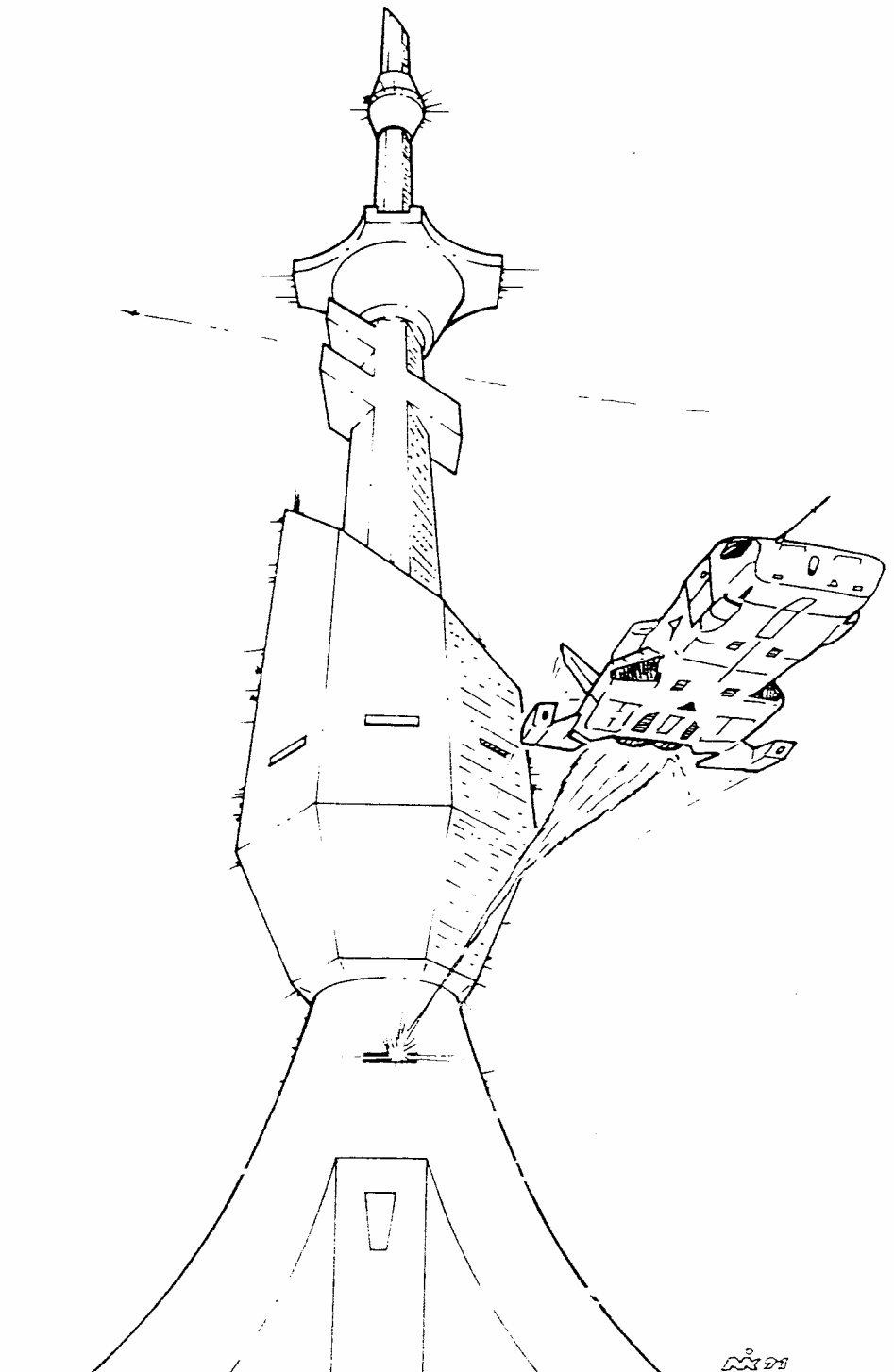


Signal-GK

#4



*A Cry for Help—
A Call to Adventure!!*

TABLE OF CONTENTS: SIGNAL GK #4

GUEST EDITORIAL	3	Leighton Piper
CONTACT: LANCIANS	4	David Burden
CYBERTRAVELLER	8	David Burden & Leighton Piper
CABAL.....	12	Leighton Piper
THE DEMANDS OF JUSTICE	18	David Schneider
PORT OF CALL: ZIRUUSHDA	24	Jae Campbell
BUTTERFLIES.....	26	Adie Stewart
INDSS.....	27	Nick Walker
NEW MEDICINE	28	Adie Stewart
BREATHLESS: HAMANOIK CONSPIRACY PART IV.....	31	Leighton Piper
JUST ANOTHER WORLD	36	Adie Stewart
LIBRARY DATA: OLD SUNS	43	DDT & Alison Nash
WAR ZONE: OLD SUNS.....	51	Stuart Machin
TRANSPONDER ALERT	55	Jae Campbell

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Although Signal-GK is acknowledged by HIWG, the data shown is not necessarily “official”. Players wishing to know the official status of any item or, article should contact the Dagudashaag Sector Analyst, Duncan Law-Green, directly.

Traveller and MegaTraveller are trademarks owned by Games Design Workshop (GDW). Any references to products, rules or data of either GDW or its licensees - in particular, Digest Group Productions, is not intended to infringe in any way upon their rights.

The name, Signal-GK, is not intended to infringe upon the earlier GDW adventure of the same name. For review purposes, please refer to this fanzine as either “GK”, “S-GK” or “Signal-GK the Fanzine...”

HIWG (History of the Imperium Working Group) is a an organisation which is attempting to detail the official MegaTraveller universe.

All Articles and Artwork are copyright of the specified authors and artists and may not be copied without their consent.

ARTISTS IN ISSUE

Cover: “TheTower” by Nik Piper

Interior art:

David Burden [DB](p5); David Schneider [DSch] (p17);Stuart Machin [SM]; Nik Piper [NP] (p20, 32, 35 - both, 43); Adrian Stewart [AS] (p38, 52); Leighton Piper [LP](p33); Paul Sanders [PS](p30, 57, 38); Duncan Law-Green [LG] (p7, 55); Jae Campbell [JC] and Len Robinson [LR] (p14). Other illustrations not credited - unknown.

Subsector Maps: Andrew Pickford

Warzone Maps: Leighton Piper based on Andrew Pickford’s originals.

Introducing:

Richard Minty [RM] and Dee Smith [DS].

Dagudashaag Development Team: Duncan, Adie, Leighton, Stuart and Jae with assistance from Alison Nash

Signal-GK originally produced and distributed by: Jae Campbell. This issue originally edited by Jae Campbell.

This edition re-edited and produced by: Leighton Piper.

GUEST EDITORIAL

Well, let me introduce myself. My name is Leighton Piper (yes, Leighton is my first name). I am 26 and currently employed by the Public Health Laboratories at the Royal Preston Hospital. I work within the Department of Virology (yes, nasty viruses) as a Biomedical Scientist (that's a lab tech to you) where I perform routine diagnostic assays for evidence of viral infection. Hence my "Hamanok Conspiracy" adventure/campaign has a nasty virus in it!

I've been gaming since about 1979 when I started with good old "Dungeons & Dragons". I soon took up "Traveller" and became hooked. I virtually gave up RPG's between '83 and '88 at college/university, with an odd game here and there with my brother (Nik Piper who has contributed some artwork) and his friends. I took up playing again about 1989 when I got hold of the new MegaTraveller rules. Wow! I thought and promptly engrossed myself in the system. I found a couple of interested players in Preston and started gaming again. Then I started looking for some way to distribute my ideas - first with HIWG (UK) and S-GK in addition.

I still play other games but Traveller remains the favourite. Currently I'm running the old original -"Traveller Adventure" for a couple of novice Traveller players - and they aren't following the plot. What do they say about the best laid plans ...? I am also going to have a go at getting some material published in the "professional magazines".

Current interests outside RPG's include history, computing (I'm involved in programming and data processing courses at college), music where I'm trying to expand record, tape and CD collection, decorating my building-site-of-a-house and my family.

My family consists of my girlfriend (who has to put up with my role-playing) and my two- year-old daughter (there's another due in July - I think I'll call it a day at that!).

Now it's time for the thanks: Jae (the 'Laird' Campbell for letting me aboard the good ship 'Signal GK'. Nik Piper for supplying artwork for my material, David Burden for accommodating some of my ideas in Gushemege (hopefully we'll include some Gush' material in future issues) and finally all the contributors, especially those with material in this issue.

This is a good point to encourage all readers to contribute and criticise. Please send your material and views (to Jae). Your activity is required to keep S-GK a success. Feel free to contact me with any thoughts on issue 4, or any other topics. I would specifically like to hear your thoughts on the CyberTraveller articles by David Burden and myself. We plan to run a section (if Jae will let us) with further articles, comments and game rules in the evolving future of the Imperium, especially post--Rebellion... (I'd happily allow part of HardWired to become a CyberTraveller section but the final decision is yours, the reader. Let me know what you think.... Jae)

All the best my fellow Travellers.

Next Issue will be edited by the founder of the D.D.T. (Dagudashaag Development Team) and thus, indirectly, of Signal GK, the Sector analyst of Dagudashaag, the master himself, J Duncan Law-Green. Duncan will be expounding upon the Mimu Subsector. Issue 6 will be guest-edited by our Rebellion/Warzone specialist Stuart Machin. He's asked me to pass on the following message:

"I am intending to guest edit issue 6. This will be in Gadde (J) subsector. I am also intending to make this a 'special' issue (isn't every issue of Signal-GK special? - Ed.). Ahem, I intend to look more closely at the actual conflict of the Rebellion. While it will include 'Port of Call's (I am doing Depot for example) and other normal features, I would like the special features and adventures to reflect the actual conflict. Examples of such adventures are 'High Point' in S-GK 2 and 'Research Station Beta' in Challenge 41. I would also like military adventures such as mercenary tickets and Trillion Credit Squadron scenario's. Similarly, the articles should be based on similar themes, such as mercenary units of Dagudashaag or AKA's leading military figures."

Stuart Machin can be contacted via S-GK.

CONTACT: LANCIANS

“Lying to trail of the head of the Great Rift lays the Lancian Cultural Region. Created by Empress Arbella in 639 the Region is home to the Lancians. Sentients of many races, follow the Lancian philosophy and way of life. In the generally aggressive, competitive, and profiteering space of the Imperium Lancian offers a more creative, considered, and pastoral way.”

Pattnai Tinisutta. “A Lancian History”, Kukhun University Editions 1120.

GENERAL

Although Lancians originated as a minor human race on Kukhun/Gushemege the term is now applied to sentients of any world from the Lancian Cultural Region, particularly to those who follow the Lancian philosophy. The Region covers 5 subsectors and is centred on Subsector D (Tansa) of Gushemege Sector. Three subsectors lie in Gushemege (Taapvaia, Tansa, Isi Ahto), and one each in Corridor (Sashrakusha I and Dagudashaag (Mimu). The latter spills over to include some of the spinward-most worlds of Old Suns. Whilst the majority of Lancians are human the culture also embraces minor races resident in these subsectors, especially the S'mrii from Mimu. That being “Lancian” is more a way of living than an accident of biology is often not fully appreciated by sentients from beyond the bounds of the Region.

PHYSIOLOGY

Pure blooded racial Lancians, who originated on Kukhun in Tansa Subsector, average 1.9m in height and mass about 70 kg. They are thinner and taller than most Solomani - usually with fair skins and light brown or straw hair. Due to dietary incompatibilities with Kukhunen fauna the original Kukhunen were vegetarian, and this is still a characteristic of most Lancian societies. To all intents and purposes the average Lancian is nowadays indistinguishable from the mass of starfaring humaniti.

HISTORY

Contact: Kukhun (Gushemege 3105 B658997-E) was seeded by the Ancients with human stock around 300,000 years ago. By the time that the Vilani Naarsirka bureau made first contact around -9100 they had reached TL4. The Kukhunen were a creative culture, but with a taste for violence and a mind of their own that did not take too kindly to the rigidity of Vilani rule. In concert with the neighbouring S'mrii they were continually champing at the bit of Vilani rule.

When Vilani rule was overthrown in -2219 the Kukhunen, who had now spread to several neighbouring systems, found them presented with the no more benign rule of the Solomani. As the Second Imperium slipped into the chaos of the Long Night the Kukhunen entered into a bloody civil war. This was initially between the colonies, but was eventually fought out between factions on Kukhun itself. At the same time Kukhun slipped into an ice age as Mihev, the planet's K0V star entered a cooling phase that has lasted to this day.

The Long Night: The Kukhunen initially seemed oblivious to these three threats to their survival. Their salvation came from the efforts of the Lancian Movement. This movement, named for the goddess Lancia of Kukhunen mythology, believed fervently in the importance of creativity, both as a way of life and as a way of thought. By -1324 when the Civil War was at its height the Movement had gained significant numbers of followers in all the factions, even amongst the factions' leaderships. It was through the efforts of the Lancian leaders that peace was brought about, and the planet began to address the problems of the Long Night and the advancing ice age.

The Lancian Movement formed the core of the new world government. Over the next century, as Kukhun successfully dealt with the ice age threat and managed to maintain a TL6 society, Lancian philosophy permeated every facet of Kukhunen society, and every Kukhunen's mindset. By -1200 Lancian culture dominated Kukhun.

Kukhun was unusual in having an active and creative existence during the Long Night. It emerged, after re-contact by Sylean traders in -143, as a vibrant and energetic world anxious to make its mark in the stars. Jump drive was rapidly reacquired and for the next 150 years contact was re-established with “lost” Kukhunen colonies (who were rapidly converted to Lancia), and new worlds were settled.

At War: Problems began in -24 when the Lancian Confederation was approached by the Sylean Federation to join their federation of the stars. Efforts to bring the Confederation into line were increased from 36 onwards as the Third Imperium began to flex its muscles. The Lancians, with bad memories of the First and Second Imperiums, and now with a culture that was fundamentally different from that espoused by Emperor Cleon I, were none too keen to surrender their independence. A cold war soon gave way to a widespread campaign of terrorism and de-stabilisation. By 57 open wars had broken out on several worlds as Artemsus sent Imperial aid to guerrillas fighting Lancian governments. By 73 most other worlds in Gushemege had joined the Imperium; even several non-Lancian dominated worlds from the Confederation had signed

up. In 74 non-Lancians on the strategic world of Shiramuunir (2507 C444AC8-F) revolted in defiance of the Lancian government, calling for Imperium help to free them from Lancian “tyranny”.

Artemus finally lost patience and sent in the Fleet, as much to stop the expansion of Lancian philosophy, which had been gaining ground, as to bring Lancia into the Imperium. Artemus’ great mistake was to put the Duke of Vland in charge of the Campaign. The Vilani Pacification Campaign was as long and bloody as it was since the Lancians and S’mrii saw it as a replay of the Consolidation Wars of 5,000 years previously. In the end the Imperium, in the form of Vland’s Makhidkarun Bureau, prevailed and in 120 the Lancian worlds joined the Third Imperium, but under sufferance.

The Third Imperium: After the Campaigns, Makhidkarun occupied significant parts of the Lancian Confederation. Many worlds, such as Beheld and Lishun, were re-settled by Makhidkarun. Others, such as Oroth, were now radioactive wastelands.

Makhidkarun, with its interests in media and entertainment soon began exploiting Lancian artistry and creativity. The Lancians did not take long to realise that perhaps eventual freedom lay through subterfuge, by working with Makhidkarun. If you are writing and producing the prime-time interstellar soap simstim then think what psychological warfare could be conducted.

During the Civil War Lancia constantly sought to restore normality, for who wants entertainment in war, and the destruction stood directly opposed to Lancian ideals of creativity. The culture was an early supporter of Arbellaatra, and used its considerable capacity for propaganda to support her. In recognition of Lance’s support Arbellaatra created the Lancian Cultural Region in 639; a move that was in-line with the prevailing policy of moving power away from the Domains.

Lancian Cultural Region: The creation of the Region led to resurgence in Lancian culture and especially economics. The old ideas of need driven economies were resurrected and the legal status of the Region enabled the necessary protectionist trade and currency measures to be enacted. These enabled the Lancian economy to exist within the profit driven economy of the Imperium. Lancian art also flourished, with still a tinge of psychological subterfuge. As technology improved so did Lance’s output. The creative drive of Lancian society continually surprises with the uses it finds for technological developments. Working with the S’mrii has proved particularly rewarding. S’mrii neurotechnology mixed with Lancian creativity led to the development of a vast range of cybertechnologies.

With the coming of the Rebellion Lancia is again trying to bring about a peace in which it can prosper, whilst always looking for the ultimate chance of

independence. Unfortunately its “four corners” position makes it a major battleground where survival of individual worlds has become more paramount than the survival of society as a whole.

PHILOSOPHY

“Lancian” is a cultural and philosophical designation rather than a racial one. It derives from the name of the movement on Kukhun that was responsible for saving the planet from natural and self-destruction, and which rapidly established itself as the world philosophy. The name itself is that of the mythical Kukhunen goddess of creation. Lancia has been described as one of the most important and influential “godless religions” in the Imperium. Not every Kukhunen (or indeed every resident of the Region) is a Lancian though, although some 90% are. Those that aren’t are mainly to be found within the cities and on industrial worlds where the economy is the most mixed.

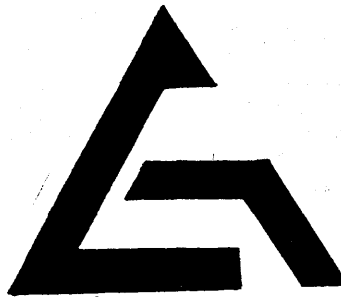
The two key elements of Lancian philosophy are creativity and contribution. Creativity is evident in the art, pacifism, and originality of Lancian culture. Pacifism should not be taken as meaning a total aversion to violence but rather an avoidance of mindless destruction. Kukhunen and S’mrii memories of the First and Second Imperium led to their extreme hostility against the Third Imperium, and especially the use of Vland as the subduing power. The ferocity of the Imperium’s response was in part due to shock and frustration at the effectiveness of the Lancian/S’mrii defence.

Lancian artistry and originality accounts for Lancia’s dominant position within Imperial entertainment, maintaining its strong bonds with Makhidkarun (for entertainment) and the S’mrii (for neurotechnology and virtuality). The Lancian culture has also bred a counter culture - the Kaz - who believe in destruction as the ultimate denial of creation. They should be distinguished from the Ultra sect who see anarchy and destruction as a necessary part of the creative process, and who have a pyrotechnics joy of the beauty of destruction.

The ethic of contribution is reflected in peripheral fields like the endemic medianet and the high degree of artistic and political participation of Lancian society. Most importantly though it underpins the whole of Lancian economics and the trust on which it is based.

ECONOMY

Lancian economy is at its root, an extreme socialist economy - to use a Solomani term. Although the true Lancian economy is now only found on a few fundamentalist worlds it’s foundations lie at the heart



Lancian Cultural Symbol

of the most powerful and influential Lancian worlds. In traditional Lancian economy everything is free, and everybody gets paid nothing. If you need it you take it. If you can contribute you do so. Such an economy must by its very nature be closed, and as such is only viable nowadays in small communities and isolated worlds. The contribution ethic restrains Lancians from taking what they haven't earned or "contributed" to. The main result of this economy is that everybody has a similar standard of possessions and a similar standard of living. Lancia is freed from the crippling uniformity of the old Solomani Peoples' Democracies by the creative and artistic impetus. This results in a variety of products that would shame even the most productive market economy.

Mixed Economies: Those Lancian worlds that are more fully integrated with interstellar society have evolved hybrid economies that allow greater integration and allow offworlders to survive more easily. Examples are:

- **Sharenga:** All Lancian's are paid a flat wage in Imperial credits, and offworlders are only allowed to import credits in proportion to their length of stay. The penalties for smuggling currency are severe. The flat wage is "open to discussion" and there are set conditions under which it is varied by the state, e.g. number of children, distances travelled, health. The crucial point is that the wage changes with need not work done.

- **Liigash:** Very high taxes are levied with the large revenues being used to supply extensive social, health, educational and transport services for free. Offworlders are either limited in currency as above, or subjected to a daily tax that brings their available money down to Lancian levels, and forces them to contribute to Lancian society.

SOCIETY

Art: Everybody links Lancia and Lancians, with art. The image is of a whole society spending its entire life in a studio making *objet d'art*, electing their best artists to government, and being incapable of filling out a customs form without doing a sketch and singing an aria first. This is of course far from the truth. On one level, art occupies the same place in Lancian society that sport occupies in many others. Most Lancians, but by no means all, have an art or craft that they indulge in during their spare time. Most residential districts have clubs and societies for the main artistic streams, and artistic competitions attract the same kind of attention that sport matches may elsewhere. They give a community something to identify with, and to compare themselves with other communities by, without getting involved in the negative aggression that sport tends to bring. On a higher level art, or rather creativity and contribution, does permeate almost every aspect of Lancian culture. From a simple view this is manifest in the graceful architecture and superb industrial design that is evident everywhere Lancian society. More complexly it is evident in Lancian law, with its dislike of

"pointless" incarceration, and in interstellar relations, where the approach is one of reconciliation rather than confrontation.

Art Movements: Whilst the Tariil guilds are responsible for the development and maintenance of the "technical" aspects of the arts, the aesthetics are developed through various movements, some enshrined in clubs or associations, others just as unofficial groupings or critical labels. There are many hundred such movements. The breadth of Lancian art, which often acts as a vanguard for Imperium art in general, can be gauged by a brief description of some of the main movements at present.

- **Traditionalist:** Traditionalists believe that only the original arts are worthy of the name art. They are visual painters, physical sculptures, acoustic musicians, and linear writers and take great pride in reinventing lost forms of Lancian, and indeed human, art.

- **Ultras:** The Ultras believe in experimental and subjective art. Working mainly through simstim, but also through physical senses, they make the audience the target of their work, creating sensations and feelings as directly as possible in the audience. As an example whereas a Traditionalist might paint an impressionistic painting of a head howling to represent the suffering, angst and loneliness of a victim of a meson gun strike. The Ultra would put the audience through a surreal simstim of a meson gun attack, highlighting and emphasising the desired senses and emotional reactions. Needless to say much Ultra work verges on the sadistic, masochistic, and psychoerotic. Several Lancian worlds have taken steps to limit the activities of this movement.

REFEREEING THE LANCIONS

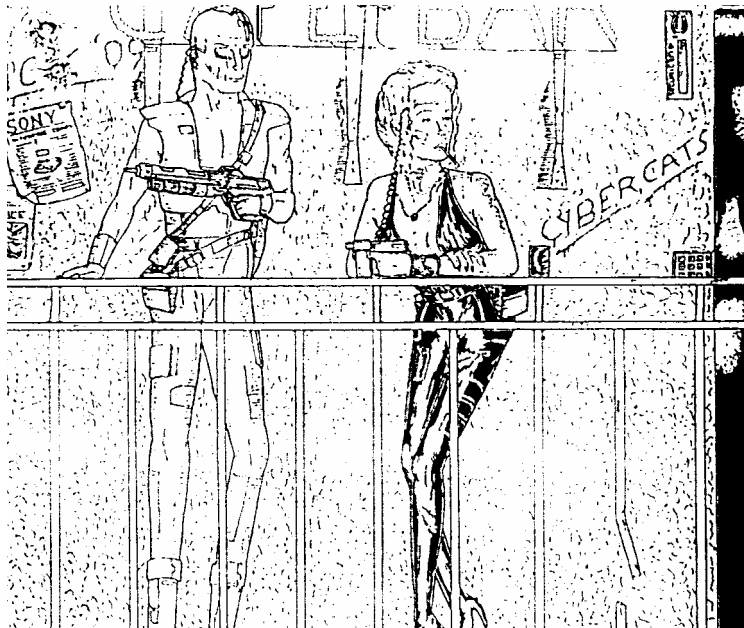
Playing Lancians: When playing a Lancian the fundamental psychology of the Lancians should always be borne in mind, the twin drives to contribute and to create. This doesn't mean that every Lancian is a do-gooding traveller, always eager to help and who spends their spare time painting murals or writing music. The drives are more the axis of a personality profile. A Lancian's urge to contribute can vary wildly in its scope. "Fundamentalist" Lancians interpret it as the need to contribute to society or even humaniti or sophonti as a whole. Less benign Lancians see it as referring to their street-gang or criminal syndicate. The problem with Lancians is often that they want to DO things, and are driven to doing things, be they good or bad. This zealousness causes many non-Lancians to approach Lancians with caution. The creative aspect of Lancian psychology is also a double-edged sword. As mentioned earlier Lancians can have quite different attitudes to what is and isn't creative. To some the Instellarms PGMP-15 is a highly creative weapon, allowing the user to refashion her surroundings in quite dramatic ways! Hopefully this brief discussion has shown that Lancians are not a bland bunch of artistic do-gooders. The "average" Lancian is it is true, unlikely to be any more interesting than the average Solomani, but she will be

differently motivated. As with any society it is the more extreme characters that will prove interesting, both to play and to meet. In the Lancian case these range from fundamentalists who have difficulty comprehending the monetary Imperial society, but who do everything possible to help and contribute to humaniti's well being, and so much the better if that involves creating a planet sized mural, to the Ultras who contribute with all their energy to the BarBarDakgang, deconstructively creating desolation, moving aggressively to the beat of a different drummer.

Lancian NPCs

Lancian NPCs can be divided into three main groups: those living and working within the Cultural Region, those who act as an interface between Lancian and non-Lancian society, and those who form part of the inter-stellar community.

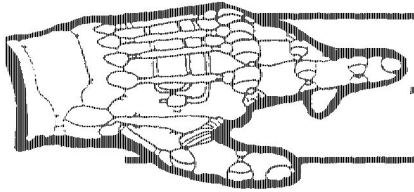
Interstellar Lancians have learnt how to to the money and profit orientated world of the Imperium- The:- vary though between those still hold true to the Lancian idea of need, those who live in a luxury that only their creativity could bring. Such characters can often be too



far removed from mainstream Lancia to be of much use as guides in the region, but can be very useful “left-fielders” outside it. Interfacing Lancians will often be non-Lancians who were brought up in the Region. They have a good understanding of the culture and can help to smooth players’ ways through the region. Merchants working in and out of the Region are predominantly non-Lancian, but those within it are mostly Lancian, although they are more transporters than merchants. The man in the street Lancian encountered dirtside could be of any of the types or leanings described anywhere above. When creating any Lancian NPC bear in mind the points raised above about playing Lancians: it is their radically different motivations that makes Lancians interesting and different.

Welcome to the Lancian Cultural Region.

CYBERTRAVELLER



The document on which this article is based was written when the post 1120 future of Hard Times, Traveller 3, Star Vikings, super-viruses and all, was but a twinkle in GDW's eye. With the change in society that the dusk is bringing, and the possibility of some form of cyber-punk emerging into Traveller, this article aims to alive some food for thought as to how cyber-punk could be believably handled in Traveller.

Within every metropolis there exist two cities. There's the physical structure that we can see and feel, and then there's the cybercity. Stretching from virtual horizon to virtual horizon, the cybercity is the nervous system of the physical city. The 'phone in the pocket, the PC on the desk, the ATM in the wall, the mainframe in the basement. All connect and interconnect through a labyrinth of fibre and a network of radio. This is where the real meaning of the city is, where the work is done and the knowledge is stored. This is where the net-runner feels at home....

Cyber What? ...

What is Cyberpunk? The child of Gibson out of Blade Runner, fostered by the Mirrorshades group, cyberpunk is where technology is put to the uses of the street. The key technology areas are weaponry, drugs, cybernetics, and computer networking (or "net-running"). The uses of the street are usually linked to corporate warfare and the struggle of the underdog. All this laced with a dose of myth, a healthy disrespect for authority (unless it comes from the business end of a Sicherheit AG-11) and highly chromed punk cosmetics. Cyberpunk without the cyber is a simple, violent and anarchic culture that could be represented by any Traveller world with a suitable Psych Profile and Law Level and need not concern us here. Cyberpunk without the punk is closer to the squeaky clean Traveller view of the future. It needs only a rationalisation of technology levels to bring Traveller into line with 1990's, rather than 1970's, predictions about future technology. Its stress on robotics and cybernetics may be at odds with Imperium culture of the late Third Imperium, but as that Imperium fragments such concerns are of little importance, especially in fringe areas such as Gushemege. Where work is required then is where both the technology and culture of cyberpunk are present, especially if they are present on an inter-stellar scale. How do we rationalise cyberpunk with Traveller? This

question must be dealt with before attempting to work out detailed rules for this "hybrid" environment, in order that the environment is believable and consistent with Traveller to date.

The rest of this article will look at the two areas of concern, culture and technology, with an emphasis on the former, and will aim to identify a workable framework for the integration of cyberpunk and Traveller.

The Dark and The Light

Cyberpunk is commonly considered to take place in a "Dark Future". The streets are wet and shadowy. Lawless gangs with tattered clothes covering cyberlimbs stalk the cities. The sun never shines on the cybercity. In contrast Traveller is usually seen as a squeaky clean future. Gleaming white arcologies tower into the shimmering sky. Air-rafts cast lazy patterns as they carry beautiful Soc-A Vilani's to the Ducal palace. Whilst the Rebellion and Hard Times has done a bit to muddy the waters cyberpunk as a widespread phenomena still doesn't sit well with Traveller society.

There is however four considerations, which seem to allow Cyberpunk and Traveller to realistically co-exist. These revolve around variety, social adjustment to technology, technological development and the limitations of physics.

Variety (or "Out of all the 11,000 worlds...")

Cyberpunk books and RPG's take place usually take place on one world or system, often only in one city sprawl. Traveller covers ten thousand worlds, and then some. Within these, especially low-law level worlds, a cyberpunk feel would be quite at home. Traveller also covers many races and cultures, and since the rebellion, many states and factions. Some of these may be more disposed to cyberpunk, or degeneration to cyberpunk than others. For example in Gushemege and Dagudashaag, the Lancian and S'mrii cultures have a history of cybertech, and the worlds of the Rurevayn in Gushemege have inherited technology far beyond their original means through leakage. This has led to a tendency towards cyberpunk which has been encouraged by the fractioning of the Imperium in the region into several small successor states. The fact is that Traveller is vast in scope, and made up of widely differing worlds. It wasn't a homogenous whole when the Imperium was united, and it is even less of one now. The Imperium, and the Traveller universe as a whole, is full of variety. Cyberpunk is traditionally local, world or system bound, so there should be no inconsistency in having areas or worlds orientated towards cyberpunk.

Just don't make it widespread, like making Lucan a disgruntled cyber-Jock and giving the Imperial Marines chainsaws. Cyberpunk should add to Travellers variety, not detract from it.

Social Adjustment

Almost all cyberpunk is set in 2000-2400 Solomani, in a society that has a TL9-10 feel to it: slugthrowers but few lasers, interplanetary travel but little or no interstellar travel. It is hardly surprising that GDW released it's Cyberpunk rules as a tie in to 2300AD. So is cyberpunk a tech level related phenomena, a stage that societies go through? Is it the result of a rapid development in technology that races ahead of the ethical, moral, and cultural development that is needed to harness this technology? If this is so then it would seem reasonable for the mature societies of the Imperium as a whole and the other major races to be fundamentally clean and bright, having passed through the cyberpunk phase long ago. Cyberpunk would though still be found amongst the less developed worlds, especially those that have undergone technological "uplift". The example of Rurevayn cited above being a case in point. In this era of "Hard Times" the reverse might also be true, that sudden technological collapse brings a return to the cyberpunk ethos as the controlling facets of an organised society disappear: in which case I suggest that your players start buying mirrorshades fast.

