in Castille, all Inquisition operations are Secret Operations.

International Operations

Although the Inquisition has a great deal of power and authority in Castille, their influence is less welcome elsewhere in Théah. There, they must adopt secretive terrorist tactics in order to continue their holy crusade against science and sorcery. They move in secret, hide their true intentions, and strike only when they know that retaliation is impossible. Their exact *modus operandi* depends on the specific region they have been assigned to.

Avalon

The Knight Inquisitors in Avalon number only a few, and move with extreme care. Most operate under elaborate false identities, and attack only when they know that success is assured. They have good reason to be cautious. Queen Elaine has distanced herself from the Vaticine Church, denounced the Inquisition, and allied herself with the Sidhe. Her government has zero tolerance for Inquisition agents within Avalon’s borders. Verdugo would do anything to destroy her, but his influence is severely limited. So far the Inquisition has undertaken only a tiny handful of assassination attempts, all of which have failed thanks to either the visions of Derwyddon or the actions of MacAllister’s black knights. Other nobles have proven equally difficult to destroy, and the sorcerous Sidhe have lent considerable aid to their Glamour-wielding allies.

With Elaine and her followers out of reach (at least for now), the Inquisition has turned its attention to more accessible targets, namely the Royal Association of Scientific Minds. Emboldened by the successful assassination of Jeremy Cook, they have moved to isolate Avalon’s scholars from the remainder of the populace. They must act carefully, for their small numbers make them exceedingly vulnerable, but by coordinating their attacks, they have brought fear and dissension to Avalon’s heretical scholars. Though the Royal Association perseveres, its membership keeps most of its experimentation a secret. The Inquisition hopes to drive them further into secrecy, where they can be isolated and destroyed one by one.

Inismore and the Highland Marches have only a few Inquisition spies within their borders. The Inquisition has

found it exceedingly difficult to infiltrate the populace of those two nations; the Highlands have too few Vaticines to mask Inquisition activity effectively and the last Knight Inquisitor to set foot in Inismore was promptly cut into fishbait by Mad Jack O'Bannon. Verdugo has decided to concentrate his resources in Avalon and deal with the rest of the Triple Kingdom when circumstances are more favorable.

Castille

In Castille, the Inquisition has free reign. They act openly, dragging heretics into the street for public burnings and keeping the populace under an iron thumb. In many locations, Inquisitors act as *de facto* rulers, issuing edicts and arresting citizens with near impunity. Only the heroics of Los Vagos keep them in check, and the Invisible College must act with the utmost secrecy, if at all. Dozens of scholars have already perished in the flames, and countless pieces of knowledge may have been lost forever.

The only real place of refuge in Castille are the nations' numerous universities, which remain open despite

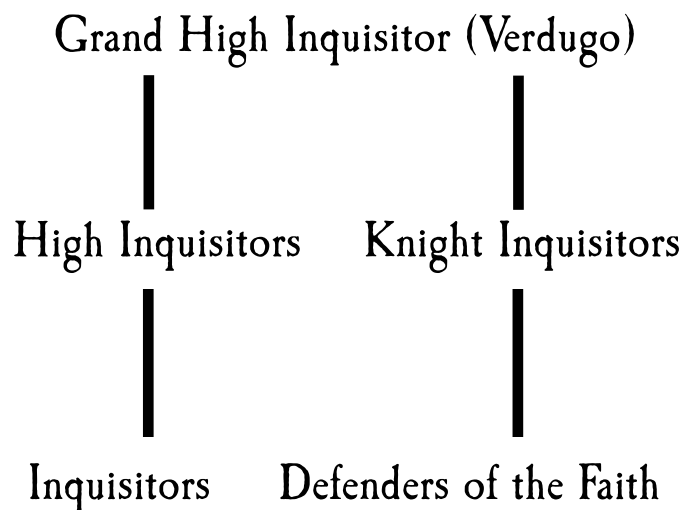
Verdugo's best efforts. The Vaticine Church has supported education for centuries, and even the Inquisition cannot undo it all at once. While severely censored, scholars here can continue to teach, and learning still moves forward, albeit at a snail's pace. Certain avenues of study, such as the search for a cure to the White Plague, are free of Inquisition influence and the Invisible College has used those gaps to disguise its activities. The Inquisition monitors Castille's universities very closely, however, using High Inquisitors and their servants to keep a close eye on things. The remnants of the academic community must move as mice beneath the claw of a cat: delicately and with tremendous caution.

