

The Estalian Inquisition

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La Santa Inquisición (a.k.a. El Santo Oficio)

The Holy Inquisition is a special religious court, one focused on pursuing heretics, magicians, non-humans, Arabs... Anyone can fall in one of these groups if it interests the Inquisition. It is a feared organization in all the places where it has jurisdiction. Nobody contraries it publicly; although some nobles plot in the shadows against it. It is a dangerous game and more than once a noble disappears during the night. Even the Cult of Verena fear to openly argue with it, instead giving a false public image of unity.

Although it is a powerful institution, it is far from achieving total control of the Estalian Kingdoms. The jurisdiction of the Holy Inquisition is limited to the more rural and poor kingdoms. Here their control on the people is amazing. They don't govern openly, but all the petty kings of the region rule with an inquisitor or have an adviser from the Santo Oficio. So they are largely puppet Kings with an obvious apathy towards the duties of government. The advisors and inquisitors usually allow the King to think that they are the actual ruler, until they deviate from the chosen path. In this case, the King will have to face the raw reality of the situation. What would their reaction be? Abdication? Depression? Open or secret rebellion? No one knows. Only the measure of the man and the power they still hold would determine their course of action. Until now none have dared to attempt an open rebellion, but times are changing.

Creation of the Inquisition

The history and creation of the Inquisition is closely tied to the Arabian invasion of Estalia and the subsequent reoccupation. In this context, just after the Arabs were driven home, numerous Estalian Kingdoms were formed. With the exception of Magritta and the people of the Irrana Mountains, who were not completely conquered by the Arabs, numerous racial and religious laws appeared in the rest of Estalia. Racist measures were also promoted by the advisors of the different Kings. The usually small and poor interior kingdoms started a fierce legislation banning the cult of Ormazd. The remaining Arabs had to choose between conversion or leaving their home and livelihoods. Of course the majority of them chose public conversion while they maintained their real faith. This was noticed by the Church of Verena, whose power and influence was growing in these kingdoms. During some secret conversations with each King, some were persuaded to allow the creation of the *Santo Oficio* in his kingdom.

At the beginning, the Inquisition was only a court focused on the search of false converts. It had no additional structure supporting it; so it had to rely completely on the watch and other public institutions. All their dark methods came later, so they did not employ torture, spying or denial during the beginning. These became more prolific when the Suprema judged the sister of the *Inquisidor General* Tomás Ojeda for witchcraft and found her innocent. Sadly Ojeda found his sister sacrificing her son in an sinister ritual two months later. This incident shocked him to the core and he became a fanatic zealot obsessed with the persecution of liars and heretics.

He started a campaign to forbid all uses of magic, a campaign that finally succeeded with a total ban on the free use of magic. Since then a magician needs a special licence from the Crown to practice his art. During that time Ojeda thought on the use of the current interrogation and investigation methods. He made statements on the use of torture and verbal subterfuge, asserting that the truth is hidden in the shadows and the only way to make a liar truly confess is with fire and iron. This discussion opened a widespread debate inside the cult of Verena. The opposition to Ojeda was fierce and numerous, although not amongst the members of the Inquisition who mostly defended Ojeda's ideas.

At the beginning his propositions were rejected and Ojeda gradually ceased his claims. Secretly, he created an organization, *La Hermandad*. Its purpose was to fight unbelievers and those who protected them. So during some years Ojeda remained quiet, organizing a web of informers and recruiting diversely skilled people that could train promising members.

Once the foundations were set they covertly infiltrated all aspects of the cult of Verena, slowly promoting Ojeda's propositions. One by one, the theories and methods were accepted, while *La Hermandad* grew in strength. During that time Ojeda wrote "*El Proceso Inquisitorial*" and "*El Código del Inquisidor*"; two books stating how an inquisitorial process must work and how an inquisitor has to behave. Since then the structure of the Inquisition has remained unaltered, remaining as stated in Ojeda's writings.

Hierarchy of the Inquisition

Fray Tomás Ojeda was the real creator of the Inquisition as it is known in present day Estalia. He created a complex bureaucratic structure to organize the Inquisition. Heading the Inquisition administration is the *Consejo de la Suprema y General Inquisición* lead by the *Inquisidor General*. If the *Inquisidor General* is charismatic or exerts great influence, he becomes an unopposed 'consultative' organ (like during Ojeda's leadership). On the other hand, with a weak *Inquisidor General*, the *la Suprema* may become a real power and the last chance for the accused.