Technological Development

Technology very probably sets limits on when a vital part of cyberpunk, "net-running", is possible. Before TL7 or 8 the computers and communications necessary for the net do not exist (but see Gibson/Sterling's The Difference Engine for a TL 3/4 form of cyberpunk). From current, twentieth century, experience it also appears to be the case that to crack serious and well thought out computer security in real time you need technology that's a level or two beyond what was used to implement the security. And for cyberpunk that cracking technology needs to be on the street. At TL8 - 10 people are only just getting used to the whole idea of COMPUSEC and so this isn't too much of a problem, security isn't well developed.

Interstellar Net-Running

"It was a tough job. Sebsti LIC ran a closed system and any off-worlders were subject to a rigorous scan. My only hope lay in a commercial "snake". The hooks into the XBoat operating system had cost me an arm and a leg, but they'd pay for themselves on this job alone, I thought. I'd spent a week getting the payload together, and then I stuck it in an XBoat datagram, put in the hook, and sent it on its way. If all had gone well then when the XBoat arrived in system my hooks would launch the snake into the Sebsti e-mail network and it would find it's way to the Production network. Then the payload would be activated and fight its way through the system security, guided by a lightweight but capable restricted AI. Hopefully it would find the formula and then kick in the escape sequence, picking up a laser ride to orbit, and then squirting itself into the XBoat out-system queue. In a month I'd be ready and waiting to pick the booty out of one of my 'safe' mailboxes. Not exactly real-time stuff, but I thought it would be a living. Of course I was young then."

Cora 'Thunder' Amhki, "A Net Apart", Namaso Press, Kimatao 1040.

By TL 14/15 though the sophistication of computer security may be such as to make illegal access to computer data impossible, at least until TL 16/17 technology becomes available on the street. Another aspect of this to consider is that the targets of cyberpunk in Traveller ought to be the Megacorporations. But they are bound to have TL 15/16 technology available, whilst the average, and most common, tech level, of a subsector like Gushemege is only 10, so technology development would appear to permit lower tech cyberpunk worlds to exist in an Imperium that has reached TL 15/16 and grown "beyond" the reach of the cyberworld, but cyberpunk on these worlds would be unlikely to be able to affect Imperium-wide organisations and developments.

Limitations of Physics

A final consideration for the lack of prominence of cyberpunk in the Imperium is that cyberpunk is limited by physics to being a fundamentally a world-bound culture. As the sidebars explain net-running, the key cybertechnology, is increasingly impractical as ranges increase beyond orbital. So whereas skilful cyberjocks could dominate a world net it would be highly unlikely that they could extend the influence to anything like the interstellar scale that the Imperium acts on. Net-running becomes just another tool in the arsenals of governments and corporations, and one that is used at a "local" level only.

Summary

There appear to be two main conclusions to be drawn. Firstly, that cyberpunk can be woven believably into the fabric of Traveller, without upsetting the balance of the large scale Traveller that we know and love. Secondly that cyberpunk is limited. In Traveller, and I believe in any real or imagined future, cyberpunk should be seen as a local phenomena, that it is most likely a phase that cultures pass through (in either direction), that it is restricted to middle technologies, and its influence is system bound, at most.

Whose AI is that?

The Blavatsky X67 dropped out of the sky above Specer City like a pig that had forgotten how to fly. It pancaked onto the roof of the Masala Building, the whole craft buckling as the active metal matrix absorbed the shock of the impact. "Hell, I'll never yet used to these landings", thought Lattis as he slipped his harness and punched the canopy release. It was a few short metres to the service door, and Lattis slipped the KeyBust over the security keypad. Overhead grav rafts slid silently by and Lattis could make out the lights of the Kimalad Lines Liner as it lifted from Giinashkhid Down bound for Misir. Lights flickered and the door hissed open. Inside the door Lattis bent down to the maintenance port and plugged the decoy box into the buildings network. The building would be no match for the intelligent agent in that golden box. In microseconds the building would be blind to Lattis' presence. Lattis slipped cautiously down the emergency stairs and along to the penthouse door. He typed in the code that the decoy would by now have installed. The door slid gratifyingly open. A quick scan in IR showed the room to be empty and cold. Lattis headed for the desk, where he slung the Marlow deck off his shoulder and unzipped its case, resting the deck on the corner of the real wood desk. "Khaku'l, this guy must be rich!" Lattis sunk cross-legged to the floor and rested the deck, a Lichte C45, across his knees. He reached behind and plugged the deck into the wall socket and then jacked himself into the deck.

The room faded to be replaced by the blaze of the Net. But this wasn't the real Net. This was Tala LIC's own TDMNet, serving the myriad of company offices that slept silently below him. Lattis heard Brauner's chipself pick out the SATCOM teleport, ORBITAL access, and the XBOAT gateway (that reconnaissance had cost Brauner her life. Thankfully they'd been able to chip her memories before she'd died. Lattis was grateful to have her riding shotgun on his trip. There off to the left was the Tala corporate AI, with enough knowledge tucked away inside to keep Lattis in boosterspace for the rest of his days. So close, but no, that wasn't today's target. Instead Lattis thought, and was out of the local net and onto the real Net, the Net that spanned

Interplanetary Net-Running

"Yeah, I remember that run. I accessed the Paara teleport and uplinked to the L5 orbital. From there the code I got from Ihre got me onto the laser line to Perihla, a gas giant satellite and home of the Togliere Corporation. The problem was the 100 second round trip delay was making my actions slow and any moment I could get hit and flat-lined and not know about it, let alone have time to launch my defences. I froze a watchdog program that was idling ahead, but it was as though every limb in my body was aching. I keyed the sequence for the main datastore and

+++Link L5-Perihla Failed ++++ +++#032/ 33/af DiagnosticsFollow++++

I wrenched the headset off. With that 100 sec delay I had no chance. As my code hit home Togliere's defences must have alerted and they had 50 seconds to work while my program followed its preset pattern before I even saw the problem and could react, and another 50 seconds before my edits took effect. Like I say, deadmeat."

- Eddie Latin, Netrunner. Interview 176-1113.

Giinashkhid from pole to pole, and the system from planet to planet. Lattis ran the macro and relaxed as his deck wound its way through corporate Specer to just outside the Eos data Fortress. Lattis hung there, killing time in some accountant's message system.

"Go", said Patata's disembodied voice, coming in across the airwaves from her fourtrack parked downtown. Lattis launched the ice-breaker, glanded some DY-sen and set to work

Jack out. Two beats of his heart and then Lattis was zipping the Lichte into its case and slinging it onto his back. Out the room and along the corridor. Crack! An HV round thudded into the wall behind him. Lattis' nano'd nervous system boosted his reflexes into overdrive as he dived, pulled a body pistol from his waistband and fired in one swift, fluid movement. One corpsec down but a second was headed towards him, cyberdews extended and a shock purple main making an intimidating sight. As the Aslan lunged Lattis' reflexes pulled him clear of the dew's monoblade sweep and gave him the chance to sink a toxin-filled nail into the felines neck-.

Onto the roof again, Lattis' IR vision failed to pickup the Blavatsky's outline; the craft having slunked off to a corner of the roof to collapse into a pretty convincing imitation of a pile of junk. Far below the net-runner could hear the sounds of the local BarBarDak gang "arting" a nearby building with a couple of hot rodged PGMP's. Sirens waited in futile opposition far away. Lattis followed the Blavatsky's beacon and as he approached the VSTOL straightened, the intelligent alloy strengthening and reshaping itself for a gut-wrenching take-off. Lattis climbed in. The cockpit smelt of too many long flights and too few soft landings but he shut the canopy anyway. "Home" he said, and the Blavatsky pushed itself off the side of the high-rise and into free-fall. "God I hate these things", thought Lattis as he left consensus reality behind and jacked in to the virtuality of the net to see how Patata's extraction team had fared.

An everyday story of cyberlife, but in Traveller terms the tech levels are mixed to say the least:

Blavatsky X67 VSTOL:	TL 7-9
Grav Air-Rafts:	TL 9+
Kimalad Lines J- 1 Liner:	TL 9+
Intelligent Agent/Low Autonomous:	TL 12+
IR Eyes:	TL 12+
Lichte C45 Cyberdeck:	TL 7+
Neural Jacks:	TL 14+
XBoats:	TL 13+
Brauners Personality Chip:	TL 15+
Tala Corporate Al:	TL 17+
4x4 Ground Car:	TL 5-9
Drug Glanding:	TL 12+?
Radio Implant:	TL 10
HV Assault Rifles:	TL 6-12
Nanotech:	TL ??
WetWired NervousSystem:	TL 13+
Body Pistol:	TL 8+
Cyberdews:	TL 10+
Intelligent Alloys:	TL ??
PGMP-12:	TL 12+

Traveller, a product of the late seventies, now appears pessimistic when it comes to computers, neurotechnology and other “hot” technologies. Faced with this mismatch there are two main options open to Traveller players and referees who want to run CyberTraveller adventures: create a CyberTraveller variant with Tech Levels or key devices modified (and lose “officladom”) or restrict yourself to Traveller standards (and lose some of the cyberpunk feel).

CyberTraveller Variant

Since weapons technologies in Traveller appear to “fit” with the cyberpunk standard, and since the computer technology is fairly abstract (except for AI’s and intelligent agents/autonomous programs) it is mainly the fields of neurotech and cybertech that need modification. Both these have previously been approached from a medical angle in Travellers’ Digest/Referee’s Companion, which at least reflect mid-eighties thinking, but even so are still pessimistic as far as TL 9-10 cyberpunk goes. In general what is required is to bring published tech levels for cybertech forward by 1 or 2 levels (e.g. cyberlimbs, artificial eyes), neurotech, forward by 4 or 5 levels (e.g. neural jacks, personality chips) and bring AI’s leaping forward from the TL17/18 of Robots Book 8 to about TL 9--12.

Given the adoption of such mods a “normal” cyberpunk game can be played with Traveller on TL 7--12 worlds, the technology level changes giving increases in the equipment, and modifications available. And of course such a world will probably have artefacts of a higher tech level available as imports, but they will be more rare and command a high price - mirroring a common cyberpunk scenario, the search for that magical new gadget. As tech levels exceed 12 a possible problem occurs in that bio/cybertech is “spent out”, unless one also brings forward the TL16+ technologies. But if the discussion above on social adjustment is taken into account then cyberpunk should anyway fade out as

computer security gains the upper hand and civilisations reach the plateau of “average stellar”. This abatement of bio/cybertech development in fact is a virtue as it allows society to catch up, before the next big technology jump comes in.

Playing within Traveller

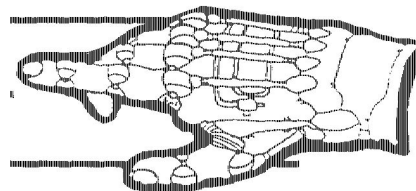
If we stick with the existing Traveller tech levels then from our cyberpunk story above we lose the enhanced vision, the advanced materials and nanotechnology (both of which hadn’t been invented in 1980!). To most we lose the soul of cyberpunk. It’s almost like watching some 1920’s Jules Verne film, with outrageous B-movie space opera props.

Hopefully though Traveller 3 will act to redress some of these technological “anachronisms”. As has been repeatedly stated Traveller, and even MegaTraveller, reflect the technological predictions of the mid/late seventies, a time when nanotechnology, micromechanics, modern PC CPUs, virtual reality, intelligent agents, computer viruses, intelligent materials and a hundred other technologies in use or being exploited today weren’t even dreamed of. Now, with Traveller 3, is the time to update the technology available in Traveller, especially in the TL9 -12 range.

Conclusion

So, what does this discussion tell us about CyberTraveller. In terms of feel cyberpunk can be readily integrated into Traveller. However it should only be world or regionally based, and centred around early/low average stellar worlds. Net-running should also only operate on a world or orbital basis. At tech levels beyond about TL12 worlds develop computer security procedures and systems that are effectively impregnable, and society reaches a plateau in major technological development, a breather in which to come to terms with new technologies and cyberpunk fades away. The technology level issues do require either some tampering with Traveller if you are to reflect cyberpunk norms, or accepting Traveller imposed limitations will probably ruin the feel. The coming of Traveller 3 may, GDW willing, gives us the chance to see technology updated and brought more into line with that expected in Cyberpunk.

Hopefully the ideas discussed here regarding the integrating of cyberpunk into Traveller can serve as a basis for discussion about this topic. Traveller 3 is our chance to see cyberpunk brought into the Traveller fold. Let us ensure that it is brought in in a well thought out manner, in keeping with the Third Imperium. Hard Times, and whatever the future may bring.



CABAI

Abstract

CABAI (Computer Augmented Behavioural Alteration)

The use of microscopic biochip implanted into the hypothalamus and other hormonal control regions of the brain (i.e. secondary implant in the pituitary gland) to modify behaviour. External stimulation of the hypothalamus by the pre-programmed neuroprocessor at specific regions leads to the release of specific hormones. These specific hormones can bring about rapid and particular metabolic changes effecting whole or isolated regions of the human body. Can interfere with natural hormone release and/or function through sympathetic, synergistic or through blocking effects.

There can also be direct stimulation of pleasure and pain centres. The controlled release of the body's natural 'pain killers' - endorphins - can be used as very effective, safe, cheap and rapid method to relieve pain. On the battlefield it could help to overcome certain logistical problems and enable the recipient to continue in his/her actions without recourse to direct medical intervention. It is also envisaged that the 'pleasure and pain' centres approach to convicted criminals could ensure compliance with prison rules and regulations thus reducing tension and manpower.

Detail

The process can have profound medical benefits for those suffering from a variety of hormonal and neuronal/cerebral disorders ranging from growth stimulation to control of fertility, from modulation of kidney function to stimulation of nerve function and heart control. The use of natural endorphins as stated above is very useful where conventional anaesthetics pose a risk to the patient.

The biochip can be inserted by a competent surgeon in under two hours and removed in a quarter of the time. The process has not been widely implemented due to its reclassification as a military project and even this developmental use has been limited in scope.

The CABAI project was developed by a team at the Bioengineering Research Bureau of Shishmadarshag LIC. led by Professor Rae Tuliiga. The concept of direct manipulation of human action/behaviour by the introduction of advanced neuro-electronic systems incorporated and controlling living tissue has had a long history. The most recent phase included the insights gained by this particular line of research arose at an obscure side meeting of the Bioelectronics Group at the Shudusham Robotics Conference of 1083 where Tuliiga was a junior research associate at the Lemkkoll-Hamun University on Anjiv (Tansa/Gushemege 3006). The ideas

taken away from the meeting were to remain dormant in Tuliiga's mind until he was elevated to the head of the Neuropharmacology Unit with the Bureau where his ambition bore fruit.

Initially the corporate planners at ShMaSh were skeptical on being presented with the application of funds for extensive research in this field. They argued that the controversial nature of the project could seriously undermine the market base for ShMaSh if the details were ever made public before the initial feasibility studies and the socio-psychological impact could be ascertained. Also the introduction of a working system may well be cheap compared to a complete course of orthodox treatment i.e. neuro-drugs; this would seriously erode company profits in this area. However the initial resistance was overcome partly due to the fact that most of the executives were sure that the project would never amount to much and partly prevent Tuliiga from leaving and taking his ideas to another company.

Within four years of the start of the project the research team had a working system introduced in a terran pig. Eighteen months later in 1115 the team had introduced a prototype biochip into a human volunteer with a hereditary hormone. The neuroprocessor and its associate effector circuits were used to compensate for the deficiency by a specific stimulation of primary effector cells within the hypothalamus.

The success of the first human paved the way for the primary goals of the research, namely the external control of mood and behaviour. This stage ran into problems however. The breakdown of control led to an imbalance in hormone production which in turn led to acute psychiatric problems in the volunteer. The man stole an auto-rifle (and a couple of magazines) and fired indiscriminately into a holiday crowd killing seven and injuring fourteen others. The local police killed him after tracking him down and cornering him but not after he had wounded three officers. ShMaSh had to bring a great deal of political pressure to bear (and a few bribes) to halt an inquiry. The project was nearly cancelled at this juncture but survived through the dogged persistence of Tuliiga.

The problems were quickly identified and the project continued with a set of relatively volunteers, which brought about rapid progress in the work. The research was set to be developed for commercial exploitation when the military stepped in and took control of the work and the direction of the project. This caused deep outrage amongst the staff and Tuliiga resigned in protest over the hijacking of the project by the military. As the work now went under the banner of essential military research the hierarchy of the armed forces perceived Tuliiga as a security risk due to his much

publicised comments on the work. He was placed under house arrest where he died in a suspicious fire.

A major development took place on 213-1118 when there was a break-in at the research lab. Thieves were obviously professionals who knew exactly what they were after, taking computer records, hand-written notes, papers and hardware. There was no trace left that could give a clue towards the identities of the criminals. The work has not resurfaced, the conclusion reached by administrators of the project is that the theft was organised for the benefit of a "hostile power", a euphemism for one of the factions fighting over the Iridium Throne. The current favourite for the position of the sponsor of the theft is one of Dulinor's agencies. The work is probably being developed for its military potential, a daunting prospect when coupled to some of the elite lielish commando teams who already have an infamous reputation.

The first sight of this technology in the open has come with the emergence of a class of underlife in the seamier side of Kesser, primary city on Masa (2513). These individuals have had CABAL biochips implanted into the brain and are set to stimulate the pleasure centres. These individuals do little but sit in a dream-like state and slowly oblivious to their bodies' suffering. For many it is a last desperate, but for them entrancing, act. Others have used the devices to boost their responses, to aid their life of crime.

The most exciting and most dangerous discovery evolving from the development of the, CABAL work has been the interaction of chip recipients with computer systems. The initial studies on the first volunteers showed that during the monitoring of the neuroprocessor's effects on the host, certain anomalies in the computer were discovered to coincide with specific brain wave frequencies. Positive feedback experiments showed that subjects could exercise some measure of control over the computers.

Implementation

Any individual wishing to undergo a 'psychochip' neuroprocessor implantation procedure must go through a series of preparatory tests. This includes a full general medical plus physiological, psychological, personality and neurological tests to assess suitability. Laboratory assays cover aspects such as tissue typing and immunological rejection assessment as well as screens for biochemical and hormonal abnormalities, other than that being treated) and carriage of microbial pathogens. Following this comes preoperative preparation, the implantation procedure itself and finally one or more follow-up checks.

The implantation of the chips requires a technical base in medicine and of computing of at least average stellar: the importance attached to the operation emphasises the need for a skilled surgeon - the better the surgeon the greater the chance of success. The chips can be manufactured at tech level 12 and therefore

the operation has potential of being performed on wide basis as long as the knowledge is available.

The range of chip functions are potentially limitless although many are dangerous to implement and/or illegal. The following list is but a short and rough outline of the available feasible designs and their specific effects (individual referees should feel free to develop their own ideas and subsequent game effects, the author would be pleased to about any).

Hormonal: Base price of implant Cr.125,000. The hormonal implant is in essence the original fostered by Tuliiga using computer chip designed to specifically stimulate the hypothalamus and the pituitary glands to compensate for deficiencies. The biochip controls the complex electrochemical activities associated with secretion and passage of chemicals through cell microchannels. The methods of action of the CABAL chips within the brain are essentially similar across the subtypes, although placing of chips, sensors and control structures vary.

Effects can be seen almost immediately, the chips can be set to give appropriate stimulation, or alternatively at greater expense the chip can be programmed to respond to bioelectrical signals from the brain stem. This requires a period of training ten times 1D days - progress is monitored at the regular check-ups.

The implant introduced for purely medical reasons has effects specific for the condition to which the neuroprocessor was added, hormone production is achieved via controlled impulses. There are other specific neuroprocessor implants, which for example through training and control can lead to the specific production of adrenaline (through an indirect path). In the best-trained individuals the raising of adrenaline levels at will, seeing increases of hormone of up to 200%. This leads to increased metabolic activity temporarily boosting strength and endurance two points. The response lasts for up to half an hour; there is a refractory period of four hours where a response is not possible.

Neuronal: Base price Cr. 250,000. This type of implant can lead to general and specific stimulation of voluntary, skeletal muscles - although those taking a more expensive option and more lengthy, vigorous training, can specifically alter the pattern of involuntary muscle contraction (for example, heart and gastrointestinal tract muscle).

Training to achieve muscle control is of the same duration as that required for the specific hormonal control above. The specific stimulation of particular sets (or indeed an stimulation) can lead to an enhancement of body strength by up two points.

The 'general control' type neuroprocessor implant was originally designed for those individuals suffering from a variety of muscle wasting diseases, where neurone degeneration has led to failure of natural stimulation and control.

Axonal-Cerebral: Base price Cr. 325,000. This type of implant is the most expensive, dangerous, yet promising in its effects. The first neuroprocessors used were of a general nature designed to compensate those with defects in the neuronal/axonal pathways of the brain that give rise to various cognitive, memory and muscle abnormalities.

General benefits for those suffering from any of the above problems will include problems will include improvements in recall and cognitive abilities, etc., enough to overcome the original defect. Specific enhancements of cognitive functions can raise intelligence by one point and an improvement in recall of can raise apparent education by one point. These effects last up to three hours and can be utilised once every six hours, during which time the individual usually must rest.

The enhanced cognitive neuroprocessor comprises a cerebral-computer interface and controlling system. Electrical signals generated by thought process are converted into binary codes that can directly make switches in electronic pathways of any linked processor-driven device. Prolonged training of up to 12 months is needed for these functions to be mastered and is analogous to certain abilities possessed by special, zhodani psionic adepts. These adepts can alter the bits of data held on computers (see 'Travellers Digest 1' or Best of Travellers Digest vol.1' - Adventure 1 by DGP).

The enhanced chip costs up to ten times the basic price - this includes all the costs involved in monitoring and training.

To determine the psychological suitability of a subject for implantation:

Routine, Det, 30 min (time optional),(uncertain).
Referee: The determination relates to the player's/NPC's ability to convince a psychologist that they will be able to cope with the implant.

To determine the physical suitability of a subject for implantation:

Routine, Med, special *, 1 hour (optional), (uncertain).
Referee: The medical skill relates to the investigating physician. The special modifier comes into force at the referee's discretion and relates to any particular physical problems or enhancements that the player/NPC has.

Both the above tasks must be successfully negotiated before the character can proceed onto the next stage. Both tasks can be attempted again if an individual fails, with the following modifications for the first task the difficulty increases one level for each previous failure i.e. second attempt is difficult, for the second task the ability to make another attempt depends on the level of mishap. If the mishap is at the destroyed level, some fundamental incompatibility has been discovered and no further attempt may be made. At major level then the examining doctor has discovered some potentially fatal disease/disorder in the individual (which should be easily cured - randomly determine the nature of the

disease). This disease must be treated before the physical suitability task is attempted. This second attempt is at the next difficulty level: only one re-try is possible. The superficial and minor mishaps increase the task difficulty one level. Multiple re-tries are possible as long as determination rolls are successful.

To prepare an individual for implantation procedure:
Routine, Med, Dex, 15 min (optional), (uncertain, hazardous).

Referee: The skills apply to the supervising physician. Failure indicate, that there is some small problem. A retry is possible unless there is a destroyed mishap, a major mishap increases the task one level.

To perform the implantation procedure:
Difficult, Med, Dex, 30 min (optional), (uncertain, hazardous)-

Referee: Again the skills apply to the principle medic involved in the operation. -Success will only become apparent some time after the operation - recovery period is 10 times the time increment at which point the biochip functions can be activated. Mishaps can be potentially fatal; a destroyed mishap signifies death to the recipient, a major mishap leaves the recipient with some degree of permanent damage - intelligence and dexterity are reduced by one point. A minor mishap leads to the permanent loss of either one intelligence or dexterity point. For all categories including superficial there is a coma following failure, the more severe the level of mishap the longer and deeper the coma.

To follow up an individual after implantation:
Routine, Med, Int, 15 min (optional).

Referee: These check-ups should occur once every two weeks for three months to monitor progress, iron out any problem, and spot potential trouble. These consultations are designed to evaluate and implement the physiological and psychological changes brought about by the working chip.



Professor Rae Tuliiga

THE DEMANDS OF JUSTICE

"We had found ourselves on Kimilad in Dagudashaag sector, although the world was under Lucan's control he didn't appear to be too popular here so we weren't worried about Office of Internal Security agents causing us trouble. We were looking for a bit of work when we received a message, it simply said: Brother Lar has a job for you, be in the Starport Lounge at 20:00.

"We met Brother Lar that night and he asked us to do a very special job for them. When we heard the name Admiral Yokasi we knew we couldn't refuse, besides, we knew we'd have to do things like this when we joined the Brothers of Varian."

Introduction

This Rebellion era adventure is set on Kimalad (1506 A7859CB-E Hi). Kimalad is a high population world which is currently under the control of Lucan's Imperium, yet Lucan is not particularly popular there. This adventure assumes a group of adventurers of about five in number with ties to the Brothers of Varian. If the player characters do not have ties with the Brothers of Varian they should be contacted by Brother Lar via a TAS box address of one of the players.

A while ago Admiral Wainfrost ordered the nuclear bombardment of the high population worlds of Ispumer, Shankida and Dashi on the pretext that he had to stop high population worlds from falling into Dulinor's hands and that he was simply carrying out his orders. Information about this has been largely suppressed throughout Lucan's Imperium, however Kimalad has just had a great deal of information about the attacks leaked to it. Whilst Kimalad is behind the main battlelines is still too close to the war zone and so the population finds the idea of nuking worlds extremely unsettling, hence the reason Lucan's Imperium is so unpopular. The Imperial Navy, which has been using Kimalad a base for several of its operations, has been encountering increasing distrust and hostility amongst the citizenry. As a result, it has decided to move certain sensitive projects to other locations.

What is not known by the Navy or the population is that the Brothers of Varian are responsible for the security leaks occurring on Kimalad as part of a long term plan of destabilisation. The Brothers have been assessing the effectiveness of this operation from the reports of members planted inside the Imperial Navy and from these agents they, have just learnt that a very important prisoner has been held here in secret for some time. The prisoner is none other than Admiral Yokasi, the man who tried prevent Admiral Wainfrost from bombing Ispumer, Shankida and Dashi before he was betrayed. The Admiral is being held in a commandeered prison facility pending transfer to

Capital where he is to face charges of mutiny, treason, dereliction of duty and conspiracy. It appears that as part of the Navy's transfer of projects the Admiral is to be moved off world and then sent on to Capital where he is to be tried and executed.

The Brother's agents in the Navy have provided details concerning his transfer and have promised that if a rescue attempt is made they will do all they can to assist by delaying re-enforcements and so forth.

The Mission

The player's mission is to rescue Admiral Yokasi. To do the players are provided with a copy of the transfer plans for the Admiral as well as the following pieces of equipment.

- False paper, for all members of the team.
- The transfer plans.
- Two smoke and two HE grenades for each member.
- Twenty kilos of TDX or other explosive.
- Sufficient ammo for the player's small arms.
- Ten thousand credits for bribes and an, expenses incurred during the mission.

The players will be expected to supply the following pieces of equipment themselves. If they do not have any of these the Brother's will supply non-traceable items.

- Personal weapons
- Some form of combat armour
- A vehicle or vehicles large enough to transport all members of the team and their equipment
- Communicators for all members of the team

If the players require any other equipment they will have to supply it themselves or spend some of the ten thousand credits and go out and buy it. They are also instructed to get equipment and a weapon to give to Admiral Yokasi upon his rescue by them.

Once they have the Admiral they are to make their way to Havens Landing Facility, a private landing area with modest maintenance facilities, where a modular cutter will be waiting for them. The cutter will take them to a merchant vessel waiting in orbit, which will take them out of the system.

If the players have anything which they wish to take with them, it should be given to the Varian contact who will have it loaded upon the merchant vessel before the mission. There is one important condition to the mission though, the Brothers will insist that the team avoid killing or wounding civilians at all costs. This is because such things undermine the faction's popular support,

however if such a thing is absolutely unavoidable they will understand. Finally the players will be told that a successfully completed mission could result in each of them being given an additional CR. 7,000 and that they may keep any of the equipment issued to them and any of the ten thousand credits that are left.

The Transfer Plan

A look at the transfer plan for the Admiral will reveal the following: Admiral Yokasi is being held at the Kalins Lange Correctional local institution which has been commandeered by the Imperial Authorities and is being used to house political and important prisoners of war. In two days time at 06:30 the Admiral will be taken from his cell to the prison administration centre where the paper work for his transfer be carried out. At 07:00 a 'Resolve'-class G-Carrier ('101 Vehicles', p.22) number 364 will arrive at Kalins Lange. The G--Carrier will have a driver, a gunner and four guards in it. All of these people will be Office of Internal Security Operatives.

By 07:10 the Admiral will have been placed in the vehicle and it will leave the prison to go to the Starport. The G-Carrier will arrive at the Starport no later than 08:30 whereupon it will proceed to the Starport Security Centre. Once there the OIS Operatives will hand the Admiral over to Imperial Army Military Police who will escort him from Security Centre on foot to a waiting shuttle. By 09:00 the Admiral will be on the shuttle which will also be crewed by OIS Operatives. Once the Admiral is on board, the shuttle will immediately take off and take the Admiral to an Imperial Navy Warship to which he will be transferred. The warship will then proceed to the jump--point and leave the system.

So, How Do We Pull This Off?

The players must now plan and execute a mission to rescue someone held by Imperial Authorities. A difficult proposition. There are a variety of ways that they may attempt to try and achieve this. They may want to try and bust him out of the prison administration centre before the G-Carrier turns up but discreet enquiries (or just a good professional look at the building) will show this to be a somewhat foolhardy plan. The facility is defended with a number of security fences and heavy weapons. It is generally considered impossible to break into without a determined assault by well equipped troopers and sapper support.

Another option is to turn up with another G-Carrier and forged paperwork before the real G--Carrier and sign the prisoner out. The main hassles with this is that the real G-Carrier may turn up before they leave and that the prison will be in contact with the real G-Carrier either by radio or some other means. If they do manage to sign the Admiral out it won't be long before the real G-Carrier turns up and the authorities are alerted. Trying to rescue the Admiral at the Starport is also a bad idea as the nearby Security Centre is full of troops,

as is the nearby Imperial Navy base. The players best option would be to ambush the G-Carrier after it has picked up the Admiral. A look at the transfer plans will show that -there is a point along the G-Carriers route of travel that is furthest away from all points of help. This point is in Enge Street near some unoccupied Government buildings.

If the players decide to try and ambush the G-Carrier on its way to the Starport they will discover that the area is seldom travelled at the moment and is ideal for an ambush. If the players decide to try and get the Admiral some other way and succeed they will find they will have to go down Enge Street in order to make their way to Havens Landing Facility.

Things Go Wrong

If the players are waiting in ambush for the G-Carrier it will turn up on time and drive straight into whatever ambush they have set. Somehow the players will have to disable the G-Carrier so that they may get the Admiral out. If the player's roll badly allow them a few "lucky" shots that damage the G-Carriers grav plates. As soon as players achieve this and are about to move in to deal with the crew, the players see large demonstration, with murder in their eyes, come round a corner carrying anti-Lucan placards. These people will take one look at the stranded G-Carrier with its Imperial markings and, with howls of rage, charge it.

