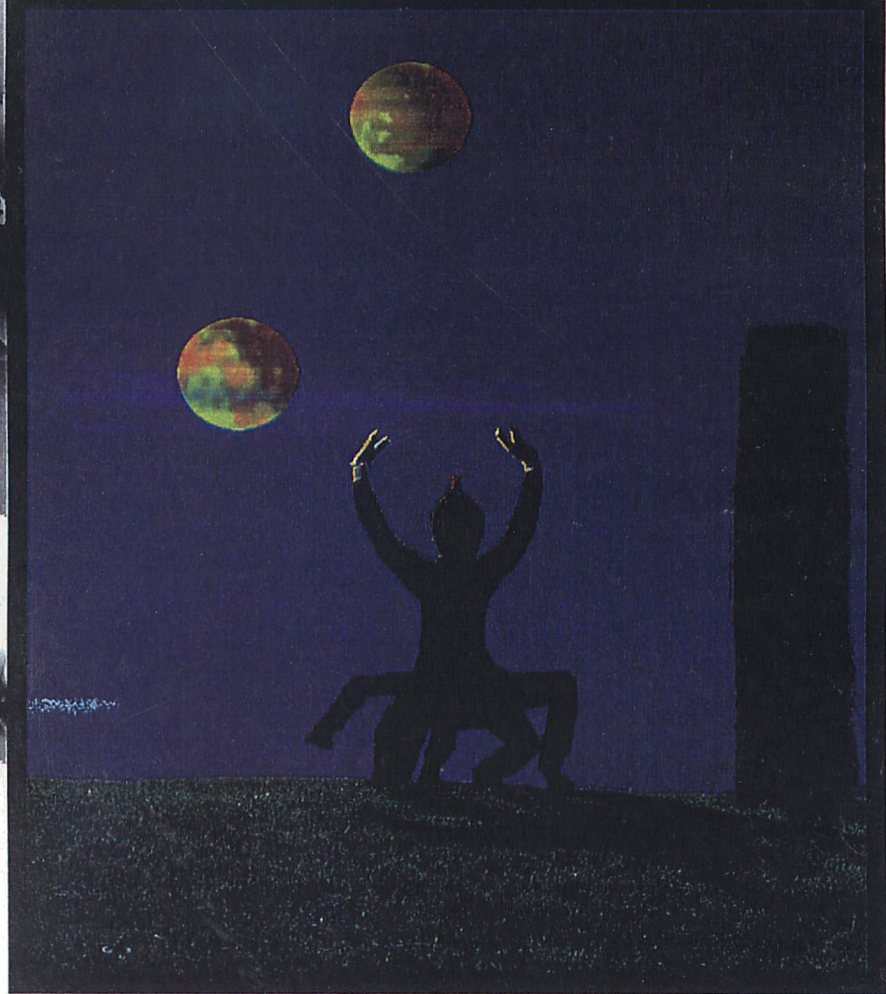


A supplement for

MARC MILLERS
TRAVELLER



101 RELIGIONS



101 RELIGIONS

A supplement for



"What in the name of Manod is that sound?"
"..."
"Hey, I said WHAT'S THAT NOISE?"
"Sorry, hold on a second..."
"Ear plugs - no wonder you didn't hear me the first time."
"Well, you can hear the racket - five minutes working on this water recycler and I just couldn't take it any more."
"So what's the racket then?"
"It's the Aslan in 5A. A couple of the other passengers have already complained but apparently the captain says there's nothing we can do."
"What? With that raucous noise? Surely if it's disturbing the others the captain should have had the cat confined to the brig?!"
"Religious tolerance statute 73B, apparently - one of those new-fangled things the Emperor pushed through the senate some months back. That 'noise' is 'religious chanting' according to the Aslan."
"But why does it sound like he's gargling?"
"He only chants while he's in the shower. He takes one about three times a day."
"Sheesh. That's one clean cat."
"Yes, but only because all his dirty fur has ended up in our recycling system. Look at this filter... yuck! Oh, please tell me this isn't a furball?"
- 4th Engineers Woody Tanwan and Ursula Silverfish

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101 RELIGIONS

or

"A variety of religions, beliefs and cults with which to entertain, enthuse and annoy your Traveller® players."

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE: *The religions presented in this supplement are fictional and are intended purely for use in the TRAVELLER role-playing game. These religions are not intended to resemble, portray or judge any religion, belief system or person. Any resemblance between entries in this supplement and any real religion, belief system or person, past or present, is unintentional.*

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Introduction

What's in this book and how to use it

This book is intended to provide Traveller® referees with a selection of interesting beliefs with which to flesh-out the myriad worlds of the Imperium or your own custom star systems.

Introduction

Religion is almost universally intended to answer *The Great Questions*: Who are we? Why are we here? Life is incredibly common (in the Traveller universe). Most people now take this for granted, but philosophers, scientists, theologians and mystics still debate why such an unlikely event has happened on so many worlds.

There are many popular explanations for why life is so widespread. Some credit the Ancients, a semi-mythical species that died out millennia ago. Others invoke deities and supernatural intervention. Some raise Life itself to godhood, believing that Life called itself into existence out of the very fabric of the universe. Others go farther, believing that our universe is but one of many such living (or even dead) universes.

Most sophont species develop religions during their climb to civilisation. Religion begins as an attempt to explain the world and its phenomena; followed by the more general questions of life, the universe, and existence.

Religions often evolve into philosophical schools which set down modes of conduct intended to lead the believer to a better existence. As they develop, religions may also become a means of entrenching cultural identity and stability and (sometimes regrettably) for establishing or maintaining a power structure.

Early religions may include ancestor worship, veneration of climatic processes, plant and animal species and even individual topographic features. A common key belief is in the existence of incorporeal entities (spirits), interacting with and influencing events in the physical world. Early religious rituals might have been used to bring success in hunting or good crops.

Over the millennia merging of cultures may result in the integration of the associated belief systems. At the same time, breakaway extremist or purist groups often cause divergence.

Religion in the Imperium

The Imperium practices freedom of religious expression provided the activity of churches and

sects does not threaten the peace and security of other member star systems. However, Travellers may discover that the religious practices and beliefs they encounter are more restrictive, repressive or more complex than they anticipate when they leave the security of the Imperial starport extrality zone.

It should be emphasised to Travellers that local religions are rarely something to be ignored - breaking a religious stricture may cause offence or bring swift retribution, perhaps even death!

Format

This supplement is divided into sections according to the general religious classifications used by the Imperial Scout Corps. Each entry in a section has the following details:

- a description of the religion - its basic ideology and distinguishing features,
- a section for the referee containing additional details which might not at first be apparent to player-characters (PCs),
- one or more plots which you may wish to exploit, linked in some manner to the religion.

You should feel free to adapt any or all of this information to suit your campaign background and/or personal preferences.

Background

As per the other "101" books from BITS, the data in this book are largely independent of the Traveller era or Milieu (except where otherwise noted in the text) and can easily be adapted to any campaign or rule set. The majority of the religions are humanocentric but can easily be adapted to other major and minor Traveller races.

Universal Religious Profiles

If you already use URPs (introduced in the MegaTraveller era *World Builder's Handbook* by Digest Group Publications), you should adapt the religion entries to existing URPs or generate new URPs as desired. For licensing reasons, BITS were prevented from including details on the generation and use of URPs in this supplement.

Animism is the belief that all aspects of the natural landscape (rivers, mountains, etc.), the flora and fauna (plants, trees and creatures) are inhabited by spirits or gods. Similarly, all phenomena (storms, etc.) are caused by these spirits or by dedicated gods of the phenomena. The potential range of spirits or gods is thus quite huge and there is little or no regime to it.

1. Ablenka

Description: Found throughout human colonised space, Ablenkas have taken animism to new heights by treating not just natural objects as spirit-filled but all objects. Such objects are known as 'calipe'. Six times a year, on specific days, each follower is expected to collect together one item from each of four different groups. Namely, an item from the natural world, one from their own personal world, one technological thing and an item of 'information'. A like-minded believer must be found to discuss aspects of each of the items' divinity. Upon their death, each believer is buried with the chosen object (anything from a seed to a starship!) - a calipe - that they wish to "become".

Referee: Ablenka developed over several millennia. If there was an original founder, the name has been lost over the ages. PCs may mistake followers of this faith as slightly 'strange' collectors.

Plots:

- The party are asked to transport an item which is then damaged or destroyed in transit. The owner is an Ablenka who claims damages far exceeding the item's intrinsic value as it was to be his/her calipe.

- A PC becomes friendly with an Ablenka and is asked to take part in the ritual discussion of six mundane objects and how they contribute to the spirituality of the cosmos. The Ablenka will then reveal that they are dying and request that, no matter what happens, the PC ensure their desired calipe is buried with them.

2. Heliogaianism

Description: Heliogaianism originates from within the worlds of the Terran Confederation and comprises the twin beliefs that planetary biospheres are themselves living organisms and that, as stars have influence (via astrology), they too have personalities. The personality of stars is dependent upon their perceived effect on an individual's star chart. The basis of a star's

personality is derived from that of the astrological constellation in which it lies. Followers of this faith believe that stars and planets are receptive to human communication.

There are many branches of Heliogaianism, among them. *Official* - these believe that Terra is the only correct place for humanity. The more militant try to stop others leaving the homeworld by sabotaging their ships. *Orthodox* - neo-Luddites who give themselves the benefit of the doubt as far as space travel is concerned. Otherwise they will have nothing to do with high technology beyond wrecking any they come across. *Reformed* - these believe humanity's destiny is to spread among the stars, and the stars themselves want humanity there. However it is only polite to perform appropriate ceremonies of thanks at the new location.

Referee: The astrological correspondence fell apart once faster-than-light travel became commonplace. Heliogaianism needed reforming in order to fit into humanity's expanded horizons. It did this by correlating the zodiacal effects of stars on Earth with estimates of those stars gravitic influence on the planet. The data was then extrapolated to visible stars of other settled systems.

Plots:

- Amongst the party's passengers is a radical *reformed* Heliogaianist who wishes to visit the local star more closely. An expert in computers, he hacks into the ship's astronav systems such that after take off it dives towards the sun. The PCs may panic but after one circuit of the star the ship will resume normal operation. They can try to circumvent his hacking in the meantime (as this detour will add several days to their time in-system!)

- The party carry an *Orthodox* Luddite to a high tech, high population world. They are preparing to lift with new cargoes and passengers when the Port Authority's security detain them for shipping in a terrorist. Apparently, the Luddite has performed a major act of sabotage and had bought another ticket on the party's ship to get off

planet. He hasn't been caught yet and may be heading for the PCs' ship...

3. Neo-Paganism

Description: The followers of this faith believe that it is a resurrection of the traditional religions of Terra. In a similar manner to some other faiths, this organisation has come under investigation from the Ministry of Justice to establish if it is, in fact, another elaborate tax evasion vehicle. However, the outcome of the enquiries concluded that it was not a fraud - the state of the religion's assets and the members involved in running it were too shambolic to suggest tax evasion!

Members of this faith tend to cluster around places with shops where they can buy candles, incense, oils and little bags of herbs. They gather whenever a moon is about to rise and scamper naked around a bonfire until they're exhausted, then settle down to a nocturnal beanfeast with mulled ale and sausages.

Reference: This faith is a pale recollection of what once was. Once the living sacrifices, the close connection with the land and flocks, the central importance of the local stream and the ever-present danger of raiders from the next valley are removed, there isn't that much left of the 'traditional' religion to resurrect. What remains is a vague impression of the mysteries of Eleusis, literary accounts of Bacchanalia, the mildly amusing phrase "sky clad" and a conviction that if they associate themselves with an ancient persecution - in this case that of witch-like people - you acquire spiritual depth. They insist on being taken seriously, but are often treated with smiles of mild indulgence.

Plots:

- The party has the misfortune to encounter a member of the faith at a festival just before the full moon. The member will focus their attentions on one of the characters who they feel would be ideal for bringing back the old ways. They will attempt to draw them off from the party to capture them for a sacrifice at the coming moon rise.

- Members of this faith, while travelling between systems on the same ship as the PCs insist upon holding a celebration when the ship passes a moon in normal space. Unfortunately, as the ship is on approach to a gas giant for refuelling there are a large number of moons which will rise, and are being used for an excuse for inebriated revelry.

4. Let the Sun Shine

Description: This faith is superficially similar to the beliefs of the Lords of Light (q.v.) but originated amongst starship crews during the longer journeys associated with early Solomani exploration vessels. Light worshippers are usually long-term space travellers who have seen much darkness in space and desire the presence of bright light to prevent anxiety or depression. Often, they will sleep with the lights on for reassurance, and have a great belief in the healing quality of light.

Reference: Worshippers carry sources of light with them at all times and do not tolerate darkness very well. If they awoke to a darkened room they would panic (ingrained culturally now, but probably originating from a time when loss of light equated to a potentially fatal power plant failure). Worshippers are most often found on the enormous family-crewed bulk carriers that endlessly circulate through the core regions of the Imperium. The belief moves between ships and is slowly becoming a more formal affair with writings and a slowly developing philosophy.

Plot:

- A crew member from one of the bulk carriers has bought passage with the party's ship to catch up to another bulk carrier, where she is to marry. A light failure in her cabin incurs her wrath (born out of real fear) but she's finally pushed over the edge and panics when the pilot dims the lights prior to jump. She genuinely doesn't know about this custom and believes there is a power plant fault. In her terror, she will not be quietened until she has been provided with several alternative sources of light (torches, etc.).

5. Cult of the Void

Description: As the Solomani colonised the stars, Walter Beaumont (a Physical Chemist) started the Cult of the Void. He preached about the importance of the five elements to would-be travellers and colonists. The Cult initially did not have a strong following, but after the Long Night a resurgence began as more and more people turned from more secular beliefs.

Reference: A text written by Beaumont forms the core of the Cult's beliefs:

"The journey into a new life starts with a passage through the vast void which can take an unwary acolyte into the abyss. Once the rite of passage has been completed you will join other initiates on the new world. With an induction into the necessary elements for survival in your new home your new life will begin. To colonists, Earth

and Water are essential to sustain life and they must be looked after and tended in order to feed both families and livestock. Fire is required to keep one warm and cook one's food, but a lack of vigilance can result in the destruction of all that one has striven for.

"One must be careful not to make the same mistakes as one's ancestors and take too much from the elements. Doing so may cause a new world to turn against one just as has happened in the past. Without enough trees the Air will grow stale and will not be able to sustain life.

"We all have a responsibility to look after and respect each of the elements or ultimately we shall loose our children's future."

Plot:

- Fanatics of the Cult who believe that the colonists have grown unworthy of his teachings have stolen the original book of Walter Beaumont. The party is hired to retrieve this valued religious 'artefact'.

6. Animal Angel Alliance

Description: This society offers to put one in touch with one's personal animal 'angel'. Essentially, they believe that not only are there spirits in almost all creatures and objects, but that each person is attuned to a specific spirit.

Willing recruits pay for a lengthy period of attunement, during which Alliance helpers try to determine the location of the associated spirits. This may include novel forms of divining, much touching of animals, rocks and the like and eventually each recruit is told the nature and location of their spirit. This may be a small stone in their immediate neighbourhood or a strange alien creature on a world many parsecs away.

The follower is then supposed to obtain their allied spirit and keep it with them thereafter. Through communing with the spirit, the follower benefits from their advice (often through dreams).

Referee: This religion has been accused of being a money extraction operation; the attunement is often expensive. Then again, if the Alliance can identify a rock on another world, presumably they have to do quite a bit of research!

Plot:

- A sceptical PC should be encouraged to try out the attunement, perhaps on the advice of

someone who gives them some remarkably accurate 'dream advice'. They will be told they should seek out a weasel-like creature on a specific cliff in a jungle on a neighbouring world. If the PC goes through with this and pays their Cr5,000, they will eventually find something more like a fat rat awaiting them. This creature is actually mildly psionic and, having picked up the PC's desire for friendship, will attach itself to them. Whether they grow to be a pest or a genuine aid in the future is up to the referee!

7. The Preservers

Description: This organisation is claimed to date from pre-jump Earth. Alarmed at humanity's propensity to obliterate those features of the ecosystem which interfered with the pursuit of the profit, a conglomeration of entertainers raised funds to preserve areas of the biosphere sufficiently large to be self-sustaining.

This philosophy has been continued into the Imperial era and some groups of Preservers have taken on a far more religious outlook, regarding the rape of a biosphere as being a direct assault on various deities. Preventing such rape, but whatever means necessary, has led some Preservers to become eco-terrorists. The majority, however, concentrate on consolidating purchased lands (on various worlds), planting between them, expanding animal friendly zoos and building up an exhaustive library of life forms in frozen DNA and actual embryos where possible.

Referee: Naturally, those who rape worlds for profit (from strip mining to deforestation) really dislike the Preservers. The latter can often have sufficient financial muscle to protect themselves and enforce their views.

Plots:

- The PCs are hired by a relatively small Preserver group as temporary rangers to guard the boundaries of their land against poachers.

- The PCs are hired by a mining corporation to disrupt a land purchase registration about to be placed by local Preservers. Given a week's delay (e.g. by stealing the Preservers' paperwork) the miners will have time to put in their own claim.

Polytheistic Animism

Sun, moon, stone, air, water...

Polytheistic Animism is the belief that certain natural phenomena are associated with specific deities. There is commonly a defined hierarchy of these gods and/or goddesses. There may be a huge range of gods but, unlike strict animism, they operate within a defined regime.

1. Siatsdler Worshipers

Description: A dwindling group of Zhodani worship the Siatsdler (or 'Beings') who are personifications of the six Shidr (or 'seasons') of Zhdant. Ataniebl (or 'harvest') is supreme amongst them and Atshtiavl ('chill') is regarded as the least powerful. Complex inter-relations between these deities rule the lives of the Siatsdler who are usually very well acquainted with meteorological sciences.

In Atrint ('spring'), a sacrifice of dried moss is burnt. Believers are convinced that the devastation of Zhdant that occurred during the final war of the Ancients is about to be repeated but that the combined power of the Beings will be sufficient to save all true believers.

Referee: One mark that identifies Worshipers amongst themselves is the way they tap the back of their hand to their cheek every hour as a mark of respect to Ataniebl. This faith developed in the pre-history of Zhdant, and lingers on. It is tolerated by the nobility and intendant classes as a harmless pastime (mainly) of the lower classes, and is gradually dying out, with less than a thousand practising worshippers believed to survive.

Siatsdler is a form of polytheistic animism, in which the followers hope to be saved from the imminent 'final war'. There is a strict hierarchy within the faith which maintains control of documents believed to date back to the times of the Ancients. Although Siatsdler is dwindling, there are regular missions to try and save more of the Zhodani and others.

Plots: Note that for *Milieu 0* adventures that contact with the Zhodani occurs in the Spinward Marches sector around 50 Imperial, but other minor, trading contacts were made by the Vilani before this date.

- Fire suppression systems on the PCs' ship will be activated when a sacrificial ritual gets out of hand. The smell of moss will pervade the ship for some time to come but no real damage will be done. The Worshipers will be a little

embarrassed but will not miss the opportunity to tell anyone who listens why they do what they do.

- In the middle of trade negotiations a PC's nervous habit (scratching the back of their hand on their chin) will be misinterpreted by a Siatsdler worshipper. The PC will then be taken aside for a lengthy explanation of why the Worshipper is convinced that the final war disaster is nigh and that the two of them should make plans to leave the area as soon as possible. Should the PC play along with the Worshipper's conviction that s/he is another Worshipper, the PCs will get very advantageous trading deals.