Below *la Suprema* are a number of organisms called *Consejos* (Councils), with a defined territorial jurisdiction, usually an entire kingdom. At the top of each of these Councils is an *Inquisidor Mayor*, and below him are a number of *Inquisidores Provinciales* organized in *Tribunales Provinciales* (Provincial Courts). These also organize temporary *Tribunales Locales* (Local Courts) in those places where heresy has been accused to make the appropriate investigations.

A Local Court consists of one or more Provincial Inquisitors, depending on the importance of the accusation. In extreme cases the Local Court is led by an *Inquisidor Mayor*, but these are rare. It is also composed of a prosecutor, some notaries, a physician, a cleric or monk and a number of *familiares*. The *familiares* are people such as torturers, jailers and constables who have played some important role in an investigation, more usually spies and investigators. A normal practice is that the Local Court officials will arrive in a town some days before the arrival of the Inquisitor, in order to make the first investigations. The common people fear them with an almost superstitious awe.

Sins, Crimes and Censorship

In the beginning the *El Santo Oficio* could only judge followers of Verena and only for witchcraft and religious matters. That is the official charter as it was stated by the cult of Verena and the governors of those Kingdoms under its influence. When the Inquisition was founded it only had that jurisdiction, but its reach has grown since then. Nowadays the Inquisition can judge most citizens and for a variety of crimes. These extra crimes and sins primarily include bigamy, adultery, Ormazd worshipping and reading books by Arab or non-human authors. Between them a large range of more appropriate crimes are judged by the Inquisition. These are sins like blasphemy, apostasy, heresy, witchcraft including unlicensed magicians, Arabic celebrations or false believers and converts. These crimes are their main duty and the reason for the Inquisition's creation.

Due to the religious conversion of most Arabs and the expulsion of the rest along with non humans, the arm of the Inquisition currently reaches across all Estalian Kingdoms. It is an effective tool of repression present in all social classes.

Though these things are true in a general sense, one must not forget that the powers and jurisdiction of the Inquisition vary from Crown to Crown. A crime prosecuted in one kingdom by the Inquisition, might be under the jurisdiction of secular institutions in other provinces or even be perfectly legal. In a similar vein, the Inquisition is dependant on the different royal or local authorities for manpower. The Inquisitors may find their power limited depending on the mood of the authorities. However, not many officers dare to deny the Inquisitors their requests.

Another right of the Inquisition in some provinces, with the particular agreement and control of the Crown, is the moral and political censorship of ideas, books, pictures, music and all artistic expression. In these places, before a book is published or imported from foreign countries it has to be examined by an inquisitorial censor. This has the right to force changes in the writing, eliminate parts of the text and even forbid it completely, including it in the lists of banned books. Different kingdoms have very different lists. In some places these policies are applied retroactively and the censor have the power to examine private libraries. Despite the diligence of the censors their duties

are made difficult by a lack of manpower, the ingenuity of the publishers and the use of the printing press. Writers and publishers use tricks to avoid censorship like printing in a neighbour kingdom or printing a first edition purged by themselves and then print the original text in the second edition. This last trick is one of the most successful because the censors usually only examine the first printing of a book.

The Inquisitorial Process

All the inquisitorial processes start with the accusation. Any citizen of a kingdom where the Inquisition has jurisdiction can make an accusation of heresy. In some kingdoms there are limitations on who has this right and duty. If the accusations are scarce, the inquisitors can provoke them with Edictos de Fe (Faith Edicts) which state that every person of the community must accuse all the heretics he knows or face excommunication. These edicts usually provoke an accusation frenzy in the community, with people accusing each other just by sheer terror to the inquisitorial process.

The inquisitors also have the right to promote Edictos de Gracia (Grace Edicts), which grant every person who recognizes he is guilty of heresy the chance of self-accusation and ask for mercy in 30-40 days. The sinner is sure he won't be heavily punished, but he must pay some money "as alms". As the cynics say the provincial courts usually sign these Edictos when they get short of money.

The accusation is studied by the *Calificadores*, people specialising in Law and Theology, who decide if the accusation belongs to the jurisdiction of the Inquisition. Sometimes they send some *familiares* to make some initial investigations. If they prove that the accusation is false, the informer is accused of calumny and must pay a fine to the Inquisition.