It seems the Varian Faction's attempts to undermine Lucan's support on Kimalad and generate resentment of him, has been even more successful than originally anticipated. Earlier in the day several major unions called a snap strike and quickly organised a major rally at Halas Park, next door to the Havens Landing Facility! Tempers ran hot during and now the uncontrolled crowd has armed itself and marched to burn the government buildings in this street to the ground. No sooner do they arrive than they see one of Lucan's vehicles sitting in the street. The uncontrolled crowd quickly becomes a rampaging mob and the disturbance begins to spread throughout the city. The players are slap bang in the middle of this.

As the players watch, the G--Carrier's gunner, thinking that all this is a trap set by the mob, begins to fire indiscriminately into the mob. People go down, but mob is beyond reason and in seconds the G-Carrier is buried under people. The scene is much like the scenes coming from Eastern Europe of late (Remember this was written in the very early 90's - LDP). This leaves the players with some problems, Firstly, the man they are trying to rescue is sitting inside that G--Carrier and they aren't supposed to shoot civilians. Besides, the crowd is essentially on their side anyway. The players are going to have to leave their positions and try to get to the vehicle. At least they no longer have to worry about carrier's laser as the crowd have ripped it from the roof.

The players should arrive at the G-Carrier just as the

crowd force open the doors. The OIS men will come out shooting and will direct their fire at the players as soon as they see that they are armed. The OIS are all armed with 9mm pistols and the four guards have ACRs as well as flak jackets. Once these men have been overcome, Admiral Yokasi will be found in a semi-conscious condition on the floor of the G-Carrier. It appears he was drugged before he left the prison.

If the players already have the Admiral and are simply going through Enge Street they will run into the crowd setting fire to the buildings. Once the crowd see them they will turn their attention to the players vehicle, believing it to be a Lucan patrol, and damage it. They will have to escape on foot with the drugged Admiral and try and find alternative transport.

Time To Leave

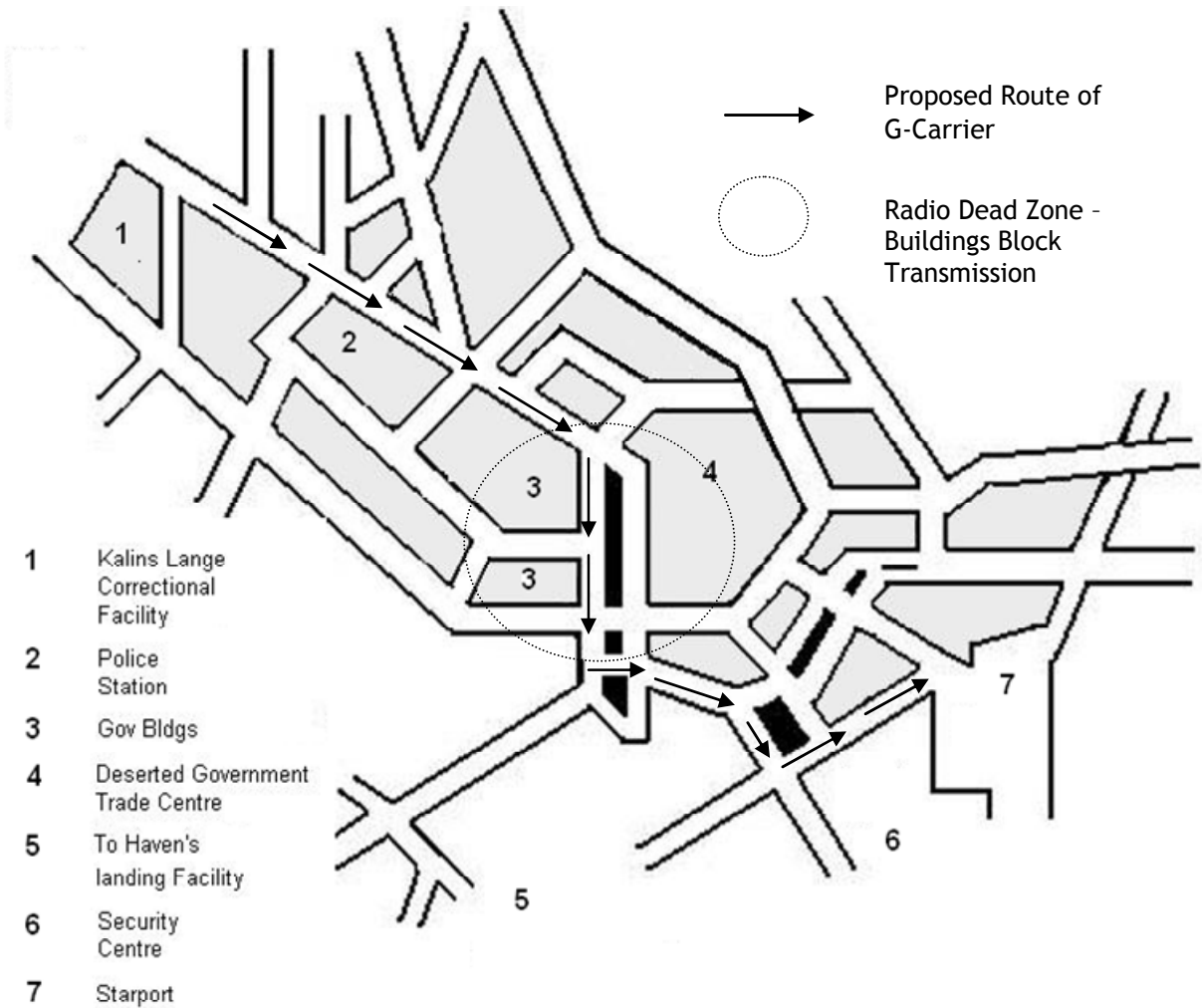
The players now have Admiral Yokasi, a little worse for wear perhaps, but they have rescued him none the less. The trick now is to get to the modular cutter waiting for them at Havens Landing Facility. To do this they must fight their way through the berserk crowd to where they left their vehicles or where they can appropriate some more. Buildings are now on fire, looting is going on all around and anti-Lucan slogans have been sprayed over all the vehicles in sight, including those used by the players. The players now have to drive through a

rampaging mob. This is not so bad if they are using grav vehicles as they can simply fly above the crowd's heads. Things are not so good if they are using ground effect vehicles. They will have to weave slowly through the crowd. One good thing is that the anti-Lucan graffiti on their vehicles make them popular with the mob who, slowly move out of their way and let them pass. The players should have just gotten out of the crowd when the Riot Police turn up.

Oh, Oh, It's The Cops

Police units begin to form everywhere to combat the riot, which is rapidly spreading throughout the city. Ambulances, fire-fighting crews, news crews, local troops all begin to turn up. What are the players likely to do? In most cases they will put 'pedal to the metal' and try to get clear as quickly as possible. Now, if you were the Police and you saw one or more vehicles speeding away from a riot covered in anti-government slogans, what would you think? Very suspicious? Worth looking into? You're darn totot'in.

So, before the players get very far from the riot they will see two Venerly Class Police Speeders ('101 Vehicles' p.23) coming up behind them and ordering them loudhailer to stop. If the players stop they are going to have to explain the man in the back who is drugged and wearing a prison uniform. And just why



they are all wearing combat armour and carrying weapons. So, it doesn't seem too likely that they'll comply, instead an exciting chase and running battle through the busy city streets until they can somehow lose the Speeders. No more units are available as they are dealing with the riot.

it to the waiting cutter. Once on board, both they and the Admiral are safe. The cutter immediately takes off and goes to the ship in orbit. While down below, the planet tries sort out its problems, the merchant ship quietly leaves orbit and moves out to jump point. The Varian Faction scores another victory for justice and the honour of the Imperium...

Eventually the players should lose the police and make

PORT OF CALL: ZIRUUSHDA

Ziruushda 1204 A977377-A Lo Ni Ag 400 Im M5 V

SYSTEM DATA

Primary: Hawayeil, Spectral Class M5 V, mass 0.331, luminosity 0.110

Hawayeil M5 V

Ziruushda: Mean orbital radius 0.2 AU. Period 126.971 std days. Diameter 14,431 km. Mass 1.6993 terra. Molten core, density 1.06. Mean surface gravity 0.84g. Rotational Period 18h 39m 3s. Axial Inclination 18°32'10". Energy Absorption 0.7

Ziruushda A977377-A Lo Ni A

• Takhara YS04377-9

Piz Y744327-9

• Lak YS00000-0

• Cregud HS00000-0

• Gres YS00000-0

Latilym YAAB000-0

• Lenix YS00000-0

• Ruhag YS00000-0

• Nucyw HS00000-0

• Gopypuf H300318-9

• Cavysot Y376000-0

Surface atmospheric pressure 0.67. Composition oxygen-nitrogen mix. Hydrographic percentage 72.86%. Mean Temperature -13°C. Native life present, non-sentient. Total System Population 4,940.

(Note: The Hamaran only on census those Hamaran who are classed as adults. The real figure is probably well into the millions)

Satellites: One - Takhara, Diameter 330km, Orbit 403,200 km.

Primary Cities: Ghelukhi Archipelago 3,500, Starport A: Shaol 500 Spaceport G, BhughÜ 500. Spaceport G.

Landing Pattern

Ships arriving in-system are contacted immediately regarding docking requirements. Cargo ships are handled by the ZTCOA (Ziruushdan Trade Confederation Orbital Administration), while passenger facilities were franchised out to the MMSL (Medurma Main StarLines) who give priority to their own ships. Free Traders with both cargo and passengers are initially dealt with by the ZTCOA who arrange for the ship to dock at a transferral bay prior to being moved to the automated handling bays. Cargo Ships and Free Traders are generally allocated a window within ten minutes while non-MMSL themselves waiting for anything up to thirty minutes before being allocated approach vectors. Once landed. clearance is generally allocated within ten minutes and the procedure while thorough is extremely quick and efficient despite the large number of Bwap's attached to Port administration.

World Government is non-existent. The functions of administration and local government are carried out by Gyasö (monks and nuns) of the various Hachar Monasteries with the legal, judicial and tithe functions being handled by elite councils made up of those Hachar Gyasö who are also members of the Sahki Tas (lawgivers interest group). Shaol governs itself according to Scanian law.

Population Breakdown: 88% Hamaran, 8% Humaniti, Aquan, 2% Humaniti, Imperial, 1% Bwap, 1% other minor races.

Social Outlook: Conservative, Advancing, Unaggressive, Peaceful, Harmonious, Friendly.

Religious Profile: A311808

Law Profile: Undivided, 7-B6995

Technology Profile: A9-BBAC88BAA78-D

Clearance party generally consists of a Port warden (almost always Bwap) and his team of 12 Search assistants (all Hamaran), a Port Engineer and crew of 6 maintenance staff (all Hamaran), a Health Officer and a small team of Custom and Immigration Officers. In most cases Hamaran will allocate a Bwap or Human to act as liaison, but be aware that one of the Hamaran Search "Assistants" is generally a high-ranking Port Official within the Hachar Gyasö.

STARPORT PROCEDURE

Ziruushda is primarily agricultural and as a result its starport traffic varies according to the seasons. Much of its agricultural produce is supplied by fishing though that too is only harvested in certain seasons to prevent overfishing. There is only one starport, Ghelukhi, which is divided into separate Cargo and Passenger ports.

Starport Facilities

Only the starport area has both extralidity and quality human-sized surface accommodation. The Port has 38

cargo berths and 5 passenger berths with 2 transferral bays. There are no runways. Traffic in the system using the cargo bays varies according to the season from 185% to 25% off-season. Passenger traffic stays a stable 76% throughout the year. Starship construction and repair, though relatively primitive [tech level A] is extremely efficient and thorough. The only Search and Rescue facilities are owned by MMSL and charges a heavy salvage charge to independent traders.

Port Costs

Refined Fuel Cr. 200/tonne, Unrefined Fuel Cr.25/tonne, ocean refuelling is permitted. Berthing Costs, Cargo Cr. 130, Passenger Cr.250, for the first 5 days, (both) Cr.250 per additional day. Warehousing Costs Cr.50 per tonne per week. Security costs Cr.25 per day. Handling Tax Cr.1 per tonne. Shuttle fees - charter only. Human-sized transport outside the port is generally by private charter except for transport to the Aquan city, Shaol which costs Cr.35 from the Port.

Regulations

The Hamaran are extreme conservationists and visitors are warned to not contaminate or damage in any way the sea or forests as such crimes carry a mandatory jail sentence. The Hamaran also prohibit the importation of any drugs except for personal medicinal use. There are no restrictions on the import or export of credits. When you land you are required by law to declare what valuables you are bringing in with you. Custom officials are quite strict about checking this record when you depart and making sure that you have not forgotten or mislaid anything en route. You may have difficulty bringing out objects or souvenirs (such as statues) from the Gograhah Reiver period as these are classified as art of me "Ziruushdan Cultural

Languages

Most Hamaran inhabitants speak pure Kiriani though one of the requirements for entry into the Hachar Gyasô (Government) or working at the starport is a fluency in Galanglic and Galaach. Aquans use Na (sign language). Vilani, Sfuizia and Kehuu may also be spoken but not beyond the Ghelukhi Archipelago.

Portside Facilities

Only in Ghelukhi and Shaol are there anything remotely resembling human-sized accommodation. Most humans either stay at the Tseatse Hotel (3 stars), the Lhashiang Bar (2 stars) or commute from Shaol. The Hamaran themselves, live in Tangú; a collection of tree houses that are built at least 3 metres above the ground creating dark and narrow streets below. Here the sun is never seen, so extensive is the tree city. Each Tangú consists of a massive but extremely low roofed communal room with about a hundred small globular nests above. Many Tangú have amalgamated together to form massive cities above. Each Hamaran family (consisting of parents and their pups up to 18 seasons old) sleep together within the small claustrophobic globes high above the street. Entire clans occupy each Tangú and several hundred Hamaran may have to share kitchen and bathing facilities. Individual travellers may

sometimes be allowed to stay in the Kaô, the narrow pillar-like corridors that hold the Tangú up between trees. The quality of these places varies considerably but at the very least you will be supplied with quilts and hot water.

Ziruushda is not noted for its cuisine. The food tends to be coarse, heavy and rather bland. The standard Ziruushdan dishes are Tuäkpa; a noodle and vegetable soup with a sprinkling of fish (fish is classed according to Bôru teachings), Mö-Mö; dumplings with boiled eggs inside. You may find a small restaurant selling Scanian fare but this rarely resembles true Scanian cuisine and is characteristically very greasy and unappetising. Most Hamaran live on a diet of roasted Tsama nut, fish, Ayau flour, cheeses and fruits.

Most restaurants will let you see what is available and allow you to select the food you would like them to cook, providing you can make yourself well enough understood. Local translator chips are remarkably bad at translation. Ghelukhi now stocks a wide variety of imported food and a wide variety of fish, fruits, vegetables, nuts and dried fruit are available in the market area.

HISTORY

Ziruushda was initially colonised in -8086 by the Vilani but was abandoned in -3398 due to an epidemic of Terran chickenpox that wiped out 90% of the colony virtually overnight. During the Long Night the planet was believed colonised by a now extinct race, the Gograhah, who apparently used ancient Vilani starships to raid and plunder nearby planets between -980 and -350. The Gograhah were believed a myth until a scoutship rediscovered Ziruushda in 23. The planet was uninhabited, but the shoreline and coastal shallows were covered in carved monoliths and statues of several races, some from as far away as Gushemege. Extensive archaeological excavations have failed to discover anything about the race that created them. No buildings or burial sites have ever been officially uncovered. Only a single carved symbol found on almost all the statues appear to identify this race with the Gograhah Reivers.

In 662 archaeologists invited the Scanian colony on Gateway/Argi to send a team of Aquans to help investigate the shallow seas in case the Gograhah were an aquatic race. The small colony Aquans liked the planet so much they decided to stay and helped found a small settlement on the planet. In 693, Hamaran from Tethys entered into negotiation with the Aquan colony of Shaol to buy the surface areas of Ziruushda. Although refused initially, the Hamaran proved so insistent that the Aquans eventually consented to the establishment of a small colony on the Ghelukhi Archipelago. Since then, relations between the two races have been such that in 764 a world council (not government) was established along Hamaran lines to represent the varied races.

In 835 a massive influx of Imperial citizens wishing to live on Ziruushda resulted in an intense famine for

several years. During the worst part of the famine most Imperials fled the planet leaving the Aquans and Hamaran to rectify the problem. The result is that now, non-citizens (i.e. not born on Ziruushda) are strictly limited as to the number that can sully on the planet at any one time.

A VISITOR'S GUIDE TO ZIRUUSHDA

Ecology

Much of Ziruushda's limited surface is water-logged marshes or rain forest with the only lands sufficiently drained for habitation being the equatorial archipelago's which are extremely mountainous. The largest settlement is the Ghelukhi Archipelago.

Atmosphere Sickness - Most humans will suffer from the effects of breathing a thinner atmosphere. The degree will vary from person to person and gradually decreases as you become acclimatised. Atmosphere sickness usually develops slowly during, the first two or three days. Its symptoms include headache, nausea, loss of appetite, sleeplessness and difficulty in breathing. People are affected in different ways and not all of the symptoms need be present. This is the body's way of warning you not to over-exert yourself until these symptoms have disappeared. Direct intake of oxygen will help alleviate these symptoms but there are no medicines to prevent them. Most people get the initial symptoms quite soon but it may take about five weeks before complete adaption occurs.

Climbing stairs too quickly, even after a month on the planet can leave you gasping for breath. Atmosphere Sickness can develop into pulmonary or cerebral oedema (waterlogged lungs or brain). These are serious

complaints that can result in death. These are liable to occur only if the symptoms are ignored and you continue your activities at normal pace. The symptoms of pulmonary oedema are as follows: weakness, tiredness, shortness of breath, increased respiratory and heart rates, dry cough at first followed by cough with watery or bloody sputum. As soon as such symptoms manifest themselves you must seek medical assistance as soon as possible.

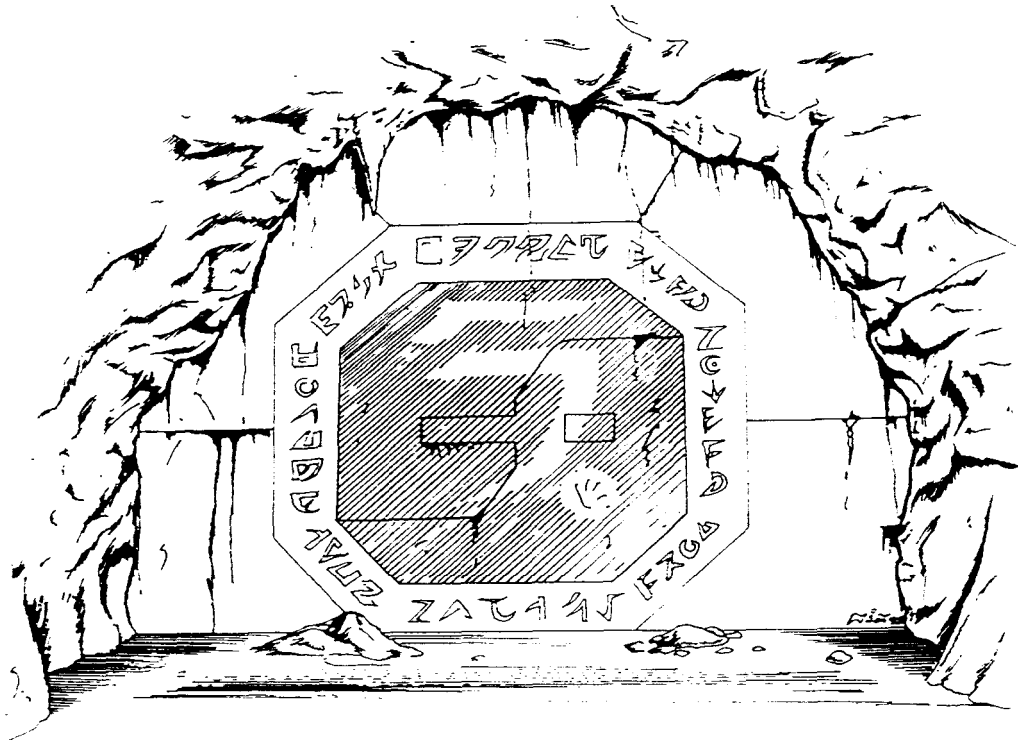
Ziruushda is not as cold as most people imagine, in Ghelukhi, even in winter, snow will never lie for more than a few hours and it is unpleasantly cold only during the night. During the day the weather can appear to be quite hot. Rather than the cold, the most characteristic feature is the rain. Otherwise the weather patterns are seasonal and regular. The Spring comes late, with blossoms and leaves not appearing until nearly Summer. The cold edge of Winter has gone within 30 days of Year's Turn and as it moves into Summer, the weather gets progressively hotter and the atmosphere wetter. When combined with winds, which can be quite strong, very unpleasant storms can occur.

Population

It is extremely difficult to tell the exact Hamaran population as only "mature" Hamaran are counted. Monks and Nuns are exempt since they are classed as beyond mere living and all pups up to 18 years are considered immature. In addition, the Gelu-Kö (untouchables) are not classed as sentient in the eyes of their culture and are also excluded from the census.

Culture

The Hamaran of Ziruushda have a natural warmth and



Holo of the Entrance to the Lost Mound on Tagäz

good humour. Most accept their place in society, content with their racial position. Hamaran society is broken down into landowners, serviles, merchants, professionals (mainly engineers or doctors) and the clergy. Approximately 1/3rd of the population are believed to be Gyasö (Monks or Nuns) living in one of the 2,500 monasteries that exist on the islands.

All Hamaran will join a specific Tas (voluntary interest group) at ten years old and will show allegiance to that group by supporting it both socially and financially. Although they will continue to live with their clan their primary allegiance is now to their Tas rather than the clan. Hamaran place no restrictions on their pups and many will join philosophically opposing groups from their parents. Regardless of Tas-kinship the hereditary social class is strictly enforced. Most Hamaran appear extremely sedentary and it is true that most remain emotionally tied to the same Tangú throughout their life. Despite this they have a strong sense of curiosity and will often work for most of their life away from home. All Hamaran try to visit Tethys at least once and all plan to retire back home to their own Tangú. Böru, the main Hamaran religion, is best described as reasoned supernaturalism coupled with observational evidence. Their many and varied festivals are mainly seen as a way to release excess emotion through formalised displays of specific emotions. Males and females share cultural equality in everything except marriage. A rigid system of polyandry exists (females have more than one mate).

Ziruushda has very few rich, and many, many poor. All have strong privacy customs and consider it extremely impolite to ask personal questions. Visitors should remember that there are no modesty taboo's and most inhabitants wear the minimal amount of attire required dependent upon planetary location. Hamaran societies place a high value on life especially sentient and outlawed the death penalty several centuries ago. This peaceful outlook extends to all creatures and visitors should remember that all animal life is protected and revered. Pup's are reared by the extended family. All live by a widely accepted ethical code and offenders are despised. Work is the meaning of life for most with leisure being considered as doing a different type of work for your interest group. The Hamaran are extremely prompt but visitor's should remember that this also means that they themselves demand promptness in everything.

Please remember, that all administration outside the Port is done by Gyasö, and it is recommended that visitor's remember to show all officials the respect due their religious standing regardless of their occasional inability to actually carry out their governmental position adequately.

Psychology & Religion

Ziruushda, like all Hamaran settlements, is dominated by religion. At least a third of the population have dedicated themselves to serving as monks or nuns. Most music and nearly all art, personify some aspect of Böru

philosophy. A common misconception exists that Ziruushdans practice a different religion from other Hamaran. A shamanistic form of Böru heavily influenced by the indigenous mythologies that festoon the mysterious undersea ruins scattered throughout the planet as well as Scanian concepts. This misconception is further reinforced by the endless number of ferocious, seemingly demonic, deities that peer at you from the endless street murals and overhang the street from the walk of the Tangús.

It must be remembered that this same phenomenon can be observed in any culture that has embraced Böro; instead of denouncing and stamping out local Gods, the Hamaran converted them to their own cause. Races were thus able to continue using their traditional religious symbols but within the context of a highly evolved system of value and meaning. Ziruushda is different only in the fact that it adopted many of its deities from a seemingly extinct race and then incorporated them into their existing religious practices. Böru influences every aspect of Ziruushdan life. It is impossible to understand the Hamaran without knowing the basic tenets of Böru and how they interpret them. Only this way can we hope to peel away some of the layers of exotic fantasy that have built up around this race.

Yaihäma - The concept of reality. Hamaran believe that physical existence is both frustrating and, essentially, unsatisfying. They believe that the source of this suffering is not part of the nature of existence, nor is it due to the influence of either gods or demons. Suffering is the waste product of the inner confusion caused by the untrained mind.

The Path of Shaihyka - By following the of the Shaihyka the Hamaran rid themselves of this confusion. Shaihyka emphasised the need for strict moral discipline combined with charity, meditation and insight as the only true way to liberate the self from the negative inner bondage of suffering.

Acts of Gyasö - Hamaran believe that the greatest acts of charity are those that grant comfort to the Gyasö; the monks and nuns that serve the way by acting as examples of the Path of Shaihyka. Hamaran monks and nuns consciously adopt a way of life that is most conducive to the cultivation of the Way. They are the living teachings of Böru. Hamaran charity generally consists of paying a voluntary tithe (one tenth value of their goods) in either food or money to support a particular monastery, sponsoring a monk or nun through their life or giving a pup to a particular monastery so they might grow up to become a Gyasö

Pämdeom (The Wheel of Rebirth) - Hamaran believe that the attributes of the Pämdeom, if lived honestly, will lead to rebirth on a higher plane and consists of the teachings that lead to a higher state of being. The four spokes that power the wheel are; never taking life (most Hamaran are vegetarian), not stealing, celibacy and not lying about one's spiritual attainment. The Wheel itself consists of tolerance, energy, ethics,

meditation and wisdom. Wisdom to a Hamaran means attempting to look beyond the fiction of life and to experience life as it truly is. To do so they must first rid themselves of conventional ideas and perceptions as to who they are and what reality is. Next they live the aspects of Pämdeom and in doing so gain insight.

For most, Böru is summed up simply as seeking the Three Jewels; by directing one's life towards the enlightenment and compassion personified by Tä Gyasu, the first Hamaran to walk the path to mortal godhood, by following the teachings of Shaihyka and lastly by devoting themselves to uphold and strengthen their own community.

Taxes

Beyond a standard visitor's tax (5% on all services) tax is an unknown concept on Ziruushda. The "government" is funded by voluntary tithes both directly from its citizens and also a tithe paid by most other monasteries to the Hachar Monasteries for "enduring" the worldly tasks of government.

PLACES TO VISIT

Ghelukhi Archipelago - the main Hamaran colony and site of the starport. Ghelukhi is a series of islands covered in high-pinnacled mountains and overgrown by a vast forest that reaches even into the sea itself. Most of the forest is composed of DiaÜ trees - a prolific plant that grows so fast that it will reach a height of 3 metres within a year of planting the seed. The majority of Ghelukhi's forestland is cultivated. It is DiaÜ that is used in the creation of the Hamaran many tiered dwellings known as Tangú. The plant is used to provide buildings, roads, linen cloth and much more. Throughout the centuries the Tangú have grown closer and closer together as they were enlarged in size and new Tangú built. A dark sunless city of long corridors runs beneath the sky cities of the Hamaran. When new DiaÜ striplings refused to grow in the permanent darkness below the city, the Hamaran made artificial pillars to support the Tangú between healthy cultivated trees. Everything was extensively carved with figures taken from the Ziruushdan mythology and from Böru. Even the bark of the DiaÜ was carved, despite the fact that Hamaran never venture here down here unless they were the goddess Gelu-Kö. Above the floor are beautifully carved buildings and the lattice-roads made from Staravyne and DiaÜ which connect everything together forming the highway of the air. Although lattice-roads can easily bear the weight of several humans most visitors find them too precarious for their tastes. For this reason humans are required to carry torches with them at all times so they can safely venture through the pitch black tunnels and corridors beneath the trees.

Monasteries - High above the Hamaran cities are the stone-built monasteries that ring the entire archipelago. Some have walls 10 metres high made from hand carved granite. Although each monastery is crowded with

monks and nuns, each sleep alone within miniature stone cells barely big enough for a Hamaran to stretch out. They are the only Hamaran that will willingly sleep alone. Every inch of the stone citadels have been carved with demonic images representing various gods.

Stöpüen - When the first Tä Gyasu died, his body was cremated and his ashes placed in a traditional Stöpüen (funeral casket) to be cast into the sea. The symbol of the casket has subsequently become pre-eminent symbol for the enlightenment of Tä Gyasu. There are five principal forms of Stöpüen representing different aspects of enlightenment (and one other). The three most common are the Tä Stöpüen symbolising his illumination and enlightenment, the MarÜ Stöpüen symbolising his conquest of the demonic or chaotic aspect and the Ni Stöpüen his passing away and conscious rebirth.

Sky Burial - Although Gyasö are cremated after the manner of Tä Gyasu, the most common method of disposing of the dead is to take the corpse to a specially designated area outside the town, often at the top of a mountain, chop the corpse into pieces and wait for the carrion to come and eat it. Gyasö and relatives of the clan would perform the final religious rites before the body is removed. According to Pämdeom belief, consciousness leaves the body about 5 Tasu (8.56 hours) after clinical death. From this moment the corpse is considered truly lifeless, meat void of purpose. The manner of disposal is considered a final act of generosity, enabling other life to be nourished by one's remains. This practice has greatly aroused the ghoulish curiosity of many human visitors and it has become almost de rigueur, while on Ziruushda, to see if you can stomach the sight of this gruesome procedure. Initially the Hamaran tolerated the presence of foreigners, but recently they have become more and more offended by the blatant, morbid voyeurism of some observers, especially those that insisted on recording the ceremony. Some unpleasant incidents have occurred in recent years with Hamaran throwing stones at those who still try to make a candid recording. If you do go to witness a Sky Burial do so with respect both for the dead, their families and customs. Keep a good distance and do not even show a recorder.

Tagäz - The largest island- continent on Ziruushda is also the least inhabited. Apart from the single ridge of mountains to the west Tagäz is primarily a mixture of jungle and swamp. The air here hums with the sounds of insects and a profusion of colourful avian species, many never catalogued, fly from tree to tree, uttering raucous calls. Travellers to the deep jungles should beware many varieties of poisonous snakes and carnivorous plants, which prey on the unwary traveller. Thick, richly green tropical jungle dominates most of the landmass forming a thick, almost impenetrable barrier. To the north of the HagÜ Range lie thousands of low mounds within the jungle itself - rugged rock outcrops, covered with vegetation. Thirty-two years ago a small tourist expedition claimed to have found a concealed entrance that led into one of these. Venturing inside, they discovered that that particular

mound was artificial but unfortunately empty. On the return journey, the group were attacked by HaharÛ and only the guide survived, though driven insane by her experiences. The location of the artificial mound was lost with the expedition though their holo-recordings did survive and are now on display at the Ghelukhi Museum. Since that time, explorers and tourists have tried investigating the thousands of known jungle-covered outcrops in the hope of either rediscovering the mound, or possibly another which still contains some hidden treasures. Many believe the mounds to be created by the Gograhah, though no-one has yet proven that the original lost mound was created by them.