Eisen

In Eisen, the Inquisition has had mixed success. On the one hand, they can't expect any help from the Eisenfürsten, who have troubles of their own to worry about. On the other hand, unless they attack people who are valuable to the Iron Princes, they have little to fear — at least from the rulers of Eisen. Most Knight Inquisitors operate out of the northern half of the country, where the Vaticine Church still holds sway. They move in large bands, often indistinguishable from the mercenaries and bandits who plague the countryside. In this manner, they may strike and retreat with relative impunity, roving far and wide in search of heretics to burn. Might makes right in the mud-soaked fields and unless they encounter a force larger than their own, the Inquisitor bands have little to fear.

Or so they think. The Inquisition's greatest enemy in Eisen is neither the Invisible College nor the Iron Princes, but an order thought destroyed long ago. Die Kreuzritter maintains a strong presence in the country, and has no love for Verdugo's thugs, who they feel have usurped the authority of the Hierophant. They have been quietly killing off Inquisitors whenever they catch them alone, using their Nacht powers to vanish without a trace. At least three Knight Inquisitors have been murdered in this manner, along with almost a dozen Defenders of the Faith. The Inquisition has no idea who committed the murders, but has made finding out one of their top priorities.

Inquisition Organization



Montaigne

With the possible exception of Elaine, there is no ruler the Inquisition hates more than *l'Empereur* Léon. Unfortunately, they have been unable to get close to him after the fiasco of Montegue's Stand, and Léon's increasing paranoia keeps security around him tight. As with Avalon, the Inquisition has had to satisfy itself with less important targets. Inquisition spies have made several inroads into *l'Empereur's* court, where they hope to sniff out admitted sorcerers, political supporters of Léon, and patrons of scientific learning.

The Inquisition has more success with the downtrodden Montaigne peasantry, who sometimes use Inquisition disguises to strike back at particularly obnoxious nobles. Knight Inquisitors find ready hiding places among the hovels and farming villages of Montaigne's poor. From there, they can strike against the nation's Porté-wielding nobility and then vanish among the massive underclass. Of course, the nobles often retaliate against such attacks by executing peasants suspected of harboring Inquisition agents, but Verdugo's men approve of such developments: it exacerbates the nation's simmering class tensions, drawing Montaigne closer to civil war.

The King's Musketeers have made things very difficult for the Inquisition, thwarting numerous plots and forcing the Knight Inquisitors to disguise their actions. Verdugo's men depend on the peasantry to shield them, and the underclass's hatred of Léon does not extend to his gallant swordsmen. Careless Inquisitors may thoughtlessly move against a beloved Musketeer, only to find themselves betrayed by the very peasants they had previously thought so loyal.

Ussura

Because Ussura is such a large place, the Inquisition has had to concentrate their efforts along the border and slowly work their way into the country. They limit their activities to large cities such as Pavtlow and Ekternava, and content themselves with watching and waiting. In a nation full of near-pagans, that is the best they can hope for. Because of the small scale of their operation, Matushka has yet to

The Cardinal's Lodestones

If the College's allies within the Church are to be believed, Cardinal Verdugo possesses a device that the scholars could put to good use.

Verdugo knows what transpires in the farthest corners of Théah because of a rare lodestone that once belonged to the Hierophant. When needles are touched to it simultaneously and then placed on separate pivots, they will sympathetically move parallel to one another.

The Cardinal dispenses these needles to his spies, along with dials surrounded by the letters of the Castillian alphabet. Whenever one of these field operatives has information to report, he uses his needle and dial to transmit a message back to Vaticine City.

If such a lodestone exists, the College would do well to get their hands on it. Not only would they hasten and enhance their own communications, but Verdugo's network of spies would receive a crippling blow.

interfere with them, mostly because she expects her people can handle such a minor threat on their own.