If there is not evidences of the innocence of the accused they are arrested, without an explanation, and all of their assets as well as their families assets are confiscated to pay for the salary of the inquisitors and the cost of investigations and judgement. Once arrested, the accused is informed vaguely of the terms of the accusation, usually only stating that he is accused of a crime of heresy. In the same vein the name of the accuser is kept in secret to avoid any possible vengeance. The accused has to demonstrate their innocence preparing a defence with the aid of a lawyer provided by the Inquisition itself. In the same way they can collect favourable testimonies but they have to wait until the inquisitors have finished their investigations, including an interrogation of themselves. This means that they usually have less time to prepare the defence, but at least the accused, after the interrogations, will have a better idea of what crimes and sins are imputed against them.

The most feared part of the process involves the extraction of evidence from the accused. Provincial Inquisitors are designated to travel to the location and demonstrate the guilt of the accused with various evidences. These are accusatory testimonies collected by the Familiares and the accused own confession. If the accused deny their guilt during the first interrogation, they are tortured until they confesses. The accused is given the chance to reject a confession obtained under torture three days after the confession. If the confession is denied, it is annulled... and the accused can be tortured again.

Although torture is always applied in the presence of a physician, the accused is told that all the temporary and permanent damage and pain he'll suffer is his own responsibility. This is due to their refusal to confess and discharge their conscience. The frightened and half-alienated accused doesn't know the exact terms of the accusation, basically they have no idea of what charges they must confess. So they start a process of trial and error trying to get the charges right. Sometimes this is a short process, but with some of the more insidious accusations the accused can confess almost everything in order to put an end to the torture. All the "extra" self-accused crimes and sins are also judged in the same inquisitorial process.

Once all the evidences from two sides are collected the process begins with the reading of the defence and accusation (in that order). After that the court deliberates in the named Consulta de Fe and decides a verdict. Due to the confession being considered irrefutable evidence, those accused are rarely absolved. The sentencing is performed during an Auto de Fe, a ritual very similar to a mass. This supposes that the heretic is reformed and reconciled with Verena and Mórr for extension.

In the privacy of their homes many Estalians recognize that the inquisitorial process is an excellent tool for eliminating rivals and enemies. The accused is arrested, humiliated by the crowd and his worldly goods confiscated just for starters. Even in the case that the accused is absolved he will always bear the stigma of having been investigated by the Inquisition. Watching from his anonymity the accuser smiles whenever he remembers that his well planned vengeance is completely free.

Verdicts and common punishments:

There are four types of verdicts: absolution, suspension, defamation and conviction.

- Absolution: the accused is released, his goods returned after the payment of fees and declared innocent.
- Suspension: the judgement is suspended provisionally and the accused is released for lack of evidence. His goods remain confiscated and he is still considered suspicious, so he can be arrested again in the future.
- Defamation: the accused is given a spiritual sentence just by sheer suspicion, even though there is lack of proof.
- Conviction: the accused is declared guilty and is given the subsequent punishment. As everywhere else the exigency of the punishments can vary a lot, not only from court to court but from accused to accused.

Some examples of punishments for different crimes and sins are described below.

- Minor crimes (blasphemy, don't adhere to Verenan strictures, etc.): payment of a fine, wearing Sambenito (special costume, very flashy, it marks the person as inquisitorial culprit and invites derision).
- Common crimes (heresy, casting petty magic, using Divination): lashes (usually 100), exile of the locality or province, jail for a specific amount of time in an ecclesiastic institution (usually a convent or monastery).
- Major crimes (recidivist heretics, high level magic using (all above petty magic), Chaos and other dark gods worshipping, necromancy, witchcraft): exile of all the kingdoms where the Inquisition is found (any person who encounters them inside the limits has the duty, and a reward, to kill them), public burning. Just before an accused is burned, they are given the choice of repenting and therefore redemption. If they agree, they will be strangled before the bonfire is lit.

Autos de Fe

One of the most solemn events in rural Estalia are the Autos de Fe, which are performed periodically in the market square. Nobles and commoners assist in these events as if it were just another celebration. A foreigner will probably find it tragic, perhaps even cruel. The Auto de Fe is celebrated once the sentence is given. This ceremony is performed to reconcile the culprits with Verena.

