

THE ULTRAMARINES

by John Lambshead

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE ULTRAMARINES

The Ultramarines were part of the First Founding Space Marine legions, which means that they are older than the Imperium itself. The genetically engineered warriors of the First Founding were the elite shock troops in the Emperor's armies way back in the Age of Strife. Ultramarines were one of the twenty vast Space Marine legions that took part in the Great Crusade to reconquer the galaxy under the leadership of their genetically modified Primarchs – Roboute Guilliman in the case of the Ultramarines.

The warlord of the Emperor's armies was the Primarch known as Horus, Commander of the Lunar Wolves Space Marine legion. He manoeuvred the loyal Ultramarines far from Earth then led more than half the Space Marine legions west across the galaxy in an invasion of Earth to mount a coup against the Emperor. Horus and the rebels had been utterly corrupted by the Dark Powers of the Warp.

Advancing along the southern Galactic axis, the Ultramarines missed most of the heavy fighting of the Horus Heresy that occurred to the galactic north-west, so were in better condition than most of the loyal marines when Horus fell. The Ultramarine legion held the Imperium together immediately after the revolt and was instrumental in the reconquest of rebel planets and the reconstruction of Mankind's empire. The Heresy confirmed Roboute Guilliman's conviction that strict adherence to orthodoxy was vital for spiritual fortitude, and, hence orthodoxy has been the Ultramarines' strict policy ever since.

Seven years after the Horus Heresy, the Space Marine legions were broken up into smaller formations called chapters. The Ultramarines contributed twenty-three new chapters including the Aurora, Black Consuls, White Consuls, Doom Eagles, Eagle Warriors, Genesis Chapter, Inceptors, Libators, Mortifactors, Novamarines, Patriarchs of Ulixis, Praetors of Orpheus, Silver Eagles and White Consuls. Most of these chapters follow the strict orthodoxy of Guilliman, but not all – the Mortifactors are an example of a radical chapter. Orthodox marines are known as 'Codex Chapters'.

It is believed that Guilliman was one of the first High Lords of the Imperium and that he personally laid down the structure of the Imperial Guard and the Imperial Navy at the same time as developing the Codex Astartes to govern Space Marine doctrine in the future. In the eyes of the Ultramarines, this makes the Codex Astartes a religious instrument of supreme authority and they are extremely reluctant to challenge or modify any of its precepts.