2. Starfolk

Description: Starfolk believe that the stars are gods and they have a complex pantheon based loosely on stellar classification with 'O' Type stars the most venerated. All stars are thought to be children of the First One - the monobloc from which the universe formed. 'Starmen' are highly charismatic leaders who make stellar pronouncements each day to starfolk. These pronouncements are vague and flowery, but lapped up by followers who will become stars at death if they have attached themselves to a Starman and listened faithfully.

Referee: In the Third Imperium, Darrians are held in absolute abhorrence as god destroyers through the use of the 'Star Trigger'. Occasionally, Starmen have preached that revenge should be taken against the Darrians. Followers number in the thousands, and may often be found travelling the starlanes to become closer to the stars.

Plots:

- The party provide transport to an enthusiastic group of starfolk under a very charismatic leader. If the party fail to prevent a hijacking attempt they will find the starfolk have placed the ship on a direct course into the nearest star to make them all gods.

- The party are hired to investigate the collapse of a star to a white dwarf and find out why it took place. They not only have to deal with the emotional outfall of distraught starfolk, but a

firm conviction that this was not stellar evolution at work but a deliberate act (probably by a Darriani).

3. Gaianism

Description: The belief that each 'garden' world is connected to the divine life giving force. This is based upon the Old Terran Gaia Principle, where all life is connected to each other on a world. Gaia is both the "Earth Mother" and the force of nature itself.

This is similar to animism, but with a divine force/being controlling it all. Nature is to be respected, as all things are interconnected. The adherents believe in reincarnation, but what one does with one's current life does not determine the outcome of the future life. Gaia will ultimately decide where your life force is needed when one 'passes over'. Seasonal festivals are observed, mostly a naturalistic ritual followed by a celebration. The organisation is loose with each local area having their own priest or priestess.

Referee: The religion is open to anyone who wishes to join, but they are not evangelical; they believe in each person's choice to participate. It may be found across the Third Imperium and Solomani Confederation, but is has more followers in the Solomani colonised regions.

Plot:

● The party are hired to find lanthanum deposits on a recently colonised world. There are rich deposits on a remote, heavily forested, part of the world. Many native animals make their homes here (generate with the Traveller rules or use *101 Lifeforms*), as does a Gaianist settlement. The party must make arrangements with the Gaianists for the lanthanum extraction without disrupting the balance of nature of the forest. Failure to do so will initially result in the sabotage of the PCs' efforts, and eventually lead to outright armed conflict. Unfortunately the caves in which the lanthanum is found are home to a native creature. Wanton killing of these beasts will guarantee the wrath of the Gaianists.

4. The Dua Almu

Description: The Dua-Almu believe that the first human life on their world was the result of the sacred ice panda rubbing against standing stones set in the ice. This slight warming of the stones, along with the panda's breath, resulted in the first 10 humans - the Dua-Noc - who are venerated and whose tombs are by the sacred standing stones. Followers eat no hot food, and pray at random times throughout the day, stopping suddenly (whatever they were doing) to stand

absolutely still (wherever they may be). They then spend several minutes singing quietly before resuming their previous activity.

Referee: The followers are reluctant to leave their native planet and if they do they are very nervous travellers. The faith is found on a low tech planet on the Imperial fringes.

Plot:

● One of the Dua-Almu takes passage on the same ship as the party, and becomes increasingly nervous as the journey continues. This will eventually result in a panic attack at an inopportune moment. This attack is unlikely to be violent, but may require the characters to coax the Dua-Almu out of an inaccessible space (for example the drive or avionics accessways).

5. Vulcanism

Description: A city-based religion where most of the inhabitants are adherents and worship the local volcano which brings fertility to the land and judgement on wrong-doers. Priests claim that they are accurately able to predict eruptions and warn the faithful to evacuate their homes, thus non-believers and wrong-doers are left to face the wrath of the volcano.

Referee: In actuality it is the old, the infirm and the very young (who are not fast enough to escape) who tend to die. The predictions of the priests are accurate, thanks to the purchase of some high technology seismic analysis equipment with an orbital observation satellite many years before.

This faith is found in a small area of a low technology, medium population world, whose cities cluster around the world's lakes in fertile areas at the base of the volcanoes. Outside these areas the ground is generally not viable for agriculture.

Plots:

● The party are arranging a trade deal on this planet, when the merchant hears a bell, and makes some excuse of needing a few minutes to make a religious observance. They disappear into the back of the shop... After a few minutes the characters may notice that it has gone quiet. Outside, the priests have evacuated the city and only unbelievers are left. The rubble and tremors associated with an eruption are then heard and the PCs will have to get back to their ship as soon as possible as the starport is on the local flat rock structure, part of the lava plain.

● The party are approach clandestinely by one of the priests to supply a replacement seismic warning system as the old one is wearing out.

Once supplied, the priests may not want the characters to escape knowing that their predictions are more technological than their people realise.

6. The Flood-maker

Description: This Aslan sect believes the flood-maker brings fertility to their homeworld and cleanliness to their fur. They believe that floods wash away unclean aspects of all worlds and provide a fresh start for the survivors and the land. The waters coat the land with a deep silt, out of which life springs.

Referee: Members of this faith show the behaviour patterns typical to Aslan - honour, pride and a sense of rightness. There tend to be more female members of this religion, and generally they tend to extend their philosophies to cover most disasters. As a result, they are unbearably cheerful in the face of disaster, looking for the good which they believe will come from any such time of trial.

Plot: *Note: Contact with the Aslan takes place towards the end of the Long Night.*

- The party find themselves on a long duration journey where their transport has a closed environment with an Aslan who is a follower of the flood-maker. The PCs may be irritated when the water recycling system bungs up with fur (the Aslan insists on regular baths or showers during which they 'sing' an ear-splitting 'song' loudly and continuously). The Aslan will be belligerent if prevented from practising their faith but then hopelessly optimistic if anything goes wrong during the journey!

7. The Superseding Sapphic Sisterhood

Description: The SSS is a conglomeration (over many centuries) of several religions each based on predominantly female deity hierarchies, preaching that bringing forth new life into the world is the key aspect of godhood.

As technology became available for artificial fertilisation, gene splicing, *in-vitro* ova merging, cloning, etc. the SSS decided that males were redundant. They run a selection of business enterprises, operated exclusively by females with males used only for the most subordinate roles.

Referee: The SSS have an extremist arm. They might have simply set out to massacre males but instead have created a virus which substitutes x for y chromosomes when a cell reproduces. It generally takes seven years to complete this process for a grown male subject and produces a hulking, big footed ugly woman, which most of the SSS think of as puckish justice.

Women can be carriers of the virus, which has a body fluid vector and also edits the DNA to prevent the emergence of males from any future union. There is currently no cure. Thankfully perhaps, the virus only works on humans.

Plot:

- A local SSS group has been spreading the trial virus near to a military base and, through close association with the male soldiers, has been monitoring the results. The PCs may encounter this when operating as mercenaries or be asked to investigate peculiar changes some wives have noticed of their military husbands.

Polytheism is a system where multiple gods, all of roughly the same importance and power, co-exist, generally within one or more god-specific habitats. A given deity does not tend to have a link to a specific natural phenomena (as per animism) although they may be associated with specific powers (love, war, etc.). Where a polytheistic religion has its origin in animism, some deities may retain animistic-related names or associations.

1. Church of the Stellar Divinity

Description: One of the most popular churches in the Imperium, the Church of Stellar Divinity teaches that the stars themselves are gods, and when a believer dies, their soul goes to join with the Gods. The religion is fairly easy to belong to, asking little more than adherence to the Golden Rule, and attendance at the weekly services. There are numerous minor variants to the strict church doctrine, but most of these are tolerated as "the will of that God".

Referee: The 'Golden Rule' is never disclosed to non-believers, but is an open secret due to the widespread nature of this church. However, discussion of the Rule in front of a church member by a non-believer will often cause offence.

Plots:

- The party are hired to transport a fairly high-ranking church member to another system. In jump, she dies of a stroke. At the destination, the party are accused of dooming the leader by allowing her to die cut off from the Gods.

- Two NPCs in close proximity to the PCs (on the same ship or involved in the same adventure) find they are from different branches of the church. Their theological differences swell until their arguments threaten the PCs' mission.

2. The Temple of the Stellar Divinity

Description: The Temple of the Stellar Divinity believes that all races are derived from star gods, and that the stars will ultimately destroy all life and create it anew. Believers are convinced of every sophont's ability to become a star if they can be born-again at a high enough spiritual level. One way to achieve this spirituality is through chanting and the quest for an ever more perfect form of words and music. The church is well known for the beautiful and often very popular chants used in their long services.

Referee: Found throughout the Imperium with a small membership, this faith is another which appears to have derived from humanity's obsession with the stars. Some of its more extreme followers believe that early destruction by sun-like effects (e.g. standing next to a nuclear device when it goes off) will bring them nearer to divinity.

Plots: *Note: a temple belonging to this religion was first presented in 101 Rendezvous which contains some additional adventure hooks.*

- The PCs are engaged to hunt down a team of linguists who are prepared to translate some of the chants into Hiver. The only experts they will be able to find will be a disparate group of people whom it will be hard to even get to travel together to the Temple, never mind work together.

- A fellow traveller turns out to be a disciple and reveals (in great secrecy) to a PC the fact that he has a special relic of his church - a star map that purports to mark the sites of temples many, many millennia previously. The disciple wants to visit these sites if they still exist and an observant PC will notice that some of the sites correspond to known Ancient sites.

3. The Cult of the Deep Ones

Description: The Addaxur, a carnivorous reptilian minor non-human race of the Zhodani Consulate, exhibit a semi-religious belief system based on characteristics of their homeworld and their unique sensory abilities. Their primary senses are smell and sophisticated underwater sonar. The planet Addaxur (A A8A876-D) is a water world, with a high proportion of heavy minerals making the planet's surface gravity in excess of two standard gravities. The heavy minerals include radioactives, which heat up the interior of the planet and make the ocean floors geologically active.

The reptilian Addaxur live in the ocean surrounding the planet's many volcanic islands, but venture ashore to feed and reproduce where they are safe from large aquatic predators. The

Addaxur's sonar sense detects tectonic disturbances beneath the ocean floor, which in pre-history were explained as voices of "the Deep Ones" - a race of giants living at the bottom of the planet's 20 kilometre-deep oceans. Many Addaxur have maintained this belief to the present day.

Referee: There are followers among the Zhodani proles (non-psionic lower classes) in the sectors surrounding Addaxur.

Plot:

- A wealthy Zhodani merchant (a prole) approaches the party to crew a submarine which will bring back "proof" of the existence of the Deep Ones. The party will be able to clinch a spectacular trade deal if they are able to demonstrate the existence of "Deep Ones" on the planet. Any giant, deep-ocean creature will be sufficient, but live capture is essential. The repercussions of obtaining such proof may be dangerous!

4. The Church of All Faiths

Description: The Church of all Faiths was founded by a history student who decided that every religion was correct. The only way to ensure salvation was to worship in every way known, changing every day. The Church is small, and currently found only on Sylea. They follow a 2962 day year, to allow for each of the religions they have identified to be properly observed.

Referee: The Church compound resembles a movie set due to the huge number of costumes, props and artifacts required for the rapid conversions. Some libertines keep track of the Church's calendar, and "convert" for the more hedonistic faiths... The faith was founded in -13 on Sylea by Philip Godet and has around a 100,000 members across the Imperium.

Plots:

- The Church hires the PCs' ship to investigate the religions of a recently re-contacted world. The trip takes five weeks. [That's 35 different religions to deal with. Be creative!]

- A PC happens to be the very image of a religion's major force of evil. For one Sylean day, the character will be pursued by fanatic Church members determined to slay him.

5. Mother Worship

Description: Followers of this religion worship their individual mothers as goddesses who bring life to all. They carry holovids of their mother with

them always and visit their mothers once every three to four weeks (at least).

Referee: The mothers themselves are sometimes believers, but some are not, so this worship can cause some friction between mother and children.

Plot:

- One of the characters is approached by a serving Imperial Marine who asks them to deliver a message and small gift to his mother, a few jumps away. He explains he has not been able to contact her as his unit was moved out unexpectedly. He gives them the gift, message and delivery details. Soon after, the party are intercepted by the Marine's colleagues who wish to retrieve the message so they can use it to tease the marine. The PCs must decide how they wish to respond.

6. The Repenters

Description: This cult flourishes in the richer backwaters of Imperial society, where people often spare a few credits for the poor and needy, but rarely have any genuine care for such people. Fortunately for them, the Repenters do care. Irritatingly, the Repenters care totally and care all the time. They won't stop caring and sharing until the whole Empire cares too.

Referee: The Repenters is a coalescence of campaign groups from a range of religious groups. Their 'church' has settled down into a diocesan syncretist institution with a recognised hierarchy on each world. It is partly a well-informed and sage research establishment, specialising in social justice, partly an aggressive street level proselytising and fund-raising movement and partly a way for the over-privileged to assuage their guilt at not being born a peasant. Promotion within the hierarchy is by good works and visible "simplicity of living".

Plot:

- The PCs are hired by a businessman whose shady mercantile dealings have brought him the unwanted attentions of the local Repenters who now him everywhere, pointing out the error of his ways. The police are not interested in helping him, so he wishes the PCs to deter the Repenters (permanently if possible).

Rational Polytheism

For the great ones have many faces...

Rational Polytheism is the belief in a small number of deities who manifest themselves in numerous different ways, each perhaps having a different name, association and method of worship. At first site such a religion may appear to outsiders as 'plain' polytheism.

1. The Aurum Astrum

Description: Numerous branches of this faith exist, some on good terms with one another, others feuding bitterly. Each has its own distinct variation on the beliefs with a constant core: the belief that 'magic' works. Adherents pursue spiritual progress via esoteric mysticism, based on a grab-bag of techniques from a variety of cultures - mostly resembling those of ancient Terran Europe and the (Terran) Middle East, but from numerous other sources as well.

Prominent activities include arcane rituals filled with chanting in dead languages, meditation on sacred geometric patterns, and obsessive pursuit of any rare or unusual books, artworks, or similar items which might aid in "the path." God-images used metaphorically in the faith's teachings and ritual are (mostly) Egyptian or Greek, but again wider borrowings are common, and all are (usually) held to be aspects of a single divine presence in the universe.

In the Imperial era, many adherents of the Aurum Astrum assert that what others describe as "psionics" is in fact a discipline known to their high initiates since ancient times, and that this discipline can be taught to anyone who accepts the faith. Furthermore, they also claim that their system teaches powers far beyond the known capabilities of traditionally-trained psions.

Referee: The PsionicSuppressions (ca. 850), led to a deep paranoia in many Aurum Astrum groups, as they were forced "underground" to protect their persecuted psionic skills. Whether the Aurum Astrum can in fact train its adherents in psionics is an open question, as is the existence and nature of the "super" psi powers attributed to the group's elite inner circle.

Plots:

- The PCs are contracted to transport a sealed shipment of rare books and objects between Aurum Astrum communities in adjoining star systems, with a representative travelling with the shipment. On arrival, both the intended recipients and a rival faction try to claim the shipment, the latter claiming it was stolen from

them. Whichever group the party decide against will seek revenge, ranging from leaving disturbing ritual objects in the PCs' quarters to sabotaging their ship.

- A female noble hires the characters to provide security against unnamed potential attackers. Gradually, it becomes clear that the noble is an ex-Aurum Astrum member who has published some of their secrets, and fears reprisals. Whether she is paranoid or prudent remains to be determined.

2. Subjects of the Celestial Court

Description: The Subjects of the Celestial Court believe that three deities control all aspects of the universe. These deities appear in many different forms depending on the circumstances. Doctrine stresses obedience to authority, and adherence to tradition; through such behaviour the believer will enter the next life with appropriate rewards. Outsiders are rarely welcomed into the faith, most members were born into the church. The Subjects have been undergoing a decline since joining the Third Imperium, as many younger members reject the rigid social code imposed by the faith.

Referee: This faith developed on Vland (the Vilani homeworld); it is unknown if it actually predates the Ziru Sirka. During the Rebellion period (post 1116 Imperial), there is a sudden resurgence in the popularity of this religion. Most encounters with worshippers will occur within the Vilani Sphere - only in the Ziru Sirka was this faith found beyond this region.

Plot:

- A teenage Subject child runs away and hides on the PCs' vehicle or ship trying to escape off-world. Although capable of expressing their objections rationally, the child is still a minor legally, and the characters may face charges of kidnapping if the situation is not handled carefully.

3. The Servants of Derupo

Description: Derupo, ("the Greatest God"), has multiple Attributes: Lyando, the Goddess of the Harvest; Nes, the God of War; Ryalas, the God of Makings; Yal, the God of the Stars; Kamba, Goddess of the Seas; Saleno, Goddess of the Hunt; Dombor, God of Peace; Lapesir, God of Health; and Ryner, God of Weather. The high priests of the various attributes meet "in Clave" to make and implement government decisions. All instances of an activity consecrated to an Attribute, or requesting assistance of an Attribute, must be preceded by a propitiatory offering to the governing Attribute. Depending on the activity/request, this may be anything from praying or genuflecting to an idol or altar to a ritual bloodletting or sacrifice.

The high priests define (under the rubric of the Word of the God) procedures "that are pleasing to the Attribute"; special dispensations must be requested for consecrating non-standard procedures. Training is by rote, but exploration is not discouraged; the High Priest of an Attribute may allow new procedures or discoveries to be consecrated to the Attribute, or to Derupo's Self, and thus approve it for routine use.

Referee: The Servants of Derupo are found on just one world, a Theocracy where other beliefs are seldom tolerated. Those offending or preaching another faith may find themselves on the receiving end of an "experimental" ritual.

Plot:

- A PC needs medical attention while on-planet. During the course of the treatment (obsolete, but still effective for the PC's ailment or injury) one of the PCs is bound to enquire why a more modern, more effective treatment isn't being used. They are rapidly convicted of blasphemy, and sentenced to death. Their friends can apply to the ecclesiastical court for a stay (which will be granted) in an attempt to get the conviction overturned, due to the offending character being an offworlder unfamiliar with local religion.

Once the stay is granted, they will have three weeks to either convince the trial court to reconvene and overturn the sentence, or to convince the high priest of Lapesir to consecrate the procedure suggested by the arrested character. The latter will require the priest be taught the procedure, shown why it is better than the consecrated procedure, provided with any tools, implements, drugs, etc., not locally available, and shown how those tools, etc., may be made or procured locally (giving profit-minded characters a route for opening up regular trade).

Of course, the characters will have to be careful to avoid the same fate as their colleague.

Success will lead to the death sentence being commuted to ten years hard labour. The high priest themselves must then pardon the convicted PC to have them released. A jailbreak is always an option but will result in a death sentence for all involved.

4. Telor

Description: Followers of Telor, the primary faith of the Darminia minor human race, believe that there are fundamental numerological patterns underlying all things. The prophet Telor was educated in the traditional Vilani manner by an assimilationist upper class clan but went on to reject Vilani cultural norms in favour of a codified form of the loose polytheism that governed Ishag prior to its conquest by the Vilani.

