

THE TROJAN REACH



TRAVELLER

TRAVELLER

PIRATES OF DRINAX: THE TROJAN REACH

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome Traveller, to the *Pirates of Drinax* mega-campaign!

In the days, weeks and months ahead, you will be taking part in a campaign that offers a breath-taking amount of freedom, allowing you to forge your own way through the universe with no worries about boundaries or goals other than those you set for yourself.

You will also be able, nay, be encouraged to engage in that one activity you always wanted to take part in during *Traveller* games but always found your referee dissuading you from.

You get to be a pirate!

PLAYING THE PIRATES OF DRINAX

As a Traveller in the *Pirates of Drinax*, you will find you have a huge amount of choice in what to play and how to play. Your Traveller can come from any race in the Third Imperium universe (Aslan and Vargr are common within the Trojan Reach, but there is no reason you could not play as a Solomani, Hiver or K'kree, or even one of the minor races), and embark on any career.

Once playing within the campaign, you can truly do anything – while there is a storyline behind this campaign, there is no set outcome. The basic premise begins with you and your fellow Travellers being given a ship and a letter of marque by the King of Drinax, with a mandate to create support for a new multi-system kingdom. However, this is by no means what you are required to do.

You could, instead, decide to set up your own pocket empire within the Trojan Reach, complete with its own pirate fleet loyal only to you. You could, perhaps, become true agents of chaos and trigger a war between the Imperium and Aslan Hierate that you will profit

from. You could, maybe, create the kingdom the king has asked for and then depose him, setting yourself up as ruler in his stead.

For once, you will not be upsetting your referee by diverging from his carefully planned campaign – we have made sure he has everything he needs to handle any direction you choose to go in within the Trojan Reach.

Every now and again, you will find the referee will dangle a plot hook in front of you, but it is up to you whether you bite and follow the adventure, or instead pursue your own schemes. Just be aware that we have also instructed the referee as to what will happen if you take no action when a plot hook is presented. There are many other factions and powers throughout the Trojan Reach, and you will find their own plans do not revolve around you. Do not be surprised if a seemingly inconsequential event suddenly blows up into interstellar warfare in a region you *do* care about!

CAMPAIN IMMERSION

One key point to remember when playing the *Pirates of Drinax* is that you will get out of the experience exactly what you put in. There is a lot of campaign information in this book and while you do not need to know it all before you start playing, keep in mind that it is there.

When you visit a new world, do not just look up its profile to see if your current ill-gotten gains are worth selling. Read up on the description of the world, and ask questions about it before making the jump – the referee has a great deal of information about these worlds too, and many plot hooks (minor and major) are based around them. If you know something about the world before you visit it, not only will you be better prepared for whatever awaits you, you will also find the Trojan Reach to be a much richer place to visit and explore.

That is the heart of *Traveller*.

CREATING THE TRAVELLERS



In the *Pirates of Drinax*, the Travellers are given a letter of marque by the King of Drinax and ordered to cut a swathe across the Trojan Reach. The Travellers must therefore be adventurous, hardy spacefarers. They do not have to be blood-thirsty rogues – they could be, but they could also be loyal warriors of Drinax, or Travellers seeking employment, or adventurers with a grudge against the Imperium or the Hierate or both. As long as they have the daring and the skill to fulfil King Oleb's mad dream, they will be offered a place on board ship.

NON-HUMANS

Drinax is right on the border of Aslan space, so Aslan exiles or adventurers are the obvious choice. You can find out more on Aslan Travellers on page 64.

There are a few Vargr corsairs operating in the Reach, too, and one of them might travel coreward far enough

to end up on Drinax. You can use the rules on page 51 of the *Traveller Core Rulebook* to create Vargr Travellers.

ORIGINS

The Floating Palace, wasted surface of Drinax, and Asim offer specific origins for Travellers that they may like to use during Traveller creation. These will modify starting characteristics and replace the Life Event table on page 44 of the *Traveller Core Rulebook*. Each has a list of suggested careers, but these should be viewed as suggestions only – Travellers are always free to pick their own course through life.

Travellers are free, of course, to use the creation rules within the *Traveller Core Rulebook* as they are, representing someone who came from the Imperium or elsewhere in the Trojan Reach.



DRINAX (FLOATING PALACE)

You are a noble of the Kingdom of Drinax, just like everyone else who lives on the Floating Palace. You grew up amid the decaying wonders of the citadel, learning the history and the glorious deeds of your ancestors.

Characteristics: STR -1, END -1, EDU +1, SOC +1

Suggested Careers: Noble, Scholar, Navy, Entertainer

Floating Palace Life Events

1D	Event
1	New Contact: You befriended one of the figures in the court of Drinax. Pick one of the characters listed on page 22 as a Contact.
2	Family Affairs: Roll 1D. 1-2: Someone close to you gives birth, complicating the line of succession and taking one of your inherited titles away. Reduce SOC by 1. 3-4: A marriage is arranged for you by your family. Gain SOC +1 if you go through with it, but you don't get to meet your new spouse until the ceremony. 5-6: Someone close to you dies, and you inherit their estate and titles. Gain an extra Benefit roll or increase your SOC by 1.
3	Romantic Entanglement: You become romantically involved with another courtier. Roll 1D to see how it turned out. 1: Amicable breakup. 2: Nasty breakup. 3-4: Ongoing relationship (gain a Contact). 5: Marriage. 6: Tragic death or disappearance.
4	Misfortune: You suffer an unfortunate accident. Roll 1D. 1-2: A wicked uncle steals your family inheritance and titles. Lose 2 Benefit rolls, reduce your SOC by 2, and gain an Enemy. 3-4: While trading with the Vespexers of the surface, you contract a disease left over from the Aslan attack. Reduce your END by 1. 5-6: You fight a duel of honour with another noble, and the cur cheats. Gain a Rival and a level in Melee (blade), and lose either 1 Benefit roll, 1 SOC, or 1 END.
5	Good Fortune: Fortune smiles upon you. 1-2: Rachando the merchant offers you a good price for a family heirloom. Gain 1D x Cr10000. 3-4: You inherit a place in the Star Guard. You can sell this commission on for 1D x Cr10000, or you may automatically qualify for the Navy career and automatically gain a promotion in your first turn. 5-6: You find an antique weapon in the armoury of the Floating Palace. Gain either an ancient rapier or laser pistol.
6	Unusual Event: Roll 1D. 1-2: You are psionic! Roll to test your Psionic Strength immediately, and gain DM+4 to the roll. 3-4: Great expectations. Before the fall of Drinax, your family owned large estates on a planet. Roll 1D. 1: Paal 2: Torpal 3: Clarke 4: Asim 5: Banks/Khusai 6: One of the old Sindalian worlds – pick any planet in Sindal Subsector. 5-6: You discover that you are actually the bastard child of King Oleb.

DRINAX (WASTELAND)

You are a Vespexer, one of the tribes who wander the blasted surface of Drinax. Two hundred years ago, the Aslan wiped out your world and condemned your ancestors to a living hell. The King in his floating palace may claim you as one of his subjects, but the Vespexers kneel to no-one.

Characteristics: END +2, EDU -1, SOC -1

Likely Careers: Army, Citizen (colonist), Drifter, Rogue, Scout

Wasteland Life Events

1D	Event
1	New Contact: You are not without friends. Pick Rachando, Chieftain Galx, Sal Dancet or Prince Harrick as a Contact.
2	Family Affairs: Roll 1D. 1-2: Someone close to you gives birth, and the tribe cannot feed another mouth. Either the child dies, or you must leave your current career and strike out as a Drifter or Rogue. 3-4: Your tribe is struck by disease, and someone in your family dies. Gain their possessions as a bonus Benefit roll. 5-6: One of your kin is accused of a crime and exiled from the tribe. He has not been seen since – perhaps he vanished offworld. Gain him as a vengeful Enemy, should you ever meet him again.
3	Romantic Entanglement: The tribe must grow, and you are married off. Roll 1D to see how it turned out. 1-2: Partner died. 3-5: Ongoing relationship. Gain your spouse as an Ally, and you have 1D-3 children. 6: Tragic death or disappearance.
4	Misfortune: You suffer an unfortunate accident. Roll 1D. 1-2: You are framed for a crime and exiled from the tribe. Gain your persecutor as an Enemy and reduce your SOC by 1. 3-4: While exploring a ruined city, you contract a disease left over from the Aslan attack. Reduce your END by 1. 5-6: You are wounded while hunting, and worse, your hazard suit is torn. Lose one Benefit roll to pay for its repair.
5	Good Fortune: Fortune smiles upon you. 1-2: Rachando the merchant offers you a good price for a relic recovered from the ruined cities. Gain 1D x Cr10000. 3-4: A travelling merchant or smuggler offers you a place on board his ship. You may automatically qualify for the Rogue or Merchant career. 5-6: Your tribe prospers. Gain an extra Benefit roll.
6	Unusual Event: Roll 1D6. 1-2: You are psionic! Roll to test your Psionic Strength immediately, and gain DM+4 to the roll. 3-4: You find the wreckage of an Aslan ship that crashed on Drinax, and recover a mysterious chest from its cargo hold. You have never managed to open the chest, but it bears the symbol of the Syoisuis assassin-clan. 5-6: When you were a child, the tribe's wise-woman cast broken stones over your crib and declared that you were the <i>Hlax Kur Eaisa</i> , the messiah who would avenge the Vespexers upon the Aslan who ruined their world.



ASIM

The minor agricultural world of Asim is the only province left to the Kings of Drinax. Prior to the reconquest, the Asim were ruled by the cryptic Foundation; life has improved marginally for the peasants since then, but the planet is still a low-tech backwater.

Characteristics: END +1, EDU -1

Likely Careers: Army, Citizen (colonist), Drifter, Entertainer, Marine.

Asim Life Events

1D	Event
1	New Contact: You have the ear of someone at court. Pick Cleon Hardy, Rachando, Kisayl or Lord Wrax as a Contact.
2	Family Affairs: Roll 1D. 1-2: Your family has thrived since the reconquest. Gain SOC +1. 3-4: A Drinaxi noble killed your father during the war. Gain him as an Enemy. 5-6: Your family still live in desperate poverty on Asim. You may lose one Benefit roll to relieve some of their suffering; if you do so, gain DM+1 to your next Advancement roll.
3	Romantic Entanglement: Roll 1D. 1-3: Your family holds to the old ways, and practises the breeding program developed by the Foundation. You have been married off despite your objections. 4-6: You travelled to Drinax to seek your fortune, and found a someone instead. Roll 1D to see how it turned out. 1: Amicable breakup. 2: Nasty breakup. 3-4: Ongoing relationship (gain a Contact). 5: Marriage. 6: Tragic death or disappearance.
4	Misfortune: You encounter difficulty. Roll 1D. 1-2: Your low-tech backwater homeworld did not prepare you for the wider galaxy, and you run into a dangerous misunderstanding. Lose 1 Benefit roll or lose a Contact or Ally. 3-4: You are injured while travelling. Roll on the Injury table. 5-6: Aslan Slavers! You are kidnapped by slavers from the Glorious Empire, a renegade Aslan state that practises slavery (see page 25). Roll 1D to see where the slavers put you: 1-2: Navy; 3-4: Army; 5-6: Scout. While enslaved, you cannot gain a Commission or gain Benefit rolls. You may try to escape after each term either by rolling 8+ on 2D. If you fail to escape, roll on the Injury table.
5	Good Fortune: Luck is on your side. Gain DM+1 to any one Benefit roll.
6	Unusual Event: Roll 1D. 1-2: You travel in the Aslan Hierate for some time. Gain a Contact among the Aslan. 3-4: A mentor of yours is a secret member of the Foundation, and inducted you into their conspiracy. Your mission is to spy on the court at Drinax and report back to your secret masters on Asim. If you refuse, your family will be killed. 5-6: You are psionic! Roll to test your Psionic Strength immediately, and gain DM+4 to the roll.



ELSEWHERE IN THE REACH

Pirates can come from anywhere in the Trojan Reach – the lawless central subsectors are known for piracy and bloodshed. The ‘pirate planet’ of Theev in Sindal subsector, for example, is home to tens of thousands of criminals. Closer to Drinax, any of the old vassal worlds could be home to a Traveller.

THE IMPERIUM

Travellers from the Spinward Marches might end up on Drinax, and in need of employment. A band of Travellers with an old scoutship or far trader could start of exploring the Trojan Reach, then suffer engine failure and be forced to land on the Floating Palace. Alternatively, pirates and criminals who flee the Imperium’s justice often end up taking refuge in out-of-the-way parts of the Outrim Void.

THE HIERATE

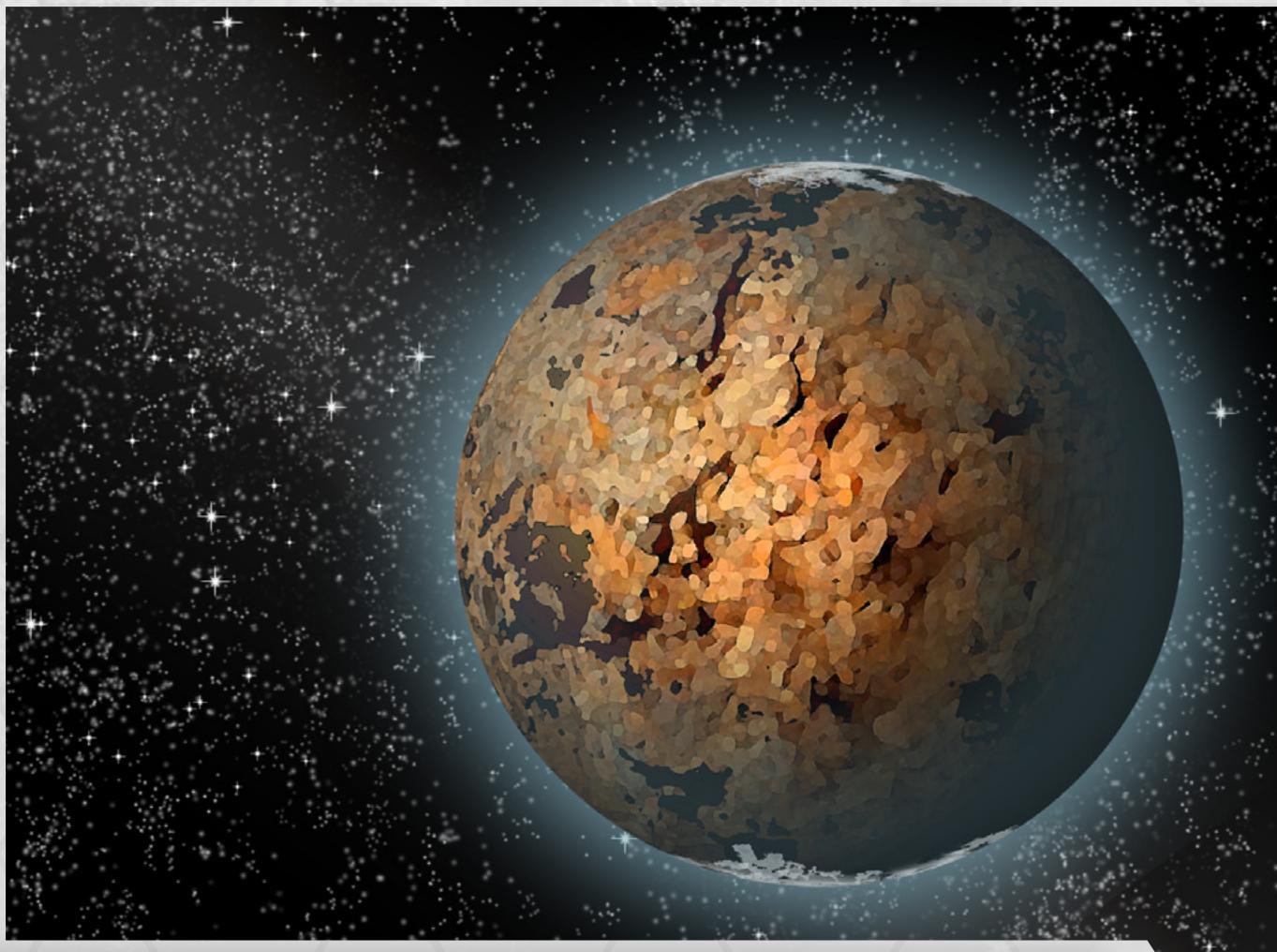
King Oleb would gladly employ a few Aslan outlaws or outcasts. Even wandering *ihatei* still in good standing with their clans could join Oleb’s privateering scheme.

CAREERS

While any Traveller can participate in these adventures, the obvious careers for prospective privateers include Agent, Navy, Marine, Rogue, Merchant or Drifter. In addition, Drinax produces far more than its fair share of Nobility.

SHIPS AND SHARES

Unlike other campaigns, the Travellers start with a ‘free’ ship – the Drinaxi Harrier. There is no mortgage on this ship; it remains the property of the King of Drinax, who expects the Travellers to pay him a tithe and follow his plan to unite the independent worlds under his banner. Travellers do not receive ships through Benefit rolls (the Traveller will receive D3 Ship Shares instead) and use Ship Shares to upgrade the battered old Harrier. See page 12 for details.



THE HARRIER



The Drinaxi Harrier-class commerce raider (her original name was V'Hurg, but the Travellers are free to change that) was constructed at a TL15. Her internal systems are extremely advanced, although battle damage and two centuries of neglect means there are some glitches and damaged components.