Vendel

Although Vendel remains a stronghold of Objectionism, the Inquisition has a considerable presence within her borders. Powerful men and women from all over Théah congregate in Vendel to discuss financial matters, providing plenty of opportunities to procure information. A well-bribed Vendel servant can be the key to getting rid of a petty Eisen or Vodacce noble who has proven impossible to strike at in their home province. Kirk's cosmopolitan nature and constant ebb and flow form the perfect cover for anyone to operate without suspicion, and the Inquisition has taken full advantage of it.

Like their Ussuran counterparts, Knight Inquisitors in Vendel concentrate more on following leads and procuring information than on burning infidels. They have provided valuable tidbits to their counterparts abroad, resulting in the deaths of numerous heretics in those countries.

Unfortunately, they have been less successful in planning attacks of their own. Since the disappearance of Franz Deleboe in 1661, the Vendel Guilds have watched their territory like a hawk, scanning for any signs of Vaticine interference. Even though numerous scientists operate right under their nose, the Inquisition will not act against them without an airtight plan and a ready means of escape. They have no wish to disrupt a valuable spying operation without due cause.

Vestenmannavnjar

The Inquisition has no foothold among the Vestenmannavnjar. Few of this primitive culture follow the Vaticine religion, certainly not enough to support the sort of fanaticism the Inquisition requires. Even if they did, the Vesten's warlike nature and Lærdom magic would make short work of them. Vestenmannavnjar has enough problems with the Vendel to let another enemy take hold among them.

Vodacce

The Inquisition operates stealthily in Vodacce, despite that nation's proud Vaticine heritage. Many Vodacce nobles look upon them as tools to use against their enemies, and more than one Knight has wound up doing a Prince's dirty work for him. The Inquisitors view such incidents with distaste, for it often compromises their tightly-held beliefs. Vodacce also provides considerable financial support to the Church, making it a political liability to anger the populace too much. The Knight Inquisitors operate in small, tight-knit groups and often go to great lengths to cover their tracks; the less the Princes know about them, the better. An operation in Vodacce can take a year or more to plan, and often results in the disappearance of only one troublesome noble. The Inquisition feels that any measure of success in Vodacce is worth the long preparation.

Defenders of the Faith

Threat Rating: 1-4

Usual Weapons: Rapiers (Medium) and Muskets (Firearms)

TN to be hit: 5 + (5 x Threat Rating)

Skills: Sprinting +1, Disguise +2

Special Abilities: Defenders of the Faith can operate in Brute Squads of up to 8 members, instead of the usual 6.

Description: The Defenders of the Faith comprise the bulk of the Knight Inquisitors' forces, and are often used as muscle or spies. The sight of a dozen masked thugs dressed in red Inquisition robes is enough to send even the bravest man scrambling. Defenders of the Faith are Brutes, but they can be any Threat Rating the GM desires.

Knight Inquisitors

Less public than the Defenders of the Faith, the Knight Inquisitors consist of High Inquisitors chosen by Verdugo himself for their ferocity, cunning, and martial skills. Castillians say that they can call on mystic abilities granted to them by Theus himself, but evidence of this has never materialized. All Knight Inquisitors are Villains with Traits that average at least 3; each should be developed individually by the GM. They are all extremely competent, and more than a match for most inexperienced Heroes. Some of the more senior Knights could even challenge an entire party of Heroes all by themselves. Knight Inquisitors will be examined in more detail in the upcoming *Church of the Prophets* sourcebook.

Possible Mystic Abilities

The following abilities represent some of the possible powers that the Knight Inquisitors might exhibit. It is up to the GM to determine if they exist in his or her campaign, and where their origins lie if they do. They could be the result of the Inquisitor's fanatic beliefs, they could spring from the divine will or Theus, or they could even be the result of a terrible Bargain the Knight Inquisitor made, similar to the one which produced sorcery. Every Knight Inquisitor is different and not all of them have such abilities. You should decide whether other High Inquisitors share them, or if they exist solely among the Knights. Alternately, they could not exist at all, leaving the Knight Inquisitors to operate as other mortals do. Their exact nature is up to you.