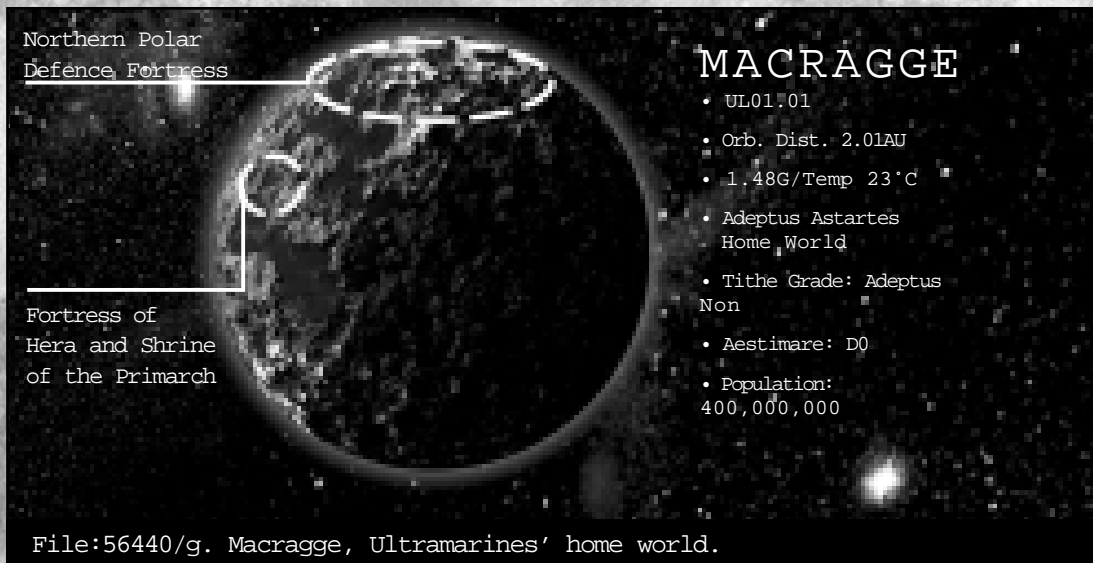
ULTRAMAR

The Ultramarines are unusual in that they control and rule the entire subsector of Ultramar. Most Space Marine chapters have a single base of operations, usually a planet but sometimes another orbital structure. Ultramar consists of eight major inhabited systems that share a common cultural heritage with the primary world, Macragge. It is reckoned to be the happiest and best ruled place in the galaxy. The worlds of Ultramar are unusual in that they are held in ecological balance, and are not characterised by the typical industrial

Roboute Guilliman

Roboute Guilliman was a Primarch, one of the genetically engineered supermen created by the Emperor to lead his armies. When the Primarchs were still in their incubators they were stolen into the Warp by the Dark Powers and scattered throughout the galaxy. Many of the Primarchs were damaged by their time in the warp, a fact that was not to become clear until the catastrophic Horus Heresy, but Guilliman avoided this fate.

His capsule fell onto Macragge where it was discovered by noblemen out hunting. The semi-divine child was adopted by Konor, one of the two Consuls that ruled Macragge. Roboute Guilliman, as he was named, astonished his tutors and while still young led a successful campaign against Illyrium barbarians. Returning home in triumph, Roboute discovered that the second Consul, Gallan, had conspired against his adopted father and assassinated him in the very Senate House itself. Guilliman crushed the rebellion swiftly and completely and assumed power as sole Consul, an office he held when Macragge was rediscovered by Imperial forces fighting the Great Crusade.



desolation common across much of the rest of the Imperium. The Ultramarines recruit from all eight inhabited systems so they have a huge pool of potential recruits to ensure the highest possible quality in their candidates.

All the worlds of Ultramar could be classified as 'civilised' because of their high technological infrastructure base but they are otherwise quite distinct. They are largely self-sufficient in food and basic products but merchant traders have a flourishing business in specialties and delicacies between the systems.

Macragge, the Prime world, is a wind-blasted mountainous place. Three quarters of the main landmass is largely uninhabited bare rock and moorland. Castra Magna, the Ultramarine fortress, is located in the centre of this continent built upon a granite crag surrounded by black, impenetrable, splintered mountain ranges. At the heart of Castra Magna is an awe-inspiring adamantium and marble Gothic temple that is one of the holiest places in the Imperium. It is roofed by a multi-coloured glass dome that is the largest ever created by human hands. Inside the temple is the shrine to Roboute Guilliman. The Primarch sits upon a marble throne within a stasis field, his mortal remains held out of time for all time with the fresh blood of his wounds glistening upon his torn throat. Pilgrims travel from all over the galaxy to pray at the throne and many priests claim that Guilliman's mortal wounds are slowly healing, something impossible in a stasis field.

The Ultramarines venerate Castra Magna as the heart of their fiefdom and the second most important sacred site in the Imperium after the Holy Throne-Room of Terra. The fortress contains the Ultramarine Headquarters and Primary Monastery; the Ultramarine Admiralty

and Primus Signalis is also based here. The Macraggan civil population lives in modestly sized cities of fewer than 50 million people along the coasts of the continent and on the larger islands.