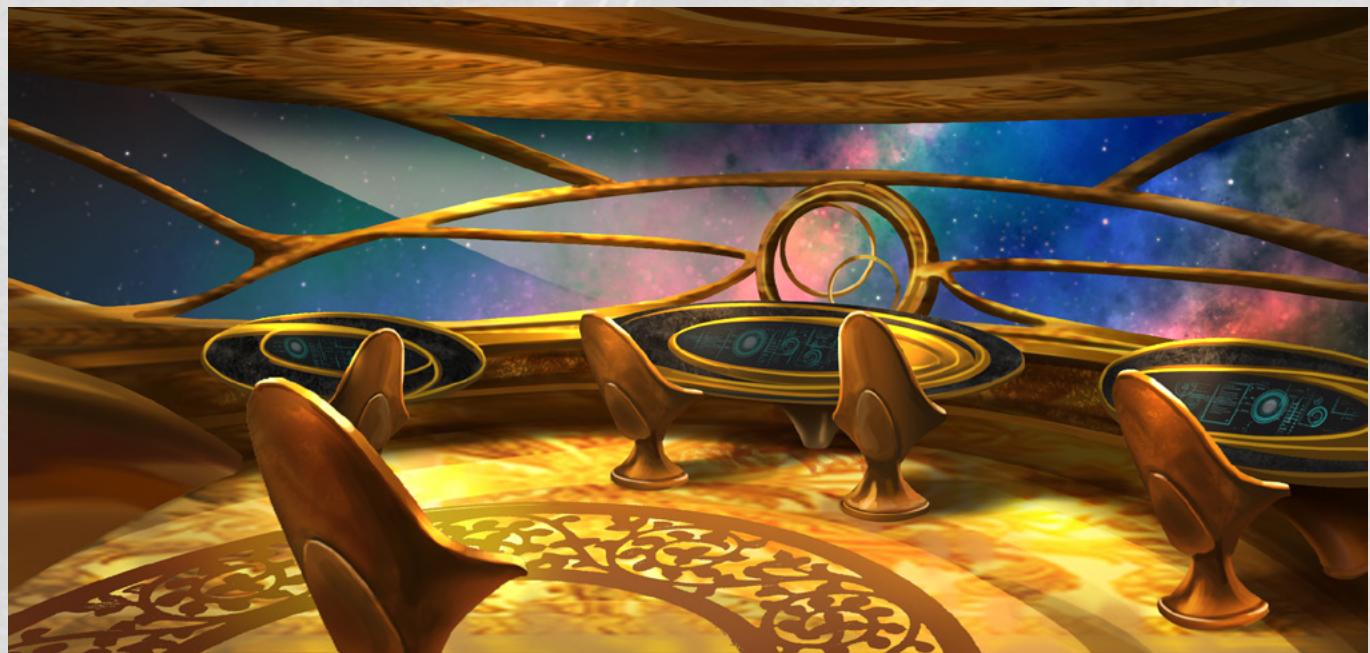
Externally, the Harrier-class resembles a bird of prey, with swept-forward wings and a stern prow. The ship has two weapons hardpoints, a turret and a barbette. When she was first launched from Drinax, her hull was painted with the heraldry of the Star Guard, but it is now bare grey metal without identifying marks. She is streamlined and possesses landing gear, so can land on planets. Fuel and cargo scoops are located in a recess under the prow.

While the bulk of Humaniti struggled through the Long Night between the fall of the Second Imperium and the rise of the Third, the Empire of Sindal (and, later, the Kingdom of Drinax) continued to make scientific progress. While their development was not so abrupt or dramatic as that of the Darrians, the Sindilians advanced to TL13 throughout much of their Empire, with a few worlds reaching the heights of TL15. All these wonders were lost over

the centuries, but the Harrier contains the fruits of this scientific achievement. Her jump drive can jump closer to a gravity well, has less emissions and is smaller than usual. Her manoeuvre drive is smaller, but still gives the ship jump-2 range and an impressive 6G of thrust. Her hull is similarly advanced, using smart materials and synthetic compounds to give it greater resilience compared to a similar Imperial hull. Unfortunately, there are microfractures throughout the keel of the ship, so the Harrier is currently not as tough as she should be.

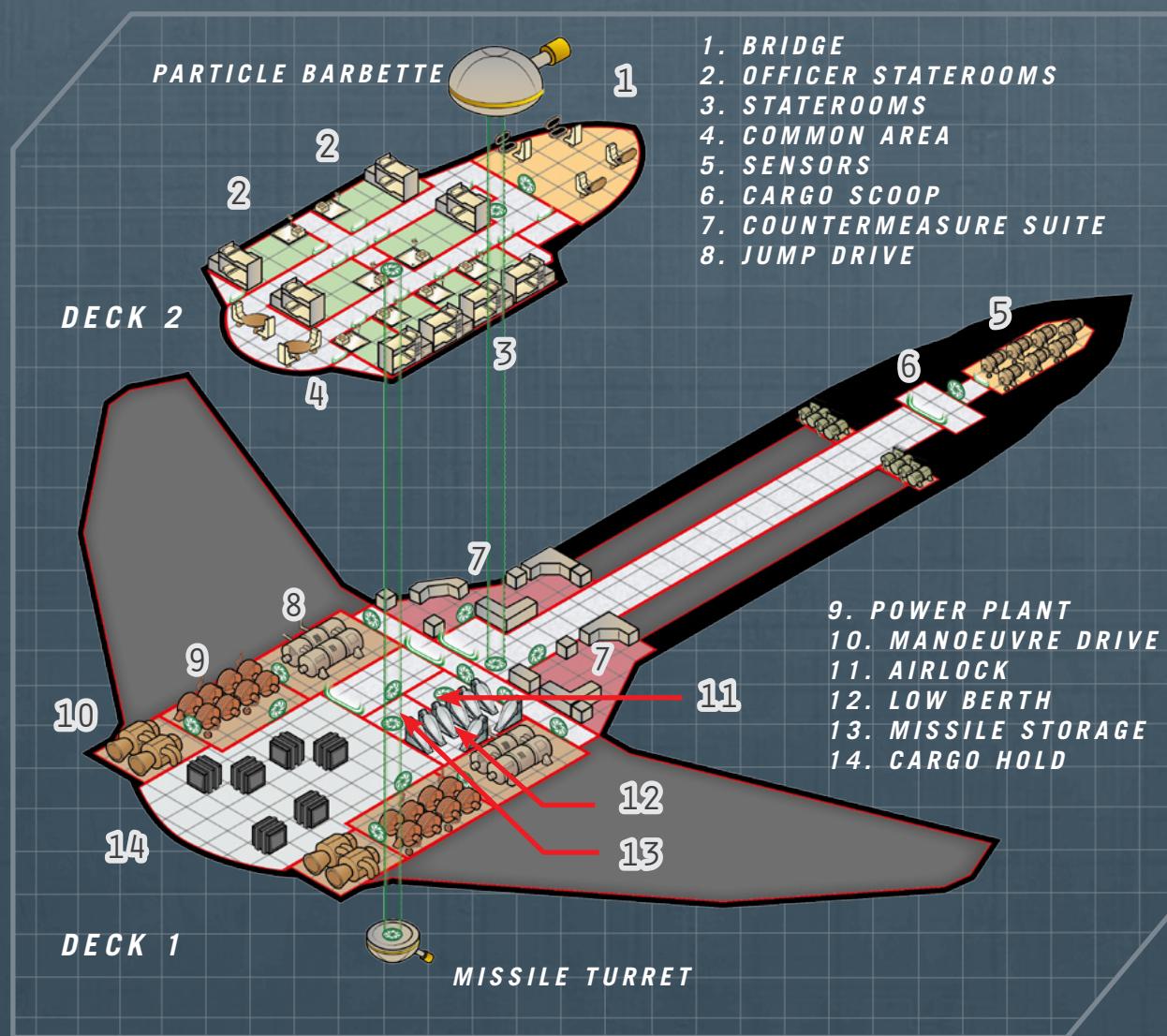
Inside, the Harrier is a baroque beauty. Her original fittings are mostly intact, and the Drinaxians delighted in luxury and opulence. Every surface is gilded or engraved. The staterooms have red velvet cushions and soft beds, while the bridge consoles are covered in dark oak with controls of brass and crystal. She has eight staterooms; four for officers with double beds and four for crew with bunks. There are also eight low berths adjoining the cargo hold, originally intended for prisoner transport, they can be used to store frozen crew or as emergency life support.

The Harrier has 29.7 tons of cargo space.

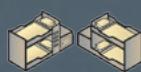


COMMERCE RAIDER

HARRIER-CLASS



ISOMETRIC DECKPLAN KEY



BUNK



FRESHER



WORKSTATION



G-CHAIR



LOW BERTH



CRATE



HATCH



IRIS VALVE (WALL)



IRIS VALVE (FOOR/CEILING)



INTERNAL WALL



HULL



FUEL PROCESSOR



POWER PLANT



JUMP DRIVE



MANOEUVRE DRIVE



COMMERCE RAIDER

HARRIER-CLASS

TL15

TONS

COST (MCR)

Hull	200 tons (streamlined, reinforced) Superior Stealth	-	18 200
Armour	Bonded Superdense (Armour 4)	6	2.6
M-Drive	Thrust 6 (reduced tonnage x 3)	8.4	25.2
J-Drive	J-2 (early jump, size reduction, stealth jump)	13.5	3.0375
Power Plant	Fusion (TL15), Power 260	13	26
Fuel Tanks	J-2, 4 weeks of operation	42	-
Bridge	Holographic Controls	10	1.25
Computer	Computer/20	-	5
Sensors	Advanced Military Countermeasures Suite	5 15	5.3 28
Weapons	Particle Barbette (accurate, high yield) Single Turret (missile rack)	5 1	7.5 0.95
Ammunition	Missile storage (12 missiles)	1	-
Systems	Armoury Cargo Scoop Fuel Processor (40/tons day) Holographic Hull	1 2 2 -	0.3 0.5 0.1 20
Staterooms	Standard x 8 Low Berths x 8	32 4	4 0.4
Software	Evade/1 Fire Control/2 Jump Control/2 Library Manoeuvre/0	- - - - -	1 4 0.2 - -
Common Areas		8	0.8
Cargo		29.7	-

TOTAL: 318.94875



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HULL POINTS

CREW

CAPTAIN, PILOT, ASTROGATOR, ENGINEER,
MAINTENANCE, GUNNER X 2, MEDIC,
MARINES X 3

RUNNING COSTS

MAINTENANCE COST

Cr26579/month



PURCHASE COST

McR318.94875

POWER REQUIREMENTS

120

MANOEUVRE
DRIVE

40

BASIC SHIP
SYSTEMS

40

JUMP DRIVE

8

SENSORS

THE POWER PLANT AND CHOICES

The Harrier is an extremely capable ship – however, all this sophistication comes at a price and it is one the installed power plant sometimes has trouble paying. When performing complex operations, the Travellers may have to make some painful choices with regards which systems to route power to. The basic power requirements are listed above, but the Travellers should also be aware of the power consumption of the additional systems.



Missile Rack Turret

Power 1

Particle Barbette

Power 15

Holographic Hull

Power 100

Low Berths

Power 1



HEALING THE WOUNDED SHIP

The Harrier suffered grievous damage during the Aslan attack 200 years ago, and with the loss of the starport on Drinax, full repairs cannot be made. The technicians of the Scholar's Tower have done their best, but there are still numerous problems and drawbacks. The Travellers can alleviate some of these drawbacks by spending any Ship Shares they accrued in their careers.

Once the campaign starts, upgrades to the Harrier can be purchased at the rate of 1 Ship Share to MCr5.

Damaged Turret: The ventral turret was targeted by the Aslan attackers. A direct hit from a fusion bay damaged the turret and the ammo feed mechanism. Repairing the turret costs 1 Ship Share.

Holographic Hull: While the entire hull remains battle damaged, only the projectors on the port wing and the nose of the ship are still functional, however the system still draws power as though all the projectors are operating. Making the entire system operational again can be done for 1 Ship Share.

Maintenance Costs: The ship's maintenance costs are unusually high, due to the exotic high-tech components it needs. Normally, the Harrier would cost Cr2657 every month to keep flying; currently, it costs Cr10000. Each Ship Share spent reduces the increased cost by Cr2000, to a minimum of Cr2657.

Microfractures: When built, the Harrier had Hull 88. However, age has riddled the keel with microfractures, reducing it to a current Hull 72. Repairing these fractures is possible, but costly. Each Ship Share spent on repairing the hull increases the ship's Hull by 8, to a maximum of 88.

Military Countermeasures Suite: This system suffered some damage and was effected by multiple hits from ion cannons. Drinax has only been able to restore functionality to the level of the countermeasures suite. This can be restored at DM+1 per Ship Share used, to the normal maximum of DM+6 for 2 Ship Shares.

Power Plant: The power plant has suffered from a lack of maintenance due to the inability to work on the TL15 plant and its efficiency has been reduced to 75% of normal (Power 195). This can be brought back to full efficiency through the use of a Ship Share.

Unreliable Jump Drive: The Harrier's jump drive mostly works, but is inaccurate. It has DM-2 to all Engineer (J-drive) checks made to jump. Each Ship Share spent to correct this reduces the negative DM by 1.

Unreliable Manoeuvre Drive: The Harrier has a powerful manoeuvre drive, but it has a habit of cutting out at exactly the wrong moment. If a double 1 is rolled for any Pilot check, the ship loses all Thrust for one round. This problem can be removed at the cost of 2 Ship Shares.

Repair Costs: The Harrier was built at TL15, far above the Tech Level of most systems in the Trojan Reach. This



means that finding suitable spare parts is very difficult. Spare parts (see the *Traveller Core Rulebook*, page 150) cost Cr200000 per ton. Unlike the other drawbacks, this problem cannot be fixed with Ship Shares.

Locations on Board

Main Airlock: The Harrier's main airlock is located on the belly of the ship. It is large enough to transfer four people (or two marines in battle dress) per cycle. A real pirate ship would have a breaching tube (see page 43 of *High Guard*) instead.

Cargo Hatch: The cargo hatch between the grav plates is used to load and offload cargo. The cargo hold can be depressurised so the hatch can be used in vacuum.

Cargo Scoop: Cargo scoops use magnetic fields to grab nearby metallic objects like cargo canisters. A scooped canister is dragged into a smaller airlock and deposited in the hold. Picking up a cargo canister requires a successful Pilot check; failure means the ship rams the cargo canister instead, likely destroying it.

Cargo Hold: The hold of the Harrier is cramped despite its size, with low ceilings and insufficient lights. The stern faces of past kings of Drinax stare from the ornamented bulkheads, keeping watch over the cargo (the eyes of these carved faces contain micro-cameras).

Crew Staterooms: The crew staterooms are comfortable and well-appointed, although their glory has faded somewhat. Each crewman has a bunk bed and a locker; there is a shared fresher and a workdesk in

each room. Above the door is a weapon's locker and storage for vacc suits.

Officer Staterooms: The officer staterooms look more like accommodation on board a luxury star liner than quarters on a warship, with all the benefits of high technology – grav-suspended beds, emotionally intelligent interfaces, environmental controls, and food dispensers.

Dorsal Barbette: The dorsal barbette is fully operational, and has a wide field of fire. The barbette is equipped with a TL14 Accurate High Yield particle beam (4D damage, Power 15, Very Long range, Radiation trait); this weapon grants DM+1 to attack rolls, and any damage dice that roll a 1 instead count as a 2.

Ventral Turret: As described earlier, the ventral turret mechanism was ruined and has not been repaired. The space is currently used for storage.

Common Area: The crew lounge and meeting room. The large table has built-in holographic projectors connected to the ship's library.

Computer Room: This small annexe to the bridge contains direct access to the ship's central computer and an immersive holotank for examining sensor data.

Bridge: The ship's bridge. In common with the traditions of the Star Guard, the ship's commander stands on a walkway that runs the length of the bridge, while the crew work from computer stations below.



WELCOME TO THE REACH

The Outrim Void. The Trojan Reach. The place where empires die.

Between the Spinward Marches and the ever-advancing Aslan Hierate is an expanse of wild space called the Trojan Reach. A narrow ribbon of stars, the dust-spice trade route, links the two empires. Every day, ships brave the perilous crossing from Imperium to Hierate, navigating a circuitous route from Fist (Tobia 3215) to Tyokh (Tliowaha 2226). Between these two worlds is a sea of lawless, dangerous planets.

The Reach is where empires run aground and mortally wound themselves, and where fortunes can be made on trade and commerce. The First Imperium never conquered the Reach; the Second Imperium left isolated colonies across its expanse, and even the Third Imperium claims no more than a sixth of the systems here.

During the long night, another petty empire arose here – the Empire of Sindal. The Sindalians were barbarian raiders who crowned themselves kings and conquered several dozen worlds before their subjects rose up against them. Today, Sindal is a ruined world of a few hundred dirt farmers whose ancestors once ruled all the night sky, and the Sindalian empire is remembered in confused tales of a golden age and wars amid the stars.

When the Empire of Sindal collapsed, outlying regional capitals became the seat of even lesser kings, and the longest-lasting of these was Drinax (Tliowaha 2223). Drinax's kings claimed half the worlds in their subsector for generations. The Drinaxians were wiser than their cousins; they learned to hide the iron fist of orbital bombardment behind a velvet glove of trade and protection. Drinax itself became a garden world, fat and plump, an oasis of culture and technology in a dangerous and barbaric sector. The floating palace of Drinax – a huge citadel of beauty and art, suspended on a grav platform of prodigious size – was a wonder of the galaxy.