Silver Tongue

The Inquisitor has a strangely persuasive voice. He can whip villagers into a frenzy or stall them just long enough to make his escape. The Inquisitor can use this ability once per Act to gain two Kept dice (+2k2) on any one social roll. They often use this ability to recruit new members of the Inquisition or to plant the seed of doubt in a Hero.

Gaze into the Abyss

This ability represents the almost supernatural dread that many Théans feel towards the Inquisitors. The Inquisitor has a terrifying, piercing gaze. Once per Act, he can look into another character's eyes and make a contested Resolve check, to which he gains two Free Raises. If he wins the contest, the losing character treats him as if he had a Fear Rating of 1 for every 5 he won the contest by. Thus, if he wins the contest by 15, he has a Fear Rating of 3 in respect to the character who met his gaze. This Fear Rating lasts until the end of the Story, or until the character defeats the Knight Inquisitor in a fight, whichever comes first.

Fanatic Strength

The Inquisitor can summon up tremendous strength with which to smite the enemies of the Church. Once per Act, the Inquisitor gains 3 Ranks of Brawn for the duration of 1 Action. This ability could be used to break down a door, shatter manacles, bend bars, or just attack a Hero. This ability fails if the Inquisitor uses it to attack a character with the Faith Advantage.

Vanishing Act

The Inquisitor can fade into the shadows in an instant to evade pursuit. Once per Act, when none of the Heroes are looking at him, the Inquisitor can vanish without a trace so long as he isn't being physically restrained and has an unguarded avenue of escape nearby. The precise circumstances are up to the GM, and common sense should prevail. No one should ever actually *see* the Inquisitor vanish; he simply uses his surroundings to maximum advantage. Often, an Inquisitor with this ability will set up a pre-arranged distraction (such as an explosion or fire) to give himself the instant he needs to escape.



Avalon Harvester

Traits

Brawn	3
Finesse	3
Wits	3
Resolve	3
Panache	3

Advantages

Avalon	(0)
Castille	(2)
Vodacce	(2)
Able Drinker	(1)
Dangerous Beauty	(3)
Member: Invisible College	(5)
Member: Jenny's Guild	(4)

Arcana: Righteous

Civil Skills

Courtier

Dancing 1, Etiquette 1, Fashion 1, Oratory 1, Seduction 3

Doctor

Diagnosis 1, First Aid 1

Merchant

Jenny 3

Martial Skills

Dirty Fighting

Attack (Dirty Fighting) 2

Income: (3k2) x 3G Starting/3k2 G monthly, plus 10-100G per year



Castillian Bodyguard

Traits

Brawn 2
Finesse 3
Wits 3
Resolve 2
Panache 3

Advantages

Bonita School (25)
Castille (0)
Member: Invisible College (5)