The second most important planet of Ultramar is the forgeworld Calth. This is an airless world with a surface of bare metallic-blue frozen rock illuminated by the lethal rays of a blue star. The large population live in huge caverns constructed deep underground. These are so enormous that they have their own internal weather. Basic foodstuffs are grown in nutrient vats in sufficient quantities to feed the population but luxury 'natural' food is imported from neighbouring Iax. Calth is the primary manufacturing centre for Ultramar. It is famous for its shipyards that build and service the Ultramar fleets of starships, both merchant and Space Marine vessels. These docks are unusual in being located on the surface of the airless planet rather than in orbit. The inhospitable smooth surface is perfect for starships. The dockyards are protected by tall surface-to-space torpedoes and puissant plasma cannon batteries. Armed battle stations hang overhead in geosynchronous orbit.

Iax is known as the Garden of Ultramar as it is a verdant, fertile, agricultural world. The world has a low population split into small towns dotted amongst farms and parklands. The only city is the ancient citadel of First Landing. This adamantium fortress is protected by clusters of mega-lasers and a detachment of Ultramarines. Iax is also famous for the fast efficient hydroway transport systems that link the market towns to First Landing.

Talassar is a water planet, 90% of its surface is covered by the world ocean which teems with

sea life. Talassar is a productive marine agricultural world with rich plankton fields and kelp beds. The fins of the giant sunfish are considered to be one of the great food delicacies of the Imperium. There is a small continent, Glaudor, where the capital is located. This was the site of a famous Ultramarine victory over Ork invaders not long after the Horus Heresy. Much of the modest population is dispersed among the rocky islands.

In complete contrast to Talassar are the Three Worlds: Quintarn, Tarentus and Masali that orbit a common centre of gravity. These are largely desert worlds. Nevertheless, they are a major agricultural centre for the more populated worlds of Ultramar. The soil is rich and food is grown in vast farm domes abundantly equipped with water condensers on the roof, which fill capacious underground reservoirs. Similar domes enclose the cities of the Three Worlds and they are famous for their

parks and lush gardens. The odds against the natural formation of a stable triple-planet arrangement are infinitesimally low and members of the Inquisition have often speculated that the Three Worlds are the artificial construct of a powerful, lost Xenorace. If so, no trace of this lost civilisation has ever been found.

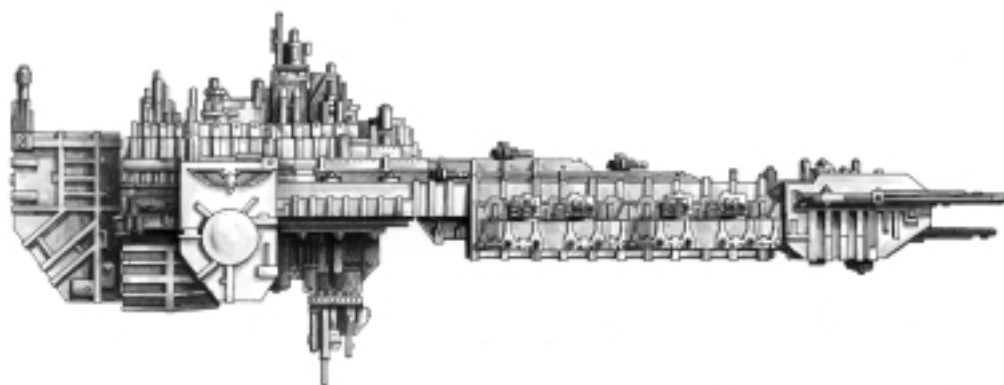
Prandium has the most biodiverse planetary ecosystem of all the worlds of Ultramar. It was settled late, soon after the Horus Heresy, by colonists from Macragge itself. Prandium is known as the Jewel of Ultramar because of its wide range of biohabitats and subsequent bewildering species richness and variety. Hunting lodges for rich off-worlders dot the Prandium outback.

The last important settled world is Espandor, also colonised from Macragge. The story goes that a flotilla of traders was blown off course by a warp storm in the Age of Strife and then

SEDITION OPPRIMERE 450 pts

The Seditio Opprimere was reduced to a near hulk at the Battle of Prandium. It was rebuilt as a gunship with powerful long-range plasma lances to give the Ultramarines stand-off fire

support when fighting Tyrannids using the new fleet tactics. This severely compromised the ability of the barge to deploy troops.