The humid jungle-swamps of southern Tagäz are popular with Hamaran hunters but to most outsiders they are only hazards along the trail to the legendary HagÛ monastery perched high upon the ridge of the Dagaä. Numerous small rivers clogged with fallen trees make travel difficult and several parties that dared the route without a local guide have been known to vanish in the region's bottomless bogs. Again it is believed that the Gograhah may have left treasure here.

The HagÛ Monastery - Overlooking the HagÛ Mountain range, the HagÛ Monastery is believed to be the highest building on Ziruushda and visitors are recommended to wear respirators throughout their visit. This monastery is famed for practicing the earliest known form of BorÛ found anywhere. The Monks live in small caves carved out of the many small pinnacles that surround the monastery itself, which is mainly a long narrow hall with several chapels to various gods carved deep into the granite below. Perhaps the most interesting part of the monastery is the famous crystal falls

far below the surface. These falls plummet about 30m into the main chamber. For unknown reasons, the waters often carry exotic gemstones and high-grade crystals, polished by the flowing waters. These finds are considered the bounty of the Earth Mother and are sacred. They are never sold but continue to line the pool bottom. The noise from the falls is nearly deafening and creates a deep vibration which can be felt several hundred metres above in the monastery.

Shaol - By most standards Shaol is little more than a small town in size, housing as it does less than 500

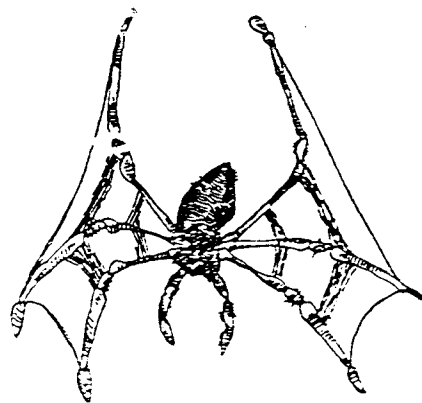
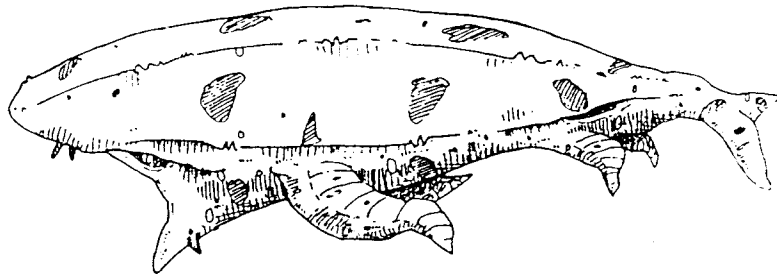
permanent occupants, mostly Aquan. The city is situated 50 kilometres off the Kaÿ (Ghelukhi Prime) at a depth of 50m. There is a small spaceport capable of handling about three craft at any one time situated on an artificial island which is tethered 3 kilometres south of the colony. The city is primarily built along standard Aquan lines with the exception of the Lubber Hotel (3 stars) and the Davy Jones (2.5 stars), which are the main residences for air breathers while staying in Shaol. They are built into the cliff-face of Talä, a deep chasm, which has never been measured or mapped but is believed to be kilometres deep. The Hotel's use remote cameras to relay the wide profusion of blind sea-life to viewscreens within the hotels themselves. The city has a central lift, which reaches the surface to prevent decompression sickness in air breathers.

Casia, or Dream-Moss as it is more commonly known, grows freely along the top of the walls of Talä. Casia has a sharp, pungent taste and a smell similar to cinnamon. Scientists have been trying for centuries to analyse why everyone who consumes Casia experiences - a variation on what is virtually the same dream. In 976, Dr. Enli Gahashuu discovered minute traces of Teragilchichin--alpha which was a then recently discovered psi-drug. Whether the shared dream is in some way a psychic phenomenon or an awakening of some sort of racial memory is not known. Hamaran authorities have placed strict penalties on the possession or consumption of Dream-Moss.

Aaba - Western most island in the Ghelukhi Archipelago. It is primarily renowned for its coastal array of statues depicting various human species including Ziadd, 'were-creatures' that

scientists believe may be Vargr and what appears to be a variation on the Noxian Spider. Aaba is also known for the iron relics made by the Aaba-hÛ monastery. The artisans of Aaba are forbidden to deviate from the traditional designs and forms approved by the first Tä Gyasu

Cha - A solitary island to the south of the Archipelago which has been made into a nature reserve because of its unique botany and the number of unique flightless birds that inhabit the land. Over 40 species are totally unknown elsewhere and a further 135 are unique variant



Skywhale & Spider-Embryo - Degushush

species. Especially worth seeing are the tropical Dragtyl, and the 3 metre high striders.

The Pinnacle of Oracles - The highest mountain on Ziruushda. The top 350 metres consist of a sheer pinnacle reaching into the sky. Three trails lead up to the top, each affording potential climbers its own unique set of hazards and disadvantages. An aerial assault is virtually impossible due to the intense wind currents and unpredictable eddies. It is widely believed that those who have reached the top may find the answer to any question: past, present or future.

The Hagruhä - A small clan of Hamaran that purposely dwells apart in utter isolation. The Hagruhä are total atheists from all over the planet who are utterly

shunned by all other Hamaran. Many are high caste, but all are welcome and treated equally even the Gelu-Kö (untouchables). Most Hamaran believe that they are utterly insane and cannot comprehend how Hamaran could hope to exist without Böru. Their Tangú is built high upon the ridge of Gheò on Kaÿ (Ghelukhi Prime), an area constantly covered in thick mist. For this reason the Hagruha have earned themselves the name of Cloudwalkers. Although other Hamaran refuse to soil themselves by visiting the settlement, the Gheò Tangú is an unique opportunity to see what the Hamaran would be like without the influence of religion.

CONTACT: HAMARAN

PHYSIOLOGY

Height & Weight

The average male stands 30cm in height though they measure about 60cm from snout to tail. They weigh about 10 kilograms. The average female is slightly larger and will generally stand about 35cm (65cm from snout to tail) and weigh 11 kilograms. Despite their light build they are extremely dexterous. Because of the unusual skeletal design of the Hamaran paw, they are unable to carry a great deal of weight in their hands instead they use their powerful prehensile tail or carry upon their backs. When swinging through the trees for great distances Hamaran will generally use their wrists as hooks and share the burden equally with the tail.

Appearance

Hamaran are bipedal mammals and walk erect. They are, however, more accustomed to climbing and will use their powerful arms and prehensile tail to swing from branch to branch. They have been unfairly described as "intelligent monkeys" though there is a great deal of superficial similarity. The colour of body fur varies considerably though most Hamaran have bands of light and dark fur. The darker fur ranges from a tawny brown to black and the lighter bands from white through to red or yellow. Their most unusual features are the two sets of eyes, which duplicate each other exactly. They also have an unusual palm socket, which is circular in design and allows for the digits to rotate round the palm for up to 150°. This allows them to adapt their paws to fit most types of tools. Between each digit are folds of extremely elasticated skin, which allows this amount of free movement without causing pain or excessive restrictions on the Hamaran's dexterity.

Diet

Hamaran are omnivorous though most followers of Böru will avoid red meat and many eat no animal flesh at all. Fish is frequently eaten and is generally not classed as life.

Rest

Hamaran are very flexible in that they will generally have several light sleeps rather than one long period. They can go for up to 26 hours without sleep but this is extremely unusual as most sleep for about an hour every four.

Reproduction

Hamaran pups are born after a gestation period of 90 days and may compromise as many pups. All pups are born blind and deaf and require constant attention for about six months old. The mother will then turn over the caring to the father and may conceive immediately. Hamaran young mature at about 6 years.

Senses

Hamaran possess the same senses as humans except that they have four bifocal eyes capable of independent movement. As many as 30% of Hamaran may be colour-blind. Their sense of smell is extremely keen and most Hamaran can recognise each other by scent alone. Hearing is excellent into the high frequencies, but weak on the lower pitches.

Anatomy

There is a great deal of similarity between the Hamaran and Terran simians. The major difference is the paws and wrists, which have five digits each arranged in such way that they can move 150 around the palm joint so that all five fingers can be clustered together to function like a human hand or even rotated similar to a star.

CULTURE

Originally descended from island-dwelling hunter-gatherers, at the time of their contact by the Vilani they had reached a stable Tech 5 society but were near to collapse due to population problems. Hamaran appear to have a unique affinity for electronics and were quickly integrated within a hundred years several

small colonies were established throughout the Sector and Tethys was declared a religious sanctuary.

PSYCHOLOGY

Hamaran are among the Imperium's smallest known sentient vertebrates and have proved to be an extremely capable and psychologically healthy race. Much of original Hamaran philosophy is contained within their religion, Böru and should be studied carefully in order to gain an insight into their frame of mind. Most are cheerful and extremely hardworking. It is normal practice for females to have several mates at any one time and males to change mates at any time. Young are always reared by the father, and there is a strong cultural taboo against leaving a lone male with children to rear. In such cases most females will offer a temporary rest until the pups are at least three years

Adventure Hooks

A Hamaran patron the PC's to "rescue" his son from the Hagruhä, where he lives amidst "untouchables" and deliver him to a deprogrammer.

A Hamaran has discovered a metallic plaque that seems to mark the location of Gograhah Reiver treasure mounds on Tagäz.

The PCs are approached to a Vilani noble who wants to hire them to get a statue off-planet.



Hamaran Male

BUTTERFLIES!

Patron: Collector.

Details: World with population 4+.

General Information.

Xenomanduca Shamurshii is a species of flying insect, similar in appearance to but not the same as the Terrain genus Lepidoptera (which includes most butterflies and moths). It is native to the hot tropical forests of Tyudhuar (1619 C599786-B) in the Solomani Rim. The creature's lifecycle is totally dependent on Ebani trees, and living examples are rarely seen off of its homeworld. The insect's body is about the length of a human index finger and is covered in fine downy fur. The wings are roughly about hand sized and are a spectacularly patterned iridescent blue.

The creatures are highly sought after on the collector's market and properly mounted and displayed examples can command surprisingly large amounts of money. In fact the price increases proportionally to the distance the collector is from the Solomani Rim. Within Dagudashaag sector, for example, a well-presented Xenomanduca could easily change hands for over a million creds. Understandably, however, the few examples that do exist that far away from Tyudhuar are well known and well documented.

Referee's Information.

Josthura Kane is an influential business figure within the area. She has large estates on several of the worlds within the subsector and counts high-ranking nobles amongst her closest friends. Her personal fortune is and she is well known for her philanthropy and generosity. But Kane has a weakness. She is a Lepidopterist, a butterfly collector, and she has had advanced warning that an uncatalogued example of

Xenomanduca is going to become available on the market. However, the owner seems to have no idea of its value and is selling it privately for a few hundred creds.

If Kane were to go in 'up front', rival collectors would almost certainly hear about it and try to out-buy her: the price could easily escalate to millions of creds. Kane's operatives have managed to get the owner's address as well as details about the building where he lives, which is located in a run-down area of town and has almost no security. If someone could enter the building, recover the insect, and then get away again

without leaving any traces (perhaps covering the theft by setting the building ablaze) Kane could pay well. She can ensure that the owner of the insect will receive a large insurance premium, and thus everyone will go away happy.

She has decided to send in independents for fear of her own operatives being recognised and thus the whole plan falling through. Under no circumstances will she deal directly with the characters. An efficient lawyer, who only refers to her as 'his client', will carry all of her negotiations out. Referees will have to tailor the rewards to suit their own playing groups, but a reasonable fee might be somewhere around Cr.25,000. Obviously the characters shouldn't be aware of the real value of the insect or they could offer it for sale themselves.



Possibilities.

1,2 All is as detailed. The owner's grandfather was originally from Tyudhuar, and he has owned the insect since the old man's death. He is short on money and is selling a few small items to raise some cash. Resourceful characters should experience no difficulties with the situation.

3,4 As above, but a rival competitor has also heard about the upcoming sale. He too has hired a band of independents, who as chance would have it, decide to perform their mission on the same night as the characters. The other group intend to steal a variety of items to cover the theft of the insect and will severely mess up the house. Further developments are up to the referee.

5,6 The Xenomanduca Shamurshii in question is an elaborate forgery that has been painstakingly constructed from a variety of materials. While it will doubtless fool an amateur (read character) a collector will see it for what it is at once. The forger who made it leaked word of its existence expecting collectors to come knocking on his door offering him a fortune, not to have them try and steal it in the middle of the night. He actually has excellent security and can call on a variety of underworld heavies should he need to. Further developments are up to the referee.

INDISS

PROPHET ARRIVED - LUUAR

News from the outback of Luuar tells of the long expected appearance of a new prophet. Almost nothing is known about the person himself. The planetary government has, however, gone as far as intervening and issued a statement denying that the new religious figure even exists. Meanwhile more and more nomadic tribes that populate the world outback are flocking to prophet's banner.

A Government spokeswoman told this reporter, "every time the local economy suffers a slight down turn, yet another of these so-called prophets or messiah's appear preaching a time of plenty if the population will only overthrow lawful government and install him its place..."

This prophet seems to be different He apparently preaches "back-to-nature" philosophy claiming that man can only be happy and at peace if he discards his technological toys and lives a simple life in harmony with surroundings. He has dictated that all items not hand made must be consigned to the cleansing fires as a sign of belief. By all accounts this prophet is a peaceful man who hopes to conquer not by war but by faith.

Unfortunately, according to local news reports, it appears that some of his followers have adopted a rather violent way of converting those who do not yet follow his teachings. There have been unconfirmed reports of 'unbelievers' being harassed and even killed for not giving up items of technology to the fires.

LUCAN IS INNOCENT - NEWS FROM THE CAPITAL

During a routine maintenance of the Imperial Palace on Capital, a small box was discovered in the aquarium. On its recovery it was found to contain four badly, damaged holocrystals. Examination of these seem to indicate that they were taken from the security camera's of Prince Varian and Prince Lucan's suite at the time of the assassination of Strehon.

After computer enhancement, the damaged holocrystals show fragmentary scenes of what really happened that fateful day.

The first crystal show two Imperial Navy Sub-Lieutenant's standing by the entrance to the suite checking their side arms. Both then leave the camera shot. There is nothing else of value recorded on this crystal. Crystal two shows only Varian's bedroom with no-one entering or leaving. Crystal three shows the bodyguard being shot from off-screen. Then Prince Varian fighting with a figure in a Navy uniform for the attackers SMG. Varian wrestles the SMG free and shoots the assassin before he falls to the ground, shot by someone off-camera. This crystal is too badly damaged to be read beyond this point. Crystal four shows no pictures

after a bullet smashed the lens but continues to record a soundtrack that can just be made out

First Voice: Ah, Windhook! Wha... (sound of gun fire) No, Varian.. Look out! (sound of SMG firing). The sound of a female screaming is followed by more gunfire. There is an unidentified sound like something or someone falling and the screaming stops suddenly.

The gunfire starts up again.

First Voice: Varian behind you... (short bursts, of fire).

Second Voice: Well Lucan, you're not there (sound of a door opening and closing). Nor in there.. Come out. come out.. (sound of gun fire is followed by the sound of a door opening then amidst the shooting the first voice is heard once more) Run for (Short bursts of a SMG).

The soundtrack unfortunately ends here. The first voice has been identified as Emperor Lucan. The second has been confirmed as that of Sub-Lieutenant Windhook. From these tapes, the true story of that tragedy fully becomes apparent. Historians have finally agreed that there can no longer be any doubt that Dulinor's assassins assisted by the traitor Windhook, killed Varian and attempted to kill Lucan. This historic find once and for all utterly discredits the story put about by the so-called Friend's of Varian and the traitor Windhook.

INVESTIGATORS BAFFLED - IMGAA

At some during the last fewdays (during the festival of Cruatha) the Planetary Art Gallery of Imgaa was broken into and 12 works of the great masters were stolen. The paintings, which were insured for over Cr.5 billion included Gaarrod's "Sunrise Over Cignus IV". The insurance company, Sol Alliance, is offering a reward of 5% of the overall value for the return of the stolen works and another 5% for information leading to the arrest and conviction of the thief.

One possible suspect is the criminal named the Art Collector by this reporter because he is believed to have desecrated at least three other art galleries and museums in the Sector during the past year. It has been revealed that the gallery had recently installed NAS sensors and Psi Shielding into its already formidable, some had claimed impregnable, alarm system.

APOLOGY - STORY RETRACTED

INDISS wishes to announce that the earlier story about the discovery of holocrystals from the Imperial Palace is utterly false. This story was apparently introduced into the INDISS news system by agents of the Imperial Ministry of Justice. All possible steps have been taken to prevent similar events happening again. Again we wish to apologise to all our viewers and readers.

NEW MEDICINE

Introduction

Human cultures such as the Vilani or the Lancians never developed an advanced body of medical knowledge, mainly because there was never much need for it. Because they weren't native to the ecospheres of their adopted worlds the viruses and bacteria found there simply didn't affect them. As long as their doctors could pull a rotten tooth, set a broken bone or perform basic surgery, they were all right. Their level of medical technology remained static and unchanging, only advancing through some chance discovery.

Illness

That is not to say that those other Humans didn't suffer from disease. They still suffered from a variety of heredity and genetic disorders, illnesses caused by poor diet or unsanitary conditions, problems associated with old age, and so on. Very rarely a virus native to their homeworld would mutate, becoming able to interact with the Human metabolism. Generally, only an unfortunate few were affected, and invariably those victims died: the virus eradicated itself.

The pattern repeats itself on almost all of the worlds within charted space with minor Human races living on them.

Medical Research

A major problem faced by the Human races transplanted to alien worlds was that they didn't fit into the natural scheme. While it gave religious groups something of a field-day, it presented a variety of problems to the scientific community. Consider: any species native to Terra (such as a tiger, a lobster or whatever) is essentially similar to a Human. It lives in a similar environment (broadly speaking) and has many anatomical parallels. Terrans, by studying the life native to their world, were to draw many conclusions about their own origins, their physical makeup, the way their bodies work, and so on. The Human races, which were transplanted to other worlds could not draw those same conclusions. None of the flora or fauna native to the adopted homeworlds of the other Human races was ever remotely close to the Humans who lived there. Consequently scientists, who lacked knowledge about their own origins, found it very difficult to carry out the basic research vital to a full understanding of the Human physiology. Many of their experiments required the dismemberment of living specimens, and as the only specimens that yielded results pertinent to Humans were other Humans, all but the most basic research was impossible due to the reli-

gious or moral views of society. There were of course exceptions, but generally this work was carried out illicitly and the results tended to be ignored or discarded by those in authority. The Terrans, of course, simply found a convenient species, such as monkeys or rabbits, and performed all the experiments they needed. The net result was that the Terrans had a vast and comprehensive understanding of Human physiology, while other Humans tended to have very limited medical know-how. This gave the Terrans a huge advantage over all the other Human races they encountered. A Terran was very unlikely to catch an illness from, for example, a Genoe she encountered, whereas the Genoe stood a good chance of going down with a potentially fatal disease.



The Three Imperia

The Interstellar Wars caused the collapse of the Ziru Sirka and the founding of the Rule of Man. There were a number of consequences of the Wars, but one of the most important is perhaps the one that is the least mentioned. The Terrans, with their natural immunity and medical skills, suffered from few debilitating diseases. But the other Humans they encountered had no natural resistance to

common Terran diseases and were susceptible to a wide variety of illnesses. Although quarantine measures were enforced, a lot of the time it was simply not practical; vast numbers of Vilani died from easily cured illnesses such as influenza, measles or the like.

Following the conquest of the Ziru Sirka and the establishment of the Rule of Man, Terra lost much of her political importance, but the world remained the medical heart of the Empire. Plagues, almost all Terran in origin, continued to sweep through the old Vilani territories, and Humans from across the Imperium flooded to the world to seek medical assistance. The Terrans responded by dispatching sophisticated medical teams to those areas that had few facilities of their own. Eventually the situation was brought under control, and many Vilani developed at least a degree of immunity. But before a medical revolution could sweep the Imperium the Long Night began.

The Third Imperium was fortunate enough to gain almost all the Terran medical knowledge, and throughout its existence it continued to expand and enlarge the already extensive body of information. But that information was not thoroughly disseminated, and some backwater areas had very little medical understanding. This was particularly true for strongly Vilani regions, where 'Terran' know-how was often resented, ignored or even destroyed. Usually the sector and subsector capitals had modern, well equipped hospitals, as did

most naval and scout bases. High population worlds and worlds with an advanced technological base also tended to have better medical facilities.

With the collapse of the Imperium during the Rebellion and the destruction wrought by the warring factions, whole sectors began to slide towards anarchy. Among the principal targets were places like hospitals and medical facilities: they could not be allowed to fall into or remain in enemy hands, thus they were destroyed. The wanton destruction, the anarchy, famine, filth, dirt and misery that shattered the Third Imperium let loose a violent and unpredictable killer: disease on a huge scale. And those same conditions have removed the very medical facilities to deal with it.

EPIDEMIC!

Common Minor Ailments.

Minor diseases can be transmitted in a number of ways. The most common means is through airborne particles sneezed or coughed into the air, but infection through physical contact, infected food and water, or parasites is also possible. Most have a short incubation period characterised by low spirits, lethargy and tiredness. This is followed by a minor fever (a temperature, aching limbs and a loss of appetite) which lasts for a few days. Other symptoms (such as small itchy spots or swollen glands) may also manifest themselves.

Kaagir's Syndrome.

Kaagir's Syndrome is a viral infection transmitted via tiny droplets of liquid coughed or sneezed into the air, or through close physical contact with an infected person. The disease has an incubation period of three days characterised by a feeling of lethargy and tiredness. This is followed by a fever (high temperature, fluid filled lungs, and physical pain) that lasts for about three more days: the fever recedes and recurs regularly. During the course of the illness the glands become grossly swollen and the victim may start internal haemorrhaging; they either die or begin a slow recovery. Victims are contagious throughout the course of the illness.

Infection

Those who are unaffected will wish to avoid contracting a disease. This can be achieved by scrupulous personal hygiene, avoiding infected areas or people, and regularly changing clothing. Wearing a filter mask (which covers the nose and mouth) will provide partial protection, although the disease can still enter the body through other moist areas. A vacc-suit will provide total protection, but restrict the movement of the wearer. Assuming the characters are in a situation where infection becomes likely (such as treating the sick) they must roll the following task once per day of exposure.

To avoid catching an illness:

Routine, End, Int, 1 Day, (Uncertain, Absolute).

Referee: TOTAL TRUTH indicates that the character has avoided infection. SOME TRUTH indicates that the char-

acter has contracted a minor illness. NO TRUTH indicates that the character has caught Kaagir's Syndrome (see below). A MISHAP indicates that the character has caught an irritating minor illness with symptoms very similar to those of Kaagir's Syndrome.

Diagnosis

Because a great many illnesses affect Humaniti it is not always easy to tell one from another. A successful diagnosis must be made before treatment can begin. The accurate diagnosis of a disease is a task:

To diagnose a disease:

Routine, Medical, Edu, 10 Minutes, (Uncertain).

Referee: TOTAL TRUTH indicates that the disease has been successfully diagnosed-. The referee should reveal whether it is a cold, Kaagir's Syndrome, or whatever-. SOME TRUTH indicates that the disease has been diagnosed, but that its state of advancement has been wrongly estimated ("...don't worry, the fever won't hit you for another couple of days ..."). NO TRUTH or a MISHAP indicates that the illness has been wrongly diagnosed, and the difficulty level for treating the disease increases by one (routine becomes difficult, etc).

Treatment

Once the nature of the illness is known it must be treated. Usually this will be through plenty of bed rest, a proper diet, and a course of medically prescribed drugs. Treating a disease is a task:

To nurse a patient through a common minor ailment:

Routine, Medical, Edu, 12 Hours, (Unskilled OK).

Referee: A SUCCESS or an EXCEPTIONAL SUCCESS indicates that the patient has recovered. A FAILURE indicates that the patient has recovered but is weakened by the illness (lose 1D3 points of strength, dexterity or endurance for 1D6 days). A MISHAP either indicates that the character has been exposed to another ailment (roll for infection again).

To nurse a patient through Kaagir's Syndrome.

Formidable, Medical, Edu, Variable, (Fateful, Unskilled OK).

Referee: The higher an individual's endurance, the shorter the period of infection. The exact duration of Kaagir's Syndrome can be determined using the following formula: $((2D6 - 7) - (Endurance - 7) + 72 \text{ Hours})$.

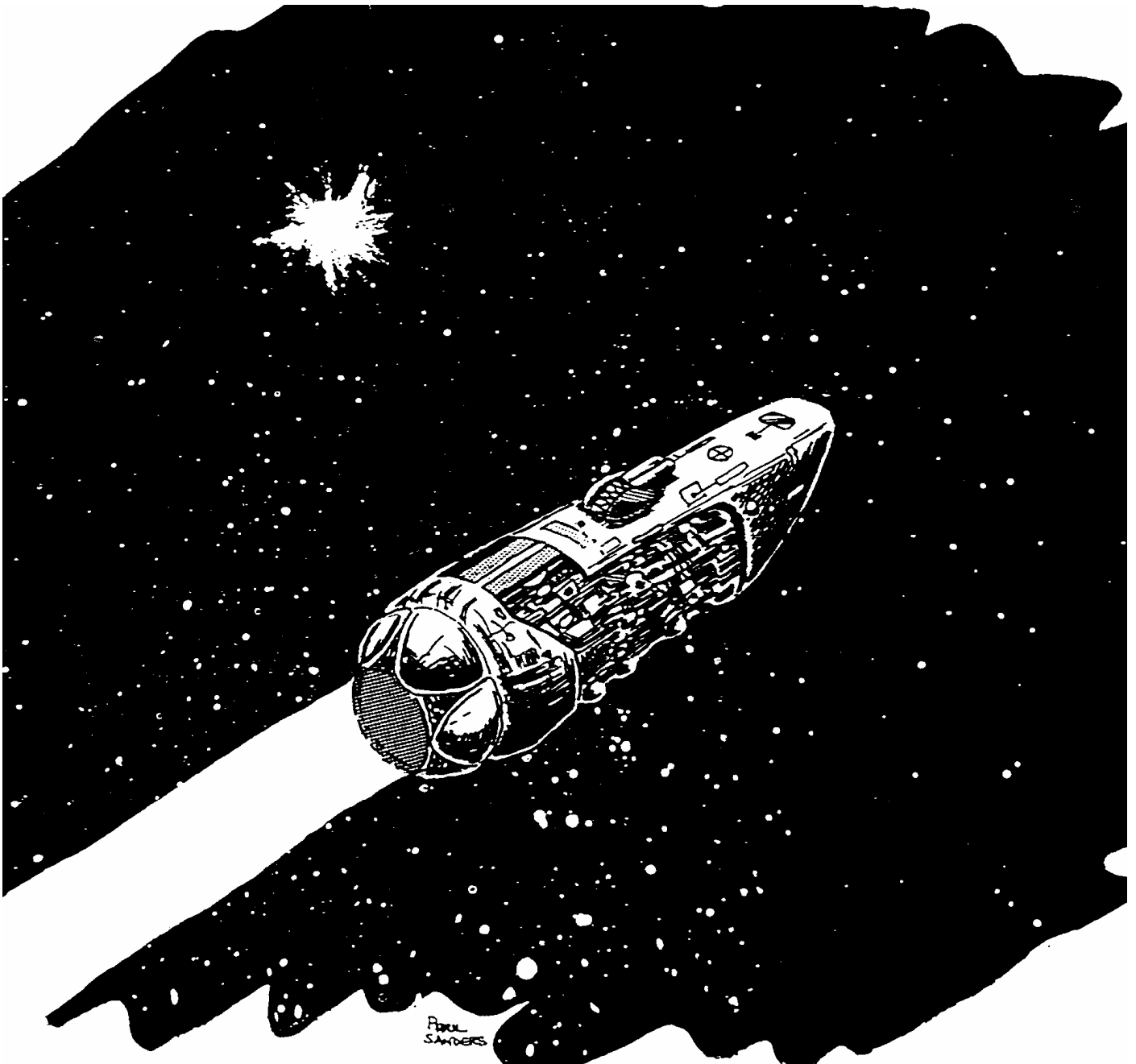
An EXCEPTIONAL SUCCESS or SUCCESS indicates that the patient has recovered. On a FAILURE or a MISHAP roll 3D6 on the mishap table to determine how much damage the character has taken from the illness: randomly apply the damage against his strength, dexterity and endurance. Resolve the task again until the patient has been cured or has died.

A number of other modifiers come into effect when treating illnesses. All the modifiers are cumulative.

- i. The patient's Endurance bonus is used as an additional DM.
- ii. Adequate shelter, food and liquids allow an additional DM of +1.
- iii. Using medical drugs in the correct dosages reduces the task difficulty by one level. A specific drug, Trimethaletine 7, is needed to treat Kaagir's Syndrome.
- iv. A lack of adequate facilities and equipment (i.e. treating the disease in the field) increases the task difficulty by one level.

Trimethaletine 7 ('TMA')
<Pronounced Tri-meth-ala-teen>
A medical drug produced by Linden Pharmaceuticals (a subsidiary of SuSAG) and sold to many facilities throughout the Imperium. It is a specific antiviral, designed to counter the viral pathogen that causes Kaagir's Syndrome. It is administered either orally or through an injection. About three percent of the population have proven to be allergic to TMA.

There is a chance that the patient will recover naturally, with no help from a doctor (hence the Unskilled OK). If there are medical staff in attendance the patient must be treated for the duration of the illness, which lasts roughly three days. The medical personnel must go by the result of the last diagnosis when administering the treatment.



BREATHLESS: THE HAMANOK CONSPIRACY, PART IV

Introduction

This scenario is the fourth in a series of five adventures. This scenario can be played as an independent adventure without recourse to the previous chapters and the ending can be developed as needed without the final piece.

Background

The PCs have reason to believe that an Ilelish commando unit that are implicated in a bomb plot on Hellas (Ushra 1416) are presently on Bastion (Old Suns 1507). Trying to find out further details of this shadowy group, the PCs have decided to follow the unit and reveal their true purpose. The PCs may now believe that they have run into this group a couple of times already - who is Dr.K? What is his importance?

Set Up

If the PCs are continuing where we left off in part (iii) then they - will probably have decided to continue the pursuit of the Ilelish commando unit. If this scenario is to be a one-off adventure then -little needs to be altered.

Optional Start

Before entering the nuggets below the referee may wish to role-play the trip between Hellas and Bastion. This could be an appropriate occasion to introduce some Rebellion-type tension/activity with a raid by one of the factions at a system the PCs are passing through.

Summary of Nuggets:

- 1: Trouble Down Below
- 2: Outlining the Problem
- 3: Down on the Farm
- 4: Confrontation
- 5: Picking up the Pieces
- 6: Destination: Yta Akat

1: Trouble Down Below.

The PCs arrive in the Bastion system and confront a FMF Navy cruiser orbiting the main world.

Location: Bastion system (Old Suns 1507).

Scene: As the PCs enter the Bastion system, they are hailed by a reserve SEH-class light cruiser of the Free Medurman Federation Navy. The ship is warned to stay well clear of the planet... "the world of Bastion is under strict quarantine. No landings will be permitted. Any attempt to land will be met with deadly force. There will be no other warning". After a brief pause: "Please state your business on Bastion, and notify us of any person on board with medical experience. Lieutenant Chinz of the FMFN cruiser 'Nakhn'. Out!"