Telorists believe that it is almost certain that anything that happens in fours (or multiples or fractions of 4) has an inner meaning that should be thought about. To many believers the Telor faith is the single most important factor in their lives. It has served as the primary means of preserving the traditional Darminie culture. The Telor faith is a polytheistic one with the sun, the moons, the land, and the water being seen as the primary deities.

Traditionally Telor requires private devotion every 4 days, or one quarter of a month, and public ceremonies of devotion every 64 days, or one fourth of Ishag's year. Telor taught that the body was the seat of the soul and that therefore hedonistic promiscuous indulgence of the body would show reverence toward the soul.

Referee: Toleration of Telor can be very trying for a non-believer as its numerological obsession is unnerving. Some non-Darminie critics of the religion have suggested that the rigidity of its numerological basis may lie in a fundamental tendency towards obsessive compulsive behaviour which is purportedly endemic to the Darminie race, possibly due to Ancient genetic engineering.

Telor wrote that the fourfold way was only for humans and thus believers have been brought up to distrust aliens. They do not believe that aliens are inferior but rather that aliens cannot fully understand and must therefore be dealt with with caution. This faith developed on Ishag/Zarushagar around -3520 Imperial, and there are in excess of 5 billion worshippers within ten parsecs of Ishag.

Plots:

- The PCs, whose ship is berthed at the local starport, are approached by a married group of four Darmine who wish to acquire High Passage on their ship for its next four jumps. It seems their ship is on docking pad four. [This hook will work even better if the ship is Jump 4, displaces 400 tons, has a crew of four, etc.] All is as it seems but the passengers will prove very annoying. They will constantly be asking questions like "What was the weight to four significant figures of the box this meal came out of?" "How do you spell your full name? I need to check its significance." "How many standard minutes did it take to build this ship?" "We need to use the ship's lounge for our revel." [Which turns out to be a fertility ritual....]

- The [preferably 4] PCs, who are unfamiliar with Telor, are hired by a Telorist patron as her bodyguard. She is a merchant who is negotiating a deal with some fellow Telorists and she anticipates trouble. The negotiations go badly and subsequently someone will try to assassinate the patron. However, the assassin will work in a predictable manner - e.g. firing four bullets at four o'clock on the fourth day after the meeting.

5. Church of Secular Saints and Martyrs

Description: The followers of this Church venerate those people of such perfect charity, humanity and exceptional public relations that they are forever associated in the public mind with the best of good works. These saints, alive or dead, are beyond criticism, and their lives are held out as examples of the capabilities of the (originally) human spirit.

Referee: Although the church has a spiritual arm, dictated to self-improvement and teaches a slanted version of history, the main purpose of the church is to make money. This money originally went to the causes which the Saints and Martyrs were associated with: poverty relief, arms control, hospices and animal friendly research; but a high proportion of it now goes to keeping the church elders in luxury and to erecting huge buildings for the faithful to pray in.

Plots:

- The Church announces a new 'saint' who is still living. The recipient is embarrassed by this accolade and, through a friend, contacts the PCs to get the 'saint' offworld and away from unwanted attention.

- As per the preceding plot but the PCs are approached by a megacorporation to try and get the 'saint' to endorse a product. The 'saint' refuses to talk to them, but soon after the church approaches the PCs to discuss terms under which such endorsement could take place.

- One of the more spiritual members of the church accidentally accesses the wrong archive and discovers the true uses that the church is putting its funds to. They approach one of the PCs (who they know from past service) to ask them to help expose the truth and right wrongs.

6. The Followers of Many

Description: The Followers of Many believe that there are just three deities - star god Aso, world god Boso, and Cho, god of the emptiness (i.e. everything other than stars and planets). Just as stars can have many appearances and planets likewise, so Aso and Boso are many-faced deities (of undetermined sex).

The Followers live their entire lives behind masks, using different masks to represent their status and role. With modern technology, ancient metal masks have been replaced by composite plastics which can change shape, colour and feel to reflect every aspect of the user - from how healthy they are feeling to their emotional state. However, masks are generally left fairly blank - the Followers abhor the uncontrolled manner in which outsiders' faces reflect their inner soul.

A mask may only be removed when alone or with one of one's promised life-partners.

Referee: Dealing with Followers is difficult - human communication relies heavily upon facial expressions. Although unmasked visitors may be tolerated in public areas of a Follower town, close liaison (trade, dealing with senior officials, etc.) requires even outsiders to wear masks (usually marked in garish orange to show them as unbelievers). Some Follower groups wear masks less often, preferring to make themselves up instead. A few individuals are reputed to be used by the intelligence agencies as experts in disguise and facial surgery.

Plot:

- The PCs observe a murder committed by a masked person. They fail to catch the perpetrator but do find a mask. The police take on the case but the PCs are then recruited by Followers who wish the PCs to prove their belief that someone was masquerading as one of their number.

Dualism is the belief that there are only two deities or deific principles, representing two opposing viewpoints (e.g. good versus evil), thus leading to continuous antagonism between them. Their belligerence is reflected in opposing forces of nature (e.g. water versus fire, light versus darkness). Believers often spend a great deal of their time discussing these opposing morals/ethics of the two deities.

1. Hi'alya

Description: This faith is one of the more closely studied among Imperial sociologists. It arose during the Long Night, on a relatively isolated world with both a native sophont species (plains-dwelling centauroids) and an immigrant human population of mixed Solomani and Vilani descent. Occasional traders visiting the world would report that a religious movement of epic proportions was sweeping the human population, leading to a renaissance in art, letters, and government. These visitors described in glowing terms the peaceful, friendly, welcoming society whose hospitality they had received. Other traders disappeared entirely after having stated their intention to pay this world a visit.

It was soon discovered that the new religion – Hi'alya, or "Glory of God" in the local language – had taken a dark turn. The native sophont species had been annihilated, as had a sizable fraction of the human population. The world has been under interdiction by the Imperium since the latter's border reached it, with subtle interventions from time to time to prevent them from reacquiring space-travel technology while the Imperium decides how to handle the potentially large problem of integrating this world into interstellar society.

Hi'alya teaches that two deities, of good and evil, are battling for control of the cosmos. It further teaches that those controlled by the evil god will always betray themselves by certain quirks in appearance, behaviour, or speech, collectively known as the Signs of Evil. However, the list of potential signs is so long, complex, and subjective that avoiding them all is very difficult for an offworlder.

Referee: The Guardian of the Faith (the autocratic leader of the religion, and *de facto* ruler of the planet) is seen as a living aspect of the good deity, and thus is free to change the list of Signs at will, usually triggering spasms of planet-wide death and destruction as newly "evil" people

and items are eliminated. The locals are aware of the Imperial interdiction, and will greet any visitors with great enthusiasm – until they betray one of the Signs of Evil, at which point the offender will be immediately, publicly, and painfully killed. Any companions will not be suspect, however, unless they too display a Sign of Evil.

Plots:

- The party are Imperial operatives, sent to this world on a covert mission to disrupt a research facility which is close to perfecting space-travel technology. They must derail and discredit the research without betraying themselves as Imperial agents. One risky but attractive strategy would be to arrange for a key researcher or the research itself to display a Sign of Evil, triggering destruction of the researcher, the facility and the disbanding of the project.

- The party is refuelling at the system's gas giant when they detect a distress signal from the (interdicted) planet's surface. Apparently a noble's yacht has crashed in a rural area. The noble offers a huge reward for rescuing him and his crew – a dozen people in all. The PCs will have to avoid Imperial entanglements, and the natives. If successfully rescued, the noble will claim to be a great adventurer who was trying to return a religious relic to the locals. He will bluff his way through detailed questions although his crew will seem less certain of the story. If the players try to blackmail him with threats of reporting his actions to the authorities, he and his crew will turn nasty: they are actually a covert Imperial scout team, intended to undermine the current autocracy.

2. The Chosen

Note: this religion is best used in the Virus Era, the Long Night or Milieu 0.

Description: Farmer Irzu Arnashi discovered a cache of relic technology and decided to use it to help her people. She saw the find as a gift of Imurippar, the noble aspect of their deity – the fact that many of the devices were corroded and useless was obviously the work of the destructive

Lagashag. She wanted to reform her church, but didn't anticipate how the people's beliefs would be restructured around her and her find - she has become the arbiter of all disputes, and is expected to look after everyone's welfare.

Referee: Arnashi has been trapped by her situation for the past thirty years, and despairs over ever escaping it. She is concerned that anything that she says may be taken out of context, and the meaning twisted. She feels a heavy sense of responsibility, and misses the past when she was a humble farmer. The world will be TL3 or less, with a small or medium size population.

Plots:

- Arnashi falls ill shortly after the party arrive - they are accused of being agents of Lagashag by a population intent on their destruction. If they get to see Arnashi it will be plain that she is suffering from radiation sickness caused by one of the recently renovated relics.

- A group seeks sanctuary on the PCs' ship, claiming to be part of a persecuted minority. Only later will it become clear that they are followers of Lagashag, out to "correct the balance" by performing random acts of violence against people and property.

3. Philosophies of Merlna

Note: this religion is best used before the Virus Era (1130+ Imperial).

Descriptions: Followers of the Philosophies believe that the Universe is permeated by forces of darkness and light and those who learn to recognise the differences between these two forces will eventually achieve Divine Enlightenment. A religious leader, the Holy Philosopher, issues guidance to worshippers regarding their daily meditation. These proclamations are discussed amongst communities of worshippers who contemplate their meaning.

Referee: Throughout the Third Imperium, the Holy Philosopher resides on Dral (0728 Core Sector). According to legend, Merlna Agmirgushi, a half-Solomani, half-Vilani religious figure during the Rule of Man (Second Imperium) founded the faith. The precise date is unknown, lost during the Long Night. Followers are found through the Imperium.

Plots:

- The time has come to select a new Holy Philosopher and the PCs are hired to escort one of the prospective candidates (chosen for their

knowledge of Merlna's writings) to Dral for the official selection ceremony.

- One of the PCs (or a NPC) is a member of the faith, and is troubled by a recent event in their personal life. The rest of the party accompanies the PC to Dral to seek guidance from the Holy Philosopher.

4. Harmonianism

Description: There exist two opposing forces, constantly in conflict with each other, at every level of existence (the universe, nature and every individual). This faith's goal is to acknowledge the existence of these forces and balance them within and without. Achieving harmony in one's life pushes one's soul closer to paradise.

Followers believe in reincarnation; each life is but a lesson to be learned on the path to achieving harmony. When all the lessons have been learned, one's soul is truly in harmony with the universe, a perfect balance of the two fundamental forces. That soul is then admitted to paradise. Harmonians have a central priesthood which holds the sacred texts of harmony. Only the priests have gained enough harmony within their souls to understand the texts and interpret them to the masses. Harmonians usually live together in small communities and can be found throughout charted space.

Referee: As a result of their beliefs, followers of this faith may be found acting on the side of what may traditionally be considered 'evil', as this will support the achievement of a balance. This religion may be found throughout the Imperium, with tens of millions of followers; the followers can be quite enthusiastic about their views, looking to recruit members of humanity. Other sophonts such as the Aslan, K'Kree and Vargr are looked upon unfavourably, as their nature is described as inherently unbalanced by the sacred texts.

Plot:

- A Harmonian priest hires the party to recover some of the sacred texts of harmony recently stolen from their vaults. The group will have to search the community, interacting with Harmonian culture to find the culprit. Eventually it will be discovered that it was a student of the priesthood who stole the texts. Knowing the priests would never allow him to view them, he stole them to try and read them for himself. He's now keen to reveal to fellow students that, in fact, anyone can understand the texts. The priests will argue that this is a very superficial understanding but it might be more convenient for them if the student were 'struck down' for his theft...

5. Lords of Light

Description: The followers of the Lords of Light believe that light is the good of existence, and that darkness is where evil hides. Believers refuse to sleep in darkened rooms, and will never voluntarily enter a dark area. The truly strong believers think those who live around dim stars are consorting with evil. Worshipers avoid dark clothing, and make pains to keep everything brightly lit. Services are held in open, airy churches, preferably with numerous skylights, every few weeks. The incidence of services increases in the darker seasons of the year on systems with noticeable seasonal variations as the followers pray for their safe passage back to the light. The faith's churches are some of the most beautiful in known space.

Referee: Followers of this faith tend to be found near clusters of new, brightly burning stars. The fear of darkness has led many researchers to believe that the religion must have started out in a binary or trinary system where true darkness is never found. Persistent rumours remain of a sect which is a mirror image of this religion.

Plots:

- When the characters attempt to deliver cargo to a Lord of Light area, the presence of dark clothing or a dark vehicle causes a very poor reaction by the locals. When they further discover that the cargo is painted/coloured black and not white as they'd ordered, a quick response will be needed to avoid a sticky situation.

- The party comes across a good bargain for solar panels. If they try and sell them in the Lords of Light area there will be a very bad reaction because in addition to being dark, the solar panels are believed to steal the light of the stars.

6. The Restored Canon Church of Sylea (RCCS)

Description: Claiming the authority of a long-running Terran religion, the RCCS has become one of the most widespread religions of the Third Imperium and Known Space. Holding to a strict good versus evil philosophy, the RCCS is very conservative; services are held in an ancient Terran language, and Church doctrine seems quite restrictive on a wide range of subjects, from marriage to salvation, having changed little since the foundation of the RCCS in -535 by Bishop (later Pope) Michael Enshuggim.

The RCCS admits alien races on a case by case basis; very few races have applied. Authority is vested in the Pope, who also carries the

position of Baron. Day to day authority lies mostly with the Archbishops who oversee the Church on Imperial worlds.

Referee: The RCCS often faces charges of being an unfeeling machine, due to its restrictive, conservative doctrine. However, it also supports and performs a great deal of charity and disaster relief work. There has been occasional friction with the Imperial Authorities, with the usually argument being that the RCCS should keep from interfering with politics. The RCCS will happily accept members and sends out missions to recruit unbelievers.

Plots:

- The party is hired to escort a Bishop to his new diocese on a world just recently admitted to the Imperium. The Bishop is beginning to have real doubts about some aspect of his belief and will engage anyone nearby in angst-ridden debate about the nature of truth and so on. Any out of the ordinary event may push him into demanding the party return him to his world of origin.

- The characters obtain information on early church history that could be very damaging. Part of a computer file they buy in a cheap lot of Library Data tapes contains a text that a knowledgeable scholar will confirm to be a non-canonical text that paints a very poor picture of some noted early church fathers and contains passages flatly contradicting an already controversial precept of canon.

7. Thammerites

Description: Thammerites believe in Bartha 'rightness' and Null-Bartha 'wrongness'. Disciples strive towards 'rightness' as revealed in 120 sacred texts - some ancient, some more recent. 'Rightness' might include fundamental physical laws of the universe, moral issues, or quite arbitrary and minor stipulations given in the texts. By striving towards Bartha, followers avoid an eternity within the chaos of Null-Bartha (and whether they spend eternity with Bartha depends on how right they've been in their lives. With little in the way of an organised hierarchy, Thammerites meet every 50 days to discuss one of the 120 texts which they all have read in the previous 50 days. Those considered most 'right' lead the discussions but any can contribute. Thammerites may be found throughout the Imperium.

Referee: The definition of 'right' and 'wrong' for this religion comes from the close, subjective, readings of the sacred texts - the interpretation of

which may be swayed by a suitably charismatic person.

Plots:

- The party's ship is considered 'right' on a world where the Thammerites have considerable power or influence. Crowds will gather as close to the ship as the starport allows and will hinder cargo handling and other port operations. The Port Authority will claim to be neutral but will delay the ship for 1D days on some pretext so that more people can see the ship. Meanwhile the Travellers will find themselves receiving the close attentions of excited Thammerites, which may cause discomfort. Careful exploitation of the situation may result in the party gaining better prices, and their port fees may be waived if the right believers are approached.

- A situation the reverse of that above. Agitated and distraught crowds gather, this time chanting ominously 'Null-Bartha, Null-Bartha'. Again, the Port Authority will claim to be neutral but will eventually ask the party to leave immediately - before they can complete any cargo transactions. They will be allowed to refuel (and may even do so at no cost if they embarrass the port officials enough over their treatment or threaten to bring the situation to the attention of the Imperial Ministry of Justice).

8. Prinsloo

Description: Prinsloo is a syncretistic religion which is a mixture of Vilani and Terran faiths. The founder, the Most Revered One Eneri Sullivan, was a former NCO in the Planetary Army. Prinsloo teaches that earlier faiths had an element of truth in them but that the whole truth was never revealed anywhere until the divine spirit of the galaxy itself appeared to Sullivan and told him to reveal the truth. Sullivan is a very charismatic man

whose almost hypnotically compelling voice has convinced tens of thousands to join his faith.

Prinslooians can be easily recognised by their asymmetrical Vilani style robes of indigo-died Terran cotton. They can be seen in public places throughout the world. They will typically go up to anyone they see and, with a face glazed over with religious joy, say "Hello, would you like to hear about the one true way to achieve all?"

Referee: Followers of Prinsloo give all their worldly goods to the faith. They work sixty hours a week and pray and proselytise thirty hours a week. Every aspect of their lives is controlled by Sullivan who lives a decadent lifestyle supported by his cultists. Sullivan founded the cult 25 years ago on a high population world. It is estimated that there may be 50,000 followers, most of whom remain on the homeworld.

Plots:

- A member of the ship's crew does not report back to the ship. This can be a NPC or, if they are up to playing it, a PC. They do not respond to communicator signals. When the party homes in on the communicator signal they find it in a local pawn shop. The faithful (N)PC brought all his remaining worldly goods here to sell.

When the party goes to the main temple they are not allowed in. By shadowing the temple they can find their friend and shipmate. When they do he is very eager to tell them about the faith. Under the laws of this planet the characters cannot do anything about his decision. Do they leave their friend or kidnap and deprogram him?

- A local man comes to the PCs for help after his wife joined the cult, abandoning him and their young children. He offers them his life savings (a modest sum) if they can recover his wife. He claims that Sullivan is a powerful psionist who is using his powers to coerce his followers.

Interactive Monotheism

'He' listens to us all, every day, every prayer

Interactive Monotheism is the belief in the existence of a single deity, who takes an active interest in the daily actions of followers. The deity may be omnipresent, omniscient or use lesser agents to watch its followers and influence their lives.

1. Ang'rrok

Description: Ang'rrok is the shaman of a primitive tribe on this world, about whom many claims are made. Most relate the tale of his many uses of supernatural powers to protect his people. Of course, no rational citizen of the Imperium still believes in magic. He preaches against the injustice of the 'Imperial Occupation'.

Referee: This religion may be found on any TL0-1 world, and will have been founded in the last 30 years. Ang'rrok is a powerful psionic, and has used his abilities to become a living god to his followers. He is gathering followers, and has sworn to drive the Imperials off his people's land. How Ang'rrok's latent abilities became so powerful are a mystery, but he has spoken of "the cave of mad dreams" and "the One who waits".

Plots:

- Ang'rrok leads his followers against the small Imperial settlement on-world. The PCs are caught in the horde's attack.

- The PCs are hired to investigate the existence of the "cave of mad dreams". They discover that there is such a cave and it houses an Ancient computer site; the site is not happy to be disturbed.

2. Gabreelism

This religion is designed for the New Era (Virus) setting, but could be modified for use in other milieux. The place names relate to systems within the 'Solomani Rim', a sector on the Rimward edge of the Third Imperium.