Civil Skills

Doctor

Diagnosis 1, First Aid 2

Martial Skills

Athlete

Climbing 1, Footwork 3, Sprinting 2, Throwing 1

Bonita School

Bind 1, Disarm 1, Exploit Weakness (Bonita) 1, Wall of Steel 2

Fencing

Attack (Fencing) 3, Parry (Fencing) 3

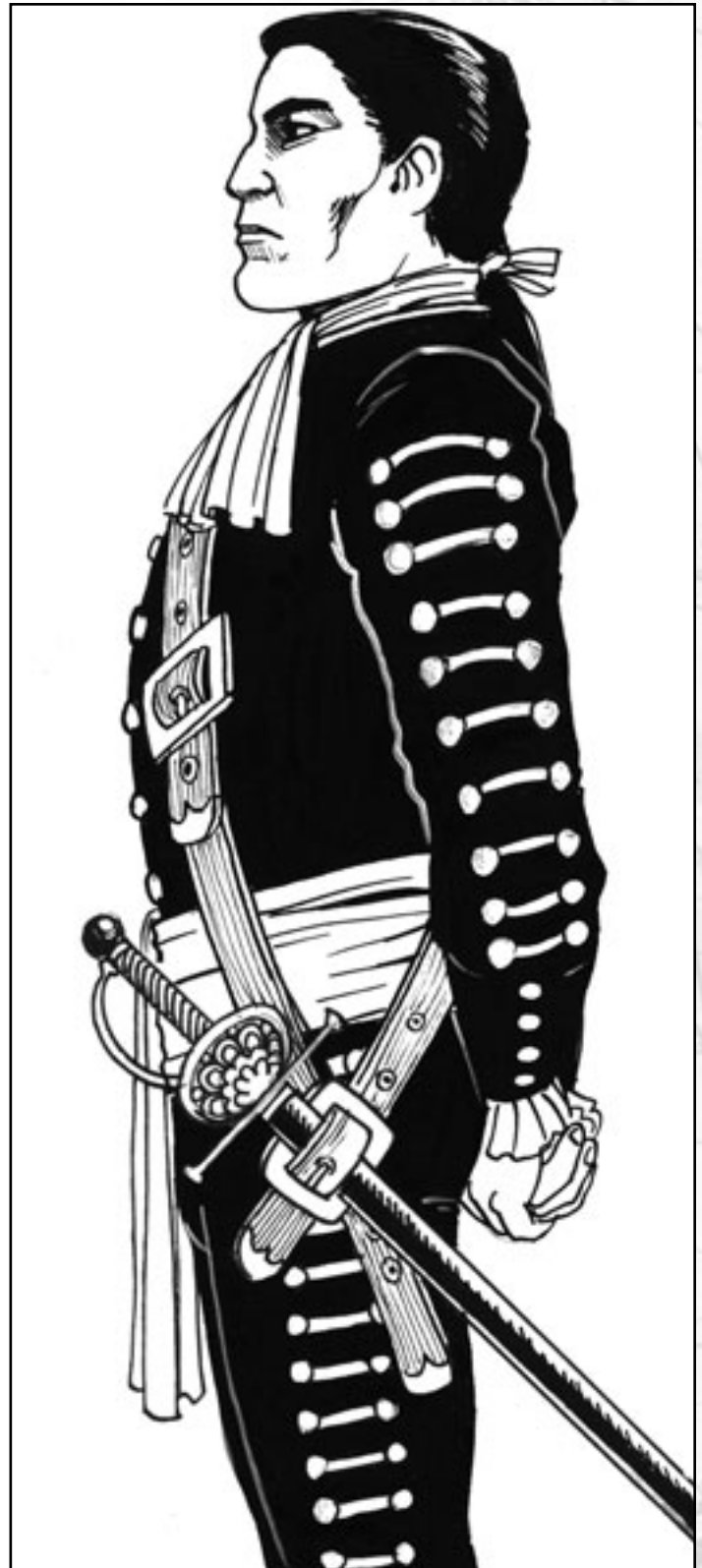
Pugilism

Attack (Pugilism) 2, Footwork 3, Jab 1

Rider

Ride 1

Income: 1k1 G Starting/0G monthly,
10-100G per year





Vendel Gadgeteer

Traits

Brawn 3
Finesse 2
Wits 3
Resolve 3
Panache 2

Advantages

Vendel (R/W) (1)
Théan (R/W) (4)
Member: Invisible College (5)

Background: Rivalry (1)

Civil Skills

Merchant

Blacksmith 2, Tinker 1

Scholar

History 1, Mathematics 2, Philosophy 1, Research 1,
Astronomy 1, Natural Philosophy 3

Martial Skills

Dirty Fighting

Attack (Dirty Fighting) 1, Attack (Improvised Weapon) 2,
Parry (Improvised Weapon) 2

Firearms

Attack (Firearms) 2

Income: 1k1 G Starting/0G monthly,
10-100G per year

Vodacce Secret Scientist

Traits

Brawn	2
Finesse	2
Wits	4
Resolve	2
Panache	2

Advantages

Vodacce (R/W)	(1)
Théan (R/W)	(3)
Faith	(5)
Member: Invisible College	(5)
Ordained	(4)
Research Library	(3)
Secret Laboratory (Small, Secret Entrance)	(4)
Spark of Genius (Natural Philosophy)	(2)