Action: Compliance is the safest policy. Anything plausible will get the PCs by (even the truth!) If the characters have any sort of medical or biological skill (even chemistry and/or forensics can do) they will be invited over to the cruiser for an impromptu discussion

THE HAMANOK CONSPIRACY

A five-part adventure set in Dagudashaag sector:

1: Wet! Wet! Wet! The characters investigate the loss of a boat on the water world of Thalassa (Pact 2 127) where they run into a mercenary Cruiser (occupied by an elite Ilelish commando team) trying to salvage a crashed starship or the sea floor.

2: One of Our Doctors is Missing. the PC's are contracted to locate the whereabouts of a missing scientist. the head of the department of Biomolecular Sciences at the University of Medurma (Pact 2124). The characters discover that the doctor deviate from his intended route and appears to have died in the starship crash on Thalassa that the PC's found.

3: Where (Red) Eagles Dare. The PC's are caught up in a terrorist raid on Hellas (Ushra 1416) apparently due to the resurgence of the Solomani group, the Red Eagles. The PC's are led to believe that this may have beer the work of another agency trying to divert attention away from other activities.

4: Breathless. The PC's are asked to undertake a very hazardous mission on Veluishim (Old Suns 1507). They are instructed to recover bodies and obtain information of a plague that has swept an agricultural world decimating its' small population. Evidence is uncovered that the was deliberately introduced into the planet's ecosystem and may have been a man-made disease. There is also evidence of those responsible which has a disturbing familiarity for the PC's.

5: The Hamanok Conspiracy. With a armful of circumstantial and tenuous evidence the characters go to uncover the chilling details of a plot by Dulinor's agents to devastate the high population worlds of Lucan's Imperium: the characters take on the responsibility of eradicating the threat and destroying the Ilelish commando team.

on the reason for Bastion's quarantine.

If the players accept the invite the cruiser captain dispatch a shuttle/cutter to pick up the PCs and bring them back to the ship.

2: Outlining the Problem.

The PCs are given a brief summary of the problem on Bastion and are 'invited' to assist in a scouting mission on the planet's surface.

Location: Onboard the FMFN cruiser 'Nakhn' and on Bastion.

Scene: After arrival in the Bastion system the PCs are invited to board the FMFN cruiser 'Nakhn'.

Action: The world is been put off-limits to all vessels as there is apparently a serious problem on the surface. You are escorted to a seminar room where the captain, senior officers and the ship's chief medic sat down behind a large oval table. You are invited to sit down. The captain then gets up to speak.

"Seventeen days ago the free trader 'Volkas' on approach to Bastion received a distress message. There appeared to be a breakout of a highly contagious cardio-respiratory disease with high morbidity and mortality rates. The broadcast advised that the ship did not land until the condition on Bastion had stabilised. Another ship arrived shortly after the 'Volkas' and after a brief consultation with the free trader's captain decided to immediately jump to Kimalad to warn the authorities. We are the subsector government's representatives and have executive powers under emergency regulations, which are now in force. We are to remain and undertake preliminary investigations until the disaster relief and research team arrive within the next day or two.

"The latest information supplied by the 'Volkas' is that the situation has deteriorated. The last broadcast was over three days ago. It appears that the entire population on Bastion has succumbed to the 'plague'. We need to send down a team to the surface to make these investigations -to check for any survivors and collect specimens for future diagnostic work. As your group would appear to possess the necessary skills to help us achieve our aims I am asking you to cooperate with us. This ship was on a minor refit at Kimalad's shipyards - half the crew were on shore leave and could not be recalled in time before departure -o this system. As a result we are deficient almost totally in our medical and scientific crew.

"We would take you down with out Chief Medical Officer, Doctor Hanson aboard one of the ship's cutter. We will supply all the equipment necessary - self-sealing vacc suits, medical supplies and kits as well as any small arms. We are not sure what you will find but you had better be prepared for anything. I'm sure the subsector government will reimburse you for your help. Do you accept?"

If the players decide to take on the job then the captain will, with the chief medical officer, explain what is

required. The PCs are to travel to the surface look for survivors, take samples of water, food and body tissues. Strict containment procedures must be followed; Doctor Hanson will supervise this part of the operation. Equipment to be take to the surface include portable microscopes, air scanners and purifiers, micro-organism identification packs and portable biochemical/ spectrophotometric assay units.



Dr. Silasi Hanson Naval Commander, Doctor 6A77BA7, Age 42, 5 terms, Cr. 25,000, Medical-4, Bioigy-2, Chemistry-2, Forensic-2, Computer-2, Gun cbt-1, Vacc Suit-1

3: Down on the Farm

The PCs find themselves in a small deserted farming town and witness the devastation of the plague.

Location: In the town of Muir, on the world of Bastion.

Scene: The players have accepted the invitation by the FMF Navy to help investigate a outbreak of a mysterious disease that has apparently wiped out the population of the world, Bastion, below. The PCs are travelling down to the surface with the chief Medical Officer Dr. Hanson in a navy cutter. A full complement of medical/ laboratory equipment has been fitted out in the cutter.

Action: The PCs are directed to land at a small farming community/town 1,000 km from the capital. The coordinates have been programmed into the cutter's computer and the vessel will land on the at the edge of the town. Once the PCs have lauded it will be up to them to begin to collect samples of water, tissues from corpses, take air analyses and survey the local area.

The PCs as they investigate will find two adjacent fields in which there are dead cattle in one but live cattle in another. The answer to this anomaly lies in the water: one field is fed by a water pipe and tank and within lie the dead animals: a natural stream feeds the other field in which the animals have survived. This stage should be played out for as long as the referee desires but is only a back around/introduction to the following nugget.

The plague is viral in origin (genetically engineered) introduced by an Illeish commando team, the same team responsible for the attack on the PCs on Thalassa and the bombs on Hellas. A four-man landed at the starport four weeks ago (obviously under false papers)

in a cutter. They disabled the central water purification unit (and the units monitoring system) and introduced the virus into the water supply. The purification unit supplies drinking water to all the towns and farmhouses on the main continent (all the population live on the one land Mass).

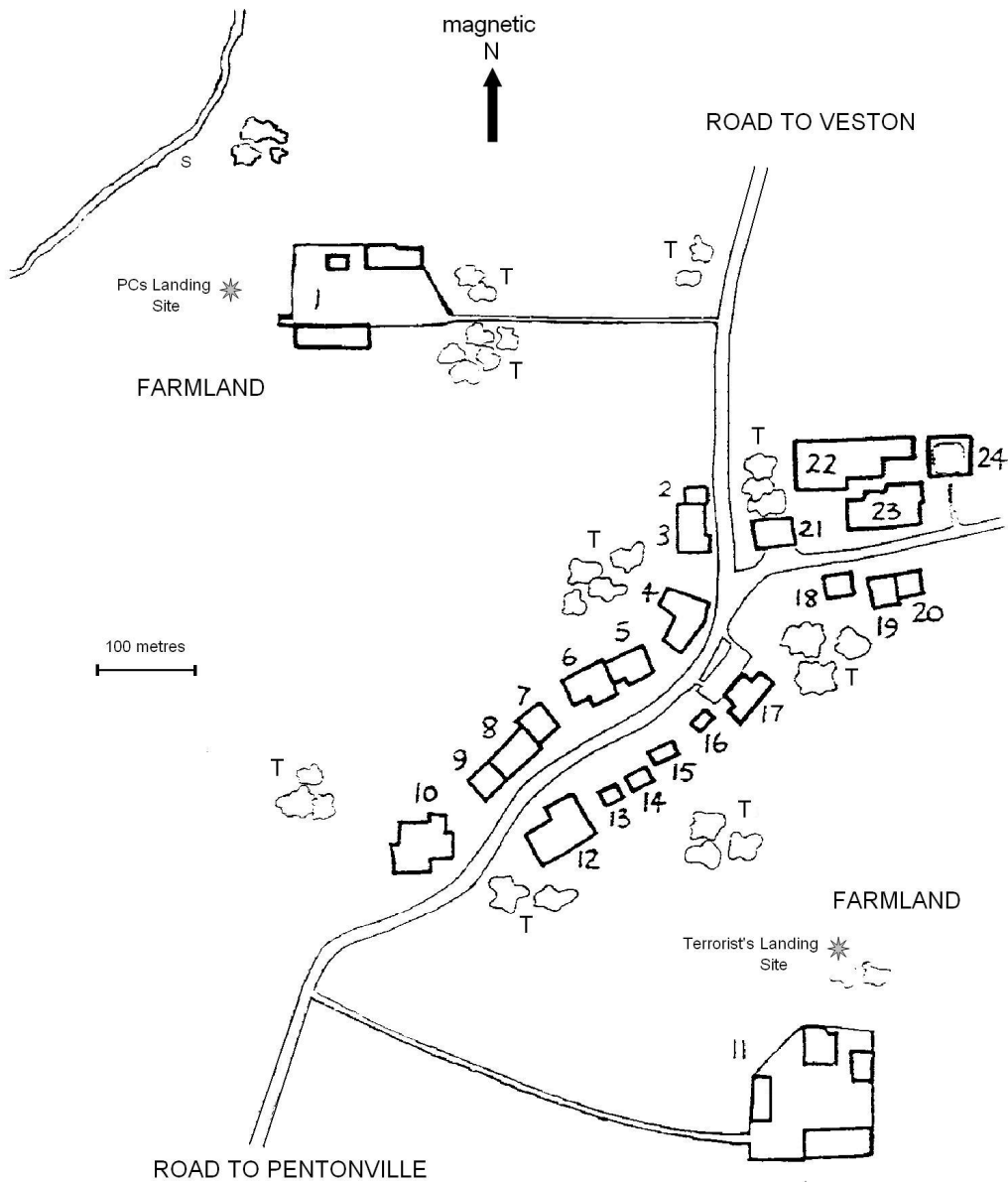
The virus is infectious for humans and livestock originating on Terra. The initial symptoms, which appear six to ten days after infection, include mild digestive system upset (diarrhoea and vomiting) followed by an acute, intense respiratory disease. These respiratory symptoms are succeeded after only a day or two by viral infection of heart muscle causing disturbances of the normal rhythm of the heart. Death follows within forty-eight hours after the beginning heart trouble through a combination of respiratory and cardiac distress.

The four-man team left the world to rendezvous with the mother ship within the remains of a shattered moon of a neighbouring planet. The virus was rapidly spread to the capital and the outlying communities where it

laid low the entire population within the next two weeks. The medical units on Bastion were ill prepared for such an emergency and could only issue warnings to halt visiting vessels landing on the world then spreading the disease to other systems. All humans and some of the livestock have succumbed to the virus. The only human lives now on Bastion are the PCs and the Ilelish commando team. The four-man team have returned to similar investigations as the PCs - they are evaluating the effect of the virus prior to a more widespread release of the agent.

MAP LEGEND

- 1. Farmstead
- 2. Office (Farm Broker/Trader)
- 3. Flats/Apartments (5)
- 4. Small Department Store
- 5. Community Centre & Library
- 6. Town Hall
- 7. Clothes Shop
- 8. Small Hotel (12 Rooms)
- 9. Small Offices (3)



10. Farm Machinery Showroom
 11. Farmstead
 12. Small Block of Flats (10)
 13. Butcher <Local Produce Sold>
 14. Grocer/Fresh Produce <Local Produce Sold>
 15. Baker/Dairy <Local Produce Sold>
 16. Cafe/Restaurant
 17. Supermarket with Vehicle Park
 18. Local Law Enforcers Office
 19. Ground Floor Flats (3)
 20. Ground Floor Flats (3)
 21. Garage & Fuel Station - Ground & Grav
 22. Power Supply substation
 23. Water Pumping Station
 24. Power/Water Station for Residents Block
- S Stream
T Calipau Trees

4: Confrontation

The PCs finally come face to face with part of group the have been shadowing for the past few weeks.

Location: On the world of Bastion.

Scene: The PCs have arrived on the world of Bastion to investigate a mysterious plague that has wiped out the entire human population and some of the livestock. They have been charged with collecting information as to its source and nature. They have just arrived outside a small farming town-.

Action: As the PCs move around the farming community they will come across two of the four-man team "in the field". The pair in the field are collecting data and the others will be analysing the data and preparing the ship to depart.

The field team will be found taking samples from a water supply pipe, at an appropriate tap on the outside of a farmhouse to the south of the main town. The pair is composed of a scientist and a marine lieutenant. Both are equipped with hostile environment vacc suits, the marine is armed with a gauss rifle and the scientist, a gauss pistol.

The marine will fight to the death, but the scientist will capitulate if either he takes a wound or the marine is killed. The PCs confrontation with the pair should result in the capture of the scientist and the removal of the marine (who will try and silence the scientist if he can). The pair in the cutter will be alerted to the PCs as soon as the 'field' pair are attacked through headset radios. This pair will not intervene unless their hiding place is discovered and they themselves are under threat. As soon as the fight appears to go against their comrades they will leave Bastion, rendezvous with the mother ship and depart the system.

Once the PCs have collected samples, data and the rogue scientist they should immediately head back to the 'Nakhn'. In the confusion, the llelish cutter should reach the mercenary cruiser and depart without hindrance. The Nakhn's captain initially believing the llelish cutter to be that of the PCs let the vessel leave

the surface of Bastion. Only when in deviated from rendezvous with the 'Nakhn' and headed for its mother ship did the captain realise something was amiss. Not wishing to enter into a lengthy pursuit and fight with the mercenary cruiser, as well as not leaving the PCs stranded on the plague-ridden world. The captain will keep the cruiser in orbit.

5: Picking up the Pieces.

The PCs interrogate the scientist captured on Bastion.

Location: Aboard the FMFN cruiser 'Nakhn' orbiting Bastion (1507).

Scene: You have just arrived back aboard the 'Nakhn' with the data collected from the surface concerning the plague, a captured scientist part of a team on the planet in some way responsible for the disease. YOU have passed the data on to the medical unit and will process it later after you have listened-in or, the interrogation of the captured scientist.

Action: The analysis of the data can be left to later as the PCs will be ask to view the interrogation Alternatively the PCs can conduct the interrogation. Whichever option is chosen use the task in the *Referee's Handbook* (page 45). The scientist is very cooperative, he is not military trained and will easily crack under pressure. He will reveal the following information:

- ✦ His name is Dr. Thierry Kensor.
- ✦ He was born and raised on Medurma.
- ✦ Studied under Dr. Kavent Dai-Adulim.
- ✦ He has been developing a genetically engineered virus to be used as a biological warfare agent. He has only doing it under threat. His family will is held under guard at a remote site on Yta Akat (Gushemege 3103), the base of the llelish unit.
- ✦ The codename of the operation is Hamanok.

Dr. Dai-Adulim was the genius behind the operation he has apparently a score to settle with Lucan. Dr. Kensor was only drafted into the project when Dai-Adulim was killed in a starship crash on Thalassa. Bastion was the first full-scale field-trial designed to test the suitability of the viral construct. As the test was apparently successful the team will now start targeting high population, industrial, agricultural and rich worlds in Dagudashaag.

The doctor has a number of freeze-dried vials of vaccine and of the Kensor is willing to develop the production of the vaccine and anti-serum providing the captain or the PCs rescue his family. Whether the PCs feel any sympathy for Kensor is immaterial. The over-riding mission of importance now is the elimination of the llelish commando team before they can initiate the release of the virus and bring devastation to the worlds of Dagudashaag.

6. Destination: Yta Akat

The PCs are charged with the destruction of the lleiish group.

Location: Aboard the FMFN cruiser 'Nakhn' in orbit around Bastion.

Scene: The PCs have captured a rogue scientist working for the Federation of Iliish and a plan to release a genetically engineered deadly virus amongst the important and high population of worlds of Dagudashaag and Lucan's Imperium.

Action: The captain of the 'Nakhn' asks the PCs to meet him in the conference room with his senior officers. He wishes to discuss the next course of action and would appreciate the player's ideas, help and advice.

The captain proposes that the PCs lead a mission to Yta Akat (Tansa/Gushemege 3103) track down and eliminate the Iliish unit. He has a converted yacht used as a courier vessel (as *'Imperial Encyclopaedia'* page 82) - jump-4 capable. The ship has two turrets, a triple missile and triple beam laser. Also included are a high pen densitometer and a neutrino sensor. The PCs are to take the vessel and up to marines Strephon's stronghold and descend upon the Iliish unit.

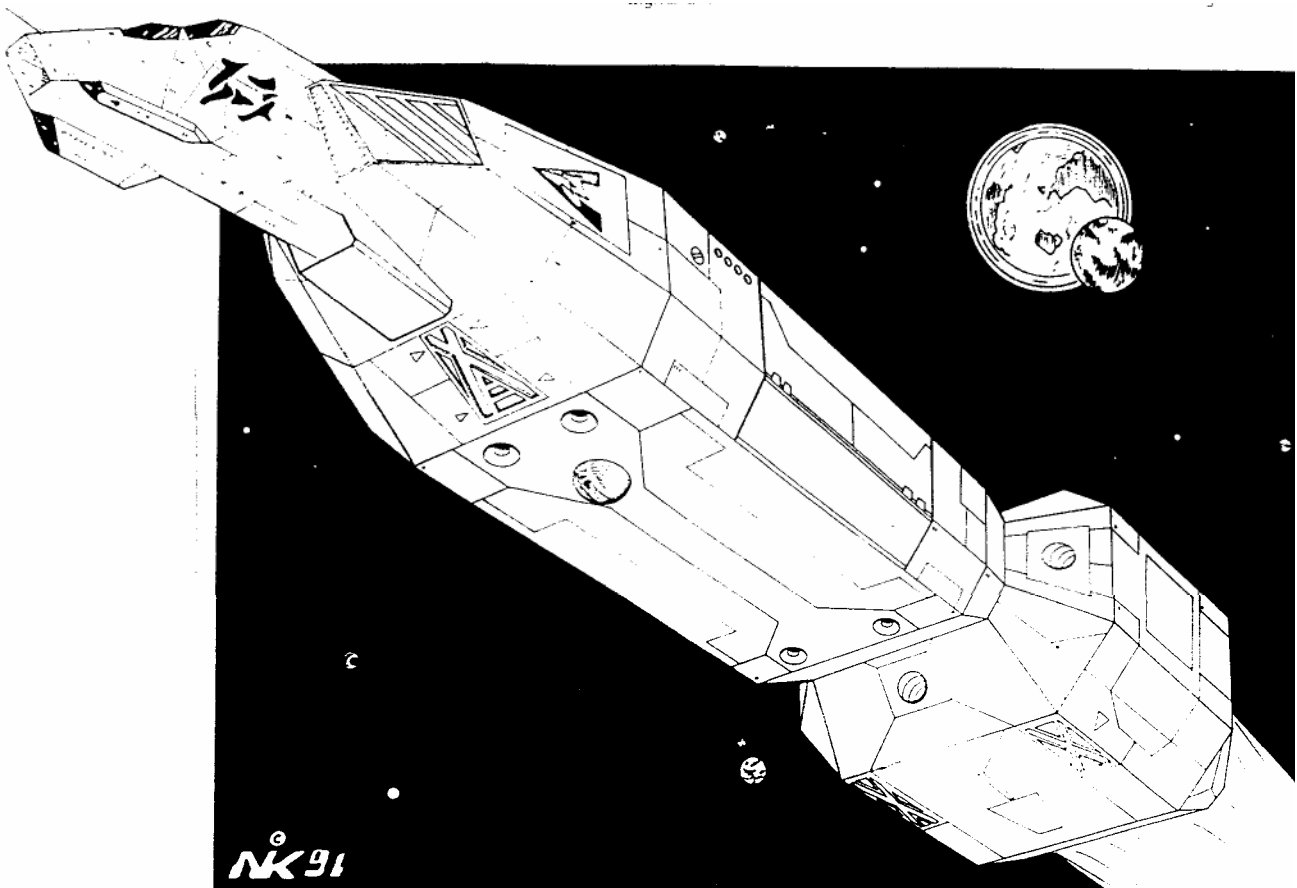
Any question or payment should be deferred until after the mission has been completed but again indicate that the rewards should be substantial from a grateful sector government.

The players should make their plans and decide on what they wish to take and the route - obviously the quicker the better. Fuller details will be in the final and concluding part of the 'Hamanok Conspiracy'.

Referees not using the whole series as a campaign-style adventure may wish to play out the final confrontation. The players and their FMF marine allies should ultimately succeed although at some cost.



Dr. Thierry Kensor, 777CC8 Scientist Age 32, 3.5 Terms Genetics-4, Chemistry-2 Biolog-2, Medical-2, Computer-2, Vacc Sui-0, Gun Cb-0



FMF Navy cutter from the 'Nakhn'

JUST ANOTHER WORLD

BACKGROUND

This adventure is set in the Imau system, in Old Suns subsector, around the time of the upheavals associated with Vland's declaration of independence. The system stays in Lucan's hands for the duration of the Rebellion: there are battles there as opposing factions try to seize the starport facilities and naval base, but the Impies manage to keep hold of the place for the duration. The scenario is equally usable at any other time in the Rebellion, and is well suited as the basis for an adventure set during the Hard Times period.

The Imperial Navy maintains a standing force (a squadron of heavy cruisers and their associated screen of destroyers) along with smaller, faster vessels (typically SDBs) to intercept any incoming craft. Squadrons and even fleets of warships waiting to depart for the front are a common sight within the system. Individual ships bearing appalling battle damage and limping back to non-combat areas are an equally common sight. Therimu, Imau's moon, has large numbers of shattered hulks in orbit around it.

REFEREE'S INTRODUCTION

The Referee should come up with a specific reason for getting the characters to go to Imau. Plausible explanations could include transporting a naval officer there from a nearby system, delivering an important cargo, rumours of a cargo being sold at rock bottom rates, getting the ship overhauled, buying ex-military equipment for the characters' ship, and so on.

Once the characters arrive in the system they are likely to have their ship stopped and searched. The scenario is laid out in short sections, not quite nuggets, but containing enough information for the referee to build on and fully explain the situation.

REFEREE'S INFORMATION

Furlough.

Despite the library information, the starport facilities at Reelor are not the only inhabited areas of the planet. There is a small reclusive community located deep in the southern hemisphere, on the shores of one of the great seas. The community was founded by individuals who felt that the pressures of Imperial life were too much for them to bear. They decided to revert to a simpler way of life, living off of what they could produce and enjoying a slower and more relaxed existence. The area they live in has abundant natural resources, rich soil, minerals and a temperate climate. It also lies close to a fault line, and occasionally seismic tremors rock the community.

The central community, called Furlough by the inhabitants, has a population of almost seventy individuals. It is maintained to an approximate tech level of seven and is fairly self sufficient. Forty individuals live permanently in the village while a couple of small independent families live in outlying farms. A few individuals live on the fringes of the community as trappers and hunters, only coming in to buy essential supplies such as ammunition. Furlough has been in existence since 1050. The Impies are aware of its existence, and are happy to let the 'Furlies', as they are known, carry on their solitary existence.

High Summer.

The Rebellion (and the subsequent collapse and destruction during Hard Times) could not have come at a worse time for the population of Imau. The planet is nearing its perihelion with Seriu, which corresponds with the world's hot summer. This time around the world's closest separation from the primary is a lot closer than normal, and temperatures look to exceed all previous records. The daytime temperatures around the latitudes of Furlough are set to soar to as high as +60°C, and won't fall to much below +40°C during the night. The advent of the high summer on Imau causes the local fauna to go through a period of explosive growth. The abundance of food in turn triggers a breeding response among the native animals. Many species enter a reproductive period, during which they become highly aggressive and territorial. The unusually high temperatures look to be causing a massive upsurge in the local lifeform's aggression and an increase in their territorial behaviour.

Local Life.

The Local Imauian lifeforms are quite hostile, but the Furlies countered this through the use of 'sonic stakes', sensor posts that produced a noise that most of the larger animals found intolerable. The entire colony was ringed by these stakes, which were monitored by a central computer. The population are able to repair the stakes but don't have the know how or components to build new ones. The posts were imported in the latter half of the eleventh century from Kimalad, a few jumps down the Medurma Main.

A few days prior to the characters arrival, the geological unit attached to the surface naval facility in Reelor detected an earthquake in the southern hemisphere. An orbiting weather satellite scanned the area but the results were never followed up. Unfortunately the epicentre was quite close to Furlough and caused major damage. The central control complex was damaged, as were many ancillary buildings and facilities. The equipment that monitored the stakes is presently non-functional. And consequently all of the posts around the perimeter shut down. Furlough has no protection against the aggressive local Animals.

THE IMAU SYSTEM

Second Survey Statistics: Imau (1207) A564233-C N Lo Ni 502 Im M IV

Stars.

Primary: Seriu, Spectral Class: M1 V, Mass: 0.458 Sol. Luminosity: 0.034 Sol, Stellar Radii: 0.511 Sol. Seriu is an ordinary red main sequence star that displays no unusual characteristics or behaviour.

System.

Seriu's family of worlds includes three rocky planets, two small gas giants beyond them, and a tiny icy planet in the outer reaches of the system. There are eleven major satellites. Imau (I) is the innermost planet. It has an eccentric orbit that swings it close to the star and then carries it away, with dramatic effects on the temperature. Imau has two moons: Therimu (H342165 B), which orbits at approximately 250,000 Km, and Garamishu (YS00000 0), which orbits at approximately 60,000 Km.

(I) Imau.

Mean Orbital Radius: 32.64 Million Km (0.22 AU), Orbital Period: 41 Days, 5 Hours, 11 Minutes, Orbital Eccentricity: 0.200 Std, Rotation Period: 33 Hours, 33 Minutes, Axial Tilt: 26 Degrees. Diameter: 8216 Km, Density (Molten Core): 0.953 Std, Gravity: 0.612 Gee's Std. Atmosphere is rated as Standard. Surface Pressure: 0.813 Atm, Composition: Nitrogen 80%, Oxygen 19%, Argon, Water Vapour and Other Trace Gases 1%. Hydrographic coverage: 42%, Composition: Liquid Water. Mean Surface Temperature: (at aphelion) 27°C, (at perihelion) 39°C. Native Life Present. Resources: Agroproducts, Compounds, Ores. Metals. Non-Metals.

Details.

All of the land around the pole is covered in Lush forests, but towards the south it gradually becomes desolate scrub before finally giving way to the equatorial dust deserts. The local lifeforms are quite hostile, which served to deter settlement of this jewel of 3 world until the founding of the Third Imperium. Reelor, the small outpost on the northern shores of the Jendor Sea, is the site of the starport and the dirtside naval facility. Above it, in GeoSync orbit, are the main port facilities and the huge naval base.

Imau supports a permanent population of some 560 Humans, all starport workers or associated personnel. Because of the high turnover in ships, especially the heavier displacement battleships. the world can expect to have a few thousand extra personnel at any one time. Reelor is a bustling community, playing host to Navy personnel and the crews of large mega-corporation vessels. The government is controlled by the naval base, with the base commander serving as the governor of the world. He has a company of Marines permanently on station to guard the Facilities, plus he can call on naval personnel from the vessels in the port.

ARRIVAL IN THE SYSTEM.

Interception.

Soon after the characters' ship tumbles out of jump into the Imau system the sensors begin picking up faint energy traces. If the character cross-reference what little info the sensors provide it reveals that there are two 'Dragon' class system defence boats closing at high gee's, a deduction that is conformed after the vessels close to near range. If the characters fire on them they will call for help, and then charge into combat. Otherwise they request permission to search the characters' ship. Assuming that the characters agree (and as long as the boarding party finds nothing too incriminating) they provide an escort to the mainworld.

Sensors and Commo.

Once they have cleared through security the characters ship is ordered into a parking orbit. Sensor scans reveal that there are few other craft within the system. There is a small naval taskforce charged with defending Imau, the SDBs that escorted the characters in, and the auxiliaries and port craft around the orbital starport. The only other ships are a pair of battered merchantmen bearing the markings of Ikgirudaa, a small company that operates out of the Parsi system in Vland sector, and the NuWorld Explorer III, a privately manufactured and slightly modified Donosev class scoutship bearing Sternmetal Horizons markings.

All of the vessels have their transponders off, a habit almost all pilots who operate within the war-torn Imperial core have developed. Captains have also become cautious about using radio communicators because they can give away their positions if a situation becomes dangerous. From the point that they arrive the only signals the characters receive are from traffic control and the port navigation beacon. Military vessels will communicate to issue orders, and once the characters' ship is safely in parking orbit the merchantmen will be happy to talk. Sensor scans will reveal that all ships are running at minimum output, with only their electronics, life support and controls powered. The Sternmetal ship ignores all communications.

Reelor Downport.

There are few restrictions on Landing at Rector Downport. It is a tiny dusty facility sitting on the levelled top of a hill basking in the heat of the day. Large fences line the sides of the hill, preventing access to the summit. Within the port there is a large landing beacon, a few small warehouses and administrative buildings, and a Maglev station. The staff consist of a sleepy overseer, two shifty port hands, and a few beaten-up looking robot stevedores. There is an ancient Maglev locomotive with a train of boxcars standing in the station waiting to take any cargo to Reelor. It is obvious that the orbital facility is what gives Imau its class A port.

Reelor City.

Reelor is a sprawling town consisting mostly of low, locally built structures. A few larger structures (places like the meeting hall, the naval surface facilities and the

maglev terminus) stand at the centre of the city. At some point the city has been attacked: there are large craters, the burned out shells of buildings, and piles of rubble. Bullet-riddled walls, a gutted Trepida grav tank and abandoned equipment bearing the Vilani Star Ecliptic testify that it wasn't simply planetary bombardment that caused the damage. While most of the populace are neutral in their attitude a few have taken violent exception to those who flattened parts of their city, and this has rubbed off as dislike for offworlders in general. Characters would be well advised to treat locals with caution.

A NIGHT ON THE TOWN

Where To?

After conducting their business the characters will probably decide to head off to a few of the local bars for a little rest and recreation. There are a number of dives that cater for naval starmen, a few that cater exclusively for marines, and one or two places that are slightly more up-market, attracting officers. They have names like the Crash and Burn, the Dead Spacer, and the Frontal Assault: they all Live up to their names. They are gloomy, noisy and rough, filled with heavily intoxicated men and women who haven't let their hair down for months.

Rumours.

The present topic of conversation in Reelor's bars is the NuWorld Explorer. The crew, or at least those who have taken dirtside liberty, have been friendly enough but have all been remarkably tight-lipped about their business. They claim they are working their way rimward, down towards Ushra, where Sternmetal has its regional HQ. The vessel is well maintained and has no battle damage, but it is minus its modular cutter. The crew have talked of the urgency of their mission but the ship has been laying over for four days now. Speculation ranges from a faulty jump drive to a full survey of one of the other worlds in the system.

A Pair in Trouble.