Then, another empire came to the Trojan Reach. The Aslan were numerous, hungry, aggressive and confident, and the Empire of Drinax was fat, lazy and wholly unaware of the sheer numbers and might of the Hierate. The Aslan trade routes to the Imperium ran through the

Kingdom of Drinax, and the kings became greedy. They demanded tolls, taxes, bribes... and the Aslan were incensed. In a single bloody war lasting less than a year, the Aslan shattered the last surviving remnant of the old Empire of Sindal. Drinax's subject worlds were either conquered by the Aslan or revolted. Drinax itself was blasted to ash, leaving the floating palace as the only remaining property of the King of Drinax.

One palace... and a few ships.

That was two hundred years ago.

Today, trade ships from the Imperium and the Hierate pass by broken, beggared worlds. The worlds once claimed by Drinax realise they have exchanged one master for another, and that the Aslan have even less regard for them than the kings did. The Imperium and the Hierate pretend to be friends while they jockey for position. The sector stands on a knife edge. The right pressure could push half the Trojan Reach into the claws of the Aslan, force an already overstretched Imperium to extend its forces deeper into the sector, permit Drinax to rise again – or carve out a new kingdom in blood and steel!

Now is the time for corsairs and privateers, for rogues and empire-builders. The King of Drinax offers a small band of trusted, resourceful bastards the chance to make their fortune. He gives them a ship and a letter of marque. They are to go adventuring in the Trojan Reach, prey on shipping and build up support in the worlds once held by the Kingdom of Drinax, playing the two great powers off against each other. If they succeed, they will become princes in the renewed kingdom.

If they fail, the stars will be their grave.

THE KINGDOM OF DRINAX

In the days of its strength, the Kingdom of Drinax – or, to give it its proper title, the Star Dragon Empire of Sindal in Exile – ruled many worlds across Tliowaha subsector. Tliowaha, of course, is the Aslan name; old charts still call it Drinax subsector. The heart of the

Kingdom of Drinax was the arc of planets first named by Solomani settlers in the age of the Second Imperium. These worlds were named for the great visionary writers of old Terra – Banks (now Khusai), Stross (now Kteiroa), Asim, Pourne, Hilfer, Paal, Torpal, Clarke and Blue. Beyond these core worlds, the Kingdom also had a presence in two dozen other systems across the subsector and beyond.

Of course, the Kings of Drinax also claimed to be the heirs to the vanished Empire of Sindal, and if one were to accept *that* right, then half the sector legally belongs to them. That particular Empire of Sindal arose in the year -2000 and ruled for 600 years, although for much of the last 200 years it was riven by internal dissent, rebellions, and brutal punitive attacks on its own vassals. The Sindalian Empire finally fell around -1400, when the imperial seat at Noricum was bombed to oblivion.

Half a dozen regional dukes proclaimed themselves Emperor or King, and the Kingdom of Drinax was the longest-lasting of these pretenders. From -1400 until the year 902, a span of more than two millennia, the Kings of Drinax ruled over their domain, guarding their vassal worlds from invaders and pirates. For most of their reign, the Kings were wise and well loved. It was only around the year 700, under the disastrous reign of Glaco IX, called the Vengeful, when Drinax started using the old tactics of Sindal and bombed their vassals to keep them in line. The Kingdom became increasingly unruly in the face of the growing Aslan

threat, and the outer worlds broke away from the cruel yoke of the Kings.

Matters came to a head in 884, when King Oleb XIV placed a tax of 20% on all trade between the Third Imperium and the Aslan Hierate that passed through the Kingdom. The Aslan response was swift, deadly, and all too fitting for the descendants of Sindal.

They bombed Drinax from orbit.

THE FEW & THE FORGOTTEN

Few Travellers visit Drinax today. According to the charts of the Imperial Scouts, the planet still has a Class-A Starport, but the charts are centuries out of date. Drinax is a dead world. There are no settlements on its surface, only the scars left by the Aslan when they bombed the cities from orbit. The once-fertile grasslands were seared to deserts; the forests where the kings of old hunted were razed. The seas bloom red with algae after they were boiled to death. No-one lives on Drinax anymore.

They live above it.

A sense of irony is shared by both Humaniti and Aslani. The Hierate's invasion force spared the famous floating palace of the Kings of Drinax. They blasted the cities and laid waste to the countryside, but did not touch the golden grav-platform or any of the palace's elegant



domes or delicate towers. They exterminated millions of commoners, but let no harm come to the nobles, servants, sycophants and courtiers on the Floating Palace.

The survivors of the invasion, numbering a scant few thousand, had to adapt to survive. The glorious Hanging Gardens, said to be a wonder of the sector, were cleared of their exotic blooms from a hundred worlds and turned into hydroponics bays. Delicate nobles who had never worked an honest day in their lives suddenly found tools thrust into the hands. The early years were not easy. Blood stained the diamond tiles of the King's Seraglio, and the ancient Scrolls of the Prophet Zaol were used for kindling. Still, the people of the Floating Palace survived. In the months before the invasion, the King had ordered the staff of the great university to transfer their best scientists and equipment to the Scholar's Tower, so they were able to retain the bulk of their scientific knowledge. The Drinaxi still have TL15-era knowledge, although they lack the mineral resources to put it to use. With most of the world below still radioactive, diseased or simply scorched beyond use, all the knowledge in the galaxy is useless when you have no copper or steel or rare earths with which to forge your wonders.

Behold, then, the Floating Palace – a flying city, an aerial pleasure-dome of surpassing beauty, of endless wonder... and utter despair.

THE KING & THE STARSHIP

Stand on the Parapet of Glory, a mile-long balcony along the starboard side of the Floating Palace, and look out across the dusty skies of Drinax. Those dots that circle like birds of prey are the Hawk Warriors, held aloft by grav belts. King Oleb XVI flies at their head, although he must wear three grav belts to carry his tremendous girth. The King is... well, his courtiers call him 'Magnificent', his enemies dismiss him as 'loud, fat and impetuous', and an unbiased observer would certainly deem him 'energetic'. Perhaps he should have been born a

hundred generations ago, when he could have led the Star Guard Navy to battle across the stars. Instead, he rules a dead world and a crumbling palace.

The King loudly proclaims his love for strong wine, red-haired women, and glorious battle, but despite his bluster, he is also a subtle and clever ruler. All his life, he has harboured ambitions of restoring the Kingdom of Drinax to its former glory. All he needs is a little leverage. All he needs is one good ship...

... and the Star Guard of Drinax has just found one. She's an old Drinaxi Harrier from the great days of the Kingdom. She jumped in to defend Drinax from the Aslan attack, but her drive malfunctioned as she arrived in-system. Her crew were blasted with a lethal dose of radiation, and the ship drifted crewless and rudderless through the system's Oort cloud for two hundred years until she was recovered. She is as close as Drinax has to a working warship.



Timeline

- 2000: Rise of the Empire of Sindal
- 1600: Sindalian revolts begin.
- 1400: Fall of Noricum and collapse of the Empire. The duke of the regional capital of Drinax claims the imperial title.
- 1000: Aslan first cross the Great Rift to the Trojan Reach
- 500: Aslan expand into Tliowaha Subsector. Trade between Imperium and Aslan grows.
- 700: King Glaxo bombs rebel worlds.
- 884: King Oleb XIV establishes the Drinax tax. Harrier ships are built to enforce payment of this tax.
- 885: **Fall of Drinax.** The Aslan, led by the Ahroay'if clan, bomb Drinax.
- 1085: Reconquest of Asim.
- 1105: Current year. The Drinaxi Harrier ship is recovered and rebuilt.



STARTING THE CAMPAIGN



King Oleb offers you – and the other Travellers – a chance for glory!

He will give you the Harrier as your ship, and more, he will give you a letter of marque and reprisal. This document gives you the right to prey on merchant and military shipping within the borders of the old Empire of Sindal that does not carry the proper documentation. The King grins at you.

"Of course, no-one's carried those papers in bloody centuries. Every ship in space is your legal prey – but I don't want cutthroats and murderers. I want thieves!"

He gestures at a map of the Trojan Reach. On one side, there's the great red expanse of the Third Imperium. On the other, the golden glow of the Aslan Hierate. Between the two are dozens of points of light, each marking a different independent star system. Threads of commerce and trade run between the two empires like arteries.

"Once, every world along that trade route shared in the bounty. The traders paid taxes to use our space and our starports. Then, because my ancestors were greedy bastards, everything fell apart. The Kingdom collapsed, and that meant those cold-blooded Vilani snakes picked the Trojan Reach apart. It's every world for themselves out there right now, and solitary worlds can't bloody hold out against a godcursed empire!"

He throws himself heavily into the armoured bulk of the Dragon Throne.

"So, here's what we're going to do. You take the Harrier and you cut a bloody swathe across the stars. Attack shipping, raid starports, hit fuel depots. Take what prizes you can. Don't kill anyone you don't have to, though – we want to bleed the merchants until they go crying to the Imperium, not start a bloody war. Pirating is part one of the plan.

"Part two is all those worlds out there. We make them our allies. Sell stolen goods there, defend 'em from raiders, recruit crew, give them a taste of wealth, and bring them back under the banner of Drinax. When the time comes, we offer the Imperium a deal – the pirate attacks stop if they recognise the Kingdom of Drinax and give me my rightful due."

He slams his meaty fist into the arm of the throne.

"We do this right, and we'll show there's life in this old empire yet.

"Now, the terms. We keep this a secret from the Imperium for as long as possible – and that means you keep that letter of marque hidden until we sign a peace. The ship's being loaned to you – you're responsible for repairs and maintenance, but she's coming home at the end.

"Ten percent of any money you make comes to me. Spend as much as you can spare on the colony worlds and curry favour with them. We'll need them on our side if this isn't going blow up in our faces."

He leans back in the throne.

"If this works... then you'll be made dukes of my court. And..."

The king stops and glances at a side door.

"Get in here, daughter. This whole scheme was your idea."

The Crown Princess of Drinax slips into the room.

"Do I have to explain the whole 'clandestine' part of this scheme to you again, Sire?"

She smiles at you, and you can't tell if she's amused or furious. The King rises from his throne and takes his daughter's hand in his huge fist.

"If we are going to save this kingdom, daughter, we shall have to trust these Travellers. After all, if they succeed, you're marrying one of them."

THE MISSION

- Go privateering across the Trojan Reach
- Disrupt trade between the Imperium and the Aslan Hierate
- Establish alliances with independent worlds and factions
- Make your fortunes and rebuild the Kingdom of Drinax!



What Good is a Letter of Marque?

Piracy is punishable by death. The old Ziru Sirka of the Vilani punished it with spacing; captured pirates were hurled naked out of an airlock to freeze to death in the vacuum, while pirate captains were permitted the honour of a spacesuit, prolonging their suffering for hours. In the vanished Sindalian Empire, pirates were hung by the neck until dead, their bodies preserved in a silicon sheath and attached to the hull of pirate hunter ships. The modern Third Imperium, more prosaically, permits suspected pirates a trial before they are imprisoned or executed by firing squad. As for the Aslan... the lord of each territory personally carries out execution with his own dewclaw.

If you are captured, you are bound for death. The letter of marque will not save you – unless the Kingdom of Drinax is restored. If Drinax's flag is raised again over a dozen worlds, then your crimes are retroactively negated – you were never devilish pirates, you were always licensed privateers, carrying out the king's commands!

Saving Drinax will also save your own necks...



LIFE IN THE FLOWING PALACE

Imagine you are a craftsman, an artist, a scientist, an engineer, the best in your generation. You trained for years, studying under the previous masters, honing your talents with endless practice. You produced works of surpassing excellence, works combining wild genius and perfect technique, until you were ready to make your masterwork, your legacy to the ages. You worked for ten years - ten sleepless, obsessive, glorious years – ignoring the outside world, ignoring everything except the fire in your soul that drove you to this act of creation. Finally, exhausted and emotionally shattered, your masterwork was done, and you proudly presented it to the King of Drinax.

Now, between all the possible fields of creation and study, from sculpture and painting to weapon-smithing to astronomy to molecular biology, let us assume there are a dozen such masterworks in every generation across a single planet. These masterworks are things of such staggering genius that they will be remembered for centuries. A dozen from each generation of artists and creators... from every one of thirty worlds that owed fealty to Drinax... for more than fifty generations. If you take, say, the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel or Taj Mahal as your baseline, then the Floating Palace of Drinax is crammed with around 20,000 such works of staggering

genius, along with ten times as many lesser works and treasures from across the stars. Add onto that all that they looted from the Sindalian empire and from other worlds, including the Ziru Sirka.

Walking into half the rooms in the Floating Palace is like being hit in the face by a firehouse of baroque beauty. Where do you look first? At the onyx floor inlaid with a map of the subsector made from artificial diamonds that are lit by hidden lasers to perfectly match the colours of every star, or at the dozen Hiver scented sculptures imported at great expense from the far side of Charted Space, or the first printings of the entire works of the Sindalian poetess Shing Za Zoha that spill from the bookcase that was carved from the living heart of a genetically engineered amber-plant, or the vaulted ceiling decorated with animated holograms of the Seven Glorious Deeds, the Nine Celestial Virtues and the Eight Seasons of Drinax?

The splendour is so great that it distracts you from the absurdity. The Floating Palace is absurdly overcrowded. Every ballroom and feasthall is home to a dozen families; children play among the works of art and technological wonders. The people 'make do' amid the greatest collection of art in the whole sector, stringing washing lines between golden statues, and using ancient tapestries as blankets.

When the Aslan destroyed Drinax and the survivors crowded into the Floating Palace, the divide between noble and commoner vanished overnight. Back then, there were some twenty thousand survivors, split evenly between the titled aristocracy, courtiers and other nobility, and the servants and lower classes. Two hundred years of interbreeding grew the population to some forty thousand, and every single one of them has inherited at least one title. These titles are not used from day to day, but Drinax clings tightly to formality and ritual, so every plumber and hydroponic farmer in the Floating Palace can list their lineage and titles.

The Floating Palace is the size of a city, a flying Gormenghast of plas-steel and carbosamite. It is easy to get lost in the endless maze of hallways, monumental chambers and spiralling towers. The palace mixes the wonderful and the absurd at every side. To take a prosaic example, the bathrooms are all made of shimmering silver, with delicate fountains sculpted by microgravity generators in the walls into the shape of nymphs and dolphins, with baths large enough to drown in that sing to you as you bathe – but because the Floating Palace is no longer visited by water-barges from the planet below, the inhabitants must collect rainwater in barrels to fill the ornamental lakes and reservoirs. Similarly, the Palace had a hundred ornamental gardens but no farmland beyond the hydroponics; a hundred



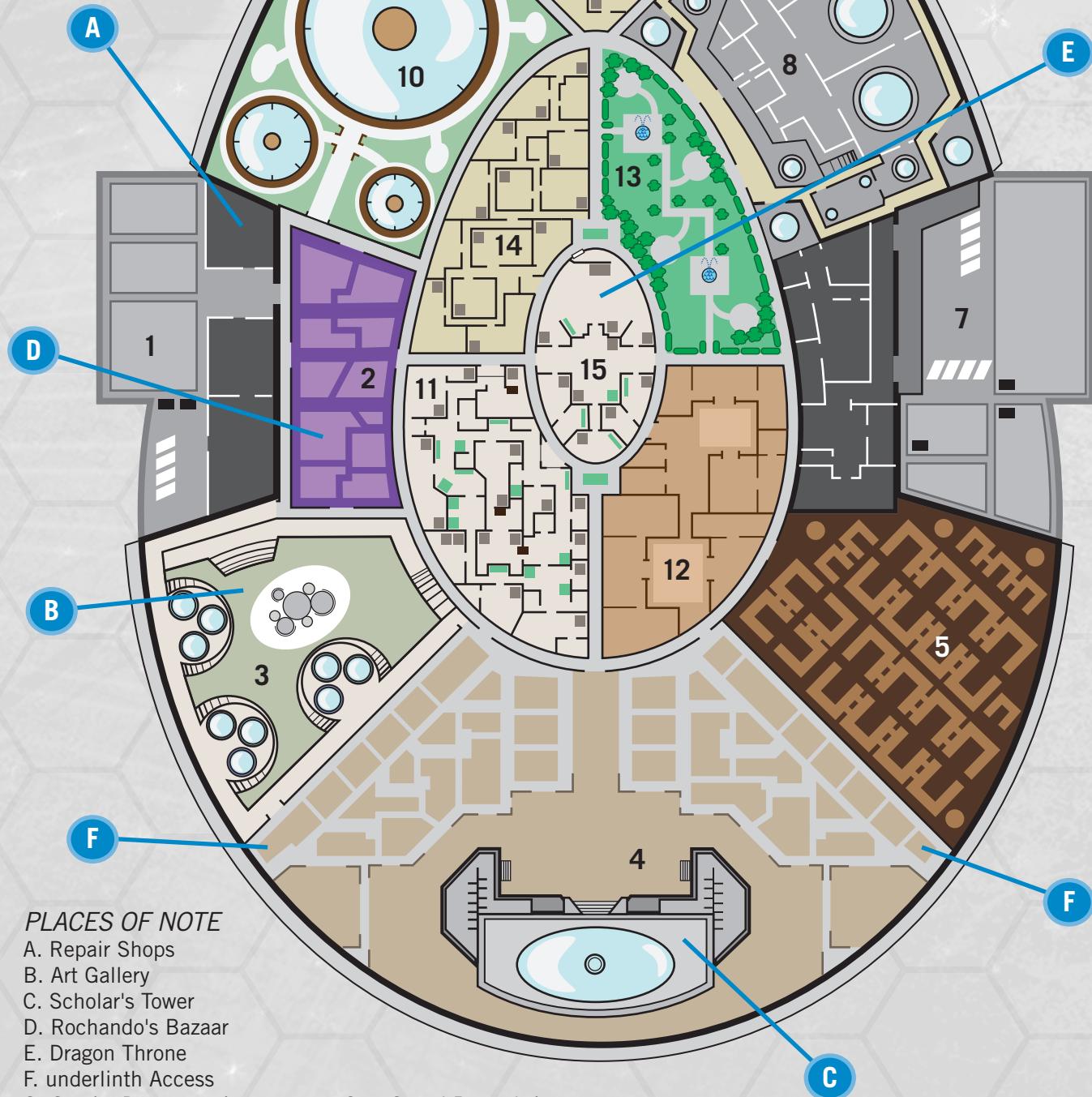
THE FLOATING PALACE OF KING OLEB

INNER RING

11. Royal Apartments
12. Star Guard Barracks
13. Gardens
14. Court Chambers
15. Throne Room

OUTER RING

1. Royal docks
2. Bazaar
3. Gallery
4. University Grounds
5. Life Support
6. Starport Control
7. Starport Docks
8. Palace
9. Ambassador's wing
10. Great Hall



PLACES OF NOTE

- A. Repair Shops
- B. Art Gallery
- C. Scholar's Tower
- D. Rochando's Bazaar
- E. Dragon Throne
- F. underlinth Access
- G. Gravity Dungeons (access near Star Guard Barracks)

palatial galleries and ballrooms but no factories beyond a few small workshops. The inhabitants of the Floating Palace may have all the ball-gowns, starched military uniforms and glittering jewellery they desire, but there is a distinct lack of vacc suits and engineering overalls.