Description: Gabreelism has as its basis the beliefs of the Searchers for the One Faith - its holiest writings were written by two such Searchers - and incorporates its mission as part of its structure. While it tends to be inclusive (and as a result met much resistance from the remnants of the Solomani Occupation Government after the Collapse) its adherents hold very strong beliefs regarding the use of automation, particularly artificial intelligence systems and robotics.

Virus to a Gabreelist is an evil, soul-less abomination that must be destroyed regardless of whatever intentions are professed by "it" or its allies. Followers of Gabreelism recognise the spiritual leadership of the Priestess of the Faith, a psionic holy person who issues pronouncements on topics ranging from proper behaviour to prophecies (actually psionic visions) of the future.

Referee: Traditionally, Gabreelism was founded by Gabree-el Dahnara in Jerusalem on Terra (popularly known as Earth) in the Imperial year 1132, the year that she gave her famous "Call to the Faithful" speech. The New Terran Calendar uses this year as "year zero".

Plots:

- The PCs are hired to provide transportation and security for a group of Gabreelist priests who are attempting to spread their faith to a world in the Wilds. Unknown to the party or the priests, agents of a rival pocket empire, the Dingir League, are already on the planet and are preparing to cause trouble.

- The PCs are hired by a Terran corporation to discover who has been sabotaging the corporation's efforts to salvage an assembly line from an automated factory on Agidda. The trail leads to an ultra-orthodox Gabreelist faction based out of Prometheus.

3. Disciples of the Bright Way

Description: The Disciples believe that God dwells in jump space and speaks to followers whilst travelling in jump. Views of jump space are called "The Face of the Deity" and a secret combination of drugs and meditation reduces the chance of going mad when looking at the ever-shifting greyness of the jump bubble. This knowledge is both secret and not entirely effective.

Referee: Most passenger and cargo lines refuse passage to the Disciples, due to prior disconcerting experiences where hatches and access ways have been opened to allow "a better path to God". Many are willing to pay large amounts for any kind of passage except low, and will put up with uncomfortable and cramped

quarters. Some own their own ships and offer passage to brave Travellers. Followers of the 'Bright Way' may be found throughout known space.

Plots:

- A polite, well-dressed young man approaches the party and asks them to deliver a large crate to the starport. He will pay each member Cr1000 for the delivery, on condition that they do not open or examine the contents of the crate in any way. If asked, the man will identify himself as a Disciple. The crate contains four Disciples, who want to stow away on board an interstellar ship. They are harmless, but completely insane.

- A similar crate is offered as above, but this time it contains a small, home-made effort at a jump-drive with timer attached to deliver a message to the 'divine being'. The man will ask the crew to jettison the crate outside the 100 diameter limit but won't reveal why. In fact the jump drive won't function but could cause a potentially dangerous explosion.

4. Church of Velis

Description: The beliefs of the Church of Velis mirror more mainline monotheistic religions. However, adherents of the Church of Velis believe that he was a prophet of God, who through his words (both spoken and lyrical) and his actions provided Mankind with divine inspiration. Most followers are concentrated in the Solomani Rim region, but can also be found throughout the Third Imperium, Solomani Confederation and elsewhere.

Referee: This religion originated on Terra before the foundation of the Rule of Man. The faithful credit the foundation of the Church to Velis Repley, a late 20th century Terran entertainer. The actual foundations can be traced to a group of fans/religious fanatics who founded the religion soon after his death.

Plots:

- The player characters must investigate the mysterious disappearance of several items of Velis memorabilia from a museum on Terra. Several members of the Church of Velis have been implicated in the disappearance.

- The party are hired by a mysterious stranger to provide him with transportation to a nearby world. All indications are he is Velis (he is merely a Velis impersonator in reality). A crowd of Church of Velis fanatics spot him and chaos ensues. Alternatively, the party are hired by a wealthy Church of Velis member to track down the

mysterious stranger who resembles Velis (and it really is him - the referee is free to invent a nearly plausible explanation).

5. Caretakers of the Anak't

Description: In the beginning, there was nothing. Then came the Anak't, building and maintaining all the material in the universe from their own substance. So believe most of the members of the minor race here. The Anak't are a lizard-like animal who build exotic structures in the same way that spiders build webs - but these are large, solid and beautiful, like fairy tale castle versions of termite nests. The Anak't are rare, and guarded zealously by the Caretakers - since they maintain the fabric of the universe.

Referee: This religion may be found on a single world inhabited by a minor race with a medium or low population (7-), and a low tech level (3-). The religion developed when the race was young.

Plot:

- The party have stopped at the port on the world where the Caretakers are found, *en route* to another system. However, the ship becomes infested with Anak't building furiously, and the authorities will not let them leave or kill the creatures. Nor will they compensate them for the effective loss of their ship (the PCs will be informed that they should consider it a great honour!)

6. The Travelling Church

Description: The Travelling Church is made up of members who occasionally take one or two year sabbaticals to travel the space-lanes and promote their worship of T'uaslua. Fairly ordinary citizens otherwise, whilst on their starfaring journeys they are very likely to look for Travellers in need of help, whom they will provide them with food, shelter, transport or whatever might be required. The Travelling Church is only concerned with humanity and no aliens would be included in such largess. They will endeavour to help those in need anonymously if at all possible but make sure that it is clear that it is T'uaslua who has provided.

Believers who are not travelling meet informally in houses and arrange collections and donations on a planetary basis to provide for any of their members who are passing that way. There is no formal organisation at a higher level. Some believers on higher tech worlds have taken to meeting on grav platforms over a mile above the planet's surface, as this both brings them closer

to T'uaslua in his home amongst the stars, and adventures T'uaslua's presence.

Referee: Followers of this faith may cause concern to down-at-luck Travellers who will no doubt be suspicious of such unlooked-for charity!

Plots:

- If the party are down on their luck, the human members may be the recipients of a gift from T'uaslua. Attempts to trace the donor will be difficult. If they succeed, the donor will make strenuous and persistent conversion attempts on the most receptive players.

- In the starport, the party are approached by collectors looking for donations to the Travelling Church. If they choose to give any money, they may find their 'luck' is good for a month as a result of prayers said on their behalf (but not in violent or illegal situations). The exact nature of the luck is at the referee's discretion.

7. Searchers for the One Faith

Description: This faith holds that all Terran religions are valid, each being a different interpretation of the divine message. The Searchers have established a massive computer database, maintained on Home and Terra, where all religious scriptures, teachings, and sayings are pooled. The Searchers hope that when all Terran belief has been assembled and analysed, the message of the Divine Being will become evident.

A wide variety of beliefs regarding the nature of God and the nature of worship can be found among Searcher members. The Searchers do not recruit members from other sentient species. Searchers can be found travelling throughout Solomani and Imperial space, interviewing religious leaders and amassing data.

Referee: This religion was proposed by Dr. Myadus Lynne on Terra during a conference on Solomani religious beliefs and spirituality in 650 Imperial. The faith is generally restricted to Solomani Confederation or former Solomani Sphere worlds.

Plots:

- The PCs are hired to escort a prominent member of the Searchers to a religious conference on Turin in the Alpha Crucis sector to locate some caves, wherein it is claimed there have appeared a series of writings of the One Being. Given the caves are in the middle of a hazardous jungle this is no easy task. It will take around 30 hours to record the writings which are on every surface of the strangely smooth cave walls.

- The party are hired by a member of the Searchers who believes he has found the key to locating a lost holy relic which will give great insight into the message of the Divine Being. Unfortunately the relic is in the possession of a wealthy collector who refuses to let anyone examine it, and the Searcher has concluded that the only way to obtain the relic is to steal it.

8. Onaara

Description: Onaara (also nicknamed "The Trader's Creed," or a similar phrase in several other languages) is a religion practised almost exclusively by merchant starship crew members. There is no central Onaara "church"; instead the faith spreads by informal and very low-key recruitment of new members by those already practising.

Onaara consists of a spiritual component (a personal deity who is an aspect of the single god, Onaar), an ethical component (a rather abstract commitment to "service" to all sophonts), and a physical component. The latter is a martial art called Onaar-asii (roughly translated as "Onaar-concentration"). Each component is pursued with varying degrees of seriousness by different adherents.

The only organisational structure associated with Onaara oversees tournaments in Onaar-asii, while also promoting the philosophy more or less as a sideline. However, most adherents treat Onaar-asii more as yoga-like body exercises than as a practical fighting skill.

Adherents taking Onaara's spiritual side seriously will tend to have a small altar or other sacred space for meditation. This can be as unassuming as a small box which is pulled out from under a bunk at need, containing a gemstone and perhaps a candle for meditation. On ships where all or most crew members practice Onaara, it is quite common to find a more elaborate altar in one corner of the ready room.

Referee: Curses based on Onaara are almost universal among merchants, even those not practising the faith. Colourful phrases featuring various parts of Onaar's anatomy will often be heard when something goes wrong aboard a merchant vessel. The faith originated during the Long Night, when a thin web of independent tramp merchants was all that held the tatters of civilisation together. The details of its origin are lost; numerous attempts have been made to tie the name of its deity, Onaar, to some planetary culture, but so far no convincing case has been made.

Plots:

- A crew member or passenger on the same ship as the PCs is a strong adherent of Onaara; during a jump, another passenger discovers this, and is openly disparaging of this "crazy superstition," missing no opportunity to mock and belittle the faith and its practitioners. The follower eventually cracks and uses their martial arts to retaliate. The PCs will gain the good will of one or perhaps even both sides if they stop the fight and find a peaceful resolution.

- The party are contracted to provide security for contestants at a regional Onaar-asii competition; local organised crime is suspected of having plans to rig the competition in some way. This could include injuring or killing competitors, bribing judges or the like, or could simply be an unfounded rumour.

9. Monastic Order of the Soldiers of God

Description: Also known as the 'Chaplains', this religion is only open to those of Solomani descent. They are a military monastic order which traces its roots to ancient Sol. On the battlefield they are very aggressive and militant. These battledress wearing brothers inspire fear in all who meet them, especially the battle-hardened Inquisitors of this order.

Referee: Many atrocities are rumoured to be attributable to the Order, but not within their hearing. They claim to be able to trace their roots back to similar orders before the founding of the Second Imperium, and to have ultimately been founded by a Terran called Pietre. Fortunately (for their enemies), there are less than ten thousand brothers in the Order, and they are spread across several sectors. Their relationship with the Church of Sylea (q.v.) and the RCCS (q.v.) is unknown.

Plots:

- The party are hired to break someone out of prison on a remote world. The price seems right. But no one told them it was a Chaplain base. More surprises; the person they're trying to break out turns out to be a Cardinal in the Church of Sylea who was reported dead...

- The Chaplains are on a holy mission fighting heretics who bombed one of their holdings without warning or reason. The surviving Chaplains are in need of combat-trained veterans immediately for assistance in retaliation/ investigation as their closest holding is many parsecs away. The party are hired for meagre pay, though they are promised eternal reward in the life hereafter. However, the PCs learn too much and discover

hints of ancient technologies and even older secrets that may shake the church and all of the Imperium apart. What are these references to a Temple and an Ark?

10. Synagogue of the Stars

Description: Almost 6,000 years old at the time of Vilani contact with Sol, this ancient religion has persevered through the most daunting challenges, including determined efforts at their extermination. Their longevity of a core system of faith and beliefs has made them an item of interest to Vilani religious scholars. Adapting to interstellar society was difficult and required much rethinking of the Ta'alm-uaad and reinterpretation of the To'or-ah, but they have nonetheless kept a coherent and identifiable culture and tradition.

Referee: There are some who believe that the lost tribe (one of thirteen sacred tribes) from Terra's distant past, was actually a Vilani offshoot that had contact with ancient Sol. The faith is found throughout Solomani contacted space.

Plots:

- The new crew member is working out well. But in the middle of a crisis where his technical (or other) skills are required, he says that it's a holy day and he can do no work, in fact none at all for the next 24 hours. What to do? The PCs may reason that he can't actually do the work, but can he talk about it? The party will need to find a way around this problem!

- Joshua's coming of age party is coming up soon and his father hires the party to make a quick run to a nearby system to acquire a few tons of rare Gefeltesfish for the celebration. It should be a milk run with just enough time. But when the ship develops a major drive fault, the PCs are in a spot. If they don't get the cargo to the celebration on time, they'll lose more business than they can imagine because Joshua's father owns the largest trading company in this subsector and can blackball the PCs at every local starport.

11. Church of Sylea

Description: The Church of Sylea (later the Imperial Church of Sylea, and later still, the Imperial Church) is another tool for the Third Imperium's expansion efforts. Where the Imperium cannot go, missionaries can. Their dogma preaches the value of unity of belief and political organisation. They are adept at incorporating the beliefs of various faiths into their own, thus attracting followers of all sorts. Worshipers include Solomani, Vilani and Sylean

alike. They use this diversity to advantage in their missionary work.

Referee: Vague rumours of an Inquisition surface from time to time, but these have never been substantiated. Open criticism in the Third Imperium is decidedly unwise. There is a degree of friction with the RCCS (q.v.), but both organisations may be found working side by side.

Plots:

- Father Sier Mar needs passage from the out-of-the-way world on which he finds himself. He's willing to pay a high rate for passage to the closest major church holding. As the party prepare to leave orbit, local authorities order them to stand down. The PCs must decide whether to hand over the Father to the locals, who are claiming he has stolen RCCS documents.

- The characters deliver a cargo to a small planet they haven't been to before. As they're unloading, armed men in priest's robes appear and arrest them for heresy. Has the Church created its own government on this planet? Or is someone seeking to discredit the church by acting this way?

12. Canine Time Worshippers

Description: Vargr beliefs are not generally well known to the other sophont races, but there is at least one sect which worships time. They pray for more time to allow them to fulfil their dreams - their aims in life. Ceremonies are actually very intricate with detailed readings, chants and discussions of the nature of time and Vargr society. Unfortunately, this intricacy may be lost on most of the other sophont races as the services are often seen as rowdy Vargr behaviour with much guttural growling, yelping and gambolling.

Referee: As Vargr society can be chaotic, the aim of this faith is an understandable desire, as members strive to resolve the conflict of their chaotic society, against their aspirations. Sometimes the only real outward sign of such a worshipper is an outward obsession with time (many clocks, watches and fascination with the time systems on different worlds).

Plot:

- The party is given a contract to deliver goods to an Imperial Research Station, which is raided by the Vargr while they are there. Surprisingly, the Vargr are not interested in the material things at the base, but rather the information and opinions of the scientists and engineers. It turns out that the Research Station is working on investigations into the manipulation of time through jump technology. Of course, should the players find this out they may become targets for Imperial Agents seeking to keep the knowledge of the research secret.

13. OCD Cult

Description: Obsessive Compulsive Disorder is recognised as a disease entity, but members of this cult view their own OCD behaviour as directions from a higher being. Thus they obtain positive reinforcement every time they perform their highly repetitive rituals, both during meetings with other members and at home (for example, checking the life support power supply multiple times every hour) and also when they are meeting others and strangers (for example, shaking hands every 5 minutes).

Referee: This is a very small cult, which is often not accepted by the authorities. However, they do keep track of when meetings occur, to allow them to check on their medical patients.

Plot:

- The party arrives back at the starport to collect their ship after some maintenance, and find that the work isn't ready. The foreman says that he just has a few things to check and goes back to the engineering section. Checking the paperwork while he is away will show that his has been doing the same checks for the last three days, repeatedly. He believes that his higher being is instructing him to keep on checking this minor equipment until it is perfect, and will make many excuses why he can't hand the ship back to the party. Without his signature, the ship can't fly. The party begins to discover why this repair company was available at such short notice.

Influential Monotheism

Do not bother The Great One with trivialities!

Influential Monotheism is the belief in the existence of a single deity, who only takes an active interest in the daily actions of followers at key moments in their lives. The deity may be omnipresent, omniscient or use lesser agents to watch its followers and influence their lives.

1. The Virtuous Sons of Creation

Description: The Virtuous Sons (and Daughters) believe that you have control over your own destiny - including the circumstances in which you will be reincarnated. Thus, the poor and the sick owe their condition to lack of faith and will. Believers try to prove their worth, so charity is plentiful - but always accompanied by a sermon. Equality is an evil concept, and animal rights are irrelevant. Church authorities hold a tight rein on the media.

Referee: This faith developed on a world which suffered greatly during the Long Night, under a religious dictatorship. Some followers may be found offworld but most are still on the original homeworld of the faith.

Plots:

- War is brewing between the Virtuous Sons' homeworld and a strongly-egalitarian nearby world. Imperial diplomats and the Imperial Navy have to intervene before things get out of hand, but mercenary groups are sensing an opportunity for profit...

- The party are temporarily stranded in a Virtuous Sons' dominated area, and the local priest decides to use them as examples of the results of weak faith. Denouncing them publicly at every opportunity, the priest will make it hard for the party to deal with any of the local populace. The authorities will have little sympathy and if the party get obstreperous life will become even harder.

2. Dedicated Servants of Larrh

Description: The Servants of Larrh are completely un-selfseeking and won't take any paid employment. They are often found as personal servants to a 'munta' with whom they will stay for life (their own or the munta's); if forced to take a wage they will donate it to their church. On the hour, every waking hour, they promise in set prayers in an archaic language to be dedicated to serving others and not themselves until Larrh's

revelation. Once every two years they will make a pilgrimage to the local capital in a ritual offering of service to their government. The more authority the capital has vested in it, the greater the devotion.

Referee: Each servant believes that they will eventually have a revelation from Larrh at which point they will follow his instructions immediately and to the letter (whether it be to gamble on the local lottery or "join with Larrh" and commit suicide).

Plot:

- A dedicated servant gets her revelation whilst in jump space. She proclaims she is to join with Larrh and there may be hints about opening airlocks, crashing the ship or anything else which might induce paranoia amongst the other passengers or crew or party. In fact, all she is actually going to do is quietly take poison in her stateroom.

However, the Servant's munta insists that she must be kept alive and may eventually admit that the Servant (who would be disgraced if this were to be made public) is bearing his child.

3. The Machine God

Description: The colony was set up at the height of the Rule of Man on a very inhospitable world, a world rich in some very rare minerals, thus justifying a sealed colony. This colony was to be run by one of the most advanced expert systems known to humanity at that time. The system ran the life support and maintenance systems, was self-repairing, and was the life of the colony. Without it all would eventually break down and the people would die. As mining operations grew so did the colony and eventually it became known as the City. Then came the collapse of the Rule of Man and the onset of the Long Night.

Cut off from the outside world with little or no hope of rescue, sealed on an inhospitable world, the people in the City began to panic. Fear led to anger and anger led to violence. Many died - administrators and scientists who couldn't defend themselves were the first victims and many more

followed. The City slid into barbarism with the strong ruling the weak. Then a madman tried to end it all by blowing a hole in the dome. Thousands more died before the City could repair itself and the by-now superstitious people believed that the City had sent a warning.

A prophet came forward and preached that the City would bring disaster and all would die unless they heeded its warning. This led the people of the city to worship the City and the Machine god that ran it all. They would offer up prayers for guidance, for forgiveness and for thanks. The prophet himself was venerated as the "Voice of the Machine" and around him formed a priesthood. They preached non-violence and used the threat of "the Wrath of the Machine" to dominate those who would not co-operate.

Referœ: Millennia have passed and still the expert system continues with the tasks that it was programmed to do, heedless of the worship given to it by the people of the City and the priests that manage them. Limited contact has been made with the Imperium.