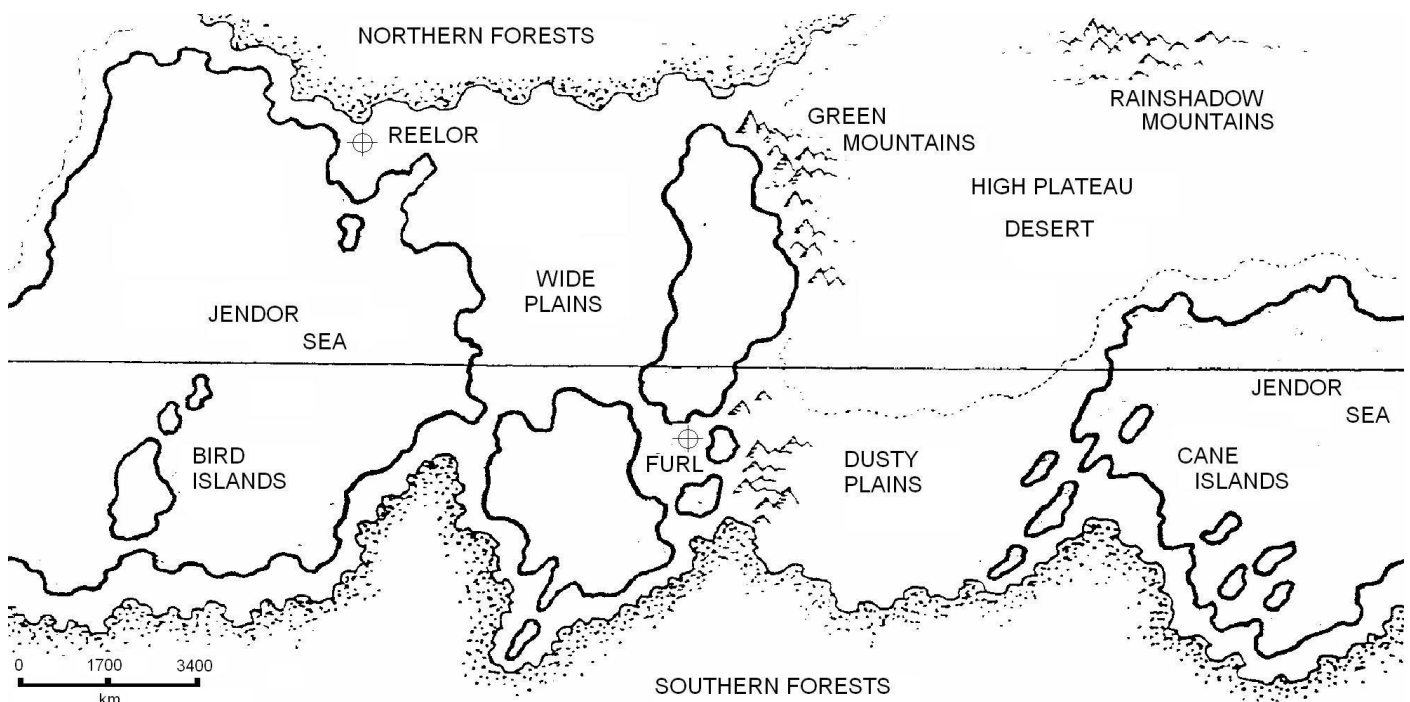
Pretty late in the evening the characters have ended up in a bar that serves a mix of locals, navy and marines. The atmosphere has been strained and the staff have been exchanging worried glances all evening. A large group of marines, led by a burly sergeant, have been getting steadily drunk. They have been watched by a smaller group dressed in combat uniforms with the markings of naval gunners. The marines have been throwing sideways glances at the adventurers and muttering amongst themselves. Just as the characters begin thinking it might be a good time to leave two men edge nervously into the bar. They are dressed in homespun robes and leather belts, and the older one carries a long wooden stave. Both look very out of place.

And that's when the atmosphere turns, really nasty. The bar goes totally silent and everyone looks at the strangers. They stare back, obviously aware that they've made a really bad choice, but are none too sure what to do. The marine sergeant breaks the silence. "We don't want no Furlies in here."

He continues to sling insults, followed by whoops of laughter from the marines and by a stony silence from everyone else. The two strangers begin to back out but the marine is still having his fun and tries to stop them. The navy men spring to their feet and attempt to help the strangers, and then someone throws a punch. Suddenly the situation has become a huge bar fight, and of course the characters get sucked in. No real injuries should be done: a couple of black eyes, a bloodied nose, a few bruises. Eventually the characters and their allies should triumph over the marines, a fresh round of drinks should be brought, and the two strangers should be made a little more welcome.

A Proposition.

The two strangers explain that they have been sent to Reelor because of the danger their community is in.



They have been sent by their leader in order to seek out some assistance, mainly because the personnel at Furlough with technical skills were injured during the earthquake. They can answer any questions the characters may wish to ask (use the information supplied in the Referee's information- above). The locals were seriously impressed by the way the characters handled themselves during the light and regard them with a certain amount of awe. They have very little they can offer, but could provide perhaps a hundred tons of cargo. Interested?

TRAVELLING TO FURLOUGH.

Furlough lies about eight thousand miles away, a not inconsiderable distance. The farmers got to Reelor in an ancient and much patched vehicle similar to the Bundan ATV (number 55 in Digest Group Publications '101 Vehicles') - it managed an average speed of about 50 kph on the journey: the entire trip took the pair almost seven days. They are fully prepared to turn around and make the same journey back if necessary. If the characters have any other means of transport they are more than happy to go along with them but they will not abandon their vehicle.

Depending on how the characters decide to get there the journey could be quite eventful. It will take only take about an hour if they travel in space, but could fall foul of the system defence forces. It will take about a day by grav vehicle and could include an animal encounter, bad weather, mechanical problems and so forth. Much the same is true if the characters decide to travel by land, but the journey will take far longer and involve many more encounters. The referee will have to detail encounters along the route.

Furlough.

Furlough itself is unimpressive. It consists of little more than a collection of domes, sheds and houses surrounded by neat hydroponic gardens. Beyond is a ring of fallow ground and then the impenetrable tangle of the forest. A few of the buildings are damaged, and the largest structure (the control centre) has partially collapsed. All of the damaged sections are covered by weatherproof tarpaulins and surrounded by scaffolding where they are being repaired. The inhabitants are standing in the dusty square, surrounded by playing children and ferocious looking dune-runners restrained by muzzles and held in place by thick leads.

The characters are welcomed and invited into a spacious, pleasant house for the opportunity to clean themselves up a little. They are offered refreshments, and once all the formalities have been dealt with are introduced to Furlough's leader, a personable middle aged woman called Jenna Stalmar. She makes herself comfortable and begins to explain the situation once again. She is as direct as she can be without being rude: the situation is critical and lives are at stake. The community needs the central computer repaired or replaced, which is not going to be a quick job, and at the same time other problems have to be solved. Furlough has little cash, but they are willing to pay for

the character's services by filling their ship's hold with cargo.

REPAIR.

The Situation.

The central computer was damaged by the earthquake that shook Furlough. Some of the data banks were smashed by a falling roof beam, and this shorted out the entire system. The technician who was responsible for maintaining the system was in the room at the time and received severe injuries. He is going to be in the medical centre for quite a while, and is unable to effect the repairs himself. There are adequate spare parts, a generator and a fully equipped workshop on site. Can the characters help?

Doing the Job.

Repairing the central computer is not going to be an easy job. Some parts are in stock while others need to be fabricated. The referee should set up tasks based on the character's skills, with perhaps a total time of about a week. Remember to allow time for eating, sleeping and other activities such as mucking around and blowing off steam. Very few people can single-mindedly keep doing the same thing for weeks at a time without their attention wandering. The characters can estimate the time the job will take: a reasonable guess would be about a week.

While the referee could simply give the characters a single task to cover the repair of the computer the project becomes rather more satisfying if it is broken down into individual tasks. For example rebuilding the primary driver board, making a new interface unit, assembling all of the components, testing them, and getting the entire system back on line. This should involve at least one trip out to the sensor posts, with the associated dangers from animals and so on. In the end you have four separate tasks, each of which should have its own individual considerations and problems.

ANIMAL HUNT.

The Situation.

On the second day of their stay Jenna Stalmar bursts into the computer room in an obvious state of distress. She calls the characters together and quickly explains the latest problem to hit Furlough. During the night the few able bodied men and women in the community were rushed out to break up a big herd of Tallorm (a local animal) to the north. They are still out there making sure the herd does not reform close enough to Furlough to present any danger to it. But now hunters operating about twenty kilometres to the south have detected large numbers of Tallorm, apparently forming into a herd and heading north.

Having two large herds form in so short a time is a rarity, or she wouldn't have committed all of her people at the first sign of trouble. And what with the first harvest of this season now being gathered there are no spare hands to deal with the situation. She has managed to scrape together a couple of hunters, but they lack

any experience, particularly operating as a coordinated group or with more advanced weapons. With everyone else fully committed she has no choice but to turn to the characters, in the hope that they can disperse the Tallorm before they present a real danger.

Preparation Time.

Assuming the characters agree to help they are given area maps showing a broad river delta surrounded by dense marshland. The hunters know the terrain but hold very little hope of stopping the Tallorm, creatures they are familiar with. But inspired by the presence of the characters they are willing to try. Jenna Stalmar has authorised the characters access to Furlough's storerooms, including its small supply of mining explosives. The stores are reasonably well equipped but contain no weapons or devices above TL7.

It becomes very noticeable that the hunters are pessimistic about the group's chances of success. They regard the Tallorm with superstitious awe, crediting it with magical or psionic powers, superior cunning, lightning speed, intelligence - everything. It is said that hearing the call of a lone Tallorm signals that someone you know is going to die. A couple of years ago Impie scouts spent months surveying the animals, but then the war started and Furlough never here the results. Of course rumour is rife, but nobody really knows what the scouts were up to. The hunters can provide accurate information about the Tallorm (see the notes at the end of the scenario).

At The River.

Travel south takes the party through spectacular scenery: over a range of high, rugged hills, around treacherous swamps dotted with pools of bright clear water, and through a forest of looming trees, dense greenery, and unseen shrieking creatures. Although the views are breathtaking the terrain is a nightmare to operate in. If the party are travelling by land the hunters can guide them to the river in around a day, but remember to add animal encounters. Travelling by air takes just a few hours, and is also far safer.

REFEREE: the terrain bears a passing resemblance to the everglades in the United States. It is oppressively hot and damp. and everything is obscured by a miasma of steam rising from the water.

Some Ideas.

The hunters suggest that the best way to stop the beasts is to prepare a trap. One idea is to set a 'killing ground' and somehow drive the animals into it. In theory they can then pick off large numbers of the animals in relative safety. They will need to survey the terrain to choose a suitable area, clear it of any potentially dangerous animals, and then set about preparing it for an ambush. Once everything is ready it is time to go and find some Tallorm. At this point the hunters in the group come to the fore. It is a reasonably easy task to find a large group of the creatures, but is very difficult to approach them without alerting them.

Once a suitably large herd has been located the

characters will somehow have to stampede them into the jaws of the trap. It is up to the referee to decide how many Tallorm the characters can find, although thousands isn't too unreasonable. They can be scared by explosion, or other loud noises, and perhaps even channelled by them as well. Once they are moving they are hard to stop, and they can jump quite substantial heights for such a heavy creature. It is well worth noting that Tallorm are extremely unpredictable, and the referee is almost obliged to make things go wrong.

Concluding The Scenario.

Remember that the plan detailed above is only one of the possibilities that exist. There are many other ways of dealing with the Tallorm: the only limits are your players' imaginations and their character's skills and abilities. Once the threat has been dealt with they can return to Furlough as conquering heroes. Any equipment the characters borrowed should be handed back over or accounted for (although the hunters will not be too averse to it 'going missing' at some stage). And over a cheery round of drinks, Jenna announces that there is another problem. She explains.

RESCUE.

The Situation.

An isolated independent farm some distance from Furlough has been cut off. It is the home of Tarek Gern and his family. In his last communication Tarek indicated that he was having problems with his power supply, an electrical generator; that was almost a week ago. Since then the authorities have had no word despite their repeated attempts to re-establish radio contact. Furlough simply doesn't have the resources to mount a full expedition to discover what has happened to Tarek. The harvest is now being gathered, and thus there is no-one else to go. Would the characters be prepared to travel out to the farm? Stalmar will provide any supplies they need and will also arrange for a guide who knows the area.

The Farm.

The farm is about a days journey to by grav vehicle, or around four days by land vehicles. The tiny settlement lies on the very limits of the temperate zone, in a vast but shallow crater caused by an ancient meteor strike. The farm itself consists of a central series of domed structures surrounded by acres of hydroponic incubators. The entire place is surrounded by two high mesh fences: between the two is a minefield that is clearly signposted as such. (Note: this is to keep the animals out). Just over five kilometres away, close to the lip of the crater, there are a collection of low huts, some primitive mine workings and a series of spoil-heaps.

When the characters arrive at the farm they will be greeted by Talek and his family, including Ys, his heavily pregnant wife. The characters will be invited in and provided with washing facilities and a generous meal. Afterwards they will be taken to the lounge and Talek, a giant of a man with a neatly trimmed grey beard, will explain the problem. His generator has broken down and he only has limited means to repair it. The electric

fence and the landmines rely on electrical power, as do his life support facilities and the communications gear.

Normally Tarek would have travelled to Furlough to pick-up all the necessary spare parts, but it is right in the middle of the harvest and his wife is due to give birth any day now. The farm represents his entire life, and as such he will not just abandon it. If he can only get the generator to provide power for a few days, until his wife has given birth and the harvest has been taken in, then he can effect all the repairs that need to be done. But there is another complication. One of his cousins, a lad who works on the farm, spotted a large herd of dune-runners while out hunting a few days ago. Tarek Gern simply hasn't got the time or the ability to deal with all of the problems. Can the characters help?

Solving Problems.

The actual sequence of events is very much up to the referee. Over the next couple of days characters with mechanically-orientated skills should try to jury rig the generator. There are plenty of useful items around the farm, but the task will involve fabricating at least one vital component. During the proceedings, Ys will go into labour, which may well involve assistance from characters with medical skills. At around the same time a herd of at least a hundred dune-runners will make an unwelcome appearance, and the characters will be required to fight off large numbers of the aggressive bulls when they attack the fence.

If the characters manage to cope with the situation, the scenario should end fairly well, with the generator coming back on line, the minefield and electric fences operational again, and the dune-runners seen off. Ys gives birth to a healthy and very noisy boy. Tarek and his family should be delighted with the characters, and Ys names the child after each of the characters. In gratitude for their invaluable assistance he decides to reward them. He heads off for a few minutes and returns with a gift, a large gold nugget he extracted from his mine. The nugget weighs about 700 grams, which would give it an approximate value of Cr. 7,000.

CONCLUSION.

The characters should get back to Furlough and eventually get the computer and the ring of posts back on line. The harvest will be safely gathered, but the quantity will surprise even the locals. This summer's production has exceeded all expectations. They have produced over a thousand starship tons from their small hydroponics units. The characters are invited to a great feast in the central hall which lasts throughout the entire night. There is singing, dancing, eating, and drinking, until the great red disk of the sun rises slowly above the horizon once again.

Jenna Stelmar is good to her word. If the characters have their ship available they can quickly and easily load up. Furlough has a whole variety of cargoes available as payment for the character's services (see below). Normally the entire consignment would cost about Cr. 6,200 per ton (making the whole lot worth

around Cr. 868,000) but the people at Furlough have decided to let the characters have as much of it as they can carry. Sometimes being a good Samaritan can pay.

40 tons of lumber (in rough logs)

Flammable.

30 tons of vegetables (packed into crates)

No Dangers.

30 tons of grain (packed into sacks)

No Dangers.

20 tons of preserved Tallorm (packed into casks)

No Dangers.

20 tons of copper ore (packed into crates)

No Dangers.

This scenario also provides the characters with one other major advantage. The community at Furlough is likely to survive the oncoming chaos, anarchy and destruction of Hard Times due to their help. It is remote and isolated enough not to be disturbed by the grand tide of events, and will welcome the characters back in the future. It is largely self sufficient, but if the characters were willing it could request a number of basic items (such as ammunition or machine-shop spares) from the outside. In fact, it could provide the characters with a haven in the coming years.

Final Notes.

This scenario leaves many openings for other adventures. These can range from activity around Reelor and the starport, investigating what the Sternmetal ship is up to (a red herring in this scenario but the referee could enlarge on it), attacks by either the Vilani or from Strephon's Imperium, more animal encounters and so on. Imau is a complicated and fascinating world, just waiting for the characters to discover it.

APPENDICES.

1. ANIMAL ENCOUNTERS.

Dune-Runner.

Dune-Runners are scavenger-hijackers native to the acrid scrublands of Imau. The creatures are small, fast quadrupeds with blunt heads and muscular limbs. Both the males and the females mass around fifty kilograms. They are covered in a leathery hide that ranges in colour from dark green to pale brown. Their jaws are full of rows of razor sharp teeth which they use to intimidate animals and thus steal their food. When they are in small groups they may hunt for live prey. Dune-Runners have proven easy to domesticate and are a common sight as guard beasts on Imau and many other worlds. In the wild family groups most often number about twelve mature animals.

Dune-Runners (Carrion-Eater), 50 kg, 6/5, None [0], Teeth, 2, A6 FE S2

Tallorm.

Tallorm are carnivore chasers native to the warm polar wetlands Imau. They are upright four-limbed bipeds with narrow heads, long necks and long tails. Males mass around four hundred kilograms while females and neuters mass slightly less. They are covered in hard, leathery skin and have many layers of muscles and insulating fat, which gives them excellent protection. Their feet have long talons, and their mouths contain a formidable array of teeth. Their dark which serves as excellent camouflage in the dense marshes and forests) and their organised social hunting make them dangerous opponents. A hunting group generally numbers around seven individuals, usually lead by a dominant male.

Tallorm (Chaser), 400 kg, 10/5, Jack [1], Claws+1 Teeth+1, 4, Am F7 S3

Monorian.

Also called Gliderbirds, these aggressive territorial creatures are native to the forested regions of Imau. They have a streamlined head and body that tapers into a thin whip-like tail. They have a pair of powerful legs ending in sharp talons, used for gripping and lifting prey. Protruding from the centre of their backs is a bony joint that supports the wing, an elaborate network of paper-thin skin and long bones. Paired muscles within the joint allow the wing to be finely angled and tilted, which gives the creature superb aerodynamic capabilities. The wing folds along the back when it is not in use. The Monorian has a powerful beak that it uses to tear off chunks of meat when it is feeding. It is

covered in a scaly skin that can be a wide range of colours and patterns.

Monorian (Flying Hijacker), 12 kg, 5/2, None [0], Claws, 2, A4 F8 S2

2. PERSONALITIES AND NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS

Imperial Marines.

Stats for Imperial Marines are provided should the characters find themselves involved in combat. The troops in the Imau system are usually from off one of the large Imperial Navy starships, although there are a company of marines in the port who act as security. More often than not, the troops off the starships are in the bars, getting seriously drunk. Generally they are unarmed (they are after all on shore leave). Reuse these characters as often as a required.

Typical Marine Lieutenant.

UPP 778986, Age 25, 1.75 Terms, Lifeforce 22, Hits 3/5, Determination 17.

Large Blades-1, Handguns-1, Cbt Rifleman-1, Leader-1, Vacc Suit-1, Computer-0, Grav Vehicle-0.

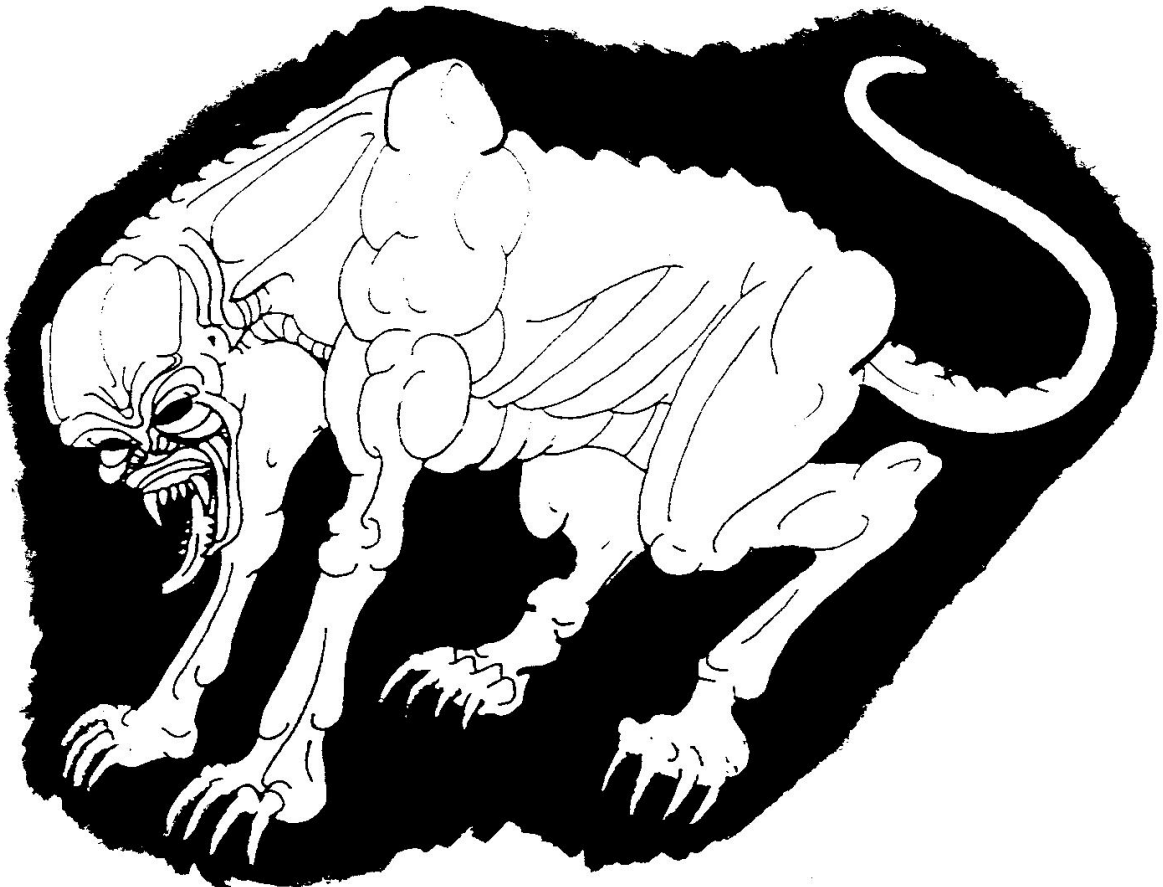
Typical Marine Sergeant.

UPP 35B664, Age 30, 3 Terms, Lifeforce 24, Hits 4/5, Determination 17.

Cbt Rifleman-2, Large Blades-1, Brawling-1, Communications-1, Tactics-1, Leader- 1, Grav Vehicles-0, Computer-0, Vacc Suit-0.

Typical Marine Trooper #1

UPP A67564, Age 22, 1 Term, Lifeforce 23, Hits 3/5,



Determination 12.

Cbt Rifleman-1, Large Blades-1, Brawling-1, Grav Vehicles-1, Computer-0, Vacc Suit-0.

Typical Marine Trooper #2.

UPP 8A5744, Age 23, 1.25 Terms, Lifeforce 23, Hits 3/5, Determination 12

Cbt Rifleman-1, Heavy Weapons-1, Large Blades-1, Computer-1, Grav Vehicles-0, Vacc Suit-0

The People of Furlough.

The inhabitants of Furlough are used to a hard existence, and are rugged and self sufficient but at the same they enjoy their relaxation. These characters are representative of members of the community. Between them they have a broad range of skills, complementing each others abilities. Feel free to change their skills as the situation warrants.

Jenna Stehlmair-

UPP 6ASAA7, Age 53, Scientist, 8.75 Terms, Lifeforce 21, Hits 3/5, Determination 15.

Liaison-2, Leader-2, Persuasion-1, JoT-1, Riflemen-1, Biology-2, Electronics-2, Computer-1, Commo-1, Admin-1, Survival-1, Wheeled Vehicles- 1, Grav Vehicle-1.

Jenna Stelmar served as a researcher for Sternmetal Horizons for many years, often leading parties in the field. She retired about twelve years ago and joined the

small community at Furlough. She is personable, clever and single-minded. She rose to the position of spokesman for the community and has become its unofficial leader. She handles most of the dealings with the outside world.

Typical Farmer or Hunter #1.

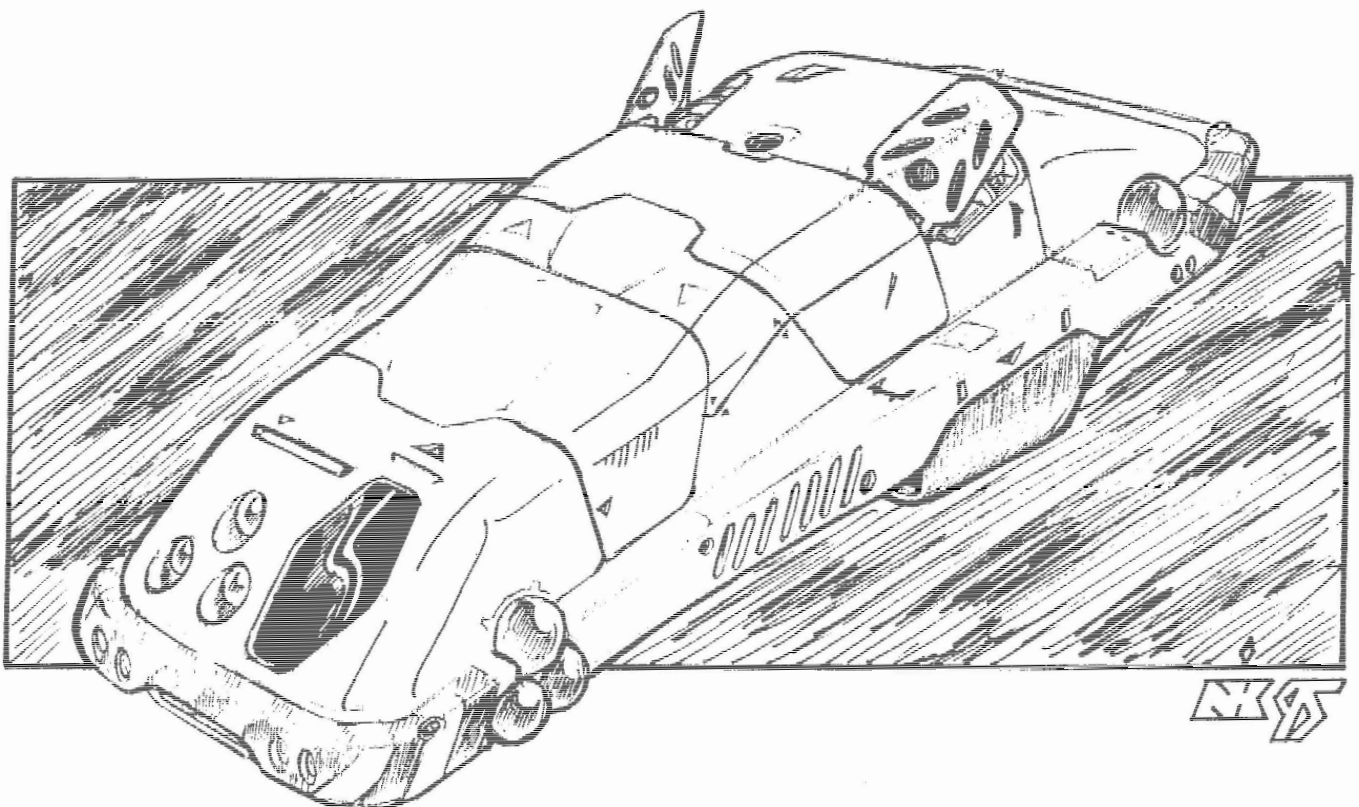
UPP A79785, Age 31, 3.25 Terms, Lifeforce 25, Hits 4/5, Determination 16.

Rifleman-2, Biology-2, Guard/Hunting Beasts-1, Hunting-1, Survival-1, Wheeled Vehicles-1, Medical-1, Computer-0-

Typical Farmer or Hunter #2.

UPP 8BA665, Age 34, 4 Terms, Lifeforce 29, Hits 4/6, Determination 16.

Hunting-2, Rifleman-2, Small Blades-1, Brawling-1, Survival-2, Stealth-1, Mechanical-1, Wheeled Vehicles-1, Computer-0.



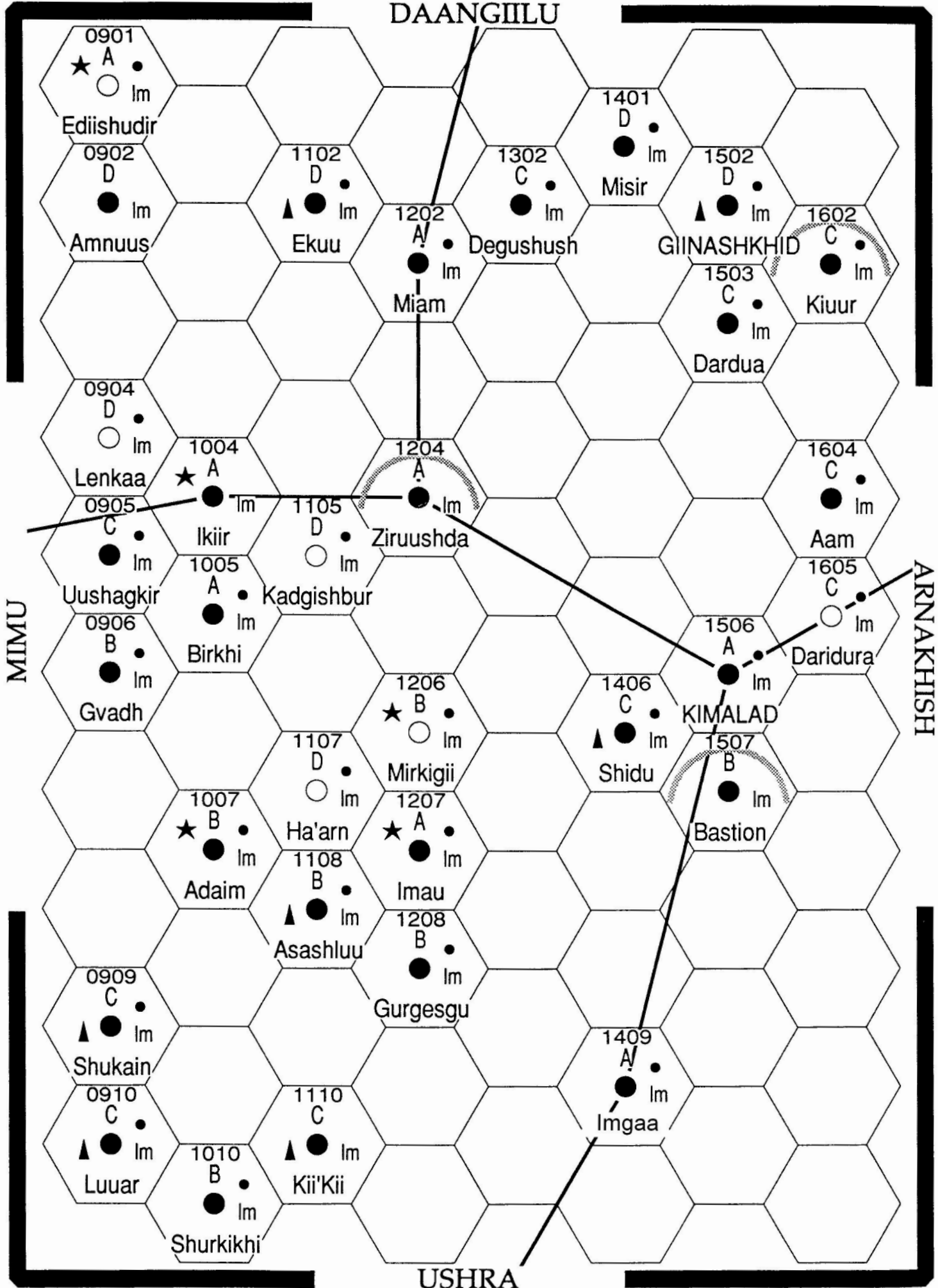
LIBRARY DATA: OLD SUNS

Duchy Capital: Kimalad

This subsector is a technological backwater. Only four systems in the entire subsector are at, or above tech level 13. The subsector suffered a significant blow in 1062, when the IISS regional headquarters for Dagudashaag were moved from Kimalad (1506), to Diishalum/Zeda (0714), in order to improve communications.