TYPE/HITS	SPEED	TURNS	SHIELDS	ARMOUR	TURRETS
Battleship/12	20cm	45°	3	6+	3
ARMAMENT		RANGE/SPEED		FIREPOWER/STR	
Port Lance		60cm		6	
Starboard Lance		60cm		6	
Dorsal Bombardment Cannon		30cm		8	
Prow Torpedoes		30cm		6	
Prow Launch Bays		Thunderhawks: 20cm		2 Squadrons	
				Front	

Note: To model the Seditio Opprimere, remove the lateral gun batteries from a battle barge and replace them with lance batteries from the plastic Imperial Navy weapons sprues.



stranded by further warp storms. It has two large continents, the eastern one is left as a wildlife reserve and even the western is sparsely populated.

Ultramar is located in Segmentum Tempestus in the galactic south where the stars are thin and mostly concentrated in a single galactic arm which spirals lazily out of Segmentum Solar, through Tempestus, and out into intergalactic space beyond the reach of the Astronomicon. There are no significant naval assets in the subsector. The nearest major naval station is at Bakka. In truth, before the Tyranid incursions, Ultramar had little need of naval assets. Tempestus tends to be troubled by raiding rather than outright invasions or Black Crusades like those sectors unfortunate enough to be closer to Ork Empires or the Xenos and raiders who are brave or foolish

enough to prey on Ultramar have to face the wrath of the Ultramarines.

CODEX SPACE MARINE FLEETS STRATEGY, ORGANISATION AND TACTICS

After the Horus Heresy, Guilliman took steps to ensure that no single person or group could ever again hold enough military power to attempt to attempt to seize sole power. To this end, the Imperial fleet and the Imperial Guard were split into two distinct organisations with quite separate lines of command up to the highest levels of the Imperial Government and inhabited planets were garrisoned by independent Planetary Defence Forces. The idea was that rebel governors or generals would be unable to move their forces and spread heresy. Similarly, rebel admirals would lack armies to conquer planets. The Space Marine legions represented both a serious

potential threat and a uniquely powerful force, capable of policing other Imperial military formations. But who would guard the guards?

Guilliman's solution was to break the legions down into smaller units now called chapters so that the guards could guard each other. In this way, the chapters could be allowed to keep their own space fleets. A Space Marine fleet has four functions; (i) to patrol Imperial space to watch for rebellion, heresy or xeno-intrusion – the investigation of space hulks is a vital marine duty, (ii) to provide an immediately available lift capability to move marines and their equipment anywhere in human space at a moment's notice, (iii) to assault defended planets and space installations so as to safely deliver marines and their equipment into combat, and (iv) to support marines fighting in ground combat. The Ultramarines, as a codex

chapter, adhere to these guidelines rigidly, unlike some other chapters who may choose to alter the role of their fleet to increase their effectiveness in space.

A marine fleet is not designed to fight naval battles, that is the function of the Imperial Navy. A chapter would normally only accept a general fleet action under the most favourable circumstances. Marine ships are equipped with bombardment cannon, boarding torpedoes and Thunderhawk gunships. These heavily armed, armoured assault shuttles perform tolerably well as space fighters but have little in the way of anti-shipping weaponry.

Marine ships lack the populous crews of navy vessels (which can be like moving cities). Machinery and servitors carry out much of the work. The rest of the crew are mostly chapter



serfs up to junior officer level; marines make up only the senior officers and assault troops. Codex chapters traditionally do not train specialist naval officers; any senior marine is expected to captain a starship or lead a fleet as necessary. The only outsiders in the crew of an Astartes vessel are the families of the Navis Nobilite who are bound by ancient blood oath to supply warp navigators for the Astartes.