Notable locations on board the palace include:

The Dragon Throne: Looted (or so the legends say) from the Sindalian Throne World of Noricum before it fell, the Dragon Throne is older than the fabled Iridium Throne of the Imperium (a fact that the courtiers of Drinax never fail to point out to visiting ambassadors). The Dragon Throne is made from fragments of fused hull-metal from ships defeated and captured by the Star Guard over the last three thousand years; even though every ship only contributes a scrap of metal, the throne has still grown into a huge, ugly monstrosity like a dragon's skull. King Oleb only drags the thing out for formal occasions, preferring a more comfortable grav-couch most of the time.

- **The Throne Room:** The old Throne Room was converted into a hangar, so King Oleb's throne room is now a much smaller affair. The walls are laser-etched platinum showing the deeds of his ancestors, and there are long low benches on either side for his 'courtiers'. As almost everyone on board the Floating Palace can claim a noble lineage of one sort of another, the king's actual courtiers and advisers are chosen for their practical knowledge and wisdom, not their family connections.
- **The Scholar's Tower:** Drinax maintained its high level of technology by sheer chance – the best academics and a full copy of the planet's scientific corpus were moved to the palace mere weeks before the Aslan attacked. Of course, with such a small population to draw from, the Scholars of the intervening two centuries have made no new discoveries, but they have preserved the knowledge of the ancients. The small staff of the Scholar's Tower are easily the best university in the subsector; students come from across the stars to learn here, and their fees are one of Drinax's few sources of income.
- **Rachando's Bazaar:** After the King, the most powerful figure on the Floating Palace is one of the few without noble blood. Rachando the merchant sells high-tech gadgets, art and relics offworld and imports vitally needed supplies. He came to the Floating Palace five years ago on board his free trader, the Invisible Hand. The King begrudges every treasure he sells to Rachando, but has little choice in the matter. Every trade Rachando makes diminishes the past glory of Drinax to preserve its fragile future.
- **The Starport:** The Aslan destroyed the original starport of Drinax, but the King's personal starport

qualifies almost as a Class A port. It lacks a shipyard, but can repair any ship that lands there and has absolutely luxurious fittings for both crews and vessels.

- **The Underlith:** The underlith refers to the network of access corridors, drains and secret passages that riddle the huge platform that supports the Floating Palace. It is the shadow side of the palace, used by spies, smugglers and conspirators.
- **Gravity Dungeons:** The dungeons are on the lower side of the platform. The huge anti-gravity generators that hold the Floating Palace suspended above the ground are so powerful that they create zones of intense gravity within themselves. Prisoners kept within the gravity dungeons are held in cells by three or more gravities. The closer to the anti-grav generators, the more intense the field; the deepest cells are under a bone-crushing 20G.

THE SCORCHED WORLD OF DRINAX

Below the Floating Palace, Drinax is a wasteland. The Aslan dropped rocks from space on much of the planet. Dust clouds choked the skies for years, plunging the whole planet into a long impact winter. Major population centres were blasted with plasma weapons and disease bombs; millions died at the claws of the conquerors.

Two hundred years later, the planet is slowly healing. Green shoots cover the impact scars, and new forests are growing in the ashes of the old. It will be another thousand years before the planet is close to its former vitality, and some wounds will never heal. The spores of the Aslan biological weapons still sleep in the overgrown ruins of the cities, so Drinax may never be safe for human occupation.



The Vespexers

The Vespexers are tribes of humans who live on the surface of Drinax. Most are the descendants of survivors; others are exiles from the Floating Palace. The Vespexers are a hardy folk who subsist primarily by hunting and gathering, although they have farms in a few sheltered valleys. They wear protective hazard suits made by the craftsmen of the Floating Palace to protect them from the dangers of Drinax. The Vespexers are technically subjects of the King of Drinax, but obey no laws except those of their tribe. The Floating Palace trades hazard suits and other worked goods for food and raw materials.



THE CHATTEL WORLD OF ASIM

Twenty years ago, King Oleb led an invasion of the neighbouring world of Asim, after his hydroponics bays suffered a catastrophic failure and the harvest was lost. To avoid starvation, Drinax sent a dozen small ships to obtain food from the peasants of Asim. When the Foundation of Asim refused to co-operate, the King angrily ordered his ships to take the planet by force. Although the Asimi outnumbered the forces of Drinax several thousand times over, they were technologically completely outclassed. Rifles and rockets are no match for plasma rifles and FGMPs.

Today, Asim is the only vassal world belonging to Drinax. King Oleb privately regrets the conquest, and life has changed little for most of the peasants of that grim agricultural world. Instead of paying tithes to the Foundation, they now give their tithe to the grain-ships that visit from Drinax once every year. Some Drinaxi whisper that the King should move the whole court to Asim, that the Floating Palace should be abandoned in favour of a living world, but it is a brave man indeed who would openly make such a suggestion to the King. Oleb will sit on his ancestor's throne until he dies (or until it collapses beneath his growing weight).

Asim is a non-industrial TL6 world with a population of around five million. The planet is physically similar to Earth, with an almost identical mass, a close match in terms of atmospheric composition, and a comparable land/water ratio, yet there is something missing. Asim lacks the vitality of a true garden world. The planet is overwhelmingly brown; the local equivalent of chlorophyll is a brownish chemical, so Asim has brown fields and brown forests growing from brown soil. The former government of Asim was called the Foundation, and was an assembly of elders and wise men from the cities. The Foundation claimed to have a thousand-year plan that would bring Asim – an obscure world in the middle of nowhere with no technological base or mineral reserves worth a damn – to dominate the Imperium. For two hundred years, the Asimi toiled to support the Foundation's grand design, never realising that it was a scam to keep the sages and bureaucrats in charge.

NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS

Over the course of *The Pirates of Drinax*, the Travellers will likely return to the world of Drinax again and again. The key figures at court are described below. They are excellent Allies, Contacts (or Rivals, or even Enemies) for Travellers; some will also play important roles in later adventures.

KING OLEB XVI King of Drinax, Dragon Emperor of Sindal-in-Exile

Age 105 (Apparent age mid-50s)

King Oleb, Sixteenth of his name, is the ruler of the Kingdom of Drinax. He's also, as he puts it, the '*bumpty-umph Emperor of Sindal, Lord Admiral of the Star Guard, protector of the whatsit and duke of the other thing*'. The only titles that Oleb really takes pride in are his awards for boxing and swordfighting. The King was a wild man in his youth, and spent years as a freebooting adventurer and sometime pirate before returning home to take the crown. Anagathic drugs have preserved his youth, but not his figure; the courtiers politely refer to the King's 'imposing frame' or 'vigorous presence'. The King is more direct about this - '*I may be fatter than a gas giant, but I am still the godsdamned King*'.

King Oleb delights in drink, in women, in food, in flying with his hawk men, and in conquest, but given the state of his faded kingdom, the last pleasure is denied him. The forces of Drinax are too diminished to conquer any other worlds, and the Aslan threat is growing.

Others may dismiss the King as a buffoon, but he is actually a cunning statesman and can be diplomatic when he has to be. He just doesn't enjoy it half as much as shouting and blustering.





PRINCE HARRICK

Age 54

Prince Harrick is the prince of Drinax and potential heir to the kingdom. He led the assault on Asim twenty years ago, when the agricultural world was conquered by Drinax. His attack shuttle suffered an engine malfunction and crashed, and Prince Harrick was mortally wounded. His body – little more than a charred husk – was placed in a low berth and shipped back to the Floating Palace. The scientists of the Scholar's Tower took him into their care, and they rebuilt him cell by cell.

For twenty years, Prince Harrick floated unconscious in a tank while scientists tried to restore him to life. The outcome was uncertain, and many rumours about his death circulated through the palace. At one point, when it seemed as though the procedures had failed and Harrick was about to die, King Oleb quelled fears of instability by naming Princess Rao his heir.

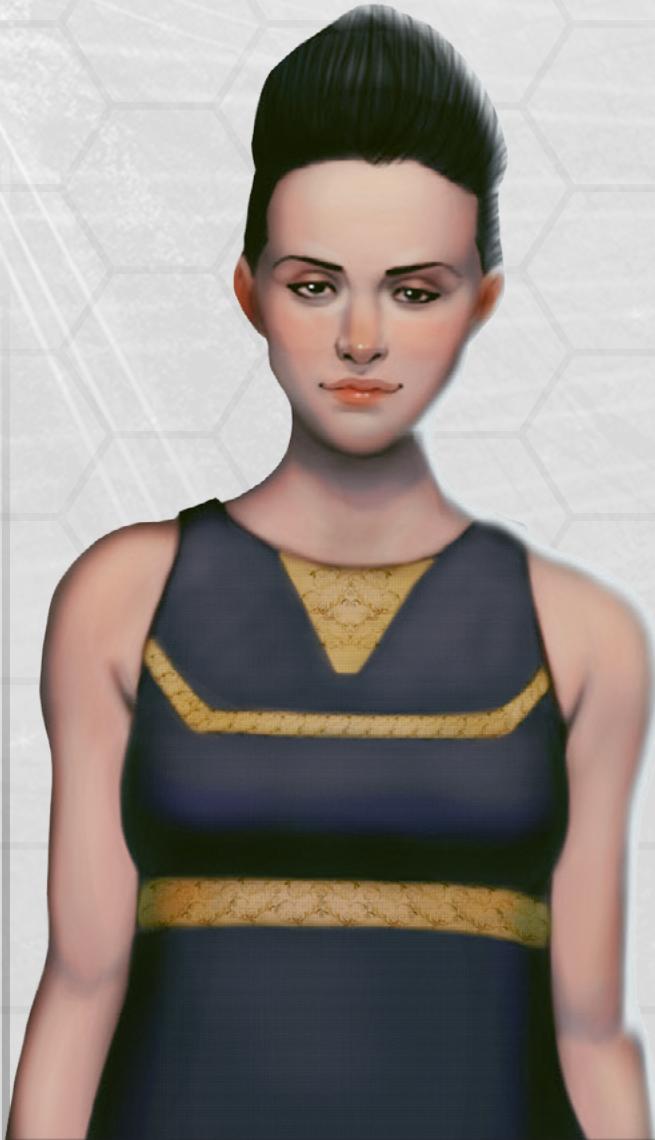
He emerged from the tank only six months ago. His features bear little trace of the horrific injuries that robbed him of half his life, but his movement is oddly stilted and his skin is just a little too perfect. The scholars refuse to discuss the technicalities of his resurrection, but most courtiers believe the prince is more machine and cloned tissue than mortal man.

PRINCESS RAO

Age 28

When her elder brother Harrick was gravely wounded, King Oleb realised his daughter was likely to inherit the throne. Previously, Rao was most ignored by Oleb, who entrusted her upbringing to his courtiers and attendants. She became the King's foremost counsellor and diplomat, and is highly influential at court. She dreams of a grand alliance of worlds – either the Kingdom of Drinax reborn, or a more equal and progressive league to provide a bulwark against the great imperial powers. Bringing the advanced technology of Drinax back to her former subjects could bring about a golden age.

Her detractors claim the princess is overambitious and blind to the perilous circumstances of Drinax, and that any such grand alliance would only serve to anger the Aslan.



Lord Wrax commands the Star Guard, the naval forces of Drinax. The Star Guard has only a handful of ships, and while they have the benefit of advanced technology, none masses more than 400 tons, and only the 100-ton scout ships have jump drives. The Harrier would have been the flagship of the Drinaxi fleet if Wrax had his way. He has little time for the King's scheme of piracy.

Scholar Voha is the elderly master of the Scholar's Tower, chancellor of the university, and unofficial court sage and prognosticator. Voha sees his role as protecting the knowledge of the ancient empire of Sindal, and is wary of any action that might endanger the Floating Palace.

Kasiyl of the Ahroay' if is an exiled Aslan from the Hierate. The Ahroay'if clan are the dominant power in Tliowaha Subsector. Why a prince of that family fled the Hierate is a mystery, and he refuses to speak of his past. He ended up on Drinax several years ago. The Aslan noble is a mighty warrior and a superlative pilot, but as a male he has no idea how to use technology or handle money, so he was little more than a beggar when he arrived. He sought a place on the Star Guard, but Lord Wrax refused him. Since then, Kasiyl has found work as a bodyguard and interpreter.

Imperial Consul Thao Poloc represents the Third Imperium at court. Capital is very, very far away from Drinax; even the Imperial governor at Pax Rulin is many weeks distant. The court of Drinax is not high on the Imperium's list of plum assignments, even though **Emperor Strephon** does send greetings every ten years to his 'beloved cousin' the King of Drinax. The consul's role usually involves dealing with lost merchant ships and a little light spying. The current consul, Thao Poloc, is a historian who travelled here to study the last remnants of Sindal. His presence is a reminder that these are probably the final days of a once-glorious empire.

Lady Hil is an influential noble in court who has little time for anyone who cannot trace their lineage all the way back to the old empire of Sindal. Sometimes, with her emphasis on protocol and noble titles from long-lost worlds, it appears Hil is in denial about the current state of the kingdom. She has a great many supporters in court and on the Floating Palace, and in a culture dominated by the weight of the past, her insistence on proper behaviour and tradition gives her power.

Rachando is a trader with no noble title or aristocratic lineage; he arrived on board a battered trader a few years ago, but has somehow become the lynchpin of the economy of the Floating Palace. He controls Rachando's Bazaar (see page 21).

Sal Dancet is a free trader and smuggler, using the Floating Palace for repairs and a hiding place. She can obtain rare goods and commodities from across the Trojan Reach, and is also an excellent source of rumours and information.

Cleon Hardy When King Oleb conquered Asim, he overthrew the corrupt Foundation and instead put his own nobility to rule over the planet. To ensure the loyalty of the Asim, he invited the inhabitants to elect an ombudsman to bring their concerns to court. Cleon Hardy is their representative; back on Asim, he was an economist and broadcaster. He is out of his depth in the strange court of the Floating Palace, but he's learning rapidly.

Chieftain Galx is a representative from the Vespexer tribes of the surface, visiting the Floating Palace when it passes over her territory. Even in the climate-controlled halls of the palace, she insists on wearing a full-body hazard suit.

POWERS OF THE TROJAN REACH

Along the trade route, only a dozen parsecs separate the Third Imperium of Humaniti and the Aslan Hierate. Those two great imperial powers may control less than half the space of the sector, but their political gravity wells perturb affairs far beyond their borders.

The Third Imperium: The great empire's expansion has ground to a halt. It controls parts of four subsectors, protected by the 'rampart worlds' of Pax Rulin and Tobia. While the Imperium shows little interest in extending its borders – the cost of protecting more worlds against the Hierate is prohibitive – there are several potential 'client states' that the Imperium is cultivating as a buffer against the Hierate.

The Imperium is a lazy giant until provoked. The Imperium's interest lies elsewhere right now, but if the Aslan advance or pirate lords makes too much of a nuisance, the Imperial Navy will be dispatched to enforce the will of the Iridium Throne.

The Hierate: To humans, the Aslan Hierate looks like an impossibly frozen tsunami. At any moment, the Aslan horde could jump over the border and conquer the whole reach. The Aslan are certainly an intimidating race. Physically, they are larger and stronger than humans, and while their technology level is not quite on a par with the Imperium, they make up for this with weight

of numbers. External observers miss the deep divides in Aslan society; the Hierate is a loose alliance of warring clans, and only act rarely in unison. The Aslan drive for territory means they will inevitably expand into the Trojan Reach. The only question is where their next advance will come.

The divided Hierate is much more likely to act than the Imperium. Each clan – and there are dozens of them – has its own navy and can react to pirate attacks or vulnerable worlds with alarming alacrity. No human can predict what the Aslan will do next.