Ediishudir	0901	A9B0642-C	N	Ni	De			604	Im	M4	V	M7	V
Amnuus	0902	DAAA745-8		Fl	Wa			120	Im	G3	VI		
Lenkaa	0904	D403266-A		Lo	Ni	Va	Ic	904	Im	A3	VI	G7	D
Uushagkir	0905	C552369-A		Lo	Ni	Po		7u4	Im	A1	V		
Gvadh	0906	8867730-B		Ag				103	Im	F0	V	M5	D
Shukain	0909	C6B1689-6	S	Ni	Fl			422	Im	M4	II		
Luuur	0910	C653362-8	S	Lo	Ni	Po		622	Im	M4	V		
Ikiir	1004	A5A4304-F	N	Lo	Ni	Fl		810	Im	M1	V		
Birkhi	1005	A2378A7-C						505	Im	K1	V	M0	D
Adaim	1007	B227448-A	N	Ni				601	Im	A0	V	M4	D
Shurkikhi	1010	B527485-9		Ni				621	Im	K6	II	M9	V
Ekkuu	1102	D446789-9	S	Ag				402	Im	M4	V	M2	D
Kadgishbur	1105	D140358-A		Lo	NI	Po	De	601	Im	M5	IV	M4	D
Ha'arn	1107	D220236-9		Lo	NI	Po	De	804	Im	M6	V		
Asashluu	1108	B8B6534-B	S	Ni	Fl			102	Im	M3	V		
Kii'Kii	1110	C743376-9	S	Lo	Ni	Po		110	Im	M6	V		
Miam	1202	A567369-D		Lo	Ni			204	Im	M6	V		
Ziruushda	1204	A977377-A		Lo	Ni		A	400	Im	M5	V		
Mirkigli	1206	B21067B-C	N	Na	Ni			903	Im	G3	V		
Imau	1207	A564233-C	N	Lo	Ni			502	Im	M1	V		
Gurgesgu	1208	B5A4779-D		Fl				113	Im	M7	VI		
Degushush	1302	C9C58A8-B		Fl				402	Im	K4	V		
Misir	1401	D425699-A		NI				925	Im	M0	V		
Shidu	1406	C365535-A	S	Ag	Ni			814	Im	M0	V		
Imgaa	1409	A769762-8		Ri				824	Im	M0	V	M2	D
GIINASHKHID	1502	D69799A-A	S	Hi	ht			203	Im	M3	V		
Dardua	1503	C667013-A		Lo	Ni			104	Im	M2	V	M4	D
KIMALAD	1506	A7859CB-E		Hi				603	Im	K2	V	M2	D
Bastion	1507	B957000-A		Lo	Ni	Ba	A	200	Im	M2	V	M2	V
Kiuur	1602	C435420-8		Ni			A	605	Im	K3	V	M0	D
Aam	1604	C562224-A		Lo	Ni			403	Im	K9	V	M0	D
Daridura	1605	C350688-8		Ni	Po	De		323	Im	G1	V	M5	D

DAANGIILU



MIMU

ARNAKHISH

USHRA

Aam 1604 C562224-A Lo Ni 403 Im K9 V M0 D

A minor agricultural backwater and retreat for those tired of the hectic core worlds, Aam is famous only for the vast numbers of Terran Swallows that live here giving the planet its alternative name of "Swallows' World". Introduced about 1,000 years ago by some well-to-do, homesick Solomani, the birds thrived on this moderate gravity world and its abundant insect life. In the intervening years, the swallows have involved into a distinct sub-species, and now have become such an integral part of the local biosphere and treasured by the locals. Those that intentionally hurt these birds better watch their backs! A stylised image of the bird is the official emblem of Aam.

Adaim 1007 B227448-A N Ni 601 Im A0V M4 D

Adaim has always played second fiddle to Imau, Ikiir and the other naval bases in the subsector as its role has always been one of support, training and minor repair of the crews and craft housed at these other bases. When new personnel or ships arrive in Old Suns, they come here first for their shakedown. The one and only city on the planet, Lumaine, has a reputation for wild revelry when naval crews get their shore leave. The city is home to about 65,000 inhabitants mainly supporting the naval presence, although there are a few, independent prospectors and miners.

Adaim is the largest satellite of the systems only gas giant.

Amnuus 0902 DAAA745-8 FI Wa 120 Im G3 VI

Amnuus is a large world with temperatures that Humans find close to ideal. Almost the entire planet is covered in shallow oceans composed of liquid water and ice, but the atmosphere (otherwise standard) contains small traces of ammonia. While the air is breathable for short periods it can prove lethal for longer exposures. The inhabitants of this world are largely descended from Vilani colonists, although there are a few Lancians and even some S'mrii. The dominant religion on Amnuus holds that the eldest child of a family must be named by a stranger. The stranger, if obviously wealthy, is then expected to contribute annually towards the upkeep and education of the child. Being asked to name a child is considered a great honour; refusal is generally not accepted by the father's family and may lead to a duel.

Asashluu 1108 B8B6534-B S Ni FI 102 Im M3 V

Asashluu is the most important of the cluster of scout bases in the Old Suns subsector, acting as a coordinating centre. The base (which is the size of a moderate town of 50,000 inhabitants, sealed and partially underground) houses large number of records on the IISS operations and activities in the Vland Domain and is second only in importance to the scout way station at Lenashuuk. Asashluu is also a crucial training ground for new

recruits to the service and a technical evaluation of equipment designed for atmosphere types A to D. Although not on the official X-boat route the IISS maintain a relatively large pool of vessels of all types found in the service.

Bastion 1507 B957000-A Lo Ni Ba A 200 Im M2 V M2 V

This world is a near idyllic world orbiting a close binary pair of identical stars, home to a small number of farmers. The system originally had the Vilani name Of Veluishim but was changed once the Solomani reached the world. The subsector administration of the Second Imperium forcibly resettled the Vilani descendent population and reserved the world for families, friends and allies of the victorious government. The Solomani colony was then developed with grants and the introduction of Terran livestock. The world was renamed Bastion to emphasise the rigidity of the Solomani authority and its apparent resilience.

The world however never managed to attract any substantial colonisation, and its development all but stopped following a violent solar storm in -278 that scoured the world, killing almost all unprotected life and stripping away a good portion of the atmosphere. A few hardened individuals remain on this world despite the amber zone rating due to the remaining stellar hazard.

Birkhi1005 A2378A7-C 505 Im K1 V M0 D

The first impression a visitor sees of Birkhi is of rolling hills covered in the red and purple native moss with only the occasional artificial oblong of black and green to mark the hydroponic farms and show that man lives on the planet. The entire surface lacks habitation except for the Adaham Starport and the small vents that litter the surface. Under the surface Birkhi is a massive honeycomb of subterranean colonies, passages and mines. The population is ruled over by the Ghnola through the Bhaital Council. An absolute dictator with total control over life and death, the Ghnola is chosen from amongst the wisest and on being elected is immediately blinded. For the next ten years the Ghnola's word is law and immediately carried out by every citizen. On the tenth year the Ghnola is led onto the surface and executed. Despite the capacity for abuse throughout its long history the system of rule by Ghnola has been mostly benevolent. Birkhi is mostly known for its export of crystals and such exotic foodstuffs as the blind Kaa Crab and Ghalo Tuber.

Dardua1503 C6667013-A Lo Ni 104 Im M2 V M4 D

Dardua is governed by Naasirka, who maintain a vast automated chemical waste processing plant on the surface and a single starport in orbit. The facility deals with a wide range of substances, most of which are used in medicine or industry. The location of the site has caused outrage amongst environmental groups: Dardua

is known across the sector for its rugged natural beauty, but in many areas the sensitive and delicate ecosystems have already been blighted by chemical spills and leakages. The local inhabitants blame the recent increase in cancer amongst its population on the presence of Naasirka's plant.

Daridura 1605 C350688-8 Ni Po De 323Im G1 V M5 D

<Dardua>

Originally a small Vilani colony during the first Imperium, it was settled by Dhuna fundamentalists who fled there to avoid persecution. During the Rule of Man, many settlers, afraid of the assassin-priests, left to colonise Edaridur (1503). While the difference between the names Daridura <New Desert Nome> and Edaridur <Not Desert Home> were obvious to Vilani, the subtleties of Vilani grammar and pronunciation were utterly lost on the Terrans who accidentally renamed both worlds Dardua. When the IISS first surveyed the area they used the old Second Imperium navigational information as a basis and perpetuated the error. Despite the identical spelling each name is pronounced differently and thus both names have stuck. Daridura is primarily famous for its unusual cave formations and unusual underground flora and fauna which mimics the yellow and amber colours of the rock formations. All blend more or less into the surrounding environment making it difficult to distinguish except by movement.

Aspects of the cult of Dhuna are still believed to be worshipped deep within secret caverns despite the almost universal loathing that Imperial citizens have for it. A small deployment of Imperial Marines have been stationed on Daridura since 211 with orders to destroy any Dhuna cult members on sight.

Degushush1302 C9C58AB-B Fl 402 Im K4 V

Degushush is the outmost satellite of the large gas giant Balirur. It is a hellish heavy-core world with a gravity of 1.881 g and a surface atmospheric pressure of around 33 atmospheres. The atmosphere is composed of hydrogen, methane, ammonia, small quantities of chlorine as well as several other trace gases. The soils are made up of a noxious chemical brew mainly consisting of ammonia. The average temperature on the surface is +116°C. Despite the extremely hostile conditions Degushush has spawned native life as well as a minor sophont species called the Zirduluush by the Vilani. The few humans on the world live in a Tech 11 sealed city while the many hundreds of millions of Zirduluush follow a stone-age existence in the outback.

[See 'Zirduluush']

Ediishudir0901 A9B0642-C N De Ni 604 Im M4 V M7 V

In the late 200s Ediishudir suffered a revolution that put a military dictatorship into power. It restricted access

to close orbital positions around the planet as well as access to much of the world's surface. They failed to provide a good reason for the order and various offworld interests began to doubt their motives. The Scout Regional Headquarters (then located on Kimalad) detached a small research group to perform a covert detailed socio-political examination. The scout team discovered that over one third of the population were physically androgynous: that is, they were neither male nor female. There was no direct evidence of genetic interference by the Government but shortly after the survey was published a second rebellion led by a cadre of offworlders overthrew the dictatorship.

It wasn't until the mid-800s that the cause of the androgyny amongst the population became apparent. It is caused by a regressive gene that has so far only been identified in genetically pure Vilani. The then Government had attempted to restrict access to the world in the mistaken belief that the problem was a disease being spread by contact with offworlders. In fact offworlders helped solve the problem by adding to the gene pool. Despite this, Ediishudiri are still notoriously (and occasionally hideously) inbred even to this day and are the butt of many distasteful jokes.

Ekuu 1102 D4467B9-9 S Ag 402 Im M4 V M2 D

Ekuu orbits a tiny red dwarf companion star in a binary star system; the two stars are approximately 4,150 AU apart. The world is home to an oppressive dictatorship that has strong Vilani roots and models itself on the original Ziru Sirkaa. Ekuu is the premier agricultural world on the Shegimuud Trace and deals with a large turnaround of ships despite having some of the most draconian trade laws, in the sector. In addition to the many rules and regulations a merchant needs to have a thorough knowledge of the amount of bribe each official requires. A merchant can expect to pay thousands of credits in kickbacks and sweeteners, depending of course on the nature of the cargo. It should be noted that bribery is completely illegal and carries a stiff sentence if caught. Some offenders are lucky and get hard labour; the truly unfortunate end up in jail.

GIINASHKHID1502 D69799A-A S Hi In 203 Im M3 V

One of the first worlds to be settled by the Vilani within the sector; it has been constantly inhabited for over nine millennia. It was originally founded as an agricultural colony, but as the population expanded it steadily became industrialised. Today it is self-sufficient in basic foodstuffs although there is a growing market for luxury commodities. The arctic temperatures on this world do make life hazardous. The surface is covered in sluggish oceans that are kept liquid by their high salinity and the atmospheric pressure. Most of the population live on two equatorial continents and the many archipelagos that surround them. Giinashkhid has been described as "...being more Vilani than Vland itself, but without the humour and tolerance".

Gurgesgu1208 B5A4779-D Fl 113 Im M7 VI

Gurgesgu is noted for its unusual seas composed of complex metallic organofluorides in a benzene-derived liquid. A whole industry has been built up around the extraction of various metals and organics from the seas. Coastal panoramas consist of huge pumping and processing stations piled upon the shore serving local and subsector industry. Ocean refuelling is not available due to the compounds in the sea which despite ship purification are not completely removed. These compounds can cause excessive power systems corrosion and hence failure. The system is well served by the class B starport, which has the necessary equipment to adequately purify the local sea for starship fuel.

Gvadh0906 B867730 B Ag 103 Im F1 V M5 D

Originally colonised in -1650 by Gvegh-Aek and Urzaeng Vargr fleeing the Sack of Gashikan. The Vargr remained undiscovered until -344 when they were found by a S'mrii research ship. Shortly afterwards a peaceful joint colony was established. Unfortunately, after the planet's discovery by the Imperium the Vargr were shamelessly exploited for several centuries and it is only in the last 300 years that they have been able, with help from the S'mrii colony, to cast off their servitude.

Gvadh is a unique example of interspecies co-operation in that it has retained strong cultural ties with both races while creating a subculture that is uniquely its own. Gvadh has been classified as 9 (Harmonious Integration) on the Tetusu-Dene scale as regards the S'mrii and other non-human sentients though human visitors should be warned that most Gvadh Vargr, especially the larger Urzaeng, will generally be extremely hostile and xenophobic towards them.

Ha'arn 1107 D220236-9 Lo NI Po Do 804 Im M6 V

Ha'arn was originally colonised by Vilani in -7,130 but during the period known as the Long Night the survivors grew extremely insular. At the time of their rediscovery they find formed a totally irrational belief that all non-human sentients were disease-ridden.

In 82 the Imperium elected to build a Xeno-Medical research facility on Tamä, Ha'arn's largest moon, in the hope that close contact with non-humans in a safe environment might result in the eradication of the phobia.

Over the centuries, this policy has worked and the local inhabitants of Ha'arn are now extremely proud of their research station despite losing its official status in 365. Today the Tamä Centre is renowned throughout the Quadrant for its successful treatment of unusual xenodiseases despite its relatively small size and facilities.

The facility has always been at the forefront of innovative practices. Until recently, cross-species research has always been hampered by the inability of

one race to fully understand the mental processes and cultural background of another.

In 1107 Professor C.R. Riket developed the Personality Overlay Unit. While this helped it was limited in that it could not transfer skills and abilities and also caused total personality alteration, blanking the original personality out. In 1112 Dr. Emil Zinan working with Lancian neuroprocessors and magnabubble storage systems developed a method of using personality overlays to create cerebral multitasking. By using personality overlays of top medical personnel from a variety of races stored in externally mounted data chips called Rom-constructs, the wearer was able to access the donor's perceptions and knowledge while being influenced by the donor's thoughts, emotions and even body movements. By interfacing the Rom-construct through the neuroprocessor additional personalities could exist within the wearer concurrently with the original personality. This allowed the wearer to become the alien doctor, perform with the same skills and understand the problem from that perspective while still retaining their own personality, training and viewpoint.

While this has resulted in a great deal of original research and innovative work it does have a dangerous side-effect which has prevented its use in more general situations.

Each Rom-construct leaves a residual personality echo in the user which can lead to severe emotional disturbance and even permanent multiple personality disorders (where an alien personality is possibly dominant).

[See GDW Adventure 8: 'Expedition to Zhodane' for details of the Personality Overlay Unit]

Ikiir 1004 A5A4304-F N Lo Ni 810 Im M1 V

A large research facility has been built on Ikiir with the prime objective of working on low temperature superconductors. The atmosphere is primarily composed of methane and carbon dioxide and great care must be taken to prevent the methane mixing with the atmosphere within the habitats as a single spark could cause it to ignite. As a result the long term inhabitants of Ikiir have evolved a culture where open flame is considered a unique symbol of life and is worshipped in deep temples far beneath the surface.

Imau 1207 A564233-C N Lo Ni 502 Im M1 V

Imau grew in importance as a result of the Vilani Pacification Campaign. The naval base became a crucial strategic system in the assembling, maintenance and repair of the Archdukes fleets. The current population of 570 are all the permanent naval staff at the base although at any particular moment there is probably between two and four times that number on board visiting ships.

Imgaa 1409 A769762-8 Hi 624 Im M0 V M2 D

This picturesque world is the playground of the rich and famous in Old Suns and beyond. Famed for its gambling halls and casinos as well as beautiful resorts, the ordinary as well as the extraordinary flock to Imgaa to win or lose a fortune. The liberal law level has encouraged the expansion of lax financial houses and the aforementioned casinos. Corruption is well known to be rife, except in the gambling institutions themselves, throughout all levels of society, everyone is having their back scratched by everyone else. The only figures of authority are the enforcers of the Gambling Licensing Commission who monitor the movements and activities of professional gamblers and fraudsters. This they take more seriously than anything else. The lack of available land has driven the price of real estate through the roof.

Kadgishbur 1105 D140358-A Lo Ni Po De 601 Im M5 IV M4 D

Kadgishbur is a beautiful ice-covered world. This vast expanse of frozen tundra derives its unique blue colouration from the pollen of snow lilies which grow only in the short spring. The pollen is carried upon the winds and settles across the terrain in beautiful kilometre-wide spirals. Many beasts including the Laqua and Remaun come here to graze on the fillies and lap up the plants' nutritious pollen. This in turn attracts the Frost Weres that slaughter the herbivores in their thousands. From this is derived the common saying "as enticing as Kadgishbur pollen and just as deadly".

Kii'Kii 1110 C743376-9 S Lo Ni F o 110 Im M6 V

Yet another world in effect run by the IISS. It is a backwater even by the scouts' standards, no more than a once-promising industrial centre now destined to collapse into dust once the IISS pull out in 5 or 6 years. At the moment the world is a minor stopping off point for scout traffic between Ushra and Old Suns. The population consists of scouts, loners, small farmers and a few independent prospectors in the outer system hoping to finally fulfil the promise of large ore strikes. The starport is small and modest but more than adequate to deal with the usual traffic.

KIMALAD 1506 A7859CB-E Ni 603 Im K2 V M2 D

Kimalad was a jungle planet until its colonisation in -3,205 by the Vilani. It was heavily mined using open cast tech methods. Vast stretches of the planet were ripped open to allow the money-hungry humans to rape its mineral wealth. Then the Long Night caused man to leave Kimalad alone. Slowly the planet recovered and the jungles covered the planet once more though the deep scars of man's earlier occupation were still unable to support life. Then in -231 Humaniti returned, not to plunder but to live - in harmony. Settlements were built on the immense flat-topped mesas. Multi-tiered

buildings of infinite hue covered the mounds as the population increased but the inhabitants refused to allow expansion to extend down to the jungle floor. Instead they built upwards forming cities of hundreds of levels, lying precariously upon each other. Monorails link the cities together. Today Kimalad is a major centre for trade and commerce within the subsector and it is claimed that its markets can supply anything you ever dreamt of. The jungle floor is home to the Ishupkura, a large grazing beast prized for its meat. Although Ishupkura can be raised on other worlds, those raised in the natural wilderness of Kimalad have a superior taste and texture.

Kiur 1602 C435420-8 Ni A 605 Im K3 V M0 D

Kiur is home to a reclusive sect, the Kirashi, who follow the teachings of the Vilani prophet Mirashiku. He wrote that all people must strive to become as close to perfection as they can and believed that the best way to do this was through physical fitness, mental purity and mastering weapons disciplines. He also wrote that the sword represented all that was bad with Humaniti - once a man has learned respect for the sword and discovered how to conquer it nothing was impossible. There are no laws on the worlds but there is an incredibly strict code of conduct. Failure to follow this code usually ends in a sword-fight. If swordplay is involved it is extremely rare for a Kirashi to lose. They make no allowances for offworlders and clearly state that all offworlders who visit their world must expect to be treated like everyone else. The Starport is an orbital facility governed by Imperial laws.

Lenkaa 0904 D403266-A Lo Ni Va Ic 904 Im A3 VI G7 D

Lenkaa is an unlikely site for a colony primarily because of the orbital distance from its primary star. Colonists originally settled the world in 476 after a discovery of heavy metals and radioactives. The much dreamed-of mother lode was never discovered and, once the initial rush was over, Lenkaa settled down and became a regular supplier of high quality lanthanum ore. Today the mines are primarily owned by four, mainly family-run businesses with the Government of the planet being supervised by the Bhaital Council on Birkhi. There is a great deal of animosity between the various families and blood feuds are common occurrences.

Luar 0910 C653362-8 S Lo Ni Po 622 Im M4 V

Luar is a world occupied and run by the IISS. The system was designated as a forward base by the Syleans to serve as contact headquarters prior to the approach and assimilation of the S'mrii and Lancians. Staffed originally with sophontologists, xenobiologists, sociologists and psychologists and other contact specialists, the base helped smooth initial relations between the two races and Cleon's Imperium. Now the base functions as a xenoculture specialist centre where information and research on alien races and cultures is

held. For many scouts in the Contact Bureau, a spell at the site forms an important part of their training.

Miam 1202 A567369-D Lo Ni 204 Im M6 V

Miam is a frigidly cold world that supports no native life. Humans can breath the atmosphere once it huts been sufficiently warmed and efforts to site a permanent colony there are well on their way. The entire project is the brainchild of Professor Ur*tkrchiakh, a S'mrii from the University of Mimu. The project became reality through a linkup between representatives of Hortalez et Cie, who are financing the project, the University of Mimu, providing the expertise and the Imperial Ministry of Colonisation. The eventual aim is to move over a million settlers to the world over the next ten years and begin agriculture on a commercial scale.

Mirkigli 1206 821067B-C N Na Ni 903 Im G3 V

Mirkigli is one of only two totally Lancian colonies within the subsector. Mirkigli is a small escaped moon in a stable orbit around its star. Originally settled for its radioactives it has long since been milled out and now the old mine shafts have become the cities. The people mainly make their living from trade and many Vilani businesses have supply offices here.

Misir 1401 D425699-A Ni 925 Im M0 V

Despite its very thin atmosphere, Misir is a pleasantly warm world with a variety of native species. Running approximately along the equator is a huge canyon, in places almost a kilometre deep. Because it is below sea level (significantly lower in fact) the air pressure is significantly high to make it breathable for short periods. The Vilani fusion-tunnelled a city, now called Sheerdrop, into the cliff-face overlooking the floor of the canyon. It has been enlarged and deepened over the centuries and now accommodates nine million individuals.

The world is strongly Vilani in culture and flavour and retains more links with Vland Sector than it does with the rest of Dagudashaag. The canyon supports a complicated and luxuriant ecosystem, including a number of large and agile predators. Misiri hunting trips have become very popular in recent years.

Neuroprocessor

A small but powerful computer created by the Lancians' which is inserted directly into the brain and which allows external data programs to interface direct to the brain. In this way skills may be learned to a high degree of mastery without having to learn or permanently retain them.

Shegimuud Trace

The Shegimuud Trace is a cluster of twenty seven systems all accessible by jump-one ships and entirely contained within the coreward edges of Arnakhish and Old Suns subsectors. The origin of the name (which translates as Heavenly or Eternal Twins) is lost in the mists of time but popular belief holds that it is derived from the two type II bright giant stars that lie at its heart. The primaries of the Kua and Kemnagii systems (Arnakhish subsector) were named for a pair of squabbling Vilani heroes, Meshurish and Mendadii. The spinward end of the Trace is dominated by industrialised Giinashkhid and agricultural Ekuu while advanced Likhukam overshadows the trailing edge. The Trace retains a strong Vilani flavour and many worlds still adhere closely to Vilani tradition.

Shidu 1406 C365535-A S Ag Ni 814 Im M0 V

Shidu, as well as being one of the major agricultural producers in the region, is considered to be one of the best examples of Lancian culture in the whole subsector and its arts are renowned throughout Dagudashaag for their fresh individualistic approach. Unfortunately this renaissance has not been without a price - too many local youth, captivated by the wealth being made by successful artists, are leaving their traditional agricultural lifestyle and flooding the art colleges with their often mediocre talent. Not only has this saturated the market with interior art but many of the plantations now have too few workers to properly cultivate the land.

Shukain 0909 C6B1689-6 S Ni Fl 422 Im M4 II

The oppressive atmosphere of Shukain has limited the development of the world - the very hot, insidious gaseous mix has restricted colonisation to the polar ore fields. Here the factory-mines produce raw materials for export of industrial complexes on Giinashkhid. The mines are enclosed in domes; each a self-contained functionally independent of each other. There are several councils regulating every facet of the life and operation of domes/mines. The scout base is situated on the world of Bellik, the next orbit out from Shukain, where there is a research station undertaking studies on the system's primary.

Shurkikhi 1010 B527485-9 Ni 621 Im K6 II M9 V

A system explored early in the Vilani's first expansion into Dagudashaag, Shurkikhi has offered little to the Imperium since its old ore mines were worked out prior to the collapse of the Ziru Sirka. The class B starport stems from the use of Shurkikhi as a naval staging post. During the Vilani Pacification Campaigns vessels passed from the Imau Cluster, moving to Andalusia (Mimu 3810) before entering Gushemege. Recently the world has become the home of a number of Lancian artists of the Ultras movement on the extreme end of the group. The

members of the Lancian colony have in effect been banned from operating in Lancian space due to the questionable activities of some of the artists in pursuance of their artistic aims.

Skywhale

<Brueneri>

An airborne filter-feeder native to Degushuush (0302 Old Suns) with an unusual reproduction cycle. The Skywhale is the mature version of the Gobani, a large 3m long amphibious creature originally thought to reproduce by budding. After a period of about 25 years the Gobani transform into the full Skywhale Their body lengthens while converting fat into helium which is leaked into the outer epidermis creating millions of helium-filled blisters which give the mature Skywhale its lift. They will eventually reach about 10 metres in length though will rarely weigh more than 120kg. It is believed that Skywhales live for about a hundred years after metamorphosis. The Gobani is neuter while the newly transformed Skywhale is the male that gradually changes over a period of years to become the female. When the male Skywhale is mature it produces a kind of floating sperm, is then intercepted by any receptive female. She then gives birth, after a period of about three months to literally hundreds of ambulatory embryo which looks like a coin-sized spider with wings. They eat their way out of the womb, killing the mother in the process and glide to the ground in search of Gobani. Upon finding a Gobani they bury themselves under me skin and proceed to draw nutrients from the bloodstream and continue the metamorphosis. Eventually they will start to alter into Gobani and drop away - as though budded. This invasion of the mature Gobani will start the biological change into Skywhales and so the cycle continues.

Unfortunately the Spider-embryos are not intelligent and land to bury themselves into anything organic by means of a pair of extremely efficient pincers and a powerful natural anaesthetic. As a result infestation can be surprisingly painless though it will cause a painful swelling. Infestation of non- Degushushian lifeforms will eventually kill the embryo naturally and the swelling will eventually fall away naturally but the psychological effect can be extremely alarming.

[See Degushush]

Uushagkir 0905 C552369-A Lo Ni Po 704 Im A1 V

Uushagkir would be a typical Vilani world were it not for the Uushagkiran's custom of tattooing. Each person is gradually tattooed from head to toe throughout their life with each tattoo having a special meaning. Upon reaching adulthood each Uushagkiran will receive the tattoos of his family - icons representing celebrated ancestors and historical achievements. As the Uushagkiran grows his companions will award him further tattoos as a mark of his own achievements. Each

can determine a great deal about each other from their tattoos. Most visitors find them colourful but lack the specialised knowledge to decipher their meanings. Few offworlders have studied the intricacies of those symbols. The best known tattoo is the icon of shame which symbolises that the person has committed and been convicted of serious crimes. Rather than imprison offenders the authorities tattoo the person and then release them. The tattoo covers a large segment of the right hand side of the face and many Uushagkiran's will commit suicide rather than face this fate.

Zirduluush

The Zirduluush are a minor sophont species native to Degushush (1302). The name was given to them by the Vilani and translates as Strange Ones. To human eyes they are primitive and warlike. The race shows very little interest in Humaniti, although they have been known to attack vehicles and remote communications towers. They seem to live in small nomadic family groups which scavenge for food on the rugged badlands arid plains of their world.

Their bodies are upright cones, mottled in colour, that measure about 3 metres in height. Their leathery skin is coated in a mucus slime that protects against the corrosive effects of their world's atmosphere. On the base of the body is a mouth surrounded by a mass of rope like feelers, each about a metre long. Each feeler is equipped with lasers that can sense organic material in the wind. Mounted round the base of the body are a collection of tiny but sensitive ears: the Zirduluush are blind and have no sense of smell. Internal gas sacs allow them to float just above the level of the ground with its feelers trailing in search of food. Research has shown that they utilise atmospheric ammonia when breathing.

The hostile atmosphere of their homeworld presents the biggest problem to accurate research into the Zirduluush - it quickly destroys any dead organic material which has made further research into the physiology and evolutionary history of the race difficult. Relatively few observations into their psychology or social structure have been achieved due to the difficulties in involved in maintaining accurate long-term contact.

Ziruushda 1204 A977377-A Lo Ni A 400 Im M5 V

Ziruushda is primarily a Hamaran colony, famous mostly for the thousands of statues that lie along its coasts and under its shallow seas. These statues apparently depict all known races within Dagudashaag as well as several unknown, possibly extinct races. It is believed that the statues were left by one of those now extinct races, the Gograhah Reivers, though the planet was apparently never colonised. The planet is now home to a unique form of the Böru religion. The planet was declared an Amber Zone in 1102 after 42 Hamaran priests burnt themselves to death as a protest after a group of forwarder tourists had insisted on filming and taking

souvenirs from a local funeral ceremony. IISS has now [SEE 'Port of Call: Ziruushda'] restricted access to prevent any further disturbances of a similar nature reoccurring.



WAR ZONE: OLD SUNS

The Rebellion in Old Suns Subsector 1116 to 1120

1116

Old Suns had always been a backwater. It had simply been a place one passes through in order to get to another. There are only two high population worlds. Like several of the subsectors of Dagudashaag's coreward edge there was considerable Vilani sympathies here. The exception to this were the local fleet elements, primarily the 186th fleet. During the pre-Rebellion era this had led to considerable friction between local politicians and the military. Similar ire was felt towards the Viisarikaas and their economic policies (which were influenced by their Solomani heritage).