Before the shops open and with the first masses, the Auto de Fe starts with a procession led by a standard bearer and followed by numerous Verenan symbols (Saints, owls, etc.). The standard bearers are nobles and important people dressed with austere black clothes. Behind them, walk the commoners, dressed in the same fashion, followed by the clergy. The barefooted culprits, guided by two familiares, wear the sambenito and follow the clergy. At the end of the retinue walk the members of the Inquisition (notaries, secretaries, fiscals, etc.) followed by the Bishop and the inquisitors.

The procession, softly singing Verenan verses (in Classic), walks to a chosen square. There a wooden flight of steps is set, at the top is which the culprit is seated, awaiting the sentence of death. Below this are seated those sentenced to galleys or hard labour and at the bottom sit those who will be lashed. With the exception of the Bishop and the inquisitors, who have special seats, the rest of the Inquisition's officers sit where they can. The quiet public watch the ceremony

in the crowded square, assistance to the act is a must if you don't want to be prosecuted with heresy or Ormazd worshipping.

The Bishop or an inquisitor makes a speech to provoke fear of the inquisitorial punishment. When he finishes, one of the secretaries reads the name of a culprit, his crimes, his confession and the punishment he will receive. He has to listen standing on a chair with a candle in both hands. When the secretary finishes, the sentence is executed *in situ*. The death penalties come first, followed by the rest. Sometimes this ceremony lasts for a few days.

In some cases, the Auto de Fe is not done publicly and it's performed in the inquisitorial dependencies. This is only done in the most special or troublesome cases.

Relations with the Verenan Cult

Officially, the Cult and the Inquisition are one, the latter being a module of the former. So, in theory, the Inquisition depends on the Cult, but in practice that's not true. Actually, the Inquisition is independent from the Cult and controls it mainly via *La Hermandad*. Almost all the ranks of the Cult are filled with agents trying to promote the purposes of the Inquisition. This is done in various ways: blackmailing, persuasion, robbery, assassination (uncommon), etc. Of course not all of them are performed by the cult agents, the most criminal acts are done by agents from outside the Cult. The other tool used by the Inquisition to control and spread inquisitorial propaganda amongst the Cult is encouraging temporary incorporations of Verenan monks and priests in order to do short services in local and itinerant courts. These services are limited to a maximum of two years of service before they return to their former obligations.

For all the dirty dealings of the Inquisition, one could think that the Verenan priests fear for their lives. This is not so as all Hostile acts performed in a most covert fashion. There are rumours of abducted priests, but they are just that, rumours. This is true for the vast majority of low rank priests, but the higher members usually are aware of this covert tyranny. They have united themselves in a secret organization to stop it. *Los Fieles* (more or less The Faithful), is their name. They are few and still in a period of formation. Yet they are determined to "clean" the Cult. How? Nowadays they are discussing the methods they'll use. There are different opinions varying from covert war to open spreading of the truth within the Verenan clergy. Decrying the situation in public is not considered by them. If they'd clean the Cult of "rats", with the agreement of the different Crowns, they could dissolve the Inquisition, although not all of them would. Note that *Los Fieles* don't separate *La Hermandad* from the Inquisition. However, that is their vision, not the truth.

Relations of the Estalian Cult with foreign Verenan Cults

The foreign cults have different visions of the Estalian one. The relations with the Magrittans are, at best, bad. Not only due the enmity of their kingdoms, but due their different vision on Verena. They assume the "official face" of the Estalian Cult, so they consider its doctrine a recipe of heresy. In the meantime *Los Fieles* are thinking on meeting some Magrittan priests, but are not sure how they'll be welcomed. The Inquisition and the "official" Cult don't recognize the Magrittan priesthood, calling them heretics or schismatics.

Outside Estalia, the Inquisition and the Estalian Cult have little, if any, relations with other Verenan priests. The extremist vision of the Inquisition is considered close to heresy and some decades ago provoked a schism. The Estalian "official" Cult disregards them as soft and heretic, corrupted by their contact with and their dependence on other races and religions. Nowadays, *Los Fieles* are trying to establish some kind of contact with foreign cults, but with little success yet.

Relations of the "official" Cult with Magritta

The relationship with the city of Magritta is especially bad. The Inquisition has no jurisdiction in the city or the surrounding area, but Magritta is too liberal for their taste. There are no extreme racist laws (apart from Arabs being disallowed public office), Ormazd worshipping is not banned, though they can't build new mosques and usury is allowed. Officially, there is no relationship with Magritta, but behind the scenes a lot of secret messages are sent to those agents of *La Hermandad* working there. Some of these agents are high standing members in Magrittan society.