The Trade Route: The trade route between the Hierate and the Imperium is important enough to be considered an independent entity. The Imperium exports primarily manufactured goods and dust-spice in exchange for raw materials and Aslan goods; many of the Imperium's exports are resold by the Aslan to independent worlds across the Reach. It takes 7 or 8 jump-2 jumps (depending on the course chosen) to cross wild-space, a journey that takes approximately 60 days. Imperial escorts usually follow ships as far as Acrid; the Aslan pick the convoys up at Techworld, while mercenary and corporate escorts follow convoys along the whole route.

Pirate activity varies along the route. Most of the attacks happen in the Borderlands subsector, where Travellers must navigate an unpromising series of systems. In general, both Imperium and Hierate tolerate a low level of piratical activity, as long as most of the attacks hit independent, small-scale merchants. Once the losses impact on a megacorporation's bottom line, though, the fleet is sent out to scour the stars and the pirates are driven out of the Borderlands for a few months.

General Development Company: The General Development Company (GeDeCo) is not the largest Imperial corporation operating in the Reach, but it is one of the most widespread. The company was originally founded to improve conditions in colonies and independent worlds throughout the Reach, but has become a major political player. GeDeCo advisors have the ear of many rulers of the independent worlds.

Independent Worlds: Most of the independent worlds in the Trojan Reach were settled by exiles or wanderers from the First Imperium, or by long-range colonisation efforts by the Second Imperium. During the Long Night, the Sindalian Empire was the great power in the sector; even the worlds that were not conquered by the Empire were under its influence. Today, the worlds of the Reach are isolated, visited only by a few traders. Their technology

declines, their cultures calcify, and they turn in on themselves. The Aslan will pick them off, one by one.

Pirates of Theev: The free pirates of the Reach use Sindal subsector as their base of operations, especially the 'pirate world' of Theev. As of 1105, the best-known pirates are:

- **Admiral Darokyn:** A former Imperial navy officer who fled the Imperium and made his name as a pirate. He operates out of Theev and commands a fleet of pirate ships, said to number more than fifty vessels. Other tales claim he still has allies in the Imperial Navy who protect his followers from hunters.
- **Peytr Vallis:** A newcomer, Vallis has had great success preying on Aslan traders along the border. Other pirates are said to be less than happy about Vallis stirring up the Hierate's wrath, but the young captain seems to have a vendetta.
- **The Ghost:** A legend among pirates of the Reach, the Ghost is more thief than pirate. Whenever a ship vanishes without a shot being fired, the Ghost is held to be responsible.
- **Hroal Irontooth:** An Aslan outcaste, Hroal fled the Hierate with a retinue of a dozen warships, including a Halaheike-class pocket warship. His name comes from his cybernetically-enhanced jaws strong enough to bite through battle dress.
- **The Dread Pirate Ashan:** The reaver Ashan is perhaps the most feared pirate in the Reach. She rarely strays into the Borderlands, preferring to attack independent worlds with her band of cutthroats.
- **Zuekhvi the Corsair:** A Vargr born and bred to space, Zuekhvi has escaped Imperial hunting patrols time and again. No-one knows the trade route worlds better than him.

The Glorious Empire: A splinter state of Aslan, the so-called Glorious Empire practices human slavery on a massive scale. Their slave ships are a threat throughout the Reach.

The Florian League: On the far side of the Trojan Reach dwell a strange race of humans called the Florani. They are extremely xenophobic, and even more conservative than the Vilani. The Florani trade a little with the Imperium; the trade route to the League is also beset by pirates.

THE ASLAN HIERATE

The Aslan are a race of intelligent beings; their starfaring culture is the youngest of all the major races, having had star flight for less than 3,200 years. Despite their youth, their spread through space has been rapid, driven by the instinctive territorial desires which are central to the Aslan male.

ASLAN PHYSIOLOGY

Aslan are descended from four-limbed carnivorous pouncer stock which was originally near the top of the food chain in the forests of their homeworld, Kusyu. About 1.8 million years ago Kusyu's climate shifted, with the result that the extensive forests of Tafohti (Kusyu's largest continent) almost completely disappeared. As the forests dwindled, so did the small fauna upon which the Aslan had preyed, forcing them to venture out into the expanding grassland plains. The large grazing animals in these regions were too much for a lone Aslan to kill, and they began hunting in *ahriy* (prides) of several families. The strongest male became the leader, and his family received the best parts of kills, choice sleeping places, and were first in line at any waterhole.

The Aslan which has evolved from those beginnings is, like a human, an upright biped averaging two metres in height and 100 kg in weight. There are two sexes: male and female, of which the most notable external difference is the male's increased size and more impressive mane. Females outnumber males by a ratio of 3:1.

The Aslan hand has three fingers opposing one medially-placed thumb, and all have retractable claws. In addition, Aslan have a single highly specialised claw under each thumb; this dewclaw folds back jack-knife fashion into a horny covering in the base of the thumb and palm. The presence of these claws and the general nature of their body structure make the Aslan somewhat clumsy by comparison with humans, but what they lack in dexterity they more than make up for in strength and endurance.

Aslan all have tails, although the length of this appendage has diminished over time and is now little more than a vestigial stump in some bloodlines.

Aslan sleep about one-third of the time; shaped by their homeworld's rotation period, their sleeping time is roughly



Time-Keeping

In any campaign, there will be a need to keep track of time and its passage. The generally accepted method uses Imperial standards, but the Aslan have their own units of measuring time.

Imperial Standard: Timekeeping in the Imperium is based on the standard day, composed of 24 standard hours. Clocks and watches count time using standard hours, minutes, and seconds.

Aslan Standard: Aslan timekeeping is based on the rotational period of their homeworld, Kusyu. This period, the *eahkau* (day), is equivalent to just over 36 standard hours. The timekeeping table shows the basic Aslan units of time, their value in the next lower Aslan unit, and their Imperial equivalents. Referees and Travellers are encouraged to adopt Aslan timekeeping practices where appropriate for added atmosphere and interest.

Aslan Calendar: The Aslan calendar is based on the revolution of Kusyu around Tyeyo, its star. The Aslan year (*ftahea*) is about 320 standard days, or about 212.2 eahkau long. The same calendar is used on most Hierate worlds.

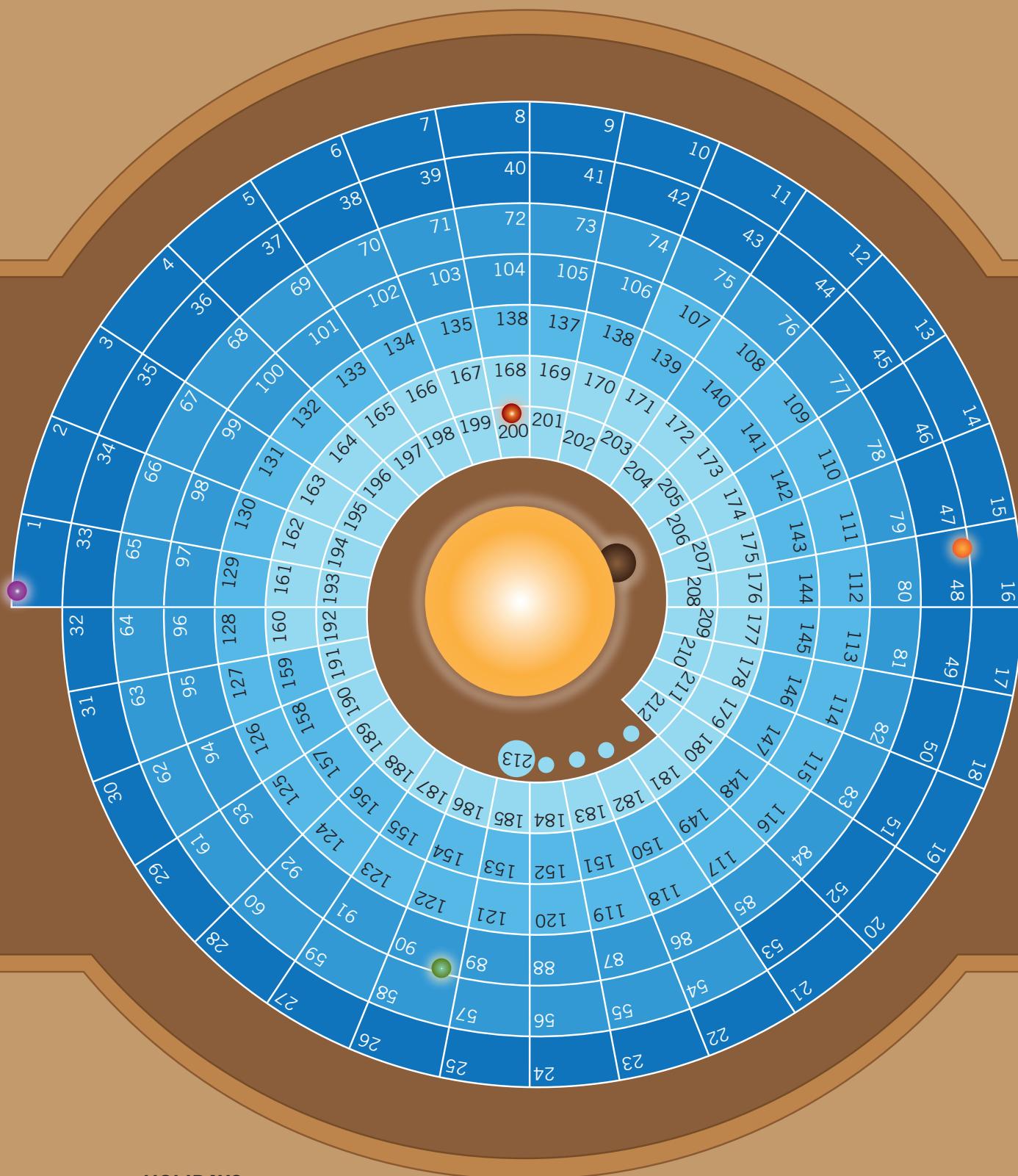
There are no subdivisions in the Aslan calendar: each day has a unique name. For game purposes, each eahkau is consecutively numbered from 1 to 212, much like the Imperial calendar. Every five years, a 213th day is added to keep the calendar in sync. The Aslan calendar takes as its starting point the first selection of the Tlaukuh as supreme council on Kusyu about 3,200 years ago (-2083 Imperial). The current Aslan date 3637 corresponds to the Imperial date 1105.

Period	Equivalent	Translation	Imperial
<i>ftahea</i>	212.2 eahkau	Aslan year	320
<i>eahkau</i>	16 <i>tekhaao</i>	Aslan day	36
<i>tekhaao</i>	8 <i>khtauao</i>	Aslan hour	137
<i>khtauao</i>	64 <i>areiaao</i>	period	17
<i>areiaao</i>	8 <i>uealaa</i>	sprint	16
<i>uealaa</i>	-	Aslan second	1.988



- SEASONS -

- "Plenty" - *Hwaiakhlle* (eroded form of "The now-imperative us hunting" time)
- "Scarcity of Game" - *Tahktiryu* ("Lacking pouncing grounds")
- "Hearthsides" - *Hwaioyftieree* (eroded form of "Now-imperative to the flames gather" time)
- "Testing of Fortitude" - *Hwaihetyew Ftaeileao* (eroded form of "Now-imperative we chase strength")



- HOLIDAYS -

- "Celebrating the Hunt" - *Ke'heiwaitfyakhoaakaola lifakhtkhto* (it-we-jointly-confirm-importantly the hunt-event")
- "Council Day" - *Tlaukuh Aloiaht* ("Tlaukuh Day")
- "Glorious Empire Day" - *Haloiale Akhwihteair Aloiaht* ("Shining Honorable-civilization-of-honour day")
- "Victory Day" - *Ke'kheii'ahkeilifaktlaiyele Aloiaht* ("The various strong huntings day")
- One 213th day every five years

10 to 11 hours (one-third of Kusyu's 32-hour day). Like humans, lack of sleep degrades their abilities drastically.

The Aslan gestation period is roughly one *ftahea*, or ten months in human terms. Most are single births – twins are virtually unheard of, and are almost always female. Male twins are rare enough to be virtually unknown. The young are born encapsulated in tough embryonic cauls, which are then cut away by the mother using a claw (or in modern times, by a surgeon's laser). Cubs mature quickly, learning to walk in only two months.

True to their pouncer ancestry, Aslan are capable of short bursts of speed somewhat greater than that manageable by humans. They also have slightly superior hearing and night vision. Otherwise, they are one of the most human-like of all alien races, excepting, of course, the Vagr (who are, after all, genetically-altered mammalian stock originally from Earth).

Early Terran explorers regarded Aslan as 'lion-like', and the simile has stuck ever since, although Aslan bear little resemblance to Terrestrial lions. Nonetheless, this early misnomer has influenced a great deal of human thinking about them, including terminology (the use of pride to translate *ahriy*, for instance) and ascribed behaviour—which is not at all leonine. The derivation of the word Aslan is unknown, but is sometimes credited to human explorers who first contacted the race.

Lifespan

Aslan develop faster than humans, and are considered adult at fifteen years. A male Aslan is in his prime from the age of twenty to around forty, whereupon he begins to decline rapidly. Males live naturally into their sixties; females reach the mid-fifties on average. Gerontology is not a priority for Aslan medical science, so aged Aslan who wish to prolong their lifespan unnaturally must seek out alternative sources of medical treatment.

Diet

The Aslan are almost exclusively carnivorous. They consume a few nuts, fruits and berries, but scorn root vegetables, grains and other plant-based foods as being fit only for 'herd animals'. The Aslan practise extensive agriculture to maintain their vast herds of livestock, and there is some archaeological evidence to suggest that early Aslan had a diet higher in vegetable matter, but cultural emphasis on predation and carnivorous behaviour means no modern Aslan would willingly eat plants.

The Aslan have the technology to produce synthesised meat, but it is consumed only by the poorest members of society or on worlds too scantily populated or inhospitable to support agriculture. Even frozen meat is

considered extremely poor fare – in any civilised Aslan house or restaurant, the meat is slaughtered right on the spot, and rich Aslan even hunt their own food on a regular basis, stalking prey across private estates. As a single herd animal provides far more meat than even a teenage male could eat, almost all Aslan dinners are communal affairs. A whole family plus guests will dine together. Aslan normally eat one large meal a day, and sleep after eating.

Small animals are eaten raw, while larger cuts of meat are lightly cooked and heavily spiced. The Aslan have an astonishing repertoire of spices and chemical preparations both subtle and bold. Aslan try to maintain such culinary practices even on spacecraft, using mouse-sized robots covered in a meaty sheath to mimic live prey, and carrying herd animals in cryo-berths for later consumption.

Aslan cannot naturally digest Terran-derived meats, but adding a few genetically-engineered stomach bacteria corrects this. Some Aslan take pills when visiting human worlds to adjust their biochemistry, although many clans now include these bacteria in medical treatments given to all children soon after birth.

SOCIETY

The Aslan have long been a warrior race; they are noble and proud, devoted to those in authority above them and responsible for those who owe fealty from below. Aslan society is based on family and its relationships.

Family Structures

An individual Aslan is usually a member of a family (*ekho*) of 2-12 persons under a patriarchal leader. This family will generally include the male family head, one or more wives, plus children and various blood relatives of the leader (unmarried brothers and sisters, aged surviving parents no longer maintaining separate families, adopted orphans of blood relatives).

The Aslan do not distinguish between mothers – all cubs sired by a male are cared for equally by all the male's wives. Patrilineal descent is all that is important in Aslan society. Cubs are more capable than human infants, and grow more quickly. A cub can walk by the age of three months, and can speak within five or six months.

A child is considered part of the father's family until:

- She is married off to a male (if female)
- He acquires Territory (if male)
- The father dies.

In the latter case, the father's Territory passes to the eldest son. The eldest son may choose to include his siblings in his family, but is under no formal obligation to do so.

Several families combine into a pride (*ahriy*), with one family dominant. The leader of that family is also the leader of the pride. Other families owe him and his family their fealty. A number of prides form a clan (*huiha*), with one pride dominant. Again, prides in the clan owe fealty to the clan's leader. The clan's leader is expected, in turn, to protect and provide for members of the clan, settling disputes between prides within the clan, and administering his holdings wisely and well.

Clans may, in turn, owe fealty to more powerful clans, particularly where blood relationships exist. The Tlaukhu consists of the Twenty-Nine pre-eminent Aslan clans, the strongest within the Hierarchy; many other clans owe them fealty, either directly or through a chain of other clans. Overall, however, clans owing fealty to one of the Tlaukhu are in the minority; most clans are independent and function accordingly.

Beliefs

Aslan are spiritual without being especially religious; they honour their ancestors and ask for their blessings, but do not worship them per se. Every Aslan home has a Shrine of Heroes, containing relics of important ancestors; most Aslan will also carry a pouch containing other keepsakes or some other heirloom. Honourable behaviour comes from obeying the traditions of the ancestors.

The Aslan do not recognise any supreme being or divine plan, but believe the universe is alive in some fashion. Perfect actions – actions unfettered by doubt, by fear, by irrelevant worries or concerns – can bring an Aslan into accord with the universe for an instant. Such moments are called *aokol*.

DUELING & HONOUR

Aslan pride makes them a touchy race, and it is quite easy for Aslan to give or take offence. This behaviour originated in the struggles for dominance within families and prides, and remains a basic part of the Aslan personality. Over the centuries, Aslan touchiness has grown formal and extremely ritualised; this rigid pattern of behaviour has been necessary to reduce conflict and injury in the settlement of personal disputes. It should be noted that this struggle for dominance is so deeply embedded into the Aslan psyche that it cannot be unlearned. An Aslan can no more ignore an infringement on his Territory or challenge to his authority than a human could ignore the urge to breathe.