After the trauma that followed the assassination of Strephon had died down and the news of Karyn's intentions to try and stay out of the conflict reached the Fleet they felt relieved. They were however, less than happy with her intention to adopt a policy of armed neutrality. The Commanders of the 186th (who were mainly Ushrans led by Fleet Admiral Alia Tameria were more pleased by the news. Tameria shared her fellow Ushrans (Admiral McCafferty) attitude towards Sector Admiral DeWitt-Langdon and his policy of "running away". Unlike McCafferty this attitude would cause her a great deal of problems.

The first fighting was little more than skirmishes originating from Coreward and Trailing. The 186th's battles with Lucan's forces however did succeed in shaking the local politicians' steadiness (never very high to begin with) considerably.

1117

The continued skirmishing against Lucan's forces led to a complete breakdown in military-political relations. The regular Navy stood firm behind Tameria. The colonial squadrons supported the subsector government. This had already led to some problems such as spares "going missing" and in one case a shot across the bows of a colonial ship. These problems worsened when probing forces from Lucan's forces in Khandi subsector fought against the 186th at lmgaa.

As 1117 went on, elements of the Corridor Fleet began to enter Dagudashaag. Some of these made contact with the subsector government who were becoming increasingly unhappy with the ongoing situation. They agreed to help the Corridor Fleet obtain bases and supplies once the main body arrived.

The main forces of the Corridor Salient (the 133rd,

134th, 155th, 214th, 215th and 255th) arrived in late 1117. An ultimatum was issued to the 186th to “obey the rightful rule of Lucan I or be destroyed”. Tameria’s reply was unrepeatable. However, despite her rhetoric, she retreated the entire regular section of the 186th to Old Sun’s main Naval base at Ikiir. The Corridor Fleet, not wishing to get embroiled in dealing with them, continued onwards.

On 275-1117 what appeared to be Strephon surfaced on Usdiki, Gushemege. Despite an attempted news blackout, word reached Old Suns on 365-1117. The Old Suns subsector government, together with their loyal fleets and remnants of the Corridor forces hold most of the subsector, apart from a small enclave controlled by Admiral Tameria, but all this would change.

1118

When news of the “real” Strephon became known in the Corridor Fleets, its commanders began to lose control. When ordered to attack his stronghold, the S’mrii ConSentiency and anything that stood in their way, the fleet disintegrated. Some obeyed the orders and moved Spinward and Rimward. The 186th were attacked and Ikiir was reduced to radioactive slag. What remained (a single light CruRon three escort squadrons with Tameria’s own “Plankwell”-Class dreadnought) fled Rimward to Ushra and Pact. They would take no further part in the fight for Old Suns.

Some other sections of the Corridor Fleet defected to Strephon. Some even joined the newly declared FMF and journeyed Rimward. Others became pirates and even planetary governments. Others seemed content to simply fight each other.

All this had a knock-on effect. Firstly, the economy of this already backward area was destroyed. Chaos reigned supreme. Secondly, because of this the subsector was judged an unnecessary target for any attacks. No-one came to help. Requests for help from Ushra, the S’mrii, Lucan and even the Vilani convoys on their last leg were rebuffed. The entire subsector, apart from a few key naval and communications bases began to slide into darkness. Little was it known then that this would reflect the entire Imperium only ten years in the future.

1119

1119 was like the later half of 1118. Whilst some of the worlds were controlled by the firm hand of the Vengeance Fleet, the remainder of the subsector continued to sink into degeneracy. During the later half of 1118 and the beginning of 1119, the political leaders who had precipitated this crash dive were arrested and executed by the Imperial Ministry of Justice for treason and disobedience to the Imperial Government. This single act made Lucan much more popular to the people of Old Suns.

1120

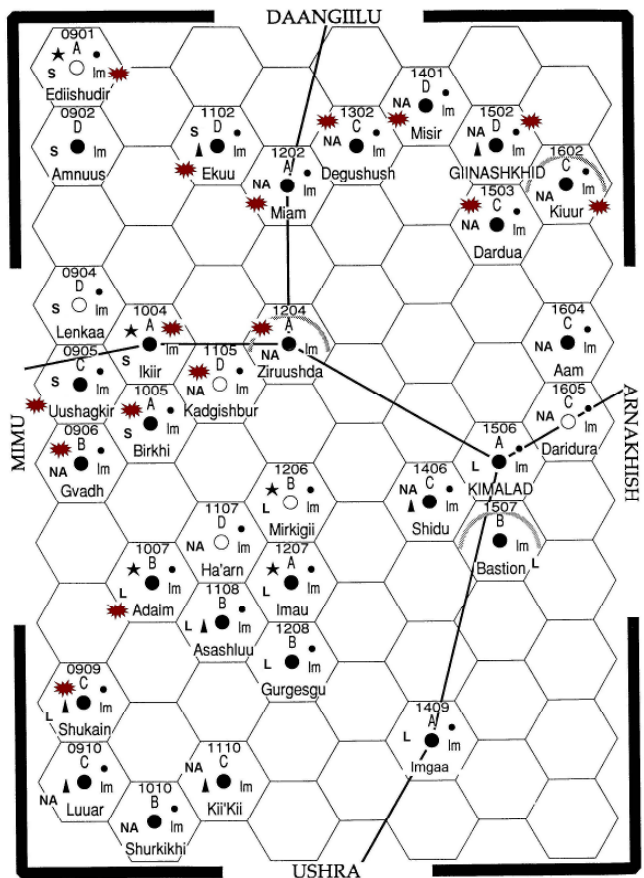
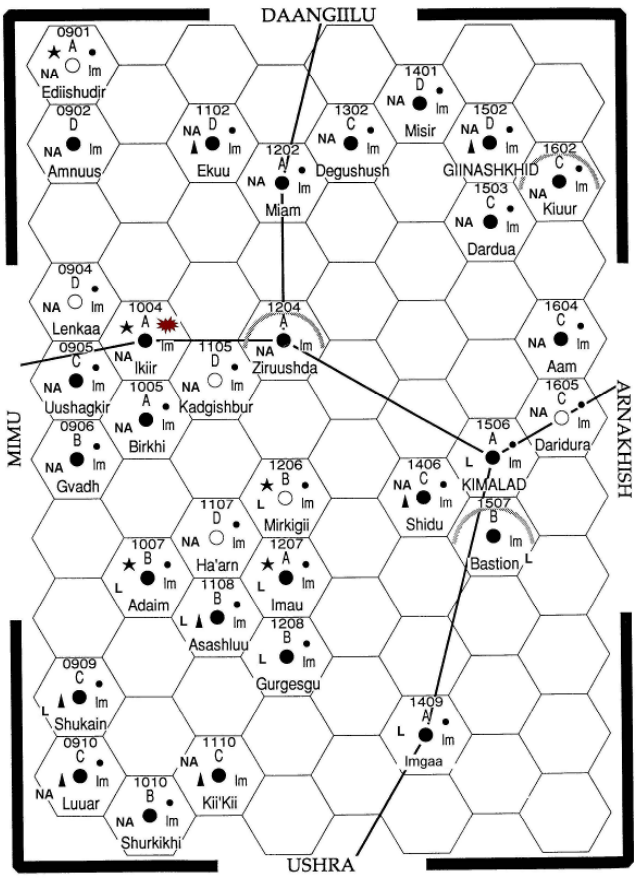
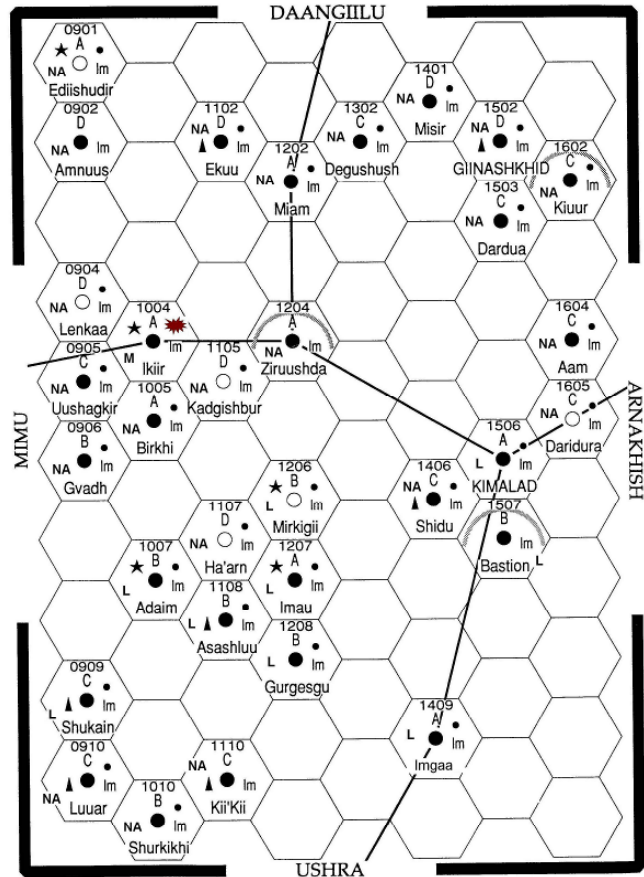
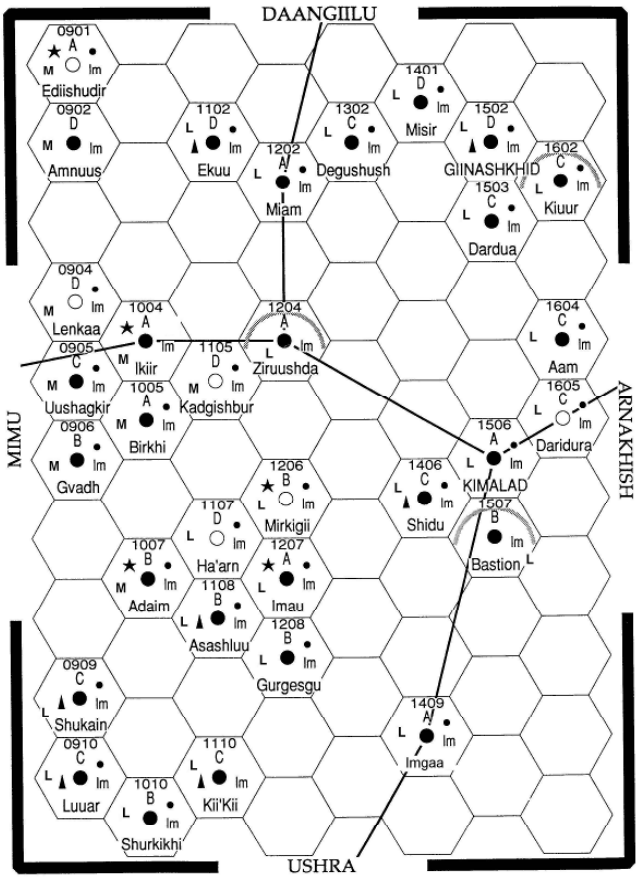
As Strephon’s forces regrouped and he finally mustered a large enough force to expand, his high command were informed by those elements of the Corridor Fleet from Old Suns that, due to the chaos, considerable amounts of “specialist” supplies remained untouched in a number of bases within the subsector. Especially on Ikiir, which despite being nuked had been host to a top-secret research base and storage facility. This housed apparently hundreds of new anti-matter warheads that had survived the attack protected by a TL16 black globe. It had taken this long for the information to be unearthed because of the hasty fleet departure. An advance on Old Suns was planned.

Many of the reserves on the Coreward flank were used, some distracted the Vilani in “fake” attacks. In fact these attacks proved so successful that considerable territory was claimed from the Ziru Sirka.

The attack against Old Suns stalled. Whilst local Lucan forces were small they appeared prepared for the attack. Nor did Strephon’s forces expect the fierce resistance of the ex-naval pirates and local dictators who saw their new “careers” about to end. Fighting raged across much of the subsector’s coreward region spreading trailward. Several major fleet actions took place and fierce fighting virtually finished off what remained of the local infrastructure. Several world’s were devastated by orbital bombardments by fleet’s unwilling to leave them in enemy hands. By the end of the year, Strephon’s forces had retreated back to better defended and not so extended positions.

What happened to Ikiir? In a major in-system battle a group of Strephon’s marines and engineers made it to the surface. They successfully opened the facilities defenses, however, the agent who had originally revealed the offensive to Lucan was part of the team and he succeeded in detonating one of the missiles. The chain reaction of anti-matter warheads going off resulted in the absolute destruction of the planet as well as half the warships involved in the fighting.

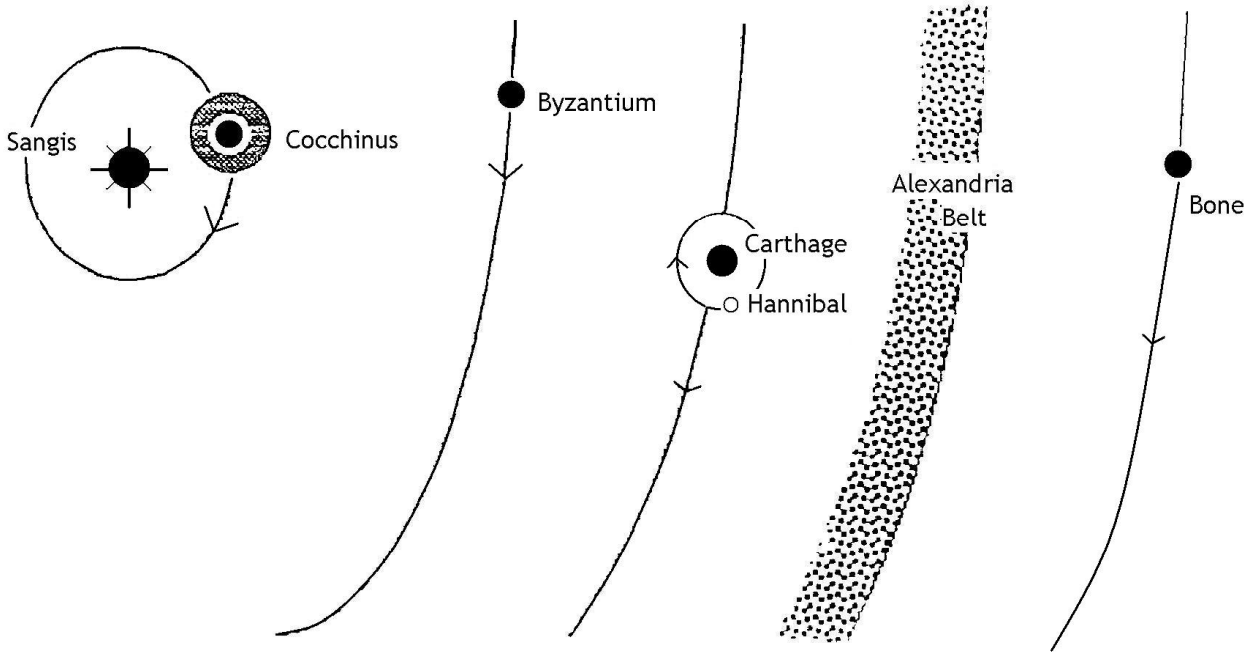
Despite the heavy fighting, the borders of the factions had changed very little. Old Suns subsector continued to disintegrate as millions died of war, famine and disease. The future looked very poor indeed.



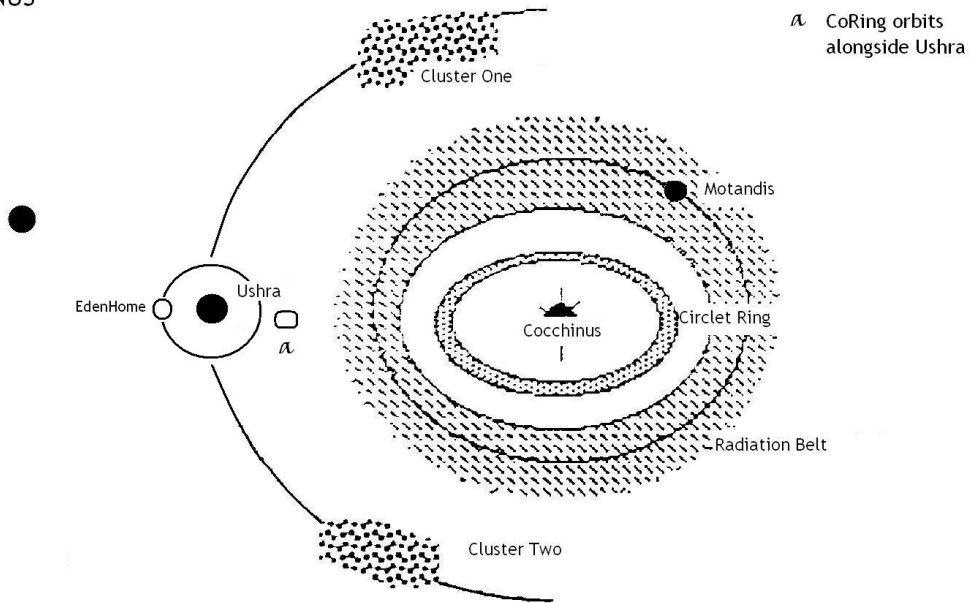
Key to Allegiances: NA—Non-aligned, L—Lucan's Imperium, M—Free Medurman Federation, S—Strephon's Imperium
 * Site of major battle

SYSTEM DATA CLARIFICATION - USHRA

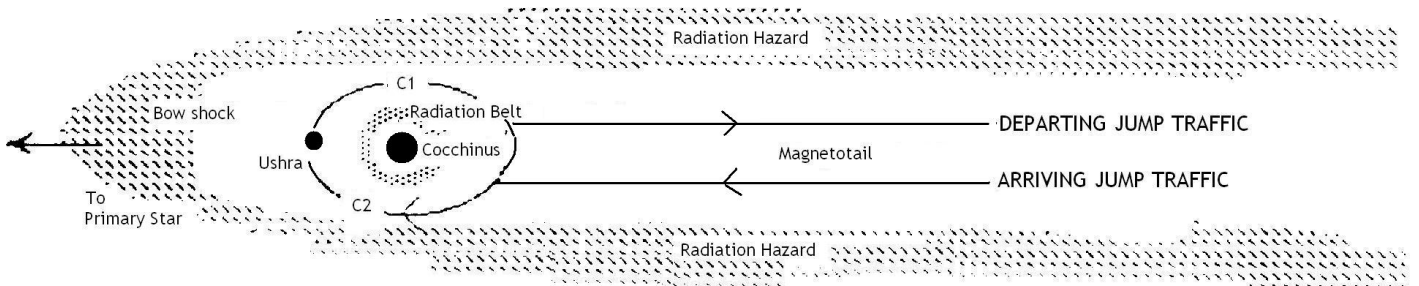
WHOLE SYSTEM - USHRA



COCCHINUS



Magnetosphere



TRANSPONDER ALERT!

Robert Bates

• I have only one thing to say about Signal-GK. Keep up the good work.

J. Duncan Law-Green

• Time is somewhat limited, so I'll try to be brief, brevity is the soul of wit or so I'm told... ! On the subject of "wargame" supplements like 'Hearts & Flowers' I think it would be better idea to build on the '*Referee's Companion*' mass combat system rather than trying to build an entirely new freeform system. Marc Miller once proposed 'Battlefields of the Rebellion', a collection of naval and ground combat scenarios. Any offers?

> Stuart is hoping to get such an idea of the ground for issue 6 so all you budding authors out there get writing.

• The Malaach article needs very little tweaking. To the best of my knowledge, a comet's tail is not radioactive. Passing through a comet's tail will not interfere with a planet's magnetosphere or ozone shielding in any way. You've been reading too many bad Halley's Comet Books. Rather than radioactivity (which seems unlikely), I would propose a violently active retrovirus, carried deep-frozen in the comet's nucleus (a la Fred Hoyle) until, warmed by close passage by the system's primary star, it filters down into the world's atmosphere from the comet's tail. Naturally the comet is still "out there" somewhere and the violent mutagen it carries poses a terrible risk...

> I like it. Much better than my own, so all readers you are hereby notified that the Malaach origin has been modified as recorded above. Let it be so!

• If any reader is interested, they can send me an SAE and I'll supply a readable A4 copy of the Ushra planetary map.

• Here's the Ushra System diagrams you asked for. I must admit it is a bit opaque if you don't know about trojan points and libration points!! The system profile is a little confusing as given!

> all maps sent must be in bold black ink and able to be reduced. Maps that have been coloured in do not reproduce as for the system data - read some of the letters below. It appears quite a few people found the information a bit uninformative for the lay (and not so lay) person.

• Tracers Nugget summaries at the start of each section in bold type would have aided readability. 'Languages' doesn't entirely mesh with my work. What do I do about Meduu-Galaach which clashes with the material in 'POC:Ushra'? In Lundqvist what exactly is a "distress massage" and how do I go about getting one! Gud Moaning to you too...

> Re: Meduu-Galaach. I see it more as a form of trade language, a bastardised form of the then current Noble languages and the original language. Like modern day hybrids it would not normally be spoken in the homes of the rich only on the streets to facilitate communication between the different races with nothing else in common. On Ushra they would have spoken their original

languages but those planets that were trading with Ushra would have learnt Galaach. No compromise required.

Duncan Peterson

• As a qualified M.D. I don't consider myself an idiot but I must write to complain about the 'POC:Ushra' article. Exactly how does the system relate together? I had to check out a book on astronomy to try and make sense of what he wrote and even then the system seems unlikely. Perhaps the author could remember in future that the audience comes from a variety of backgrounds and disciplines and not assume that all the readers will understand his often vague meanderings in what is obvious his pet subject. Any fool can gibber on about their favourite subject but it takes intelligence to write so that everyone can clearly understand. Pet moan over. I actually enjoyed the issue though found Ushra to be somewhat dry. Thank god it will collapse during hard times (I assume). Why no write up of the Hamaran? I have to admit I preferred issue 2 to 3 but nevertheless it was excellent.

Dee Smith

• Please, please, please! Will someone explain what the Ushra system looks like? I'm confused. Apart from that, I really enjoyed the article. Top marks. Liked the Malaach, look like 'Aliens - the Movie' have finally and intelligently arrived in the Traveller universe.

Alan Huscroft

• Pet peeve time. I don't like the typeface you use in GK. It doesn't reproduce well and is often something of a strain on the eyes where the narrower parts of the letters have got so faint they are almost invisible. Just out of curiosity, do you expect the Traveller revision due out at the end of this year to have any influence on what you publish in GK, or will you stick to the Rebellion era and MegaTraveller rules regardless of what GDW does?

> Hope you find this issue easier to read. I'm still looking for a better copier that I can afford. Some of the copies last issue were extremely faint. Write in and tell us if you prefer this copy's layout better. Also what do you want regarding the Traveller revision. Write in and let us know.

L.C. Gamsa-Jackson

• Thanks for sending S-GK 2. I thought page 30 was in extremely bad taste. Any more references to "snuff shows" and I'll cancel my sub.

> I'm sorry you thought my reference to Snuff shows were in bad taste. Before I explain why I included this particular item in my article let me point out that I am both a lay minister for my church and an ex-cop who served in London's Obscene Publications squad for a time. One thing has always worried me about what happens when censorship is non-existent. Today we have

several countries which have or are in the process of abolishing censorship. In those countries, as on Dashi, it is illegal to commit certain acts but not to distribute the materials. Now obviously the distribution route will generally give the Police a lead back to the offenders. Imagine a country however where you could distribute your material via satellite com-link and never be traced. Dashi was my attempt through fiction to point that some form of censorship must remain in force even if its only to cover those acts that are of a criminal nature Such as snuff and child pornography. If my article or approach offended, sorry. I will not alter my beliefs or style however for anyone, specially not when trying to underscore the hypocrisy of making ill-conceived laws such as total abolition of the censorship laws. We all need safety nets. If you wish to see what I'm talking about, go to one of these countries which has no censorship and took it some of the material currently being openly distributed (including actual snuff movies and sex with infants) there. 'Nuff said.

• Your ornate typeface is hard to read. The A4 format is a great improvement in legibility and ease of storage/filing. Presumably (if you are going for full realism in Signal-GK) Dashi is a regional centre for the study of sexually -transmitted diseases? Even hi-tech medicine would be hard pressed to cope with the continual influx of alien germs from sex-tourists? Ever considered changing your surname to <Tellons!?!> by deed poll?
> Aliens cannot normally transmit diseases to us - see medicine this issue. Also it is always seems to be those countries with less problems that lead the way in treatment of sexual diseases. Good point though, any PCs who insist running amok on Dashi should have to roll to see if they caught some antisocial disease. I'm afraid I couldn't make out what the name was I should change

my name to so I can't tell if you were being humorous or sarcastic. New competition though folks, write in and tell me what you think it Should be. Best answer gets a prize.

Nick Walker

• Overall I think I preferred issue 2 to issue - but as I wrote bits of issue 3 this could be because there were bits I'd seen before. I don't think it was necessary to do a full article on an extinct race such as the Malaach, bits about them would have been better to appear slowly as issues of the magazine appeared. However, overall I am running out of superlatives to describe this fanzine. More power to your pen (Wordprocessor). Lucan is the one true emperor.

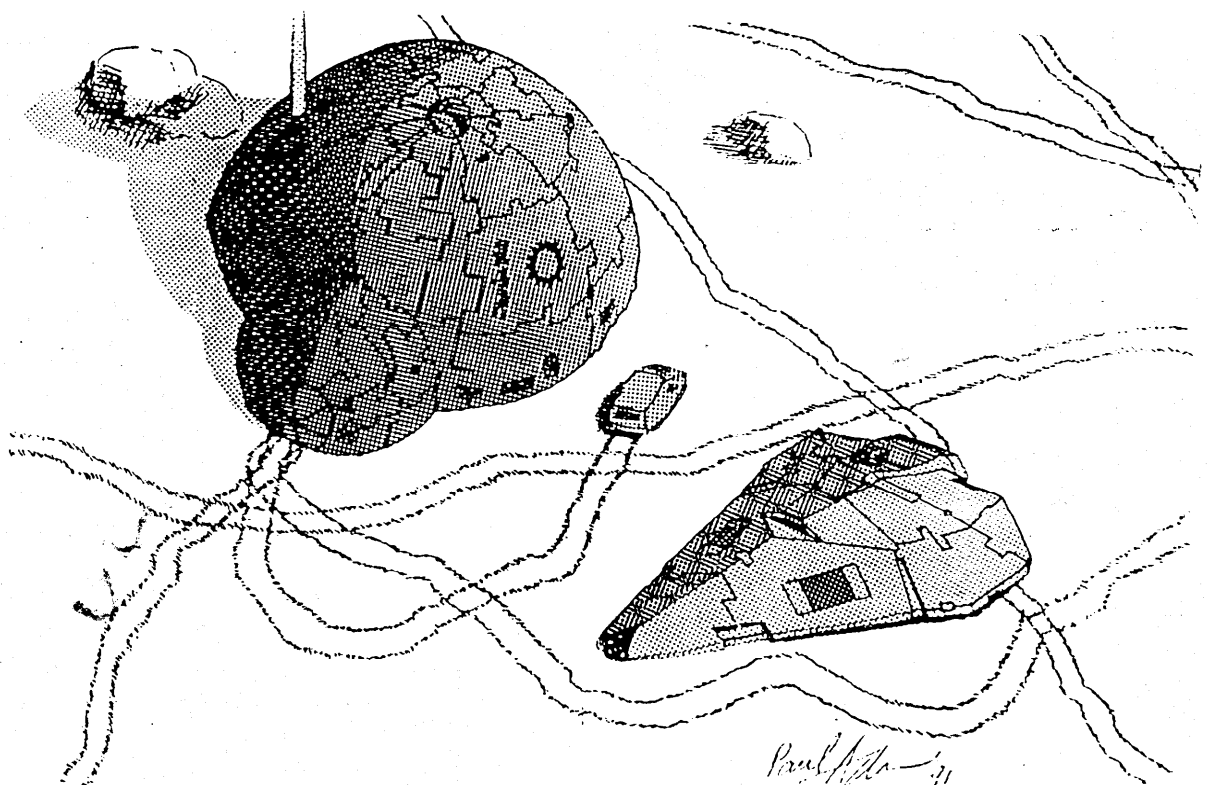
> Yea, and John Major is actually Maggie Thatcher in drag.

WANTS....

WANTED SIGNAL-GK issues 1 & 2. No photocopies. Willing to pay any reasonable price. Paul Sanders. 612 S. Patton Ct.. Denver, Co. 80219 USA.

ADMIRALS WANTED to fight Fifth Frontier War and/or other major major conflicts. I have the old GDW 'Fifth Frontier War' and would like to set up a PBM--type game where individuals act as admirals of the various Zhodani, Vargr, Sword World and Imperial fleets. The only cost is postage and your time. Copies of rules, maps and other details sent on request. I would act as referee/ umpire. If interested please send an A4-size SAE, with the faction you wish to fight for, to Leighton Piper (See Editorial for address)

ISSUES 1 & 2 of S-GK. Willing to pay collectors prices for



any available copies. Contact Karl Rodriguez, 5603 Charlie Chan, San Antonio, TX 782 UO, USA.

I've had several requests for back issues in the last few months so if any one is interested in selling their copies please send me an advert, price etc., & I'll pass it on.

READER'S SURVEY - ISSUE 3

Overall Writing	7.9
Overall Artwork	7.4
Overall Layout	7.8
Jokers Tower	7.7
Contact: Malaach	7.2
POC: Ushra	7.3
Alexander Brayden	7.3
Tracers	8.2
The Red Eagles	7.8
AKA: Black Widow	7.7
POC: Hellas	7.6
Raphael Tech	7.0
Languages	6.9
BlackDancer	6.7
Where Red Eagles Pore	7.2
Lundqvist	7.2
Transponder Alert	7.3
Library Data	8.4
Warzone	8.1
O Hearts 8 Flowers	7.1
Dag Sector Notes	7.6

BOOB TIME

Can whoever asked for a copy of Hinterlands please contact me with an SAE. I've unfortunately misplaced your address.

Favourite Article:

Contact- Malaach - An interesting race with a well thought-out physiology which fills logical gaps in Traveler history. Joker's tower wasn't enough back up though. I think it needed a good, punchy horror scenario.

At last. Dagudashaag's history starts to have depth. Great. Loved it.

Hearts & Flowers - I enjoyed it. Hope to see more adventures by Nick Walker in the future.

Port of Call - Apart from contact articles, worlds are the things that must be brought to life in order to give an essential S.F. Atmosphere.

Ushra felt good, add it to Dashi and Gateway and I felt that I could really enjoy adventuring in Dag. Almost thought I was there.

Tracers - Because I have a personal fondness for adventures where PCs get duped.

Any adventure which forces my group to use their brains instead of their brawn must be good. Thanks.

Least Favourite:

Alexander Brayden - Because I already have warship designs coming out of my ears and don't really need another one.

I felt they were all of some value.

Malaach - I do not think it was necessary to do a full article on an extinct race.

I did not like the concept of RNA transfer.

Favourite Graphics Noxian Spider, Sharik Maihagu (no it was not a digitised GDW illo but a computer generated pic), the covers, Ushra scene, Alexander Brayden, Malaach pictures

TOP AWARD

Joint Equal - Ushra scene and Cover.

NEXT ISSUE - July/August 1992.

Our apologies for the delay in this issue which were due to delays sorting out how best to work the guest editorial scheme. Next issue will hopefully be back on schedule. TTFN

