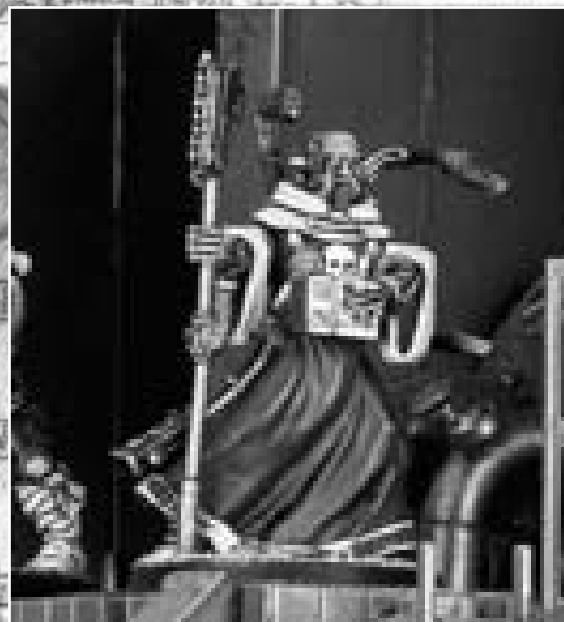




TECH-PRIEST TEZLA

Hieronomus Tezla was trained as a runic priest on the forge world of Sygies VIII, a large moon which orbits a ringed gas giant in the binary star system of Vulcanis. Vulcanis is a vital stronghold of the Adeptus Mechanicus far to the galactic north of Terra and perilously near the Eye of Terror. Sygies itself almost fell to heretic forces in the legendary times of the Horus Heresy, only being saved by the intervention of the enigmatic alien Eldar race. This event has led to Vulcanis being the home of a secretive sect within the Adeptus Mechanicus known as the Xenarites.

The Xenarites are dedicated to the study and exploitation of alien technology, a policy which most Tech-Priests find highly offensive. "If the Omnissiah had meant use to use xeno-tech," the saying goes, "he would have given us foul alien brains to comprehend it with." The Xenarites point to the intervention of the Eldar to assist the true followers of the Machine God as a sign that even they are subject to his will, and that it is their sacred duty to study them.

Aware of the antipathy of their colleagues, the Xenarites pursue a policy of covert study, often dispatching Tech-Priests and their servitors to alien sites

instead of bringing artefacts back to forge worlds for study as prescribed by doctrine. As a result, it is not unusual for Xenarite expeditions to encounter resistance from alien lifeforms, local inhabitants and even Inquisitors and other Tech-Priests in the pursuit of their studies. Open conflict with Imperial authorities is not unknown, regrettable occurrences which have only served to drive the Xenarites deeper underground, concealing evidence of their activities and guarding their study-sites heavily.

Runic priests are trained in arcane branches of scientific lore such as intuitive mechanics, speculation and improvisation. Their special skills are brought into play when scripture and doctrine fail to produce results, although their methods are often viewed with suspicion by more orthodox Tech-Priests. This marries closely with the Xenarites aims and, as such, Tezla was recruited to their ranks even before his training was completed. Tezla has rapidly become an important member of the sect, proving to have a truly enquiring mind and a natural talent for locating alien artefacts. He won great renown amongst his fellows for his audacious examination of a crashed Fra'al spacecraft in the Tamahl sector and his subsequent etheric-

plasma theourms. Likewise his studies of the ancient Ork power field generators on Polaris are reckoned to be the authoritative texts on the subject.

Over a decade ago, studies of Exodite artefacts found on the meteoroid fragment AB/90120jk 7m drew Tezla's ever-wandering gaze to the so-called maiden worlds of the Halrubra Fringe. He was last heard of leading a heavily armed servitor expedition to the moon of Eldrathon IV, where he believed an undiscovered Eldar warp-portal lay beneath the surface.

"Yes, by way of scripture, it is not for us to question the divine Omnissiah by studying the technology of alien races. However, it is my belief that the Machine God has laid the full panoply of xenological study before us for precisely that reason. I believe His Will is that we should observe and catalogue all forms of science, not only those forged by the hand of Mankind. By such study we become better able to appreciate the technological wonders of Humanity itself."

Hieronomus Tezla at
the Vulcanis Symposium, 782.M41

Tech-Priest Hieronomus Tezla

Equipment: Chain-axe; Mechadendrites; Laspistol; Re-Breather; Advanced bionic eye with Infrascopes and Motion Predictor; Bio-scanner; Temporal Phase Distort Generator (see Exterminatus elsewhere in this issue). Advanced bionic right leg.

Special Abilities: Nerves of Steel, Rock Steady Aim

Right handed: Tezla is right handed (in fact his left arm is completely useless).

	WS	BS	S	T	I	Wp	Sg	Nv	Ld
Tezla	63	64	48	61	69	73	78	63	64