Non-Aslan who do not understand these ritual forms of conduct find it difficult to get along with individual Aslan. For their part, most sophisticated Aslan have learned a certain amount of tolerance towards those who do not fit into the Aslan cultural pattern, but the cultural patterns are deeply ingrained, and offence is still taken from time to time.

Aslan society generally categorises abrasive, uncultured, or offensive behaviour into three classes: familiarity, impoliteness, and courtesy.

Familiarity is the treatment of social superiors as equals; it involves social interaction, extreme friendliness, or condescending treatment by a lower class Aslan toward an upper-class Aslan. Touching an Aslan without permission is an instance of familiarity.

Impoliteness stems from a lack of proper education or upbringing; it might include failure to address a social superior by the correct honorifics, failure to respond promptly when addressed, or losing one's temper in public.

Courtesy is a deliberate insult, and springs from contempt, a lack of respect, or malice; outward actions may often be perceived by Aslan as courtesy although not meant to be so by someone alien to Aslan culture.

Failing to immediately apologise for familiarity is impolite; failing to apologise for impoliteness when corrected is discourteous. An Aslan may apologise verbally, or by making signs of submission (offering one's throat to the offended party, or abasing oneself). Without an apology, any of these three behaviours can give offence, and an offended Aslan becomes an enemy.

Courtesy, however, is grounds for duelling. Duelling is a common way by which insults and slights are resolved, especially if rituals and other tension-relieving forms fail to defuse the problem. Duels follow well-established rituals and are fought to the death only rarely. The rules of conduct and protocols which govern them clearly state what is allowed and not allowed. A challenge to duel is never made lightly. At the same time, reluctance to challenge is seen in Aslan culture as weakness, a trait few Aslan wish to exhibit. Most challenges are issued in response to courtesy; elaborate but informal rituals have evolved wherein one party is discourteous and actually gains stature if the other does not reply with a challenge. Much of this behaviour seems incomprehensible to individuals not steeped in Aslan culture.

The rituals for duelling, however, are strictly segregated by gender. Males and females never duel; insults and slights by the opposite sex are dismissed with the excuse that males (or females) do not understand female (or male) honour. When a transgression becomes too blatant, too extreme, or too unacceptable, then a member of the insulted Aslan's immediate family (and of the correct sex) will respond to the courtesy with a challenge.

The barriers against certain duels within a family are almost as strong as those for cross-gender duelling. Children never duel with their parents (which socially includes any adults in their family of the previous generation, not just their biological parents).

To issue an informal challenge, the offended party need only bare his or her claws and roar a challenge to the other Aslan. Informal challenges are resolved as quickly as possible, and often fought on the spot. Formal challenges are more involved, and reserved only for the most important disputes, such as legal arguments. To make a formal challenge, the offended party must contact the clan head or a sanctioned representative of the clan head. The clan head will then decide whether or not to permit the duel, and state the time and place of the contest, which will usually be in a clan duelling arena.

Duels between Aslan take place as personal combat. Combatants use only their hands (and dewclaws); combat continues until one side receives a wound. In the case of grave insult, the fight may continue to unconsciousness for one participant. The winner has his or her honour satisfied; the loser is required by social and ritual standards to apologise (even if he or she was

the one originally insulted). Duels to the death are not unheard of, but are sanctioned only in the rarest of cases. Armour other than light armour is banned, as are combat drugs and other temporary augmentations.

Those too sick or old to duel may appoint a champion in their place, but this is extremely rare. Traditionally, there is a clan champion whose responsibility it is to fight for those clan members who cannot duel, but in a pinch, any Aslan of the correct gender can be nominated as champion.

For non-Aslan, one way to gain an Aslan's respect is to be willing to challenge when required, and to duel if challenged. Aslan consider those who do not embrace their culture to be tahiwihtekhtau (barbarians). Willingness to behave in the honourable fashion is an indication that one is not a completely ignorant barbarian.

Since Aslan respect prowess in battle, upholding one's honour in a duel is especially respected. However, if both parties agree, the duel can be replaced by a contest of a different kind, such as a debate, board game, or even the roll of a dice. Such substitution is frowned upon in most circles, as it is seen as degenerate and weak, but is common in places like the scientific community, where females will debate the validity of different theories with logic and mathematics, not claws.

In space, Aslan fighter pilots have been known to duel. Such fighter duels have even decided the outcome of whole fleet engagements, where both sides agree to abide by the results of the duel instead of fighting. Fighter duels are fought to the first successful hit.



A duel ends when the loser is wounded (or slain, in the case of duels to the death). The victor may not deliberately slay the loser, but (if male) is within his rights to scalp the loser. Duels can also be fought challenging one party's right to breed (this is normally done in response to one Aslan male having sex with the wife of another), in which case the victor may geld the loser.

Duels & SOC

Most duels are over trivial matters, and do not affect the Aslan's SOC. However, formal or especially notable duels can make or break the reputation of an Aslan. A Traveller who wins a formal duel against another Aslan of equal or higher SOC gains SOC +1; a Traveller who loses a formal duel suffers SOC -2.

Honour

Honour among the Aslan is primarily a male concern. Females are expected to be honourable, but it is the males who are obsessed with their honour (or, to quote the poet Tarelriyrl, only males have the *greatness of soul* to be truly honourable).

The Aslan concept of honour rests on three pillars. The simplest form of honour is *respect*, specifically, respect for the territory of another. An honourable Aslan does not trespass on the territory of another without permission or without intent to conquer. Territory, in this case, covers all the possessions of another person – land, money, wives, everything. An Aslan does not walk on the land owned by another unless the other Aslan allows him access, or unless he intends to take it *openly* from the other Aslan. Conquest is honourable; theft is not. Aslan do not work in secret (even Wars of Assassins should first be declared openly).

From this concept of respect for territory, the Aslan have built a whole system of feudal honour. Lords respect the territory of their vassals, vassals respect the territory of their lords. A good Aslan respects the privacy of another and does not gossip, as this is a form of social trespass, leading to strange situations where an Aslan might studiously ignore the questionable actions of a neighbour for years, never mentioning it to another soul, and then violently intervene without warning. An honourable Aslan takes everything he can hold and keep, but does not overreach himself, nor does he fail to live up to his potential. An honourable Aslan, therefore, is boastful to human ears – his boasts show the limits of his strength and ambition, and show his neighbours how far they can push him.

Respect even informs how the Aslan conduct their wars. An Aslan 'respects' his neighbour's territory by taking as much of it as he can in time of war. Whatever the

neighbour manages to hold onto, though, is sacrosanct. An honourable man holds everything he can, and not a square inch more or less. Only males can hold territory; all others are worthy of respect only when they are associated with a territory-holding male. During the Border Wars, this tenet of Aslan honour confused many humans – an Aslan warrior might bomb a human city indiscriminately, then tend to the victims with great care. What had changed was that now the city was conquered by the Aslan, the humans were now chattels of a land-owning male. The Aslan warrior now respected the humans, as part of his respect for the conquering lord.

The second pillar of honour is *tradition*. The ways of ancestors and heroes are the correct ways for an Aslan to behave. This does not mean Aslan are slaves to the old ways – new technologies make life easier and better, and Aslan must adapt to new worlds – but it does mean any new developments must be viewed through the eyes of tradition. The teachings of the priests and poets must be obeyed, especially those relating to war and duelling.

An honourable Aslan keeps to the traditions of his sire and his sire's sires. He fights their feuds and helps their allies. He fights duels fairly, and makes war according to the limitations agreed on by both sides in the presence of an *earleatras*. He keeps his word when he gives it, and obeys the commands of his clan elders.

The third and final pillar of honour is *harmony of action, or khoafteirleao*. This is the hardest of the pillars to master, and difficult to even explain to non-Aslan. Of human beliefs, perhaps zen comes closest. The Aslan believe the universe is a thought in motion, and that perfect actions can move in accord with that thought. An Aslan who attained *khoafteirleao* is expressing the will of the universe. *Khoafteirleao* can be reached in any context or deed, but is most commonly found in combat, poetry, or speech.

Feuds

Disputes between families or prides usually take place because of slights, insults, mistreatments, or problems which have not been resolved to both parties' satisfaction. The families may back different scientific theories; one family member may have won a competition which the other family had traditionally won; a family may have rejected a proposed marriage between it and the other family.

Feuds are an intermediate step between duels and wars. Strangely for Aslan society, they are unstructured and lack rituals to control them. If kept at a low level, a feud is a pretext for discourteous behavior and sparks many duels. If allowed to get out of hand, it involves the vassal prides and families of each side and can erupt into war.

Reactions

Aslan have predatory instincts and cultural mores quite foreign to the human mindset. To model Aslan customs, the referee can roll on the Reaction table to determine the response of an Aslan to any encounter. This reaction will colour and influence the Aslan's behaviour.

As an optional rule (particularly for Travellers new to playing the Aslan), Travellers may also use the Reaction table to determine probable responses to encounters as well. This is especially true of Aslan Travellers adventuring in the company of humans.

To use the Reaction table, roll 2D, apply the relevant DMs from the Reaction Table, and read the result.

REACTION

2D	Reaction
2-	Hostile. Roll 2D and challenge on 8+
3	Hostile. Roll 2D and discourteous on 5+
4	Hostile. Roll 2D and discourteous on 8+
5	Hostile. May be discourteous
6	Unreceptive (Impolite)
7	Uninterested
8	Noncommittal (Curt)
9	Noncommittal (Polite)
10	Interested
11	Responsive
12 +	Enthusiastic

Traveller	DM	Encounter	DM	Other	DM
is non-Aslan	+1	is SOC inferior by 3+	+1	Both from same career	+1
is impolite	-1	is SOC superior by 3-	-1	Local world Population 9+	-1
is discourteous	-2	is member of same clan	+1	Local government type H	-1
has Tolerance, per level	+1	is member of same pride	+1		
is Outcast	-2	is friend or comrade	+1		
		is impolite male	-2		
		is impolite female	-1		
		is discourteous male	-3		
		is discourteous female	-2		
		is noble patron	+2		
		has Tolerance, per level	+1		
		is Outcast	-2		

Reaction DMs: Traveller is the individual consulting the table; Encounter is the Aslan reacting using the table.

Reaction Table Results

Hostile reactions usually lead to 'discourtesy' rather than violence. In such an instance, the response given by that reaction would be one which normally would provoke hostility in return. Treat discourtesy as grounds for a formal challenge (but Travellers need not issue such a challenge - although this would take an enormous amount of restraint on the part of Aslan Travellers).

An Aslan who receives discourteous treatment may easily be provoked into an attack. Such an attack

may be immediate (which is a violation of ritual and protocol), or may take the form of a challenge to a duel, with the time and place specified. Duels are not (usually) lethal; they are fought to first blood only. The embarrassment and loss of honour one suffers in declining a challenge or refusing a duel is far worse. In addition, for humans, the respect gained by engaging in a duel to defend one's honour can be beneficial in a struggle to fit into Aslan society.

WARS

Disputes between clans (usually over ownership, control, or access to land) are, like duels, also highly ritualised. They are resolved through formal clan wars. Like duels, such wars are given highly specific rules (agreed upon by all parties in advance). There are many modes, from ordinary military conflicts to wars of assassins to capture the flag games in which some token must be removed from an enemy stronghold in order for victory to be won. Unlike duels, most (but not all) clan wars involve the death of enemy personnel. In some cases, (particularly wars of assassins), the war may be bloodless, akin to the counting coup practices of certain Native American tribes from early Earth history.

If a dispute is leading two clans to war, then the nature of the war will be negotiated through envoys; generally, the clan willing to commit to the most limited form of warfare is the one that holds the moral high ground and can force concessions from the other party. Wars are overseen by an *earleatrais* (*referee*) from a neutral clan.

While there are numerous variations on each of these modes of warfare, a rough scale of escalation for Aslan conflicts is as follows:

- **Display of Strength:** Both sides marshal their fighting forces and arrive on an appointed battlefield; the side with the greater fighting force wins. It is permissible to call on allies to participate in such a display; in a dispute involving two well-connected clans, a minor system might suddenly be filled with dozens of Aslan warships facing off against each other. Trickery is permissible in a Display of Strength – if your opponent believes your hover-trucks covered in plastic shells are actually grav-tanks, then victory may be yours despite having a lesser fighting force.
- **War of Champions:** As a Display of Strength, but when both sides are gathered, a single unit from each side (a lone warrior, squad, vehicle, warship) is sent forward to fight as champion against a similar unit from the other army.
- **War Games:** Both sides agree on the amount of forces that can be committed to the war, and the location of the war. Often, the war is fought on barren territory like an airless moon or unclaimed and unwanted planet. The conditions for victory are agreed upon before war begins – the winner might be the first to conquer a particular fortress, find a particular item, or inflict a set level of casualties upon the opponent.

- **War to First Blood:** In the War to First Blood, the victor is the first side to accomplish some goal – traditionally, wounding a member of the ruling family of the enemy clan. Any means may be used to win the War to First Blood, but hostilities must cease as soon as that goal is accomplished. In modern times, when clans can have members scattered over a dozen worlds without instant communications, Wars to First Blood are rare, as it is impossible to simultaneously alert all combatants that the war is over.
- **War of Assassins:** In a war of assassins, both royal families are permitted to send assassins to attack one another. Only the ruling families of each clan and their bodyguards are valid targets in a war of assassins, and even then the 'assassination' may not be lethal – touching a target with a bared claw may be enough to count as a kill. An assassin must bear a token confirming he is the agent of the clan that sent him – an ivory medallion is the traditional sign of the assassin, but more modern clans use a microscopic sensor-baffling implant to avoid detection by scans.
- **Strictly Limited War:** In the strictly limited war (tehlaicho), the forces and theatre of operations for both sides is agreed on beforehand. Two clans might agree to fight only with whatever military forces are on a particular world when the war begins, and would prevent the war from spilling onto any other planets.
- **Limited War:** A limited war is restricted to a single system, but there is no limit to the forces that can be committed to the conflict. This level of war includes attacks on ships within the system, and is likely to expand into piracy and raids on supply lines.
- **Minor War:** A minor war permits attacks on multiple systems and the use of warships and other heavy weapon. 'Minor' implies that neither clan is willing to risk too much in the conflict – both sides exchange regular envoys and have clear end goals.
- **Open War:** Open war between two or more clans is rare, and is precisely what the Aslan codification of conflicts is intended to avoid. In an open war, the entirety of the clan's military and industrial base is committed to the conflict, and everything is a valid target. The loser of an open war will suffer a catastrophic loss of territory, power and prestige.

- **Total War:** The aim of a total war is to annihilate the other clan completely, wiping out every living male. In modern times, total war would likely be impossible to successfully prosecute, and would draw the wrath of the *Tlaukuh*.

LAND

A deep-seated territorial instinct causes male Aslan to have an inordinate (from the human point of view) concern for the acquisition and control of land. The ownership of land is a major goal in the lives of most Aslan males. An Aslan's stature is determined by the amount of land he (or her husband) controls, and the amount of land controlled by his family, pride, or clan. The lowest classes in Aslan society are landless, providing the farmers, labourers, craftsmen, and workers essential to the society.

The largest landholds are in the hands of the *Tlaukuh*, and consist of many worlds and parts of worlds. Since holding such an extensive territory is beyond the ability of one Aslan, an extensive network of vassals (usually sons, brothers, or male relatives by marriage) administer it in the clan head's name.

The Aslan concept of nobility springs from landholdings and Aslan social level could originally be correlated with the landholds of the family: any family with a landhold was noble, with higher social level equated to greater landholdings. Today, any Aslan of SOC 9+ is considered noble. This does not mean that a noble male himself has land, only that he comes from a family which holds land.

Landholds are passed on from father to son. Originally, sons fought for the right to inherit their father's

landholdings; the losers became subordinate to the winner, or left to seek a new landhold for themselves. On large landholds, the losers became vassals to the winner and administered part of the landhold as their own. Primogeniture (the automatic passing of landholds to the eldest son) is a recent cultural innovation, having come into favour about 2300 to 2400 Aslan. Sons who do not inherit are *ihatei* (literally, second sons). With the development of starflight, *ihatei* became the vanguard of Aslan exploration and conquest of space.

Landholds have always been difficult to come by. Early explorations on Kusyu opened up new territory and made more land available. Periodic warfare has redistributed landholds to the stronger males, and conquering clans redistributed land to particularly brave, resourceful, or deserving males. With the advent of starflight, vast new territories became available.

Landholds are frequently granted as a reward for military excellence or other superlative service to the clan. An individual clan will include prides and families of all social levels; the most important of these will be of high SOC (9+), with extensive landholds (usually all held in fief as vassals of the clan's leader); middle class prides and families will have smaller landholds, while the lowest classes own no land at all, but live and work on land belonging to their lords.

Only males may own land; the male's mates will, however, administer any revenue from the land and the industries on it.

Territory

A male's TER characteristic measures the amount of land he possesses.

Ter Characteristics

TER	Status	Examples
0	None	No territory
1-2	Average	A single-family dwelling and a small garden
3-5	Wealthy	A dwelling housing the family and associated retainers, a large garden
6-8	Minor Noble	A large structure housing the family, and capable of accommodating most of the pride, together with gardens and some open space.
9-11	Average Noble	An estate of considerable size, including a hunting forest of several square kilometres in extent.
12-14	Grand Noble	A vast estate, possibly covering an entire world.
15	Clan Head	Multiple worlds

Estates of TER 9+ are usually partly sub-infeudated, where the ruling Aslan grants portions of his territory to vassal males.