Magritta, in turn, doesn't recognize the existence of the Inquisition, so no direct relationship can exist between them. But they also use their spies to obtain information, rescue prisoners or perpetrate sabotage. In fact, one can say that an intense covert war exists between Magritta and the Inquisition.

Relations of the Inquisition with Bilbali

The relationship with Bilbali is good. In the beginning Bilbali opposed the inception of a religious court, although they shared similar laws with the Inquisition. This was a decision motivated by the political situation, one that involved the rebuilding of an entire kingdom. During the campaign against Bretonnia, the Queen María de las Mercedes, also known as la Piadosa (or in Reikspeil, the Pious), who was a faithful Verenan worshipper, decided to introduce the Inquisition in Bilbali. This idea came from her confessor, Fray Luis Carrasco, a devout Verenan priest and also a member of *La Hermandad*. After a number of meetings between Carrasco and the Queen's advisors, the Inquisition was slowly introduced in Bilbali and the surrounding area. The main aspect that excited the Queen's advisors was the opportunity of recruiting numerous soldiers from the inquisitorial culprits. A number that could be increased if the Inquisition agreed to change penances and promoting Edictos stating that anyone who fought in the war would be absolved of his sins and crimes. This led to the rise of the Inquisition in Bilbali, establishing new courts across the city and its estates.

Nowadays the situation is quite balanced. The Inquisition has some power, similar to that owned by some influential nobles. They join the nobles in plotting against each other trying to diminish each other's influence but without great success. Lately it seems that the Inquisition is starting a new covert campaign, although the details are unknown by the Inquisition itself. Surely somebody knows what's going on, but who? This is the question that turns in the minds of those people involved in such affairs.

Relations of the Inquisition with the Irrana Mountains people

There is no relationship between the Inquisition and the Irrana Mountain people. Although they have no court here, the inquisitors still consider the Irrana Mountains within their jurisdiction. Of course the Irrana people don't think so, avoiding any inquisitor who enters their territory. The Inquisition has made no real attempt to force the issue of their "jurisdiction" yet. Mostly because the mountain people are fierce warriors and followers of the Old Faith and Ecaté, although sparse followers of Ulric and Taal exist. So "the Inquisition has nothing to do here" is the common belief amongst these people.

This doesn't stop the Inquisition from making claims in its propaganda that the mountain people are primitive barbarians who commune with warlocks, witches, daemons and represent an actual danger for the morality of Estalian societies. Periodically the Inquisition tries to fund an alliance between the different kingdoms to cleanse the mountains. Given the difficulty of an invasion and the petty rivalries between the soldiers and officers from different kingdoms, these expeditions have been limited to raids against isolated towns, much to the frustration of the Inquisition.

Relations with other Southern cults

The relations with the Southern cults are usually good. The cult of Mórr is, more or less, involved in the Inquisition, especially those cases involving necromancy, tomb robbing and ghouls among others. Those unrepentant sinners sentenced to death by the Inquisition are not buried by Mórr priests, denying them Mórr's Realm of Dead and falling in the hands of Khaine. They only perform rituals to prevent their return as undead. This is considered a harsh punishment.

Relations with the cult of Myrmidia are quite strange and complex. The relations with the Magrittan base of the Myrimidian cult are cold, but better than those with the Verenan cult. Relations with the cults of Myrmidia within the Inquisition's own dominion are much warmer. Here the Myrmidians usually work for the Inquisition or at least don't disturb it. Sometimes this behaviour has provoked tensions between the local cults and the Magrittan Temple.

"Shallya es harina de otro costal" (Shallya, more or less) is an Estalian sentence that, although quite difficult to translate to Reikspeil, accurately represents the situation. The relations with Shallya are cold, extremely cold. The Inquisition tries to establish good relations with them but the Shallyans don't want any part of the Inquisition's brutal domain. They are simply horrified by the cruel methods of the Inquisition. In spite of their disdain, the Inquisition treats Shallyans with respect and extreme care.