Civil Skills

Courtier

Dancing 1, Etiquette 1, Fashion 1, Oratory 3

Priest

Oratory 3, Philosophy 2, Writing 2, Theology 3

Professor

Oratory 3, Research 3, Writing 2

Scholar

History 1, Mathematics 1, Philosophy 2, Research 3,
Astronomy 1, Natural Philosophy 3, Theology 3

Spy

Shadowing 1, Stealth 1, Cryptography 2

Martial Skills

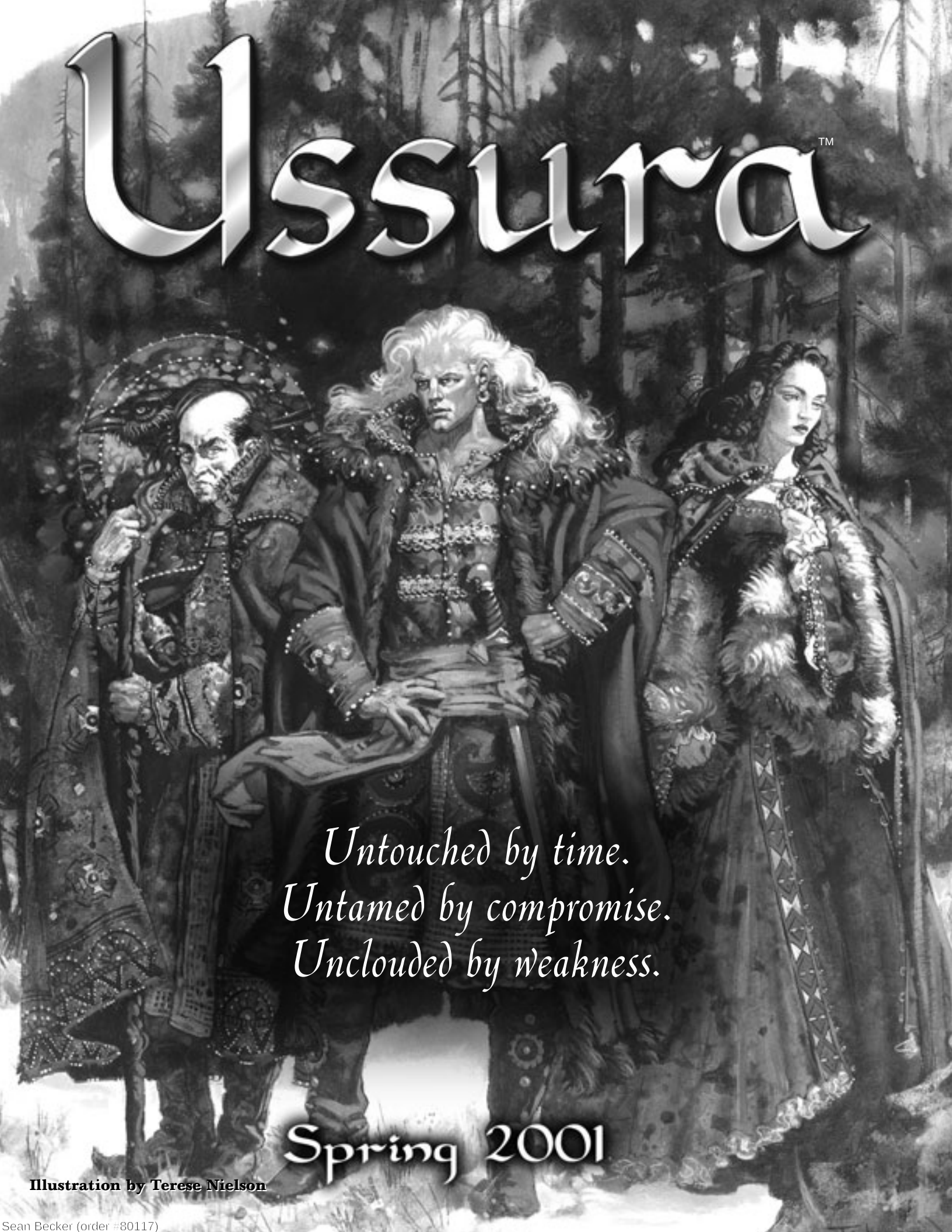
Knife

Attack (Knife) 1, Parry (Knife) 2

Income: 90G Starting/30G monthly,
plus 160-250G per year



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Illustration by Terese Nielson