The physical size of a territory is important, but so too is its economic importance. A territory that consists of several thousand kilometres of airless moon is less prestigious than only a few kilometres of a vibrant city. For a territory to be truly desirable, though, it must include space to run and hunt – the ruler of a city may be far wealthier than another noble whose territory is virgin wilderness, but the latter noble will receive more respect from his peers. The best territories are therefore those which contain both wilderness and commercial potential.

Territory & Social Standing

TER is the foundation of SOC among the Aslan. A male's Territory score determines his SOC, and the initial SOC of his offspring. In practise, SOC and TER do not move in lockstep – a female might win great respect because of her success in managing a company, increasing her SOC above her sire's TER, but it is rare for an Aslan's SOC to differ from the most closely related male's TER by more than +/- 3.

In campaigns, the referee should adjust an Aslan character's SOC to reflect TER changes. Every month of play, add or subtract one point from SOC to move it towards the TER score of the Traveller (or the Traveller's

mate or sire if female). Acquiring SOC is comparatively easy for the Aslan, as it is much more fluid than standing in the Imperium, but it is nothing without territory to underpin it.

Gaining and Losing Landholds

Every world in Aslan space is owned by someone (apart from a few planets quarantined by the Hierate). To get a landhold, a young male has five options.

- He may inherit his father's landhold. Obviously, this only applies if the Aslan is the first son, or if his elder brothers are all dead or Outcast.
- He may be awarded a landhold by the head of his pride, or by the clan. Landholds are given as a reward for heroism in battle, or for some other notable service or success. Some landholds are in the clan's gift – they have either been recently acquired, or else passed into the clan's possession if the last landowner had no heirs.
- He may be given a landhold that is a sub-fief of a larger domain, making him the vassal of the lord who holds that larger domain. Again, such landholds are given as rewards, but are much more political. An ambitious Aslan lord might recruit promising warriors by offering them part of his territory.



- He may take a landhold by force. Normally, this happens in a war; it is customary to permit warriors to keep whatever they can conquer in a war, spurring them to greater feats of heroism. On some border worlds, far from the watchful eyes of clan armies, an ambitious young male can force an older one out.

For thousands of years, these first four options were the only ones available to a young male. The obvious path to a landholding was through warfare, conquering a rival's holding or so excelling in battle that the clan would reward him with land of his own. The ensuing bloodshed kept the clans in a nigh-constant state of war, and turned Kusyu into a planetary pressure cooker. Then, the development of jump drive gave a fifth option.

- The young male may expand the Aslan Hierate by finding a new territory offworld. This is the route favoured by the Aslan in modern times. The energies of hungry young males are redirected into exploration, into taming new worlds, and into contacting new species. Aslan *ihatei* have wandered far from the Hierate, visiting worlds hundreds of parsecs trailing and coreward.

While a male may claim any unoccupied territory on any world he wishes, he must prove his ability to defend and develop the territory. A clan has no interest in defending a territory far outside of its sphere of influence, nor will a male be able to attract settlers and lesser families to an inhospitable world without resources.

Customs

Trespassing on an Aslan's territory without permission is forbidden, and the landowner is within his rights to kill trespassers on the spot. A visitor should either announce his presence, or make a proper petition when discovered by the landowner or his retainers. The formal version of this petition is the phrase '*si'yeikhteowetyu kakhteyatei*' (*I formally request the protection granted under the terms demanded by your honour and beg leave to enter your domains*); informally, '*fiya*' (*I am your vassal, sir, and am obliged to you*). The landowner, if he permits the visitor to enter, replies '*ka'tei*'.

Ihatei

The *ihatei* are the vanguard of Aslan expansion, and are of great importance to modern Aslan culture and conquest. The word *ihatei* translates directly as '*second son*', but a more accurate translation might be '*non-inheriting son*'. While male Aslan amount to less than one in three of total births, the average Aslan landowner has three wives and at least two sons. The elder son inherits the sire's lands; the other males, the *ihatei*, must find their own fortunes and territory in the universe.

The son of a minor landowner might be given no more than a weapon, a suit of armour and passage to the border. A luckier *ihatei* gets a scout ship from his sire or clan, while the second son of a richer lord might be given a warship and a host of armed retainers. All the *ihatei* flock to border regions, to warzones, to unexplored territories where an ambitious young male could make his name. Following in the wake of the *ihatei* are outcasts hoping for redemption, lower-class males hoping to sign on as armed retainers, and mercenaries looking for work.

These border camps are the most dangerous gathering of Aslan. Thousands of heavily armed, competitive and violent young males all gathered in a single sprawling shanty town. The few females present are technicians and weapons merchants. Each night, the males gather around huge bonfires and listen to the boasts and promises of *ihatei* who are planning a war. One *ihatei* might have discovered a virgin planet, another has found an isolated human world, a third believes a nearby clan is weak and vulnerable, and a fourth *ihatei* shouts that he will lead a crusade across the stars and conquer the very heart of the Imperium.

Those gathered listen to the boasts, and may rally to the banner of the most promising *ihatei*. A successful *ihatei* gathers enough warriors from the camp to conquer whatever territory he has found; an unsuccessful one must return to the campfires another night, or else join the retinue of a more successful male. Along the borders, the attacks of the *ihatei* are almost an annual event as a new generation of young warriors fights for territory.

Most *ihatei* bands consist of only a few warriors and a single ship, but larger bands can number thousands or even hundreds of thousands. If the Aslan believe that a world is worth conquering, then an army of virtually any size can be gathered. Advanced and well-defended worlds have fallen to the locust swarm of *ihatei*.

The ***ihatei*** occupy a curious place in Aslan culture. They are seen as romantic wandering heroes, and most Aslan popular entertainments centre around *ihatei* warriors and their retainers. The *ihatei* occupies a place in Aslan society equivalent to the gunslinger or the ronin samurai; they are heroic outsiders, bad boys, honourable without being respectable. They have no formal political influence, but restraining or inciting the *ihatei* to a particular task is a key element of any Aslan clan's foreign policy. They have no formal power in a clan, but a clan's expansion is determined by the support and funding it gives to its *ihatei* sons.

RITES & OUTCASTS

At the age of fifteen years, an Aslan must undergo the *akhuaeuhrekhhyeh*, the Rite of Passage. This rite has several components, which vary from clan to clan and between genders. Both males and females are tested by the clan elders on matters of honour and tradition, reciting epic poems from memory and recounting the deeds of their ancestors. A cub's strength and determination are tested, sometimes even resulting in injury or ritual scarring. Males must fight a duel against a clan champion – victory in such a duel is almost unheard of, but as long as the young male demonstrates strength and courage, he will acquit himself honourably. Many clans also have their young males go through a series of aptitude tests.

Females are normally exempt from duelling, but are given a much longer series of academic tests to determine their suitability for corporate or technical roles. Both males and females go through certain secret tests that they are forbidden to reveal to the other gender; these tests are unique to each clan.

After the rite, the young Aslan finds employment within the clan. The sons of landowners may wait for their sire to perish, or request a scout ship from the clan and become wanderers.

Outcasts

It is possible to fail the Rite of Passage, or to do so badly that no-one in the clan will offer the young cub a place. Such Aslan become outcasts, as do Aslan who shame themselves so foully that no atonement is possible. Outcasts are stripped of their standing in the clan and in society. Most large Aslan communities will have a *rukhtaha*, a ghetto where the outcasts dwell. Outcasts are permitted to perform various tasks seen as 'unclean', such as farming vegetables or other foul jobs. *Rukhtaha* are dangerous areas, as the outcasts are not above turning to crime to support themselves.

The children of outcasts are also outcast. Usually, a wandering *ihatei* will accept some outcasts into his retinue; if the *ihatei* establishes a new landholding, the outcasts can be given an honourable place there, restoring their standing.

GENDER IN ASLAN SOCIETY

The sexes have very different roles in Aslan society. Males (in all but the lowest classes) are concerned mostly with military operations, acquisition of territory, and political affairs. Females, on the other hand, are concerned more with industry, trade and commerce,

and with the accumulation of wealth and knowledge. Females always own and control corporations.

Upper-class males have little concept of money, and are literally incapable of functioning in a technological society without aid. They are seldom encountered away from the supervision of a wife, mother, or some other female relative or employer. For instance, a typical Aslan mercenary unit will be organised by a wealthy married female, who will then assign its operation, for a share of the profits, to an unmarried female relative. The battle commander and most of the troops will be unmarried males (many of them also relatives, hired with promises of land grants and the opportunity to gain honour, glory, and reputation in combat). These males are capable of operating most forms of high-tech equipment by rote as black boxes, but their expertise is limited to bravery, tactical skill, and button-pushing. Tasks which require more than this must be entrusted to males of very low social level or to females. Females of high social level fill all staff, operations, supply, and intelligence positions, and handle the administration of the unit. This example holds true for most aspects of Aslan society.

Aslan tend to place great emphasis (generally unconsciously) on the gender of those they deal with, whether Aslan or alien. They also tend to make their evaluation of gender based on a cultural rather than a biological basis. As a result, an Aslan can see a human as having a perceived gender of male because she is a gunner, even though she is biologically female. An Aslan might also classify a human male navigator as female (because he considers navigator to be a female occupation). Such judgements have strange ramifications, because an Aslan will accept discourteous behaviour from the opposite sex, while challenging to a duel a human believed to be of the same sex. Aslan will also refuse to hire individuals of a gender inappropriate to the job (qualified females will not be hired as pilots; qualified males will not be hired as brokers); yet if the human's gender is not directly pointed out, an Aslan will often assume gender based on skill qualifications.

Because the ratio of females to males in Aslan society is roughly 3:1, Aslan society tends towards polygamy (which tendency can be traced to Aslan prehistory) when populations were small and a male stood a greater chance of survival with more hunting females in his family. However, a high proportion of females remains unmarried, preferring to devote themselves to business, science, or other matters to the exclusion of marriage. Unmarried females remain part of their father's or brother's families, and in most corporations it is the females who pledge to remain unmarried (*siyajkhaora*) who get the top positions (since marriage would transfer the wife—and the wife's holdings—to a new family,

often outside the clan, to the detriment of the clan's interest in that company).

In general, wives (like land) tend to be apportioned according to the social level of the male. Lower-class families usually consist of a male with a single wife, while upper-class families may have several wives married to a single male. It is rare for more than four or five wives to be found in any one family.

Sex, Love & Marriage

The Hierate is founded on the clans; the clans are founded on the prides, and the prides are founded on families. The family is the core of Aslan society, and its structure is inviolate. Every male is expected to marry at least once, and to support as many wives as his territory will allow. Females are to serve males or their sires by doing all that is needful and managing the servants; males rule and fight. As long as an Aslan conforms to these expectations, everything else is irrelevant. Same-sex relationships are not uncommon, especially among Aslan women. As these relationships cannot give rise to children, they have no bearing on an Aslan's social standing. A male is no more concerned with a wife who sleeps with a female friend than he is concerned by a wife who has lunch with a female friend. It's just sex – and if there is an emotional component, this too is irrelevant as she is not sleeping with another male.

Heterosexual relationships are somewhat more important, as they can threaten a marriage. Unmarried Aslan may do as they wish – but if a child is conceived, and the two prospective parents are of comparable social status, then marriage is expected. In cases where a marriage would be improper (a landless Outcast and the daughter of a clan head, for example), the pregnancy is either terminated or the child is adopted by a married relative.

Extramarital relationships are not uncommon, but carry a unique set of risks. A married male may consort with unmarried females freely, although if his existing wife or wives believe that his territory cannot support another wife, then they customarily put financial pressure on the male to desist. A married female may also consort with unmarried males, provided they have the husband's permission and ensure that conception is impossible. A rich male may offer the use of one of his females to a successful warrior, although the female is within her rights to refuse.

Secret extramarital relationships are tantamount to an attack on the husband's territory. The crime, to the Aslan, is not a lack of fidelity to one's husband, it is taking the risk of bearing a child not sired by one's sanctioned mate.

The Aslan permit a form of divorce. A female can be reclaimed by her clan if a male relative fights a duel with her husband. In more progressive cultures, this duel is a purely ceremonial affair where the husband is given a share of his wife's wealth in exchange for submitting to her male relative. In older cultures, the wife must be literally rescued from her husband's territory.

DRESS, ART & ARCHITECTURE

Aslan dress in loose tunics and kilts. Footwear is uncommon, as are gloves or any garments which restrict the wearer's movements. Most clothing is ornate, with etchings, ornaments, golden or shimmering threads and elaborate embroidery being used to decorate even everyday garments. Males often wear small amulets and talismans in their manes in a system of heraldic braids that displays the male's clan and territory.

Among upper-class males, displays of wealth and power are very important. The Aslan are not as obviously ostentatious as the Vargr, but they do appreciate demonstrations of wealth. A rich Aslan might dress in silken robes, and wear a heavy harness studded with jewels and precious metals.

Aslan architecture and design tends to the organic and the rounded; there are few straight lines, just flowing shapes. They favour artistry over efficiency in the design of their buildings – every Aslan structure is different, with its own variations and surprises. Even in mass-produced housing, the residents will strive to make their territory uniquely *theirs*. Human visitors have described the dominant trait of Aslan architecture is that it is *unsettling* – one is never wholly sure if one is alone and unwatched. Every garden seems to have a hidden balcony or treehouse where the owner can watch his guests, corridors twist and turn unexpectedly, and every room seems to have at least one concealed entrance.

The two main strands in Aslan artistic endeavour are spontaneity and tradition. The Aslan consider 'premeditated' art to be rather lacking. An artist who spends months labouring on a single painting must be lacking in inspiration. Some of the greatest works of Aslan art were created on the spot, and in some cases were drawn on a random wall that the artist happened to be passing. Popular forms of spontaneous art include *weahakhil*, poems similar to haiku that are composed extemporaneously; *tahuhakil*, which are written *weahakhil* where the glyphs reflect the action of the poem, and *aeokhul*, which are especially musical roars.

Traditionalist art includes epic poetry, jewellery-making, hair-braiding and sculpture, all of which have been practised in roughly the same form for hundreds of generations. Another popular traditionalist art is *yoyeaokhtef*, epic poems written in the style of *tahuhakil* where the calligraphy mirrors the action. *Yoyeaokhtef* are used as decorations on almost all Aslan ships.

GOVERNMENT

Government in the human sense does not exist in Aslan space. There is no central authority for the Aslan as a race, and Aslan have little concept of racial unity, purpose, or pride. They do have a fierce pride in culture; a human who adheres to the culture and traditions which Aslan consider proper is considered closer in spirit than an Aslan who has, for some reason, abandoned those traditions and culture. Aslan have no racial prejudice, but do have cultural prejudice, with non-Aslan looked upon as *tahiwiteakhtau* (barbarians) unless they embrace Aslan culture and behave as Aslan.

The Aslan equivalent of government is best equated with social structure. The head of the family settles disputes between family members. The head of the pride or a delegated male member of his clan or a delegated vassal settles disputes between prides.

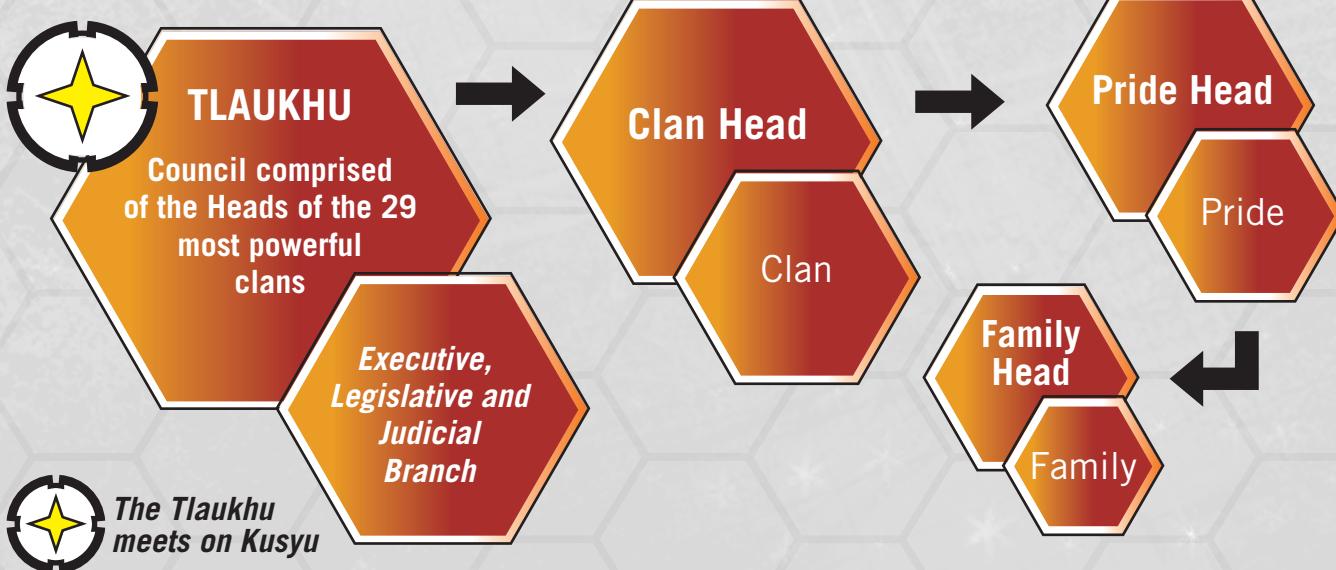
Disputes between clans are settled by clan wars, highly ritualized affairs which will function using specific rules, restrictions in locale, tech level of equipment, combatants, and many other aspects of the conflict. Such disputes are overseen by an *earleatrais* (referee) from a neutral clan. Such an appointment is an