Unbeknownst to the Inquisition there is a Shallyan secret organization, called *Caridad* (Mercy), which helps those people pursued by them. Recently and surprisingly these people have made use of a traditional right of the Shallyan clergy which permits the access to an inquisitorial court to act as an honorific observer. Here they try to mitigate the suffering of the culprits, although with little success since they have no powers. One of their more daring plans is the promotion of a religious test called the Hand of Verena. In this test the culprit holds a red-hot iron bar with a hand and then the hand is muffled with a sack during three days. If after this time the hand appears healed, the culprit is innocent; if not it's another evidence of their guilt. During these three days the Shallyans pray to their Goddess for her compassion and more than once the observer and his companions try more direct solutions like secretly casting healing spells on the culprit's hand. So far this practice has not been discovered, but if it is the consequences for the Cult of Shallya will be serious.

The relationship with Verena

There are two views held in the hearts of Verena's Estalian followers. One holds that Verena doesn't view the Inquisition as her true priests, just impostors. They are nothing more than people who are corrupting her cult and strictures, although they think they behave in a righteous manner. In this case, Verena would send visions to the true followers to try to cleanse the cult.

The other opinion is that Verena adopted a hard attitude in the Estalian kingdoms, appearing as an aspect of her concerns for fighting against liars instead of upholding justice or fighting against oppression. In this aspect, Verena would prefer the lesser evil of tyranny rather than letting liars go without punishment.

The practical difference between the two options is the use of Divine Magic. In the first case, they can't and in the later, they can. Usually only spells focused on interrogation and investigation are used.

La Hermandad

Unbeknownst to most people, this secret organization is one of the real Estalian powers. The few people who know something about it, usually just its name, mostly think that they are just the secret arm of the Inquisition. Although it is not really true, nobody would say it is false. *La Hermandad* usually acts as the secret arm of the Inquisition, compiling information, infiltrating in strategic positions of power, blackmailing, murdering, etc. They do the dirty work of the Inquisition but they are not part of the Inquisition. The majority of members are laymen and some are Verena's priests or Inquisitors. If one scratches the surface, it is plain to see that their relation is not as clear as one might think. This started long time ago when Fray Tomás de Ojeda created it.

Creation of the organization

As said earlier, Ojeda was the creator of *La Hermandad*. He did it during the Reform of the Inquisition (a.k.a. El Plan Ojeda) when the Inquisition, as we know it today, was born. As any Estalian scholar could tell you, Ojeda's first propositions were rejected after a fierce debate inside the cult of Verena. Since the Cult was, in his eyes, full of soft people with nearly heretical attitudes in their opposition to his propositions, Ojeda plotted a new course of action. Although he was a fanatic and wanted to punish them publicly for their sins, he was also a pragmatic man. In fact Ojeda's character is an example of the contradictions that affect the Estalian people's attitude, a blend of passion and pragmatism. So, for some years, he stayed quiet but not inactive.

The first thing he did was the creation of the *La Hermandad* and writing three books, not two as most scholars and inquisitors would say. "*La Senda de la Iluminación*" was the secret book. It stated the objectives, role and organization of *La Hermandad*. Probably all the copies of this book are in the hands of members of the organization. If a copy fell into the wrong hands, it could become the most important evidence of the existence of the organization. Neither the Inquisition (the members aware of its existence) nor the *Fraternitas* would like this to come about and they would do anything to avoid the revelation.

Hierarchy of the organization

As opposed to the Inquisition, *La Hermandad* has a non-bureaucratic and more flexible structure. It was thought of as a web, an interconnected, complex and effective organization. Every group of *Familiares* (note they use the inquisitorial term), is connected with three *Hermanos* (contacts who supply them with orders and resources) and every *Hermano* is connected with three groups of *Familiares*.

Above that level are the *Consejos*, one for every kingdom or province, depending of the importance and degree of control of the zone. The number of people who form a *Consejo* varies depending on the extension of the local web. Usually there is one *Consejero* for every five or ten *Hermanos*, so they are mostly small groups.

The *Consejos* are coordinated by the *Fraternitas*, the brain of the organization. This group is formed by one person per kingdom and they decide a general course of action for every *Consejo*, depending on the politics and their objectives. Within *La Hermandad* rumours exist that there is a person, el *Gran Hermano*, who is behind the *Fraternitas*, pulling the strings. Only the members of the *Fraternitas* would know if it is true. Some even dare to connect the *Gran Hermano* with some legends about what happened to *fray Tomás de Ojeda* after his death and his posterior sanctification.