Plots:

- After many centuries the expert system has begun to fail and the City is dying. What could have caused God to desert them? Is it the newcomers with their blasphemous talk of "computers" and "programs"? Perhaps the PCs can offer some way of repairing things before the locals decide sacrificing the offworlders might be a solution...

- A fault has developed in the expert system such that it initiates an evacuation procedure. All available personnel, equipment, etc. are to be loaded aboard ships and taken to a neighbouring world. The PCs may find good money carrying cargo and passengers as ships are scarce here.

4. Church of Strength

Description: The Supreme Being teaches his believers that their mortal body must be a strong 'temple' to receive immortality. The teachings, related by the prophet Philippa Niets, declare that the body gets stronger when intentionally pushed beyond the pain barrier.

Services tend to consist of mass fitness sessions, where getting closer to the Supreme Being is best served by getting as tired as possible. Groups jogging along the streets try to recruit newcomers into the church.

Referœ: Severe mortification of the flesh leads to hallucinations, compensatory endorphin secretion and a feeling of common cause with

fellow sufferers; this is mostly what binds the church followers together.

Plot:

- There are some within the church who take the fitness regime to extremes. One such group believe that they must prove themselves against others - they kidnap outsiders and force them (on pain of death) to take part in violent and ruthless contests of strength, dexterity and endurance. The losers tend to die of their resulting exhaustion or injuries. The PCs are hired by a concerned mother, whose fitness-fanatic son disappeared mysteriously a few days ago. (He was kidnapped for a 'contest' and is now dead.)

5. The God with the Big Gun

Description: Sometimes there is a need for a god. The comparative anthropologists of the Imperial External Affairs Ministry recognised that in the Imperial expansion it was difficult to convert newly 'discovered' planets from their existing religions to a suitable Imperial credo. For the more primitive worlds, the empire's lack of a religious basis was perplexing. In their minds these indestructible, fire-spitting, flying warrior demons (e.g. marines in battledress) had beaten their own gods. It was felt rather futile to tell them that there might be no god or even an infinite number and that, relatively speaking, we are just tiny specks of dead star dust whose actions are irrelevant to the universe. Far better to reinforce their beliefs in the invulnerable fire-spitting demons and encourage them to transfer their allegiance to the new, all-powerful Imperial 'god'.

Referœ: Diplomats visiting newly acquired primitive Imperial worlds are required to dress in godly dress, perform miracles (using high technology) and ensure the locals reverse an appropriate composite idol. The more able locals are inducted into a priesthood and are very gradually introduced to the reality of the Imperium such that the world can begin to accept offworld visits and trade.

Plot:

- An interdicted world, subject to the Gun God principle, has become a slave world under an Imperial governor who enjoyed the idea of being master of a whole planet of fearful, awe-struck followers. An underling attempts to make this known but is killed shortly after having passed his knowledge to the PCs...

Crisis Monotheism

And as the world reached the brink of disaster, The One appeared to all...

Crisis Monotheism is the belief in the existence of a single deity, who only takes an active interest in the actions of followers at critical points in history. The deity may be omnipresent, omniscient or use lesser agents to watch its followers and influence their lives.

1. The Way of Glory

Description: 'The Way of Glory' is increasingly popular among Imperial soldiers, especially the Marines. Glorists believe that combat is the ultimate expression of faith in God, and that a good death in combat assures one of a favoured place in the afterlife. Glorism is an informal religion, with groups of believers congregating on an irregular basis. There is no formal priesthood. Glorists believe that a great warrior's equipment can be imbued with his spirit, and pieces of a hero's equipment are often the centre of Glorist shrines.

Referee: Glorist philosophy may result in units behaving in an unexpected manner - holding a position when Imperial doctrine (and indeed common sense) would suggest retreat, for example. At its best this faith becomes a driver for an honour culture within the military; at worst the unit's culture may develop an attitude not unlike barbarian warrior cultures of Ancient Terra.

Plots:

- The PCs are hired to retrieve the equipment of a Marine who died in the Chanestlin War. The patron has the serial numbers for the bulk of the man's gear. Some of the marine's gear will still be in service and obtaining it from the military could prove tricky (though their record keeping makes it easier to locate). The remainder may be tracked down in surplus stores and so on which will be exceedingly difficult and time consuming. The PCs will have to visit several different worlds but the patron is willing to pay well. It may not be possible to locate every last item but if they come close, the patron will get very excited.

One of the hardest items to recover will be an old laser rifle lost in zero-G combat and now in its own orbit around a star!

- A terminally ill Glorist has decided to make a bid for the afterlife in the same place that the PCs happen to be. The Glorist is heavily armed, and quite irrational. Too ill to pass a medical to sign up even with a backwoods mercenary group, the Glorist's last vestiges of morality may just give the

party time to act before he starts a killing spree or taking hostages.

2. The "Machinists"

Description: The "Machinists" (a nickname; they have no name for themselves) believe sophonts are indebted to their Creator for the flesh they are given. Nerve refusion technology allows them to reduce the debt by replacing some of that flesh with metal and plastic. The loan on the old flesh can be transferred to those more willing to pay it. Machinists are voluntary cyborgs, replacing fully-functional body parts with prosthetics. Most of the cost is covered by the medical purchase of their "surplus" flesh for transplants. At this TL the bionics are no more capable than the original flesh - but at least the only payment for them is in this life.

Referee: Imperial culture is generally opposed to voluntary replacement of human organs by cybernetic prosthetics - as a result, the actions of the Machinists would be frowned upon in many systems. The faith is only a half century old, and is found on a TL11 industrial world. Very few members are found offworld.

Plots:

- A young child comes to the party seeking help. Her Machinist parents intend to replace her eyes with prosthetics, and she doesn't want this.

- An anti-cyborg gang is terrorising Machinists who work in the starport extrality zone, mugging them and smashing their bionic parts. The authorities seem unwilling to get involved. The party will become involved when a Machinist working in a store they have used is set upon in front of them.

3. The Cult of One (Monadin)

Description: Monadin is the sole worshipper of god. God speaks only to Monadin, preparing him for a crisis that will come. As god's only representative, all of Monadin's actions reflect god's will and are part of his preparation for the Terror that comes. God needs no other worshippers than Monadin for only Monadin can avert the coming crisis.

Referee: Most who encounter Monadin and learn of his beliefs (it's hard not to), believe he is mentally ill, but there are stories told of a friend of a friend of a cousin of a guy who saw Monadin save a starship in which the hull should have breached but didn't, thanks to Monadin's praying. Are these miracles or are they achieved with ultra-high tech equipment?

Plots:

- Monadin comes to the party seeking passage aboard their ship. He can't say to where exactly or for how long. Rather he tells them, albeit politely, that they will take him aboard for as long as God wills. The PCs have heard the stories about Monadin and are hesitant to dismiss him. In fact, they can't seem to resist him at all. Although they seem to have complete control over themselves, they cannot actively resist Monadin. Is he psionically forcing them to do as he wishes, or is it a higher power? And what with all the strange coincidences? (Any psionics aboard cannot use any precognitive powers or any telepathy powers on Monadin).

- The party and Monadin are both on the same lightly populated world. Monadin announces at the starport, and anywhere else he can, that everyone must exit their buildings and structures and remove all electronic objects from their presence at noon three days from now, or face doom. The PCs are asked to investigate what he is talking about by the local authorities, because he's stirring up a lot of trouble, especially amongst the less educated. But what are they to do when they find evidence that Monadin is right, especially when that evidence is then destroyed? And is Monadin the cause or the cure?

4. Religious Military Order of St. Ricardo I, King of Sylea

Description: Generally open only to those of the Sylean minor race and Sylean-born Vilani, this order is less sincere but more patient than the Church of Sylea with which it is affiliated. Despite this affiliation, it has a more moderate approach to daily living, and focuses its attention on preparing for crises and trying to diffuse them before they begin. Obviously influenced by Sylean Vilani, they take a long-term view of events. There is still an organisational preference for the pure-bred Sylean, but Vilani are able to advance. The monks are sometimes called 'Ricardos'.

Referee: The Order was founded by Mikal Kem, a former Colonel under King Ricardo's command during the Long Night. Most of the Order may be found on Sylea, but small

expeditionary missions occasionally accompany larger missions of the Church of Sylea.

Plots:

- Popular entertainment has always had fictional stories about 'another Cleon' [or insert alternative favourite Third Imperium Emperor here]: The Emperor's New Clone, The Man In The Crystaliron Mask, etc. But when best-selling author Coml Tancy announced that he was going to begin researching and writing a definitive treatment based on actual fact, public anticipation grew because of the author's uncanny ability to accurately portray state secrets in his Imperial Navy series of books.

Now his publisher has tried to contact the reclusive author to no avail. The deadline for his first draft has come and past. He was last seen entering the grounds of the Ricardos on Ton Vorn. The party are hired to find him or his electronic manuscript and return it to the publisher for a handsome reward.

- Local meeting houses of the Ricardos have been being bombed lately. And some of its undercover agents have been assassinated. They hire the PCs as independent agents to investigate who is behind these attacks. But who should they go to when they discover that it appears the order is attacking itself?

5. Doomsayers Collective

Description: "Woe, woe and thrice woe" - these people have a taste for apocalyptic prophecy and enjoy scaring themselves. They also go out and try to scare others, both to hear themselves talk and in a sincere attempt to alert the rest of the Galaxy to the doom which approaches. This doom is not a plague or a sudden snap collapse to a singularity; it is generally the return of a massive Power which will rearrange worlds in accordance with the goodness of their inhabitants.

Of course this means that the Doomsayers fear for much of the Imperium. Most Doomsayers offer a rapidly approaching date for this visitation. Usually the date is quite immediate, next Tuesday or "on the birth of your child".

Referee: The Doomsayers are entirely unabashed by all their failures to accurately predict the Change so far. Usually, they claim they knew the Change was less imminent than they had indicated, but that they felt it better to shock their audience into a realisation of the dangers.

Plot:

● One of the PCs is harassed by a doomsayer whilst at the starport; this will not stop unless they repent or they get security to remove the offending preacher. After the date that they were told that the Visitation was due, they receive a visit from some local thugs about 'their invoice'. Apparently, the doomsayer is invoicing them because of the actions that they had to take to save the world in the face of the player's intransigence. The thugs are 'friends' of the doomsayer who have decided to help them out.

6. The Heralds of Lamarckian Selection

Description: This small, thinly spread and highly mobile organisation is a driven body of people who object to the philosophy of doing good. Charity, they claim, is against all the 'godly' principles of natural selection: adapt or die!

Heralds travel widely, attempting to sell their idea of the need for courage in the face of adversity, the undesirability of humanitarian intervention and the moral taint gained by relying on other people. They are sometimes criticised for accepting sponsorship but claim that this is a necessity to support their proselytism.

Referee: The Heralds gain a great deal of sponsorship from companies and nobles who wish to maintain starvation wages, keep enslaved natives under the thumb, etc.

Plot:

● A local megacorporation boss is relying upon low wages at a production plant on this relatively primitive world. At least one religious group has arrived to bring charity to the under-privileged but the boss has brought in the Heralds to counter them. The PCs are hired to bring in charity supplies but are then discouraged from unloading at the starport by the Heralds (who will, if

necessary, attempt to bribe the PCs to destroy or take away the cargo). If the PCs learn of the slavery they must decide whether to intervene.

7. VOUC

Description: A self-consciously purist revision of the other attempts to discover a scientific basis for faith, vouç (pronounced "nees") is a return to the basis of anthropopsychic cosmology and the mighty brain of that intellectual giant Anaxagoras of Clazomenae (500-428 BC). Anaxagoras preferred to explain the bits of cosmology which were beyond his knowledge - and there were lots - by saying that a first cause vouç ("mind") did it.

vouç is described as a big whirly thing which separated out chaos into the elements. Most of Anaxagoras' writings are lost, but vouç argues there is still a lot of whirly things out there: galaxies are whirly, black holes are whirly, tap water's whirly and you can't get whirlier than a hot tub.

Referee: Followers of this religion undertake many experiments with whirly things to try to get closer to god. This ranges from computer studies of the mathematics of turbulence around plug-holes to various attempts to reach god (generally involving a spinning spacecraft diving into a spinning sun, or somesuch).

Plot:

● Having met several vouç scientists (perhaps passengers on the PCs' ship) the PCs are hired as 'lab rats' for a whirly experiment. They will be accelerated in a huge spinning 'bullet' around a 50 km diameter magnetic 'rifle'. Apart from the hideous strain imposed upon them, they may find some strange side effects (temporary glimpses of the future, short periods of psionic ability, etc.).

Remote Monotheism

Where is our god when we need him?

Remote Monotheism is the belief in the existence of a single deity, who intervenes only very rarely in the affairs of mortals. The deity may be omnipresent, omniscient or use lesser agents to interact with mortals but is either busy elsewhere (with other godly projects) or restrained in some manner from frequent intervention.

1. Chronst Sect

Description: The Chronst Sect is exclusively male and follows strict rules given in the writings of their long-dead founder, Chronst. Monks of the Chronst Sect are extremely devout in their worship of 'The Great One'. Their assured superiority makes outsiders see them as very arrogant, a charge which is not unfounded. Chronst left several (actually very dull) books which the monks jealously guard from outside eyes. Some describe 'The Great One' and his fabulous surroundings; some record Chronst's lectures and travels; and some give Chronst's Rule for Living which details how believers should conduct themselves and dress (dark blue culottes and a light blue shirt).

Referee: One of the Rules includes the manual copying of the tomes. Every additional copy has been hand-written at TL8- or rekeyed into memory letter by letter at TL9+, which gives them great worth to followers of this faith. The Chronst Sect don't believe the Great One will ever intervene in the affairs of the universe except one day to resurrect Chronst to live as an eternal amongst his faithful. Chronst died a millennium ago, and there are only a few thousand members in the entire Imperium. [This sect first appeared in *101 Rendezvous*.]

Plot:

- Believers charter the PCs' ship. One of them will go into a trance for several hours and then claim to be the resurrected Chronst. The others will worship this passenger with incredible awe and reverence (and point to various signs in the writings that confirm the claim). If the party perform any checks, they discover that the erstwhile immortal is a known con-artist and has been previously jailed for fraud. Convincing the Sect members of this will be difficult; the PCs may instead choose to manipulate the situation to their advantage.

2. Chaftliff

Description: Believing in their God 'Stek', Zhodani followers of Chaftliff (or 'The Place') look forward to a glorious eternal future when they will finally be able to interact with their God. During their lives they have a fairly hedonistic outlook which is their preparation for this wonderful afterlife of plenty and happiness. Followers of Chaftliff hold in very high regard those who have walked with Stek. These are very unusual occasions when followers have had a unique vision.

Referee: Some followers of Chaftliff have apparently predicted the future remarkable accurately. Curiously, no Zhodani with any psionic ability has ever experienced this phenomenon. Followers of this faith may be found in concentrated in regions through Zhodani Space. The faith was founded around -3899 Imperial, a century or so after the first Zhodani Core Expedition.

Plots:

- The party are travelling in a ship near Zhodani space and may encounter some followers of Chaftliff. They may stumble upon, or even be invited to, one of their 'parties'. This will be quite a wild affair and any non-Chaftliff Zhodani will be appalled at the licentiousness. However, it will be a good opportunity to meet all kinds of people.

- A Chaftliff follower has a vision of the party meeting an untimely and violent end in a year's time. While the description is very clear, details are lacking that would make it possible to avoid the situation entirely. Whether this is just a dream or a real (perhaps somehow psionically induced) vision of what is to be will be up to the referee to decide in a year's time.

3. The 'Called to Terra'

Description: The 'Called to Terra' believe that their god has specifically selected them to work toward the building of a unified and co-operative society of all sophonts that can ultimately trace

their species' origins to Terra. They view society as a tool of co-operation, and work to ensure that no society under their influence allows what they consider "abuses" or "non co-operation". Followers are encouraged to visit the group's museum and archives on Terra at least once in their lives, to see records of graphic examples of what they are working against, and to learn of the work of individuals who have inspired the group.

Referee: The overall organisation exists to promote the sharing of ideas and resources; most of the power and direction is in the hands of the ad-hoc local groups working towards the ultimate goal. Local groups have occasional conventions to share ideas and results, to debate and decide the meaning of "abuses" and "non co-operation", and discuss the best ways to achieve the organisation's goals. Membership is open to any sophont of ultimately Terran origin; this includes all humans (both major and minor branches), Vargr, uplifted Dolphins, simians, and so on. Non-Terran races are not shunned, though they can never be Called; sophonts of non-Terran origin are welcome to live within the society provided that they accept the values and modes of the Terrans, and make no attempt to impose their own values and modes upon those societies. The Called are prevalent in the area nearest Terra, but can be found throughout charted space, wherever Terran races can be found.

Plots:

- The ideals of the Called do not prevent pro-Terran bigotry from developing in their members; some perceive non-Terran races as less than fully sophont, or as unworthy of the respect due sophonts of Terran origin. A local group of the Called has recently become active on a planet with mutually hostile human and Droyne communities; the Droyne community has resources unavailable to the human community, but which the Called believe are essential to the human community. They will hire the party to assist in a clandestine raid to confiscate the resources. If discovered, the raid is likely to provoke open warfare between the species.

- As above but an informer has told moderates within the human government about the planned raid, and they have approached the PCs to prevent the raid, preferably after it has reached Droyne territory and in a public manner to prove co-operation is possible between sophonts.

- A group of 'The Called' wishes to charter the party's ship to go to Terra from a planet near Sylea. They are willing (and able) to pay the equivalent of High Passage rates for Mid Passage

accommodation, plus standard freight rates (Cr 4,000/dT per jump) for their stowed goods (approximately 1 dT per person). They have plotted a route to Terra (fuel availability is virtually guaranteed, if the party's ship can refine unrefined fuel, as all systems have at least one gas giant). They will pay 10% of the total cost up front in Imperial Credits, with the remainder payable in gold upon arrival at Terra.

En route, they will attempt to recruit members but will be jailed on one planet (more than halfway to Terra) where proselytism is illegal. The sentence is 10 local years with no parole. The others insist that the party must help release the jailed members, or they will forfeit the remainder of the payment.

4. The United Way

Description: The United Way is successful because it appeals to people's laziness - there is little that worshippers have to do. The main practical tenet is that the greater percentage of your worth you donate to the church, the better your position in the afterlife. In theory it is entirely up to the individual how far to take this, but social pressures are strong. Also in theory, there are no taxes - but vendors on the homeworld helpfully add a hefty donation surcharge to their prices which is passed on to the government.

Referee: People who do not wish to pay can go before a public meeting to obtain an exemption - their names and faces will then be prominently displayed in the Non-Contributors Index. The United Way has spread throughout the subsector. The homeworld population accounts for a little over half its adherents. The faith developed from a religious dictatorship on the homeworld during the collapse of the Rule of Man.

Plots:

- A frightened, wealthy individual approaches the party seeking protection and a way off-planet. Claiming to be a businessman fleeing an assassin hired by rivals, he is actually a corrupt church official who has been lining his own pockets with money from donations and has just been uncovered.

- A region of the homeworld has declared that services provided by the government are "giving things back", and harm the long-term prospects of the faithful. They are destroying roads and refusing all services that are wholly or partially government-funded. The church asks for unpaid volunteers to help out, since all official efforts are being sabotaged.