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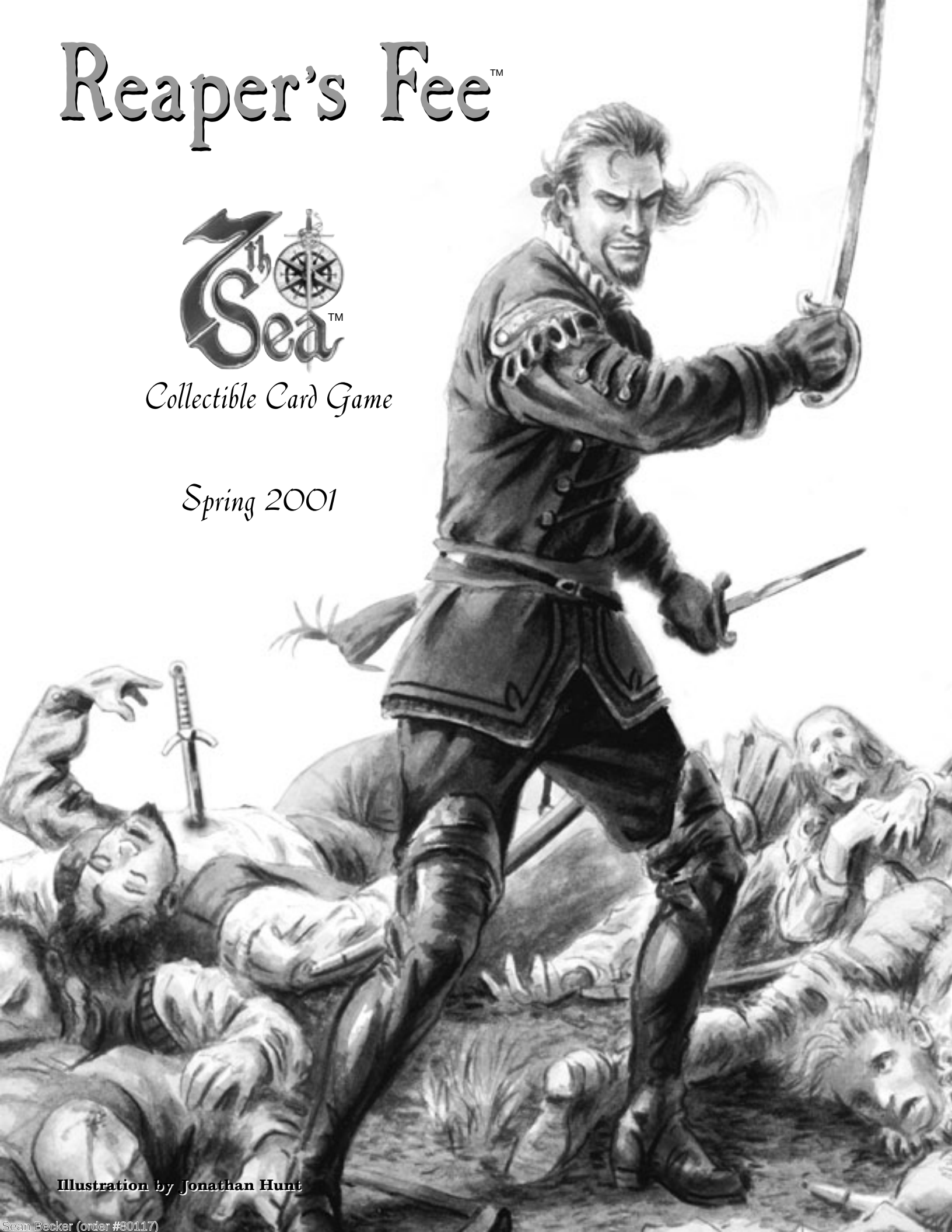


Illustration by Jonathan Hunt

Justice wears a mask...



Los Vagos



Spring 2001