Objectives of *La Hermandad* and its relations with the Inquisition

Although *fray Tomás de Ojeda* created it to fight unbelievers and those who protect them, he realized that his fight wouldn't be effective until all the Estalian kingdoms made an united front. So this was and is the main objective of *La Hermandad*. The secondary, though no less important, objectives are the fight against all kind of magic and supernatural manifestations, such as monsters, magicians, witches, chaos rituals and the like. This fight involves not only destroying the physical manifestation, but also any existing knowledge about it --including legends. They never use magic, even when they fight against magicians or the undead.

Since its creation *La Hermandad* and the Inquisition have followed parallel paths because the Inquisition have always been the main candidate to rule Estalia. If a better candidate appeared, the *Fraternitas* would change its support. This is the greatest fear of the Grand Inquisitor because without the aid of the organization, *Los Fieles* could dissolve or purge the Inquisition. So the role of *La Hermandad* within the Inquisition is essential for its continued existence, because the Verenan Cult is basically controlled by its members infiltrated within the Cult's ranks. He would do anything to retain the organization on his side. So the mighty and feared Inquisition is a giant with feet made of mud.

Lately the Grand Inquisitor is worried about the new and unknown covert campaign in Bilbali. He and the Suprema have not ordered it so he suspects *La Hermandad* is behind it. He is definitely unsure about the reasons they might have for doing it.

Appendix:

Tribunales Provinciales

One the most notable facts about the Inquisition is its complex bureaucratic organization. As said earlier there are local courts, which are set where an heresy case appears, but there also exist permanent provincial courts. The only difference between them is that the local courts are temporary and usually don't have all the staff that a provincial court has. So we can say that the local courts are petty and handy versions of the provincial courts.

Below you'll find the hierarchy of the organization of a *Tribunal Provincial*:

1. Inquisidores & Fiscal.
2. Calificadores, Consultores & Ordinario.
3. Secretarios de secuestros, Secretarios del secreto, Alguacil Mayor, Receptor, Contador, Abogado del Fisco, Juez de bienes confiscados, Escribano del juzgado de bienes & Procurador del Fisco.
4. Nuncio, Portero, Alcaide, Comisario, Despensero de los presos, Médico & Barbero.
5. Personas honestas, Familiares & Notarios

Inquisidores

The provincial courts are led by inquisitors, who have under their jurisdiction a determined circumscription and the staff working for their court. They are nominated by the *Inquisidor General* and the *Consejo*, depending of the power of the former. Each court there should be at least two inquisitors: a theologian and a jurist; or two jurist, in this case they will have the aid of theologians.

Fiscal

His duty is promoting the accusation and performing the pursuit of a case until a definitive sentence is given. He presents the accusations against the suspects in general terms, in particular, for the specific crimes and sins each of them committed. Due to his importance, it's the position just behind the inquisitor's one. Amongst his varied duties, he keeps one of the keys of the *Cámara del Secreto*, a place where the documentation about cases are kept.

Calificadores

They are theological advisors who pass judgement on a culprits' propositions, declarations or writings. They are designed amongst the clergy and, usually, with influence within the cult. Their judgements dictate if propositions are heretic or close to it and if the authors are heretics or suspected as such. In the latter case the strength of the suspicion is also stated. One of the requisites for being a calificador is being a theology professor. The calificadores have a high social standing.

Consultores

They have the right to vote on the arrest of a suspect, their torture and sentence. If the inquisitors and the *Ordinario* agree, but the *Consultores* disagree the decision of the inquisitors is applied (even if the *Consultores* have majority).

Their designation depends on the kind of judicial organs, royal and ecclesiastic, which are present in the city where the court belongs. They can be laymen or members of the Church but always with high social standing and superior studies (clerics, lawyers, mayors...). The proportion of religious people depends of the importance of the place and its spiritual chieftain.

Ordinario

Ecclesiastic judge representing the diocese Bishop who has casting vote on the *Consultas de Fe*. There is a specific voting order: first, calificadores; second, ordinario, and third, inquisitors. His participation ensures a corporative attitude of the Verena cult, an image of unity.

Secretarios del secreto

They take the minutes of all the official court events. They take part in all the inquisitors and other officials actions within the court or on the streets. There are usually three in each district. They are also the persons in charge of the *Cámara del Secreto*, where all the documents are kept.