5. Monastic Order of St. Marc

Description: This fraternity is concerned with the gathering of knowledge and are sometimes known as Marcers - pronounced 'markers' and meaning 'marked ones'. Though relatively few in number they can be found throughout the Imperial fringes, especially where there is evidence of the Ancients. These monks should be considered essentially evangelistic scholars. They can occasionally be found serving aboard Scout vessels.

Referee: Although the preservation of knowledge is very important to the Marcers, investigation and education are where they are more commonly encountered, either exploring an archaeological find, or teaching low-tech populations. The Order was founded by a group of scholars inspired by the work of St. Marc, who received permission from King Ricardo to maintain a great library on Ton Vorn to preserve knowledge and learning. As the Imperium ages and becomes more decadent, the numbers entering the order fall, and it never exceeds ten thousand members.

Plots:

- The party encounter Brother Oldewen on a low-tech world. Assigned to the planet to educate, as well as explore for ancient knowledge, he has become troubled and spends his days drinking himself into a coma in the local starport bar. He has stumbled onto something, "a great evil" he says if prodded. He wants to leave the planet, and will do anything to leave in a hurry. The PCs are his ticket offworld. Will they help the monk offworld, or investigate what has scared him to the root of his being - he seems afraid of the children he was teaching. (They have been subjected to covert geneering.)

- Marcers hire the party to take them to a well-known, heavily explored but barren world that has a popular gas giant fuel depot. They bring aboard a lot of equipment that they won't let the crew see (religious artefacts, they say). Everything seems to be fine until the Marcers are transported to the surface. As soon as the Marcers set up their camp, things start going haywire. The ship's main system's go off line and it can't escape orbit or communicate with anyone in the system. Even weapons are off line, for no apparent reason. Transport between the ship in orbit and the surface is possible though. Is it the Marcers? (They are experimenting with various electromagnetic fields enhanced by the rock structures within this planet.)

6. Binay Abrim

Description: The Binay Abrim claim to be one of the oldest continually practised Terran religions. The Binay Abrim god, who is never named, is viewed as a stern and demanding god, but one who does not often interfere directly in human affairs, although certain covenants are said to have been made with humanity. The righteous live according to a complex set of laws set forth in holy texts, but a greater importance is given to living according to high standards of ethics and morals. There is some ritual observance, generally on a weekly basis.

Special academies are established for study of scripture; there is much debate about the meaning of various passages, and students and teachers alike argue various points of view, often with the skill and rigour generally expected of legal experts. A respect for education is a major part of the ethical framework of the religion; most Binay Abrim will be found in professional positions, most notably medicine, law, and finance.

Referee: Binay Abrim do not actively solicit converts, neither do they actively discourage them, although conversion involves a course of intensive study prior to ritual admission into the religious community. The Binay Abrim are found throughout the area of Terran colonisation or administration. The 'more righteous' of the Binay Abrim often live in communities separate from the mainstream of the planet's society, and even the 'least righteous' set themselves apart by their religious practices. They are therefore easy targets for anger when there are poor economic conditions, when epidemics strike, or when governments become oppressive.

Plot:

- The party are approached by persecuted Binay Abrim for passage off-planet at premium rates for low passage. The local government, however, demands they be turned over to them for "crimes against the State and the People". The starport administration will suggest to the PCs that the decision is theirs, but that the charges are probably trumped up - just an excuse for persecution. Note: once a person is designated a bona-fide passenger, or is an employed staff member or ship crew member, the starport covenant requires the Port Authority to protect them within its confines.

Local news feed will report many arrests and murders of Binay Abrim; one feed will be cut off in the middle of a report of an organised massacre, and replaced by a continuously repeating

message that the feed is off-line due to 'State Security issues'. If the party grant passage, and word of this gets out, they will be besieged by large numbers of Binay Abrim all seeking passage, offering varying compensation, from premium prices for steerage to nothing at all (pleading for the PCs' mercy). The longer the ship remains, the larger the crowds will be, and the more desperate offers they will hear.

7. The Dark Ray People

Description: Followers believe that all worlds are born from the all-powerful dark matter goddess Enam who gives all beings life by shooting invisible rays at that being at birth. The religion is spread throughout the Imperium and Solomani Confederation, having originated in Dark Nebula sector during the Rule of Man. The primary belief is that it is important for all sophonts to stay alive to guard their life force for as long as possible. This is because the life force is a gift from Enam.

Referee: This religion was not favoured in the Imperium during the initial expansion from the bounds of the Sylean Federation, as many worshippers were opposed to the use of military power and the cost in lives of expanding the Imperium. Followers will vigorously attempt to

prevent anyone from risking their lives because of their beliefs. They are often perceived as a pacifist organisation although this is not strictly true.

Plots:

- During the reign of the Third Emperor, Artemsus, the party is recruited for an intelligence agency plot in conjunction with the Church of Sylea (q.v.). They are to infiltrate the Dark Ray People to discover if they are truly 'anti-Imperial'. If they are just 'misguided' they are to be encouraged to stop condemning the Imperium's use of force. This will place the worshippers in a dilemma - whose life is more important? The non-believing millions, or the lives of those that worship Enam?

- The party obtains a military cargo contract, and soon after their ship is picketed by a group of Dark Ray People who set up a camp outside the docking bay to elicit support against the material expansionism of the Imperium. The PCs need to find a non-violent way to bring their cargo through, and may have to restrain the Imperial Marines assigned to escort the delivery.

Deism is the belief that a single god created the entire universe but thereafter has taken no part in mortal affairs. Followers cannot interact with, or expect intervention by, such a god.

1. The Caretakers

Description: The Caretakers believe that God created the universe, and then left his children, the sophont races, to be the caretakers of creation. Therefore, it is the duty of all to show goodwill to each other and make the universe a better place for each successive generation. Once a year each caretaker is required to give some portion of their wealth to some charitable organisation, or give some service to those less fortunate.

Referee: Followers of this faith often spend much time deciding upon what the correct form of their duty should take each year. Members of this faith are found throughout known space.

Plot:

● The party are hired to transport a 'care package' to an under-developed world within the Imperium. Instructions are explicit as to where and how the 'care package' is to be delivered. *En route* the ship is attacked by pirates or hijacked. The cargo is stolen and the patron demands it be recovered. It is very clear that for the patron everything hangs on the successful delivery of this cargo; they become almost fanatical about retrieving it from the assailants.

2. Kynos

Description: Kynos means "reality-truth" or "logic". Most adherents believe that they have a personal sense of the existence of a deistic creator who still cares for creation, though cannot affect it. The highest calling one may have in life is to search for the truth (in the scientific sense) and then give it away to any who request it. An adjunct to the most effective pursuit of this goal is to embrace the sub-philosophy of Yillnaldy, meaning "the mastery of passion". This is a philosophy rather than a specific devotion; ideally, an adherent will live his entire life according to it.

This generally involves the eschewing of most expression of emotion; an extreme form - 'Reaving' - involves training and seclusion aimed at completely eliminating emotional response. There is no organisation except among those who seek the extreme of reaving; the nearest

equivalent to scripture is the writings of the original explicator of the philosophy on various subjects supposedly exemplifying the philosophy.

Referee: The pursuit of the answer to philosophical questions is considered part of scientific truth, and is encouraged, but not to any greater or lesser extent than questions that can be tested by experiment. Missionary activity is, in practice, limited to encouraging others to seek scientific truth, and to promote the sharing of knowledge, but always argued on a rational basis rather than a philosophical one. This belief is found throughout the Imperium, in moderately high numbers.

Plots:

● Yillnaldy is not universal even among practitioners of Kynos. One young researcher has become convinced that an Imperial Research Station is withholding information that could lead to better jump drives, and wants the information made public. (The researcher is incorrect; although the research station is in fact doing jump research, there is currently no useful information that has not already been revealed.) A background check will reveal that the researcher worked at the Research Station until the previous year. Deeper investigation shows they were discharged for "psychological instability" resulting from jump space exposure. The researcher will provide information on the layout, several (expired) computer access codes, and a list of files and documents, and will ask the party to obtain the files and documents and turn them over for publication. If pressed long and hard enough, the researcher may be able to scrape up Cr25,000, payable on delivery.

● An independent research facility has discovered something that the local authorities wish to keep under wraps. As the leader of the research team is a Kynos practitioner, the authorities know he will attempt to publish the information. They do not know the ultimate source of the publication, although they do know one of the couriers that will be involved in transporting the information. They will approach the party to capture the courier or otherwise prevent publication of the research.

3. Beyond the Limits of Space and Time

Description: This faith developed amongst the Scientific community of the Rule of Man and was even popular amongst Vilani researchers freed from the constraints of the caste system of the Ziru Sirka. Followers of this faith accept scientific theories of cosmology to a point - they believe that the singularity which exploded in the Big Bang was formed by a supreme being, a being which is now beyond the confines of the universe, looking in on its creation. Believers are strong proponents of research into deep space sensor systems in an attempt to see the light from the earliest moments of the universe, the point at which the Big Bang happened. They believe that if they can see the moment of the creation of the universe they will see the Supreme Being, and achieve deeper understanding of the ways of the cosmos. (The 'first light' is claimed to have been well-researched already, but the followers of this faith believe there is always more to discover.)

Referee: Followers of this belief are often found in astrophysics research programmes, particularly those run by the Imperium. Others have departed with the Solomani Confederation's Expeditions Rimward. Although low in numbers, and somewhat academic in nature, followers may be found throughout the Imperium.

Plots: *Intended for post 800 Imperial.*

● The party is approached by a researcher from Beyond who offers them significant payment if they will cross the border into Zhodani space to discover the purpose of the expeditions they have been staging to Coreward. The researcher does not reveal his sources, and understates the danger of the mission which will require a raid on the Zhodani University on Chronor/Spinward Marches.

● The party has been earning good money deploying deep space research satellites for a group of the Beyond in empty space. These data from these satellites is being collated and synthesised to effectively provide a massive sensor array, seeing farther than anything before. Returning to a previously visited system the PCs discover the scientific team they left there has disappeared and no one is talking. They may discover that a number of Imperial Marines were seen in the University the night before the team disappeared. If one of the characters checks their mail they will find an unmarked envelope with the payment and a note asking the character to contact one of his colleagues, and tell them to 'look carefully into Longbow'.

4. The Aslan Shrine of Heroes

Description: Most Aslan believe that the universe did not just happen but was created. The Creator, for want of a better term, used It's very essence to create. It became the stars, the planets, the seas and land. It became the prehistoric jungles in which the race was birthed and it became the plains on which they developed. But most importantly It became life. All living creatures and all things are made from It's form. Thus the idea of worshipping god is ludicrous. How can you pray to a creator that has given up It's very essence to become the universe? It no longer exists in a way that can be understood.

As an Aslan grows it is taught that it is not just an individual but part of a family, a pride, a clan. Its actions do not just reflect upon its own honour but that of all those Aslan that have gone before and all those that will come after. This can be a very heavy burden for a young Aslan to bear and so they seek guidance. As the Creator no longer exists, they must find that guidance from other sources.

Most revere those Ancestors that have been true to Aslan ways, mighty heroes of Gun and Claw, cunning diplomats, wily traders and the sharpest minds of the Aslan race. They carry items that remind them of the Ancestors that have made their mark on the family, pride and clan. These objects are the Aslan's personal Shrine of Heroes.

Obviously the sexes have different ideas about what qualities should be revered. A male Aslan's personal shrine would include objects that symbolise the great warriors from his family, a Trohk retelling of great deeds, an image of a powerful duellist or a plate with the names of great battles inscribed upon it. Whereas a female Aslan's personal shrine may well be the writings of a famous scientist, a lock of mane from the administrator of a great estate or any thing that reminds them of those Ancestors that epitomise that which they wish to become. The shrine can also have a darker purpose; it may also contain items that remind them of that which is not Aslan. Reminders of cowards and cheats, of liars and those without honour. It is a great fear of many Aslan that their name will not be remembered for their honourable actions but instead for their dishonourable deeds.

Referee: The Shrine of Heroes is not just a personal affair. Each family, no matter how small, will have a Shrine dedicated to those who have gone before and those that have given the family

its honour. Each pride will also have a Shrine and the Shrines of the greatest clans are extremely ornate, perhaps containing the armour of a great warrior or the complete works of a renowned scientist. But be warned: one of the greatest insults you can make to an Aslan is to insult his Shrine and the duel you will find yourself in will not be to first blood.

Plots:

- An item has been stolen from an Aslan shrine and taken into human space. The Aslan are hunting for it and beware any that come into possession of it.

- An entire Aslan starship was lost when its new power plant exploded - just a few days after its installation by an Aslan engineer. The latter fears her apparent incompetence will bring great dishonour upon her clan shrine unless she can prove the power plant itself was faulty. She will hire the PCs to help research the design and the suppliers to help prove her case.

5. Panspermism

Description: Life is incredibly widespread (in the Traveller universe). Most people take this for granted, but biologists still debate why most lifeforms are so similar. For example, transplanted humans faced incredible difficulties surviving in the alien ecosystem of Vland, yet they not only survived but prospered: the biochemistry of Vland and most other worlds is remarkably similar.

Panspermia is one explanation. Panspermists hold that life originated in only a few locations; some say only once. The building blocks of life, such as amino acids, then spread from world to world like an unopposed infection racing through the universe. Life is similar on so many worlds because it evolved from common building blocks. Finds of amino acids and RNA fragments in the Oort cloud and interstellar space have proved that this is a scientific possibility.

Some individuals, both scientists and lay people, have made Panspermia the philosophical foundation of their lives. Taking proof of possibility as proof of occurrence, they attribute mythic significance to discovering the original locus from which all life spread.

Reference: The forms of Panspermia are virtually endless, linked only by the quest for the Ultimate Beginning: cladistic analysis performed on vast

genetic databases, deep probe expeditions to sample interstellar dust clouds, comparative study of creation mythologies, even seances with spirits of the 'Eldor Race'. For some this is an eccentric obsession, for others it is the justification for every action they take. Reverence for all life, extermination campaigns against cladistic outliers, charismatic and con-men: Panspermism has seen them all.

Plots:

- The party have been chartered by a group of Panspermists to sample deep space or an Oort cloud. Coping with equipment failure so far from normal support would make an unusual 'Man against Nature' adventure. Discovery of helium-based life offers opportunities for fame and fortune, despair and disillusionment. The Panspermists may welcome the discovery for the information, or they may seek to suppress it because it contradicts their particular belief structure.

- The characters meet a group of Panspermists fleeing persecution for their religious beliefs. They believe that all life is sacred, and thus oppose any military action. This is being viewed as treason by their government, which is currently involved in a bitter war. To further complicate matters, the enemy is truly horrific - savage, ruthless and murderous. [If run as a simple 'snatch-and-rescue' adventure, this would waste the opportunities for philosophical discussion. If you wish you can have fun as the PCs talk with the Panspermists during lulls in the action. A 'Road to Damascus' conversion is unlikely but some role-playing groups delight in such chances; others would likely kill any character struck by an attack of conscience during a firefight!]

- The players are caught up in a religious massacre on a Panspermist-dominated world. The trouble starts with subtle discrimination and moves on to harassment and persecution of those considered genetically unacceptable. To complicate matters, the genetic make up of some PCs causes them to be regarded as "cladistic outliers" and thus subject to 'cleansing' (death). The PCs have a chance to rise above their own predicament; heroically saving the oppressed. [Many examples of such eugenic cleansing can be found in past history.]

Pantheism is the belief that there are no individual deities, but rather that god is everything and everything is god. It may also be regarded as a synthesis of all known religions and deities.

1. The Sojourners

Description: The Sojourners believe in repeated reincarnation until one can break the cycle. What makes them unique is the belief that you will be reincarnated close to the place you die, and conceived very soon after your death. World of origin is no barrier - an Aslan may return as a human - and a respect for all life is a natural consequence of this. Many Sojourners are vegetarian; the most fanatical will only live on food that does not require anything to die. None will casually cause harm to others.

Referee: It is believed that this faith may have derived its primary concepts from Terran Buddhism sometime before the Long Night. Sojourners hold discussions about their beliefs in many places, and it is possible that they could be encountered by a party somewhere, where they are mistaken for a lecture party.

Plots:

- A group of Sojourner priests are harassing a Droyne community. Their head priest (who was proselytising the Droyne) has just died in the vicinity. The Sojourners claim that their head priest is being reincarnated there, and they wish to take him away for training. The party are hired to kidnap a specific Droyne and transport him offworld. If they're not willing to do this, their task is to simply locate a Droyne that meets the Sojourner's very specific criteria. If the party were around at the time of the head priest's death one of them will be identified as the next head.

- A Sojourner retreat is being threatened by a corporation that intends to take the land for more "productive" purposes. The brothers will only resist passively - but they believe the corporate take-over was illegal. If the party could find evidence quickly, they would be well rewarded. The only way of finding this evidence will be a break-in that requires the presence of a Sojourner who once worked for the megacorp. Of course, his or her contribution to the break-in must be entirely passive.

2. Universal Synod of Reason

Description: This church teaches that all of Creation is a vast puzzle (composed of myriad sub-puzzles), and that our work here is to solve it. Every event or phenomenon, no matter how seemingly trivial, is a vital clue to the solution. Many of the church's fundamental teachings come from its founder, Elias Vanim, who wrote over 100 books setting out examples of "God's Puzzles" and a set of formal systems for characterising and solving them. Later leaders of the church have extended Vanim's work, as have numerous other adherents, finding greater or lesser favour with the hierarchy - though those in the latter group are merely ignored, not persecuted.

"Reasonist" services are a bizarre combination of traditional ritual (chanting, pageantry, prayer) and what can only be described as a game show, with contestants drawn from the congregation competing to solve mathematical or geometric puzzles, or in trivia competitions (to display mastery of potentially useful data).

Referee: Some local branches actually offer cash prizes to the winners, though the hierarchy frowns on this practice. More commonly the reward is simply a common perception that winners are more likely to be welcomed by God on their death - because they will be able to solve the entrance exam to the afterlife! One comedian has called this "the ultimate quiz at the end of the class."

The faith was founded on Sylea around -40 Imperial, and is concentrated in the orbital residences. It has spread throughout the Core sector and beyond, albeit at a low level.

Plots:

- The party are engaged in some shady actions and notice that they are being observed by an unknown individual. The observer proves elusive for some time, but when caught proves to be a Reasonist who has noticed their odd behaviour and is attempting to interpret it as a message from God. The characters must determine how much he knows, how likely he is to tell the authorities, and how to act in response.

● A wealthy and eccentric Reasonist hires the party to obtain a series of seemingly unconnected pieces of information and random objects, most of which are difficult to find, under heavy guard, or both. He offers a very good payment for the entire set, but will pay nothing if anything is missing. This can set up a long and interesting "scavenger hunt."

3. Tuwukh-Kawan

Description: Tuwukh-Kawan is practised by a remote community on a human-compatible planet colonised by a mixed group of Terrans and Vilani who were dissatisfied by life in a technological society under the Rule of Man. Tuwukh-Kawan does not hold that God (who is called by the same name, Tuwukh-Kawan, literally, "the heart of all") as such is uninvolved with the world, as implied by the glossary entry for pantheism; the philosophy is more of a hybrid of "traditional" pantheism and Interactive Monotheism, wherein Tuwukh-Kawan is actively involved in the minutiae of ordinary existence. Similarly, the spiritual aim is not a "conscious" promotion of harmony, being rather an "ecology", where conservation of resources, non-aggression, and living within the natural order are taken as given, rather than promoted specifically as goals. These concepts form the cornerstone of the society's lifestyle; no specific devotional activities are required, living by the ecological/religious precepts is both the will and the honouring of Tuwukh-Kawan.