A classic marine engagement would involve; (i) reconnoitring a rebel world with rapid strike vessels before commitment of capital ships, (ii) closing with capital ships and suppressing orbital defences, preferably by capturing them in a lightning assault using boarding torpedoes and Thunderhawk assault shuttles, but destroying them if necessary, (iii) suppressing ground defences with orbital bombardment and drop pods, (iv) reinforcing the assault with

waves of Thunderhawks, and (v) once a landing zone is secure ferrying down larger war machines.

Traditionally, codex Space Marine chapters hold themselves aloof from the Imperial Navy, often flatly refusing to engage in joint manoeuvres or even to give information about their warships' capabilities to Navy planners. They see little point in giving assistance to potential opponents especially when they fail to envisage circumstances where navy and marine fleets would fight a joint fleet action. This shortsightedness has been proven to be a crucial error on several occasions, such as the Third Armageddon War where the very particular circumstances meant that the vast majority of available vessels were in fact Space Marine ships, not those of the Imperial navy.

TYRANID INCURSIONS

Behemoth

The Tyranids were first encountered at an Adeptus Mechanicus outpost at Tyran Primus in Segmentum Ultima, 60,000 light years from Sol to the galactic east. They are assumed to have invaded the galaxy from somewhere east via intergalactic space in the vast empty distances between the galaxies.

This first recognised fleet was labelled Hive Fleet Behemoth by the Inquisition. Behemoth drifted through the southern sectors of Ultima, fortunately missing the densely packed Imperial worlds in the spiral arm, but destroying hundreds of thousands of planetary ecosystems in its passage until it came to Ultramar.

After some initial skirmishing with Tyranid vanguard flotillas, the main hive fleet launched an assault on Prandium. The Ultramarines massed in force in an uninhabited system with a warp gate to Prandium and then moved into the system to meet the invasion under the leadership of the Lord of Macragge himself, Master of Ultramarines, Marneus Calgar.

The battle was little short of a disaster. Calgar followed the Codex Astartes to the last full stop and allowed the Tyranids to reach Prandium while harassing and picking off their flank guards. The Master had set up marine units in defensive fortified positions on the planet. He intended to catch the invaders between the anvil of the forts and the hammer of marine drop pods. Meanwhile, the fleet would assault the Tyranid ship creatures when they deployed to invade.

Everything went wrong. Hit and run raids on the Tyranid ships suffered an unacceptable number of casualties for the little damage caused. The inside of a Tyranid ship was heavily



defended and a living hell – literally. The ship creatures dropped invasion spores without deploying in any sense that the Imperials understood and their fighting potential appeared undiminished. The Ultramarine ships in orbit were soon in a major naval action and were unable to reinforce their forces on the planet. The latter were assaulted by wave after

wave until they were destroyed one by one, despite wiping out thousands of attackers with disciplined fire volleys.

The indomitable Chaplain Cassius led the last survivors of the Prandian expeditionary force back into orbit in just three Thunderhawks. The battered fleet disengaged and retreated back to Macragge leaving Prandium to its fate. The world was completely destroyed and stripped back to its bedrock by the gorging hiveships.

The Ultramarines were dismayed by the defeat and the abandonment of one of the Ultramar worlds that they were honour-pledged to defend. None was more desolate than Marneus Calgar himself. For five days and nights he

"Damnation starts with little steps, by arrogantly thinking that you are wiser than our great forbears, by tinkering with truth, by comprising, by departing from the straight and narrow path of the Emperor's light."

Marneus Calgar

SHIPS OF THE ULTRAMARINES

Battlebarges

These are the capital ships of the Ultramarine Fleet. They are large bombardment and assault carriers designed to act as an invasion headquarters and control centres. They are fearsomely equipped with bombardment turrets to support landings. Much of their internal area is given over to assault and landing shuttles of various types, including the armoured and heavily armed Thunderhawks and drop pods. Battle barges can deploy three companies of marines with support weapons and vehicles in a single drop. They also have massed lateral weapon batteries to deal with orbital defences. Normally, chapters would only possess two or three of these crushing vessels but Ultramarines can field five as Ultramar traditionally depended on them for sector naval protection.