Secretarios de secuestros

They write a detailed list of confiscated goods. They also take the minutes of seizures in civil causes for unpaid credits to the court.

Alguacil Mayor

His duty is arresting those people indicated by the inquisitors. To do it, he has to be accompanied by a receptor, a secretario del secuestro, and familiares. He can ask for help from the civil authorities. He also looks after the safety of the imprisoned and prevents them from talking with other people, unless the visit is authorized by the inquisitors. He is, with the *secretario del secreto*, the most important charge within the secondary functionaries.

Receptor

They handle the *Santo Oficio* properties. He is appointed by the King but rely directly on the inquisitors, without their decision he cannot do anything. He is the person in charge of the confiscated goods, together with the *alguacil* and the *notario de secuestros*. He represents the Crown, which has the right to dispose of the confiscated goods.

Contador

He revises the counts presented by the receptor and he passes a detailed judgement on them.

Abogado del Fisco

His duty is representing the Inquisition in all the cases that endanger its properties or economic interests.

Juez de bienes confiscados

He attends those reclamations involving confiscated goods presented by sons or descendants of the sentenced, his creditors or third people. In the same way, due to the court investing great part of confiscated money in *censos* (mortgage guaranteed credits at a specific interest, usually high), they also are in charge of the cases generated by the retrieval of the goods.

Escribano del juzgado de bienes

He takes the transcript of court sessions and interrogations.

Procurador del Fisco

He helps the *abogado del fisco* in his duty handling the cases involving the court's properties. He collects the documents needed, current location of the witness, etc.

Nuncio

He is the court messenger. He brings the inquisitors letters and edicts inside and outside its jurisdiction.

Portero

He guards the Inquisition building, controlling entry and exit of people.

Alcaide

His duty is to control the cells and look after the culprits. He receives those people arrested by the *Alguacil Mayor*. He lists all clothes the jailed is wearing and those things possessed by them during their imprisonment. He has to maintain the prisoners in isolation. When a prisoner is called to the court they are led by him. Exception is made via an inquisitorial decision.

Comisario

They are the immediate bosses of the *familiares*, due this fact they usually are ecclesiastic, and are in charge of a territory. They participate in the reception of accusations, edict publication, verifying the genealogy of the aspiring members of the court, etc. In the more complicated zones, like borders or ports, their number increases. They also do state security functions like avoid firearm and horse smuggling.

In the inquisitorial district, outside the location of the Court, anybody can talk with the *Comisario* instead of presenting an accusation directly to the court. This accusation is transcribed by a notary. Then the *comisario* starts the investigations calling the witnesses, who are interrogated with a standard questioner. The collected information then is sent to the Court. They have the choice of ordering the arrest of suspects if there are enough evidences or/and if they think that the accused might try to escape.

Dispensero de presos

He is the person in charge of the food store in Inquisition jails. He receives the food necessary for the feeding of the prisoners from the hand of the *Comisario*, with the presence of the *secretario de secuestros*.

Médico

The physician takes care of the health of the prisoners. In cases of torture he oversees the operation advising when a tortured prisoner will receive permanent or mortal harm. The torture is not stopped in the former case; it's just an advice for the prisoner, an exhortation to confession; but in the latter case the inquisitors stop the interrogation.

Barbero or Sangrador

He helps the physician as assistant.

Personas honestas

They are people considered to be honest, and ratifies the honesty of the asseverating of the witnesses.

Familiars

Their duties are usually not very specific, but some are very important. They accuse suspects, lead prisoners, obey the orders of the inquisitors and other such mundane tasks. There are some requisites to become a *familiar*. They have to be married, widowed or be a priest of low rank (initiates). They cannot be foreigners, they must live in the location of the Court and make an oath before entering the career.

There are two classes of familiars: full-time *familiars* and additional *familiars*. The full-time *familiars* are people working for (and getting paid by) the Inquisition. They do different jobs, usually informative, as torturers, notaries, investigators and spies. These familiars usually have a specific duty that varies from familiar to familiar (i.e. a torturer or a spy is a full-time familiar). On the other hand these additional *familiars* don't get paid, they do it for the position and only work when they are called by the Inquisition. The only full-time duty they have is that they have to reveal those cases of heresy they are aware of.

Notarios

The *comisario* has to be accompanied by a notary who acts as secretary and notary, giving an accurate register of all the errands. To accomplish this duty the *comisario* usually uses a familiar as *notario*.