Similarly, no specific religious hierarchy is required; elders of the society are generally accorded more power and honour due to their wisdom and experience, rather than because of any mandate. Liturgy as such does not exist; the nearest thing to it would be the teaching of sound ecological principles to the young - but this is not done separately from other teaching.

Referee: No attempts to convert others are made, and outsiders are never viewed as full members of the community - but outsiders' children who are brought up within the system are accorded full status. Moreover, through either generations-long experience with the local ecology, or perhaps latent psionic talents (it is impossible to know which), the people believe themselves to have an innate sense of the "rightness" or "wrongness" of a person, creature, or thing (and in fact, they do seem to accurately identify "rightness" or "wrongness" according to an ecological definition). Beauty is viewed as being connected with "rightness", which is a fuzzy

concept that is best translated as "harmoniousness with nature" or "naturalness".

The community does not tolerate "Wrongness" - a person whose actions are consistently against the maintenance of the ecology will be 'reconditioned' in the interests of "preserving the rightness of the world".

Plot:

● The PCs' ship is forced to land on the planet to make repairs after a mis-jump; the planet has no starport, not even a beacon to mark a flat spot of rock. Nevertheless, they are able to put down on a plateau of bare rock less than a day's walk from the main community of Tuwukh-Kawan followers. Parts for the repairs to the PCs' ship will, naturally, be unavailable - but it will turn out that manufacture of the parts is well within the local technology.

While in the community, the party will not be shunned, but neither will they be welcomed with open arms. All attempts at payment in cash or "intrinsic values" (for example gems, precious metals) will be met with total incomprehension; the concept of money does not exist within the culture at all, and that of value only in connection with the utility of the thing valued.

Ultimately, resolution of the party's problem will be possible; the locals do understand the concept of a "little wrongness" (the death of a creature whose bones are vital to the manufacture of the part, or else some pollution of the atmosphere) leading to a "greater rightness" later - the main challenge will be avoiding causing the locals to view them as "wrongness" that must be killed outright, and to convince them of the necessity of tolerating the "little wrongness" of making the needed parts in order to achieve the "greater rightness" of getting the party to leave the planet. It will be an uphill battle, since not killing the party could lead to the "greater wrongness" of other outsiders coming and "doing wrongness to Tuwukh-Kawan".

4. Uncle John's Band

Description: An odd group, dedicated to preserving the traditions started by 'The Five' of whom Kesey was the first. Services feature improvisational music and communal dancing. Worshipers wear brightly coloured clothes, and profess a strong belief in miracles. Details of the cult's liturgy is unclear, but seem to centre around a 'box of rain'. Non-believers are not privy to what the 'box of rain' is. Followers often greet each other by saying: "Are you kind?" and "We are everywhere!" A small percentage of the religion's

most devoted believers travel from world to world providing services for local faithful.

Referee: The homeworld of this faith is traditionally the planet "Fenario", which does not appear on any known charts. The legendary founder is known only as "Kesity". The worshippers of this faith actively seek to convert others to their beliefs, and may often be found travelling between the stars to achieve this goal.

Plots:

- Concerned parents contact the PCs; their daughter has run off with the Band. They want her back, or at least assurances that she's safe.

- As the Year 48 approaches, Banders from around the Imperium converge on Sylea to celebrate the "2600 years since the Five came together." A large group will take passage on the PCs' ship.

5. Psionic Brotherhood

Description: This is a small organisation which seeks to know the divine through study and training of the psionic "Mysteries". The divine intelligence, God, exists in everything, even in the collective consciousness and this is what the believers seek to understand. Most are telepaths and know how to regulate their bodies psionically. A select few know the other mysteries of teleportation and telekinesis. These individuals are revered as they are closer to enlightenment.

Devotion to the mysteries is shown by performance in the Igah Hipodile or Psionic Games. The group's organisation is loose, with most decisions made by the individual members, but a hierarchy exists. There is the Grand Master who oversees all training; the Masters of the individual psionic disciplines; the Adepts; and finally the novices.

Referee: Prior to the Psionic suppressions of the 800s, members of this faith were occasionally found visiting Psionic Institutes in Imperial Space. After this date no members of this faith are to be found away from their homeworld in the Zhodani Consulate.

Plot:

- *This plot could happen on the borders of Imperial Space in the Spinward Marches.* The party are approached by a psionic brother. He would like to hire them to find a kidnapped novice. He has been given a ransom note that specifically said not to get the police involved. The party are to find information on the kidnappers (part of an anti-psionic league) and rescue the young novice from their clutches. The rewards are the gratitude

of the Brotherhood, and free psionic testing/training if the PCs so wish.

6. The Universal Siblinghood of Harmonic Crystallisation

Description: The Siblinghood teaches that everything is partially divine but that only items with a "pure" atomic structure, such as crystals, are "pure". Siblings are sensitive to what goes on around them and have a profound respect for all things. This reverence for nature does not stop them from changing nature, since people are natural, whatever they do is "natural".

Referee: Most adherents are inconspicuous and are identifiable only by their ever-present crystals and their notions about architecture, naval architecture, etc. The more devoted members of the religion may live in caves, rock houses, or artificial crystal structures. They are often employed in scientific or construction fields. The faith developed during the Long Night and spread out from the Interstellar Confederacy.

Plots:

- The PCs' ship is chartered by a group of Siblings posing as a scientific group. They are extremists who have been persuaded that by breaking the starship's zuchai crystal while the ship is in jump and then wearing the fragments they will gain enlightenment about jump space. This action may result in dire (even fatal) consequences when the ship returns to normal space.

- The PCs (who ideally include someone with prospecting or geology skills) are hired by Siblings to serve as workers on their crystal dig. The dig uncovers a covert, long-abandoned military base once intended to support an invasion from a neighbouring world.

7. Followers of the Way

Description: Similar to Zen philosophies, this religion teaches enlightenment through self-discipline. This self-discipline is most clearly seen in the rigorous physical and martial training that its members practice. Practitioners often wander the galaxy in search of unique experiences that may serve them on the path of enlightenment but they also often spend years in solitude or in monasteries silently pondering existence or concentrating on a single physical skill, enhancing it to amazing levels.

Referee: Skills frequently chosen for study are Bow Combat, Sword, Brawling and Perception. They generally speak very little and will not fight

unless forced to. Those who practice this philosophy may be found throughout the Imperium.

Plots:

- A group of Wayfarers approach the party. Their monastery and the nearby village are being constantly harassed by high-tech bandits that use energy weapons to take the harvests and pillage periodically, destroying what meagre income the village has and killing any who oppose them. They need high-tech weapons and training in how to use them, but can only offer Cr20 per person.

- A character unwittingly saves the life of a Wayfarer. The monk begins to follow the character around attempting to serve them in any way they can. If pressed as to why, he will admit that he experienced a flash of enlightenment when the character saved his life (although he can't really explain it - besides, you have to seek your own enlightenment) and has the feeling that it will happen again. (Perhaps this monk should be introduced to Monadin!)

8. A Singular Pursuit

Description: There are still those who haven't heard that zero point energy negates the whole concept of heat death (the gradual cooling of the universe). Among these are a hard core terrified of the idea of the Tepid Eternity. They believe they can avoid their doom by surviving high on a black hole's gravity well. The First Seeker, Raymond Graham has been developing this theory over 200 years (he uses anti-ageing drugs) and thinks he can succeed by getting things to run on Hawking radiation, interacting with X-rays, etc. Of course there are problems, not least finding a black hole to use. Luckily, money isn't one of them: Raymond inherited a major fortune from his father's megacorporation and has invested it in multiple-site deep space astronomy, two long range exploration ships and a share of survey data from the Scout Corps themselves.

Referae: Mr Graham may appear insane to some, but he has sufficient followers to populate his dream of an O'Neill station orbiting a remote singularity. The richer followers are being put in cold storage, to awake during the "Twilight of the Stars" while others search for a suitable singularity and pester cosmologists and astrophysicists to recognise that the end is coming, no matter from how great a distance.

Plot:

- One of Graham's stranger experiments is to attempt to create a miniature black hole. This involves accumulating a large number of gravitic generators on the moon of a carefully chosen gas giant. No one on the project seems to know exactly what's going on as Graham is extremely secretive. The PCs are hired to transport various unusual cargos to this site - the secrecy and strange goings on should arouse their paranoia!

9. The Church of Pure Abstention

Description: Anyone can be pure, provided they follow a low protein diet, abstain from drink, drugs, sugar, caffeine and the like, be sure never to be alone with one of the Impure, never sleep for more than 30 minutes at a stretch, never marry or otherwise liaise with the opposite sex and work hard for the Church.

All of these factors either make one remarkably hardened or very suggestible. The former tend to become priests, the rest are their obedient followers. The overriding belief is that death through such abstention will allow one to reach a state of nirvana.

Referae: COPA has diverged on different worlds. In some cases the priests believe as fervently as the followers in nirvana; if they do not manage to die through abstention then a mass 'transition' is arranged (usually involving bringing together the local COPA group in one room with a big bomb, poison gas etc). On other worlds, the priests use the religion to milk the followers of their worldly possessions. The priests do not believe in nirvana, but prefer to live in luxury on their followers' donations.

Plot:

- The PCs are asked to seek out a source for a totally illegal poison gas. Their patron is a COPA priest who is intending to help his followers 'transcend' mortality to join 'god'. Once they have provided the gas (or some similar killing mechanism) the PCs should become gradually aware of the priest's intentions. If they do not prevent the upcoming catastrophe, the authorities are likely to regard them as accomplices to murder...

Agnostics believe that it is impossible to determine whether there are any true deities or whether the universe is godless. Quite what is acceptable as proof of the existence of a deity is a fiercely debated subject amongst some people, while others simply regard it as an interesting scientific question which may never be resolved.

1. Architects of Tomorrow (Aragishge Drandirdiikun)

Description: A quasi-religious charitable organisation dedicated to the betterment of society for the benefit of posterity. Founded in -2484 on Daibel by a breakaway group of disciples of Dekumagi Shilaaguk. These disciples did not reject the existence of a supreme being, but merely declared such an existence unproven. The Aragishge thus allowed people of all faiths to join as long as they believed in the goals of the organisation. This made it popular with a large section of the population and ensured its spread throughout Daibel Sector and deep into surrounding sectors. The Long Night shattered the coherence of the organisation, but it survived in the form of small local organisations on hundreds of planets.

Referees: Two or three times a week followers are expected to give to anyone they meet begging; or to visit those in prison or hospital with words of encouragement; or to encourage a politician in their work for society. Once a month they work voluntarily for a day in a refuge, charity shop or other charitable service.

Plots:

- Characters hear rumours of a valuable item in one of the Architects' shops. The rumour is false (or else the item has long since been snapped up) but contact with the volunteer worker in this shop who is actually a wealthy merchant, will lead to a good job.

- Whilst hospitalised (or in prison), the party receive a visit from an Architect. If the players makes polite conversation, they will find out the visitor is a highly placed government official who can be sweet-talked into waiving port fees (or some similar benefit) if the character expresses an interest in the official's belief.

2. Society for Ethical Relations

Description: Members believe in ethical and moral behaviour aimed at promoting good inter-

sophont relations, both at the individual level and at the group/community level. Active attempts at conversion are non-existent, but practitioners are not averse to discussion of the basic philosophy, and conversions have been known to occur as a result of the discussions. Most members act on request as "Speakers for the Dead" - such an assignment requires them to speak at funerals, relating the true history of the deceased, in an effort to promote understanding of the deceased by those in attendance, and ultimately, to promote greater understanding between sophonts. Practitioners invariably request such a Speaking for their own deaths.

Referees: There is no formal liturgy, but virtually all members have read the "scripture", two books, both by the same anonymous author, purporting to be "Speakings" for (a) an alien race wiped out by the Terran Confederation prior to contact with the Vilani, and (b) the Terran leader who laid the groundwork for the conversion of the weak and disunited United Nations into the strong and unified Terran Confederation.

There is an additional document, describing the "hierarchy of foreignness", that is widely circulated among members, and serves as a description of the "world view" that is prevalent among members. Members are found primarily in the vicinity of Terra and on Terra itself, but have been known to be found elsewhere in the former Rule of Man area.

Plots:

- A Speaker approaches one of the party for information on an old acquaintance. The character will realise that the acquaintance has died, and that the Speaker is trying to learn more about the acquaintance for his Speaking. If the PCs ask the right questions themselves they will realise the acquaintance was murdered; the circumstances of the murder were such that the PCs may feel obliged to do an independent investigation and embark on a mission of vengeance.

- *If one of the PCs is a Speaker.* The PC learns of a request for a Speaking on a nearby planet, and accepts the request. Upon arrival,

they learn that the request was made by the deceased against the protests of the deceased's family; the local religion views Speaking as "abominable", and the family and religious community will resist the character's attempts to gain information for the Speaking.

The world on which this occurs has a little-known statute against religious persecution which can be invoked to give the PCs "inquisitor" status. This mandates full co-operation and precludes any limits on investigation (even if imposed by the government). Using this statute, two weeks of investigation will reveal that several government leaders and high-up religious officials are involved in a barratry and piracy ring directed against a Vilani megacorporation. The corporation suspects this but, ironically, is barred from investigating by the world's government. An additional two weeks of research is required to do a "proper" Speaking. If the PCs used the inquisitor status there will be a riot at the Speaking, which the party must quell without co-operation from the government.

3. Rationalists

Description: Rationalists are devoted to unifying the diverse beliefs of known space into a single coalesced and unified form, believing that this act will reveal the true nature of God. Individual Rationalists are fairly agnostic, taking very little on faith. Many members are historians or sophontologists. Rationalists react very negatively to the merest mention of the Church of All Faiths (q.v.).

Referee: Rationalists often cause offence to other religions when they infiltrate them to discover their secrets. This faith developed on Sylea, sometime in the Second Imperium.

Plots:

- The PCs are recruited to find a Rationalist researcher missing on a primitive world. Evidence at his campsite shows that he believed that he had found the great secret to the unified belief. In fact he's found an Ancient artefact that he thinks will provide a 'Rosetta stone' to understanding the Ancients. Unfortunately, he's been trailed by a follower of the Church of All Faiths who doesn't want such an artefact found. The party may just be in time to stop the murder of the researcher.

- A Rationalist passenger on board the PCs' ship makes a pest of himself by questioning the PCs and passengers about their beliefs, and deriding any superstitious habits or beliefs by the crew (like dimming the lights before jump). If there are any fervently religious types aboard, the atmosphere will become quite charged.

4. The Awakened

Description: The Awakened believe that the physical world is an illusion, and that reality may only be touched through cryogenic suspension. Rik Adugi "discovered" this when under hypnosis following time spent in an emergency low berth, allowing him to remember some of his "real" experiences (which are usually lost on waking).

Referee: The Awakened will usually purchase Low Passage, but one rule is that they must convert two others before they are allowed to be permanently frozen, so they will sometimes forego this to pursue a likely candidate. The faith was founded around 200 years ago on a TL10 planet by Rik Adugi. It is not believed that the group has any links to any of the various 'timer' clubs operating throughout Imperial space (such clubs are paid to store people in long-term low berths, reviving them at an agreed date).

Plots:

- There have been a higher than average number of low berth failures in this part of space recently - sabotage is suspected. There have been Awakened on all ships involved, though non-believers have been in some of the affected berths. Is someone pursuing a vendetta?

- One of the Awakened gains access to the engineering section and will attempt to freeze themselves (and anyone else close) instantly by flooding the compartment with liquid hydrogen.

5. Church of All Worlds

Description: One of the most controversial large "religions" in the Imperium is the Church of All Worlds. Its critics assert that it is nothing more than a huge tax scam, and few of its members argue otherwise with particular conviction. Its teachings are few and vague, basically consisting of a unified doctrine linking most mainstream human faiths under a single system. Holy Offices (such as entry to the priesthood) may be obtained by signing an affirmation of faith in the Church's teachings and - more significantly - paying a large fee to the local Church office. In return, the Church will assist members in obtaining any legal benefits extended to religious organisations, typically tax breaks.

Some members treat the Church as a joke, organising "services" which parody other more serious religions, or simply serve as an excuse for wild parties. A few smaller, less mainstream religions have joined the Church of All Worlds en masse (simply because doing so was easier than applying for non-profit status on their own), but have kept their own original beliefs and practices

despite their membership. There are even some groups within the Church who claim to take it very seriously, and conduct elaborate weekly services, prayer meetings, and the like – though many suspect that these too are elaborate jokes of a more subtle style. All in all, the Church of All Worlds is a confusing mess, just the way its members seem to like it.

Referee: Some branches have engaged in more legally dubious practices, such as serving as a "front" corporation to hold the papers of members' businesses, thus shielding them from taxation, fees, and other nuisances. The Church is almost constantly under investigation by several Imperial and planetary government agencies, and has been brought to court many times on charges of fraud and tax evasion – and so far, it has won every significant case. The Church was founded on Shudusham in the year 65, and membership has spread throughout the Imperium by the time of the Civil War.

Plot:

● The party is in dire financial straits, one step ahead of an army of creditors and tax collectors who want their ship. A sympathetic starport worker suggests that they shield the vessel from repossession by joining the Church of All Worlds, re-registering the vessel through the Church, and declaring it a (mobile) temple. This may turn out to be a good idea, serving as a powerful weapon in an ongoing bureaucratic battle; conversely, it may turn out to be part of an elaborate scam to trick the players into relinquishing title to their ship.

6. Capranism

Description: Named after Fritjolf Capra, who observed the "striking" similarities between (a non-differentiated) 'oriental' religion and quantum physics. This cult attempts to contact the 'Cosmic Principle' which the followers feel must be out there somewhere and indeed "all around us, here and now".

Referee: This artificial creed is a way for agnostics to feel good about themselves. They sit in their domes, looking up at the sky and contemplating the conic sections projected holographically around them. They put money in the collection plate without even noticing. The

faith has never had a large number of followers, and grew during the expansion of the Rule of Man.

Plot:

● The party's ship is chartered by a group of Capranist believers who want to jump to an empty parsec and attempt to contact/touch the cosmic principle. The jump will be uneventful, but the contact equipment will cause a fuel leak by shorting some systems out. The characters will be forced to resolve their lack of fuel (to jump back to the nearest world) by locating a nearby ice comet. Some elements of the believers may feel this is a sign that they are meant to stay here so that the 'principle' can be revealed.

7. The Multiple Lives Fellowship

Description: The MLF does not believe in a god but rather that wisdom is all-important. They go beyond past life regression, believing that the brain can still remember, or host, a range of past personalities. These are perceived as helpful aides to current existence - an accumulation of wisdom over the millenia. Naturally, the further back the previous personality, the weaker the linkage to their memories.

Referee: The MLF are generally well-meaning and a large proportion of their time is spent investigating history, to help MLF followers identify their past selves (regression does not always result in immediate knowledge of one's past identity, but perhaps only flashbacks to past experiences).