Ultramarine battle barges include:

Pro Merito

Lost in the warp while in transit to put down a rebellion on Tar Centiri; the planet was declared exterminatus by the Inquisition when the full extent of daemonic possession of the aristocracy was realised.

Aeternus

The most venerable battle barge on the Ultramarine ship list.

Emperor Incarnatus

Considered to be an unusually holy and hence 'lucky' ship

Adsidus

This ship was Lord Canastra's Fleet Headquarters for the Hydra-9 strike where an entire planet was subdued during three days of continuous battle.

Seditio Opprimere

Destroyed the heretic cruiser *Sporespitter*.

Lord Laomedon

Built to replace the *Pro Merito*.

Strike Cruisers

Strike cruisers are marine rapid response vessels, usually with a full company of marines onboard and the equipment to get them on-planet immediately upon reaching the target. They also carry bombardment cannon to support ground forces. The Ultramarines maintain a permanent fleet of ten strike cruisers, though this number has been known to increase as demand requires. The most famous, the *Vae Victus*, is often used on detached duties. Other famous strike cruisers include the *Iter Splendore*, the *Fidelis*, the *Interneccio*, and the *Accipiter*.

prayed in full armour to the shrine of Guilliman, taking neither food nor drink. On the fifth night he had a revelation and realised that the Ultramarines had been guilty of the sin of pride. The Codex Astartes was made for the marines not marines for the codex. The codex contained no direct answer to the xeno-things because they were unknown to the Blessed Primarch when he wrote his divine tome. The Ultramarines were going to have to improvise by using the principles enshrined in the Codex Astartes to devise novel tactics.

New plans were devised to defend the next world in the path of the creatures, sacred Macragge itself. Lord Calgar sent urgent astropath messages requesting help from the nearest Navy Base, Bakka. The Inquisitor Lord Kryptman arrived to offer invaluable advice about Tyranid physiology. Macragge would be defended by the combined might and wisdom of the Imperium.

Calgar struck hard, fast and smart at the Tyranid fleet in true Ultramarine style, destroying the largest hive creature on the advice of Kryptman. The creatures immediately became uncoordinated without the controlling hive mind and the Ultramarines reaped a vicious toll of them, harrying the tyranids outsystem to the ringed gas giant of Circe. There the creatures rallied with a new hive mind established and began to force the marines back. Battlefleet Bakka arrived at the critical juncture, no doubt with the guidance of the Emperor, and despite taking fearsome losses including their flagship, destroyed the Tyranids totally.

New Tactics

The Ultramarines and Ultramar had survived Hive Fleet Behemoth but only just. Lord Calgar initiated an energetic programme of retraining for the Ultramarine fleet. He instigated new training for marine naval commanders to familiarise them with the manoeuvres required for open space fleet actions and created a new title with new status, Master of the Fleet. The fleet practiced tactics with allies from Battlefleet Bakka and the Emperor's servants vowed never again to abandon Imperial worlds to the foul hungers of the beast. The Ultramarines also added pure gunboats (albeit in limited number) to their fleet, something that they had always eschewed as incompatible with the Codex Astartes and their holy purpose.

Kraken and Leviathan

Behemoth turned out to be little more than a reconnaissance, the mere advance guard of the Tyranid invasion of the galaxy. Hive Fleet Kraken later emerged and swallowed whole sectors on the eastern fringe of halo stars which form the edge of Segmentum Ultima. Inquisitor Lord Kryptman, arguably the greatest authority on Tyranids, has come to the unwelcome conclusion that a new and even larger hive fleet is attacking the galaxy. Apparently random attacks across Segmentii Ultima, Tempestus and Solar have suggested to Kryptman that Leviathan is attacking from beneath the galactic plane, its fingers reaching up to grasp at Imperial worlds. The Imperium and the Ultramarines face a fearsome and merciless foe.