Plot:

● A group of miscreants intend to use the MLF principle to delude several rich individuals into paying them a huge amount of money to research their past history. Their regression sessions involve covertly administered drugs and hypnosis to find out which past figures the dupes would like to be associated with. They then implant the appropriate memories and their victims begin 'remembering' their past - usually as famous leaders, inventors and the like. The PCs may end up as dupes, be hired to guard the operation or be asked to investigate it by a concerned visiting MLF priest.

Atheism is a rejection of the existence of any form of deity or deities. Rational Atheism uses science and/or logic as the basis for this rejection; Sceptical Atheism relies on the personal belief or faith that there is no supreme being; Philosophical Atheists simply do not understand the concept of deities; and 'plain' Atheism is simply a complete lack of religious beliefs.

1. The School of Shared Experience

Description: The School of Shared Experience affirm life, human nature and rational thought as far more important than any idea of God (rational atheism). They believe in the value of self and intelligence but without any religious connotations.

Scholars aim to make the world a better place by shared thought and knowledge and to that end they have weekly "linkings" where they get together to share these experiences. Higher levels of thought and scholarship in fact involve some psionic ability to join in and a good proportion of the scholars are psionic (particularly the more senior ones). Only a few scholars will be found on any one world but they have a presence on many worlds.

Referee: The School will be outlawed on most Imperial worlds following the Psionic Suppressions in the 800s. Full details of its founding have never been disclosed.

Plots:

- A psionic PC is approached by an elderly scholar concerned about the suspected corruption of their cell. They need help finding out whether some new members really are subverting the school's beliefs or whether they are simply getting paranoid in old age. This could be a good opportunity for the party to discover or develop any latent psionic talent.

- PCs hunting for a psionic institute may be attracted by an advertisement placed by a local cell of the school. They are looking for volunteers to help with research into psionic ability. If the party have any aptitude they will get some free training, if not, they'll be used as controls for a while and then released from any obligations.

2. Scientific Rationalism

Description: Followers of this belief seek to quash all religion by replacing it with the faith of science and rational thought over God (rational

atheism). They truly believe in the Marxist statement that "religion is the opiate of the masses". As there is no God, nor an afterlife that has been scientifically proven to exist, the belief is that one must make the most of one's life. This is usually done by learning the sciences and contributing new studies and discoveries to the scientific community. Needless to say, most adherents are scientists and academicians.

Referee: This group is very zealous and will try to 'awaken' anyone they feel is being blinded by 'primitive beliefs and self-righteous dogma'. Still, they believe that there are some races (such as the Vargr) whose minds are just too primitive or chaotic to accept the truth. There are many followers of this belief throughout the Imperium and beyond - however, not all are as zealous or organised.

Plot:

- A well known scientist (also a Scientific Rationalist) is a passenger on board the ship the party are on. Another passenger accuses her of converting his child away from the traditional beliefs of the family. The child was a student of the scientist while at university. These two need to be watched carefully as this may develop into a very heated situation. The scientist may hire a PC as a bodyguard for the trip. The bodyguard will face a constant barrage from the scientist about the 'wrongs of religion' who will make every effort to convert the PCs.

3. The Entropists

Description: These followers ensure that they promote chaos wherever they go by such acts as opening locked doors, altering signage, sounding fire or personal alarms, crying wolf over robberies, and so on. They believe this is essential to maintain the random Brownian motion of atoms and thus maintain the laws of physics in the universe (an alternative form of rational atheism). Some members, however, have clearly joined just to have an anarchistic fling.

Referee: Extremists of this group generate scares in the press (for example, food

contamination) and have been known to use terrorist tactics (for example, bombings) to achieve their aims.

Plots:

- An Entropist takes passage on the party's ship. Suddenly, they are beset with many random minor failures (valves closed which should be opened, settings altered). The Entropist is very computer literate and is planning to hack into the jump controller to ensure a random exit vector.

- The characters are caught up in a terrorist bombing. They identify the bomber and give chase. When (if) captured the bomber shows no remorse - it was an act of entropy and necessary.

4. Followers of the Invisible Hand

Description: This group has radicalised Adam Smith's metaphor for the workings of a free market and ended up with a spiritual justification for the centrality and rightness of being selfish (rational atheism). Quite a few of the members of this church end up with a flair for business and the organisation is rather wealthy. They also take Professor Smith's injunction against mercantile or work force combination very seriously and help out everyone else by putting a stop to unfair trading practices, unionisation, monopolies and mergers. They regard all of these activities as morally and spiritually wrong, as well as objectively undesirable in trading partners. Most preventative action is in the form of books setting out how things could be and infomercials, but the church will also finance court cases in the public good.

Referee: A few extreme Followers will take direct action, sometimes of the lethal kind.

Plot:

- One of the followers offers to intervene to help the party out during a labour dispute at the docks at the starport. If they accept, the Followers will begin a court action against the Union and the Port Authority which will result in the PCs becoming hate figures caught between both sides. The well-meaning Follower will not realise the financial and social effects of their action, as the Unions will blackball the ship in adjacent systems, and the Port Authority will perform stringent checks on the safety of the PCs' ship and also contact their colleagues on other worlds to join in.

5. Children of the Diaspora

Description: The Children are a Solomani movement pushing for a return to Earth. They consider the Solomani to be superior to the other human races, and believe that only Terra can lead mankind. They are somewhat dismissive of the question of religious beliefs (sceptical atheists), considering them either a personal choice, or secondary to the more important goal of returning "home".

Referee: This faith has two periods of great friction during the Third Imperium - the period before the absorption of Terra into the Imperium in 588, and the Solomani Rim War in the late 900s. This belief was first espoused by Ingmar Svenson on Sylea in the year -10 Imperial. Followers of this belief pattern are predominantly found in areas of the Core Imperial regions, and in previously Vilani dominated areas.

Plots:

- *For Milieu 0.* The party are hired to scout rimward, their patron is one of the Children, and is searching for clues on Terra's location.

- The party, containing aliens or non-Solomani humans runs into an extremist faction of the Children. The Children will begin by verbally attempting to convert any Solomani in the group to their way of thinking. They will be openly abusive to the others, attempting to drive a wedge between the PCs. If the PCs of Solomani extract show any interest in the Children they will benefit from gifts and excellent business deals until they 'convert'. If they try to brush the Children aside, they could turn nasty and engage in actual violence.

6. The Secret Society of Supreme Beings

Description: Existence of the Society is unproven, although conflicting rumours spring up from time to time. It is allegedly a society of thirteen wealthy sceptical atheists, who are engaged in a perpetual competition. The goal is simple: to create a religion with yourself as supreme being. Rankings are published each year, based on two criteria: a vote of all members, and a calculated score. The score depends on number of adherents, the TL and devotion of the faithful, how few resources the member spends to achieve this, and several other factors. There are 27 non-voting Collators who gather information for the vote and score calculation.

Referee: The truth about the existence of this society will be very hard to discover, and could

prove fatal if the characters imply that another religion was founded by the society.

Plots:

- A noted theologian has come forward with evidence that one of the major religions was actually started by a member of the Society! The party may be hired by various patrons, to investigate or suppress the findings, or to protect, evacuate or eliminate the theologian. Alternatively they can just be caught up in the ensuing chaos.

The evidence is obviously false and has been disproved already but the "theologian" is a fanatical conspiracy theorist and the truth is being swamped by media hype and a panicky public. The church may be delaying release of the truth to build up publicity.

- As per the preceding plot but the evidence is strong yet inconclusive, and the church is likely to be split right down the middle. The evidence may have been planted by a rival member of the Secret Society or recovered from the belongings of the responsible Society member who died of a heart attack at an unfortunate moment.

7. The Repositorians

Description: These philosophical atheists believe that the AAB (the "Vilani Repository of All Knowledge") actually does contain all knowledge (including how to run your life) if approached in the correct manner. The megacorporation Makhidkarun provides an expert system to help believers get at this information; for each query by a believer they supply a "Khukii" - a random (or "universe-directed") snippet of data from the library which should be interpreted in the correct manner to solve the believer's current problem or provide general enlightenment.

Referee: This faith was founded during the Rule of Man (approximately -2000 Imperial) on Vland as part of a backlash against the Solomani. It is common amongst Vilani technicians and workers at the AAB.

Plots:

- An archaeologist approaches the PCs claiming to have found conclusive evidence that

Repositorianism was started by a Solomani officer. She wishes to smuggle this information off-world before the Repositorians can find her.

- Based on the last three month's Khukii readings, a minor official decided that the most efficient way to serve his community was to take his own life. His son believes the readings were tampered with by an enemy, but nobody believes him. Maybe he's just paranoid, or perhaps his father really did find out something he shouldn't have...

8. Structurists

Description: The biochemical processes that life depends on are only possible when the fundamental physical constants of the universe are within a narrow range. Too far in one direction and the universe is frozen, unchanging; too far in the other and it dissolves in randomness. Life exists on the knife-edge, between order and chaos.

There is no theoretical reason why the universe's physical constants have the values they do: they could easily be different. If they were, though, life would not exist as we know it. Some believe that we inhabit one of a vast number of possible universes, and thus there is nothing special about our universe; others believe in an undiscovered principle, a Grand Unified Theory waiting for the lucky scientist.

Referee: Structurism is more a philosophy than a religion. Most of its adherents have a scientific background. Those whose belief-pattern is more mystical tend toward two reactions: wonder and despair.

Plot:

- A researcher claims to have discovered the key to the Unified Theory, but dies en-route to a Structurist meeting where he was to reveal the information. All his belongings were lost. The party is recruited to find out why he died and what happened to the theory. (He was accidentally murdered by a more radical religion who wanted to keep his particular findings from the public.)

Other Beliefs and Cults

Weird? No, we're not weird - you're the odd ones round here

There are beliefs and cults which do not fall into the normal categories of deity worship.

1. The Cult of the Dead

Description: Every infant born to parental believers is given by the priest a date on which that person will die. This ceremony occurs five days after the birth of the child, in front of ten witnesses. If a person dies early, it is deemed highly unlucky for the whole lineage and if possible families will place dying relatives in suspended animation until the predetermined day of death arrives.

Referee: Believers know they cannot escape their fate as other cult members will arrive on the date of their death to ensure that "nature takes its course"...

Plots:

- A member of the cult has established rather a good life for themselves off-planet. However, they know their allotted time is soon and if the original ten witnesses are not notified of their death they, or an assassin, will come to ensure his 'timely' death. He cannot afford to change his identity or leave planet, so the cult member has decided to eliminate the ten witnesses. The party is hired to assassinate those four witnesses not already deceased.

- The PCs run into a desperate man who asks for their protection. He is closely followed by an armed group who will want the PCs to step aside and let 'nature' take its course. Supposedly the man's allotted time has come but he claims a business rival has altered his records. If the PCs get the man to safety he will hire them to have the records corrected and find evidence of his rival's involvement. Naturally, this might just be a clever plot to avoid his allotted death.

2. The Demeter Group

Description: This informal group of planet-hoppers believe that if they eat or drink anything of the planet they are on, they will be irrevocably tied to that planet. This means that they cannot leave (or are polluted beyond hope and must roam alone for the rest of their lives). They carry with them all they need to consume: food is usually in the form of small tablets with all essential nutrients, and water is carried simply for drinking. They carry a recycling system from

which they generate water from their bodily fluids and a water generating cell which uses raw hydrogen and oxygen.

Referee: Such people have a substantial amount of baggage when they travel and for this reason many groups travel in their own ships. An elite group also wear respirators at all times to ensure their bodies absorb only pure atmosphere rather than that of a particular planet. Should a PC accidentally contaminate a member of a group, the member is viewed as an outcast, and the PC responsible may face retribution.

Plots:

- The baggage of several group members is damaged or lost while travelling on the PCs' ship. The PCs must determine how to feed and water the group now that their recycling equipment and foodstuffs are lost or contaminated.

- A local is desperately in love with a female member of a Demeter group who is about to leave planet (perhaps on the PCs' ship). He asks the PCs to contaminate her food and water with local food so that she will be forced to stay on the planet.

3. The Red Mist

Description: There is much injustice in the universe and the law can only be relied upon to catch and punish a small fraction of wrongdoers. A cult has grown up to right these wrongs, by inflicting suitable vengeance on anyone whom they regard as guilty (e.g. a known criminal having committed a major misdemeanour but being acquitted at the trial due to a technicality).

Referee: It is claimed that this cult originated from stories in the holo-comic *Red Hand of Vengeance*. This may be true, but in reality there is no such organisation as the Red Mist, although many people get convicted for being members. In reality it consists of a number of fairly twisted individuals who have deluded themselves into thinking that they are acting as the hand of vengeance for a deity (any deity, it doesn't really matter to them).

Plots:

- The PCs are hired as bodyguards for a rich banker who has been acquitted of defrauding thousands of investors out of their pension

money. The banker believes he may be targeted by the Red Mist (and indeed he will be). The PCs might have to think twice about putting their lives on the line for such a person (yes of course he was guilty!)

- PCs are usually guilty of something - have them arrested! They can try to bribe their way out of court or be released on a legal technicality. However, once free they will begin being tracked by a member of the Red Mist...

4. The Affirmers

Description: This creed started out as a self-help group and is now run by and for the benefit of those whom God helps because they help themselves. Affirmation was originally by 'prayer', which involved grovelling on the floor and declaring what a miserable sinner one had become. The Affirmers have taken this one step further - their prayers have become more of a boasting session. Rather than humble prayer in private, Affirmers are sociable and meet in expensive, tasteful, windowless churches.

Referee: Becoming an Affirmer is difficult. You have to be a known criminal, hideously rich or somesuch. 'Services' are often undertaken in huge communal hot tubs (ideally made of wood from an endangered rain forest) within the 'church'. There is usually 'spiritually uplifting' entertainment (sufficiently uplifting to be illegal on many worlds) and some interaction with the gods of chance (i.e. gambling).

Plot:

- A noble believes his son may be involved with an Affirmer group. He wishes to hire the PCs to check this out (very discretely) and if true, to prevent his son from further visits to their 'church'. If this involves somehow disrupting or destroying the church, the noble does not care. However, should the PCs take direct action against the church, they will attract the retribution of the other miscreants that 'worship' there.

5. League Against Speciesism

Description: The golden age before the Long Night enabled many acts of folly but one group with their heart in the right place was the LAS. Originally the League reasoned that, given the ability to create food from tanks of algae and fungi, the need for agriculture and animal husbandry had disappeared. LAS claimed that the tendency to split creatures into prey, pests and

pets was speciesist (including, for example, the tendency to eradicate plant species which human idiosyncrasies identified as weeds). The League reasoned that humanity had reached a state of technological and social sophistication that allowed it to "walk lightly on the land" rather than ruining yet more ecosystems.

The League fared badly during the Long Night, but grew back as the Third Imperium expanded.

Referee: The LAS is well respected among life support engineers, ecologists and animal rights groups, has lecturers at the larger universities and an active public relations unit. It is much disliked by farmers and their associated infrastructure (from seed providers to manufacturers of agricultural machinery).

Plot:

- An 'extremist' group of the LAS has begun preaching that if its principles are applied universally, then all the sophont species should be given equal rights. A lecture tour on this subject is disrupted by a group of radical human supremists. The PCs are hired to prevent such problems at the remaining lectures (at one of these a number of 'minor' sophont species will turn up to bolster the equality principle, potentially resulting in a fairly large riot with the human supremacists).

6. Born Again Powerbase

Description: This is a style of religious organisation rather than a religion. In it, the members of a faith undertake to spread it with a strategic recruitment policy targeted at those who could be of use, where possible placing their confederates in positions of authority/influence.

Referee: With care it is possible to subvert whole organisations - police forces, political parties, even whole industries. Despite frequent historical records of such infiltration, it is still commonplace throughout the Imperium.

This principle can be used with almost any of the other religions in this supplement, whether they be aimed at promoting good or evil ideals.

Plot:

- The PCs fall foul of a member of such an organisation and find themselves subjected to harassment through his many associates. Tracing the source for their problems will be difficult until they discover that all the trouble-makers can be traced back to members of this cult or religion.

Animism - all natural phenomena and objects (trees, rivers, wind, etc.) are caused or inhabited by spirits or demigods.

Animism, Polytheistic - certain natural phenomena are associated with specific gods or goddesses, arranged in a distinct hierarchical order.

Agnosticism - it is impossible to know whether or not there is a God.

Anthropopsychic - the belief that a god has similar mental processes and driving factors to that of humans.

Atheism - a total rejection of the existence of a Supreme Being; complete lack of religious beliefs.

Atheism, Philosophical - a failure to understand the concept of a Supreme Being. The question of religious beliefs is meaningless.

Atheism, Rational - a rejection of the existence of a Supreme Being on the basis of science, logic, or reasoning.

Atheism, Sceptical - a rejection of the existence of a Supreme Being on the basis of personal, non-rational conviction ("faith").

Barratry - fraudulent practices on the part of the master or crew of a ship to the prejudice of the owners.

Cladistic - study to determine if organisms share common ancestors by statistical analysis of their traits. Cladistic outliers are organisms which fall outside the normal statistics.

Deism - God created the universe, but thereafter took no part in mortal affairs, and is permanently out of reach.

Diocesan - division of followers into areas, each under the jurisdiction of a "bishop".

DNA - deoxyribonucleic acids are present in the chromosomes of all plant and animal cells and carry coded instructions for the passing on of hereditary characteristics.

Dualism - two mutually antagonistic gods or principles, one good and one evil, exist; their struggle is mirrored in nature and in moral/ethical problems.

Exclusive - a religion which limits its recruitment, for example to the offspring of existing believers. Members of such a religion may also be restricted in the interaction they are allowed with outsiders.

Gardenworld - a world which will support human life without the need for artificial life support.

Inclusive - a religion which does not place any constraints on the people which may be recruited (for example, previous followers of another religion may be allowed to join).

Monotheism, Crisis - God is involved in mortal affairs only at crucial moments of history.

Monotheism, Influential - God interacts with sophonts only at key moments in life.

Monotheism, Interactive - A single god exists and is interested in the daily actions of sophonts.

Monotheism, Remote - God exists, but is not generally available. A select few interactions in mortal affairs may occur from time to time.

Panspermism - the Ancient Greek doctrine that the elements were a mixture of all the seeds of things, now translated to mean all life comes from a common source, which may or may not be divine.

Pantheism - God is not a personality - God is everything and everything is God.

Polytheism - multiple gods (probably with lingering animistic associations or titles) exist, each of roughly the same importance.


Polytheism, Rational - a multiplicity of gods is viewed as numerous different aspects of a handful of true divinities.

Proselytism - the conversion of others to one's own religion.

RNA - ribonucleic acid, plays an important part in the development of proteins.

Structurism - the belief that because the universe shows evidence of design and/or evolution it can be regarded as being alive and/or divine.

Syncretism - a union or reconciliation of diverse or opposite beliefs and practices. Origin on Terra in the 17th Century (Solomani calendar).



A supplement for Marc Miller's Traveller™

What is the meaning of life?

From their first primitive ancestors to the time of the great, star-spanning Third Imperium, almost every known sophont race has developed religion.

The diversity of alien species...

...has led to an equally diverse range of religions and beliefs which can affect every aspect of a world's culture. An unwary traveller who falls foul of these beliefs may find themselves disliked, ignored, cast out or even sentenced to death!

Flesh-out your Traveller worlds...

...using the 101 religions, beliefs and cults detailed in this supplement. Every religion has player information, referee data and one or more plot ideas for creating quick-to-run adventures. The religions are grouped by IISS religion code.



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