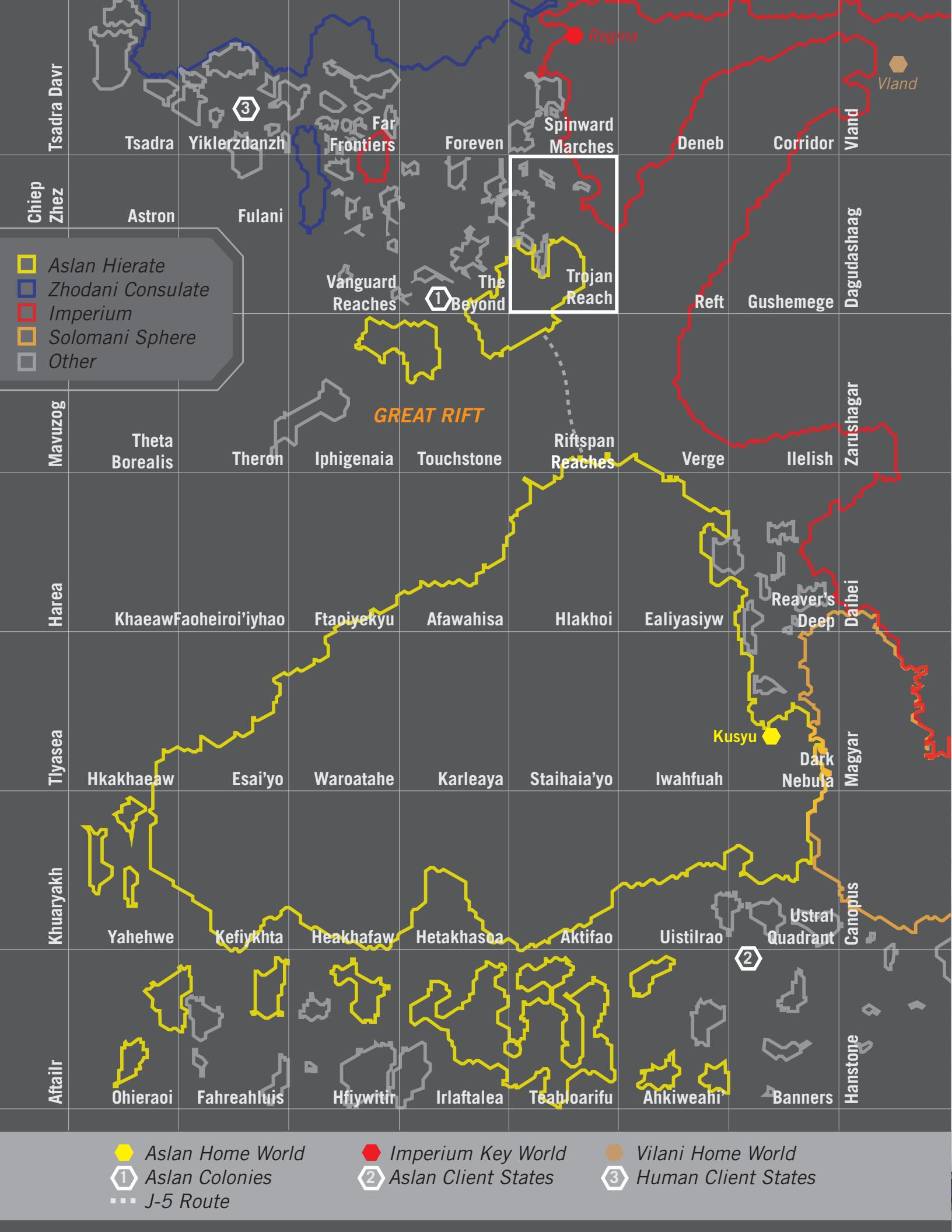
enormous honour for the clan receiving it, and the referee acts with scrupulous objectivity; moreover, especially good referees will be able to produce not only fair decisions, but ones which will salvage honor and pride for both sides.

At the top of the chain of family, pride, and clan heads stands the *Tlaukuh*. The term is used synonymously for the twenty-nine clan heads who meet on *Kusyu*, and for the twenty-nine clans which are the most powerful in the *Hierate*. When the *Tlaukuh* was originally established on *Kusyu*, they were an alliance of the largest and strongest of the Aslan clans. Since then, the criteria for the composition of the Twenty-Nine has been strength and land; population, military strength, industrial power, and landholdings are together considered when evaluating relative rankings of clans. Of the original Twenty-Nine, nineteen of the original clans remain today; the remaining ten positions have been occupied (some by a succession of clans) by new clans which have risen in strength, power and population to replace the others. Replacement of clans on the *Tlaukuh* occurs as the result of clan war, or when a clan falls in power and prestige to the point that it must become vassal to another clan.

Representatives of the *Tlaukuh* meet continuously on *Kusyu* to arbitrate disputes, settle matters of common interest, and otherwise interact with one another in the interests of their individual clans. It naturally follows that their decisions affect the other clans of the *Hierate* as well. A decision to co-operate in the development of a new technology affects other clans when the technology becomes available; a decision to settle a

Hierate Social Structure





clan war affects other clans by creating or removing trade barriers. Regardless of the effects of the decisions of the *Tlauku*, it is in no way to be considered a ruling council. The *Tlauku* makes no laws, decides no issues affecting the Hierate as a whole, owns no collective bases, military forces, or other centralized institutions, and has no power over any clan (except for the power each individual clan in the twenty-nine has over vassal clans). The closest analogy that might be found in human history is the League of Nations, a body with no authority in which important issues and disputes can be debated, but not necessarily resolved, save by the agreement of all concerned. Each clan is an independent entity (but may also be vassal to another clan). It controls space within each system in which a world is owned; when control of a world is split among several clans, there is a balance of power in the system as well. Each clan in such a case might maintain its own base, its own colonies, its own space station, its own outposts. Each would enforce such regulations regarding interplanetary flight as it saw fit, with local law level serving as a good guide to its stringency.

Representatives of other clans (powerful allies, vassals, or overlords) exert some influence on any given world, as do large corporations. These agents or envoys are most often found at the local starport, watching out for the interests of their clan or corporation.

Starports are for the most part extraterritorial enclaves which are not owned by any clan. The facilities are built, operated, and maintained by corporations which lease the land from a local clan. If a clan base is present, this will be located at the starport, but is under the control of the owning clan.

On worlds where control is split between many clans (Aslan Government Types H or J), transportation and trade routes are similarly owned by corporations which lease land from the clans through which the routes pass. All destinations, however, would be either clan territories or lease-holds established by companies doing business on the planet. Permission is needed to enter these areas for individuals not of the clan (Aslan and non-Aslan alike).

Representatives of clans and companies can be found at the starport and other major transport and trade terminals, from whom such permission must be sought.

The Hierate

Although the Hierate has no central authority, it is a single interstellar community. Outside the Hierate exist



The Aslan Homeworld

Kusyu A8769H6-E T Industrial

The Aslan homeworld is Kusyu, located at 0305 of Kilrai' subsector, within I'aheako sector. Humans often spell Kusyu as Kuzu in Anglic; Kilrai' is often spelled Kilane.

Kusyu orbits a close binary consisting of Tyeyo and its companion Saietaie, at 1 AU of Tyeyo with a period of 320 standard days. It rotates on its axis once every 36 standard hours (one eakhau). Kusyu is 12,980 kilometres in diameter, and has a standard atmosphere tainted with industrial pollutants. Sixty percent of the world is covered with water oceans with two major continents, both in the same hemisphere, and both straddling the equator. Several large archipelagos lie off the continents' shores. North and south polar ice-caps, anchored by island groups, cover about 15% of the total world surface.

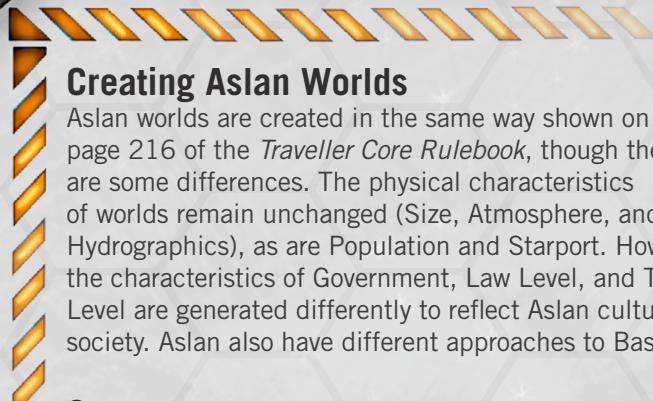
Kusyu has two natural satellites, each about 400 kilometres in diameter, orbiting at 51,000 kilometres and 96,000 kilometres respectively. Several artificial satellites, including two LaGrange stations, are also present.

Kusyu has a population of 4.6 billion, which includes the population of the artificial satellites and of several undersea colonies. There are less than 600,000 non-Aslan on Kusyu.

Humans classify the government of Kusyu as civil service bureaucracy, but Aslan classify it as split control, similar to balkanised for humans. All of the 29 *Tlauku* clans (and about 300 others) have landholds on Kusyu. Weapons restrictions are about equivalent to human Law Level 4, while Tech Level is 14, about the maximum to be encountered within the Hierate.



several other Aslan communities, including several large clusters of colonies in the Trojan Reach and Beyond sectors, and some to rimward of the Hierate. These colonies are separate from the Hierate, isolated primarily by distance. The Aslan of these communities are far closer, however, to the Aslan social norm than most Aslan living under the Imperium or in the Solomani Confederacy.



Creating Aslan Worlds

Aslan worlds are created in the same way shown on page 216 of the *Traveller Core Rulebook*, though there are some differences. The physical characteristics of worlds remain unchanged (Size, Atmosphere, and Hydrographics), as are Population and Starport. However, the characteristics of Government, Law Level, and Tech Level are generated differently to reflect Aslan culture and society. Aslan also have different approaches to Bases.

Government

In human terms, all Aslan worlds have a feudal form of government. Thus, one of several normal governmental codes might be assigned by humans to various Aslan planets (0, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, A, B, and C are all applicable), and these codes might be found in a human catalogue of world types (Kusyu, the Aslan homeworld, is often assigned Government code 8 in this fashion). When mapping Aslan space, however, it is useful to be more specific in the listing, giving a clear-cut idea of the distribution of power within an Aslan society.

Roll 1D on the Aslan Governments table, and cross-referce the result with the Population of the world to create it Government code.

ASLAN GOVERNMENTS

Population	1	2	3	4	5	6
2-	G	G	G	G	G	G
3-4	G	G	G	H	J	K
5-9	H	J	K	L	M	N
10+	H	H	H	H	H	H

G, Small station or facility: Either operated by an offworld clan or controlled by a company (the only instance where a world is controlled by anything but a clan).

H, Split control: Different parts of the world are owned by several on-planet clans. An analogy to human balkanised worlds.

J, Single on-world clan control: Other small clans may be present, but they will be dominated by the major clan.

K, Single multi-world clan control: The world is controlled by a single clan whose span extends over several worlds, not necessarily nearby.

L, Major clan control: The world is controlled by one of the Twenty-Nine.

M, Vassal clan control: The world is controlled (but not owned) by a vassal clan in fief to a larger clan.

N, Major vassal clan control: The world is controlled (but not owned) by a vassal clan in fief to one of the Twenty-Nine.

Law Level

Aslan Law Levels are generated by a 2D roll without modifications; Government codes have no effect on Law Level.

This code means much less as far as governing weaponry which may be carried than it does for human worlds; it may be considered a guideline to what is commonly carried on that world, with no penalty extended to carrying weaponry of 2 or 3 levels lower on the human table.

The real use for law level, is to represent the touchiness of the local clan government. It shows the frequency with which authorities may be encountered.

Tech Level

Tech Level codes correspond to the equivalent human codes, but Aslan technology is somewhat more uniform throughout the Hierate than equivalent human-settled worlds would enjoy. The Aslan have a maximum Tech Level of 14 (E).

The basic Tech Level roll for Aslan worlds is 1D +8, modified by the Tech Level table.

TECH LEVEL

Factor	DM
<i>Starport</i>	
Class A	+3
Class B	+2
Class C	+0
Class D	-1
Class E or X	-2
<i>Population</i>	
3- (unless government type G)	-3
4-6	-2
7	-1
8+	+0

Environmental Limits

Certain atmospheres on worlds dictate minimum Tech Levels, as described on page 226 of the *Traveller Core Rulebook*.

Bases

Aslan worlds have different types of bases available to them, as described below.

Naval: There are two types of naval bases, those belonging to clans of the Tlaukuh, and those belonging

to lesser clans. Naval bases of the Tlaukuh are larger and better equipped. All bases are maintained by individual clans.

Clan Stronghold (ACS): A large clan facility – the world is likely the home of an important pride or is strategically important.

Corporate Facility (ACF): A highly important factory or corporate headquarters.

Research Station (ARS): A clan-funded science facility

Ihatei Camp (AIC): A camp for landless males looking for retainers or conquests.

Travel Codes

Travel codes are not in general use in Aslan space. Class X starports are considered interdicted worlds, but the interdiction is declared by an individual clan, not by the Tlaukuh as a whole. Generally, worlds are interdicted by a clan so some local resource may be exclusively exploited, to prevent space travel by a native race, or exploit that race without outside interference.

Interdictions are hardly ever established to protect a world or race, only to benefit the acting clan in some way. However, the owning clan may maintain starport facilities and a base at a Class X starport world. Port quality is zero, and the port is closed to traffic not of the owning clan.

Travel and Trade Routes

The Hierate has nothing to correspond to the Imperial x-boat network, and no travel routes are plotted on

Hierate subsector maps. Major trade routes connecting high population worlds are often established by clans, and clan trade routes may be plotted; they connect worlds with population 9+, usually calling at established Class A and B starports along the way.

Individual clans maintain high-speed couriers that relay news and information much like an x-boat, but there is no co-ordination or central authority. News travels across the Hierate as far and as fast as someone is willing to pay for it.

Territories

The boundaries between the territories of Aslan clans are indistinct due to the nature of their landholdings. World surface land can be easily marked and held, but because a world may have landholdings from several clans, each clan claiming that world as part of its territory. Similarly, early exploration placed the best worlds in the hands of certain clans, and later explorations settled for less hospitable worlds. As a result, the gross boundaries of clan territories overlap. For example, the territory of a Tlaukuh clan may spread over several sectors, but within that territory most worlds are held by other clans. Even Tlaukuh clan territory boundaries can overlap.

At best, a single clan can be said to dominate a certain subsector or sector; a dominant clan owns or controls more worlds than any other single clan and maintains power superior to any other single clan in the area.



Justice

Criminal acts are rare, but not completely unheard of in Aslan society. Crimes are different from the insults or slurs that provoke duels, and are classified into three categories: crimes of passion, crimes with victims, and crimes of honour.

- Crimes of passion involve misbehaviour prompted by temper, anger, or provocation (assault other than duelling, intoxication, or rioting).
- Crimes with victims involve taking of money or items of value (theft, stealing, burglary, fraud, forgery, extortion), violating the person of another for profit (kidnapping, terrorism, piracy).
- Crimes of honour involve failure to observe rituals established for behaviour (ambush, failure to obey the *earleatrais* in a duel, abandoning responsibilities, lying in a clan council, perfidy). Originally, all accusations of crime were judged by the head of the family, pride, or clan involved. Through time, other methods have evolved.

For crimes of passion, the accused is judged by the head of the family, pride, or clan involved. Who judges the accused is determined by elaborate protocols which consider the ramifications of the crime and the notoriety which it has received. Appeals may be made to the next higher head. Punishments are minimal for first offences, with escalating penalties for continued violations. Generally, a contrite apology is sufficient atonement for a first offence. A fine, or perhaps donated labour for the family is called for in later offences.

For crimes with victims, current practice is to find an impartial *earleatrais* to consider the case and present findings; appeals can be made to a panel composed of the heads of the families of the accused, the victim, and the *earleatrais*. Penalties call for restitution at the very least, and often doubled or tripled penalties as punishments. Clans vary in their treatment of cases where the victim is physically injured or killed; some inflict a similar fate on the guilty party, while others require restitution and punitive damages, or terms of forced labour. Judgements in cases involving money and males are often very lenient, taking into account the lack of understanding most males have for money.

The Aslan do not have a police force to investigate crimes. If the crime is of sufficient importance, the clan may assign agents to seek out the criminals and bring them before the panel of judges. For petty crimes, the victim must either take the law into their own claws, or else hire a rukt'hao, a private investigator.

For crimes of honour, judgement is made by the pride or clan head, depending on the severity of the crime. Crimes of honour are the most serious of crimes in Aslan society, and penalties range from banishment (at a minimum) through mutilation or branding to forfeiture of all property and death. In practice, most crimes of honour are never tried: a duel to the death disposes of the accused before a trial can take place.

Other Social Services

Many of the services which humans consider the province of government are provided by the pride or clan. Roads, public works, and justice are all provided by the local clan or pride, as is the task of education.

Many functions are handled by corporations. Many tasks which the pride or clan believes should be done are contracted out to corporations. Throughout the Hierate, corporations run private schools, security patrols, hospitals, fire protection, and record keeping services, and are paid directly by the users, or by fees from the local clan or pride.

ASLAN CORPORATIONS

Commerce and industry play a large part in Aslan society, as it does in any technological society. Corporations are the domain of female Aslan. Males might be employed by a corporation as crews of starships, mercenaries, or (for the lower classes only) workers, but the direction and management of corporate affairs rests entirely in female hands.

For this reason, corporations are not clan-owned, since the clan is a masculine quasi-political structure. Instead, customs have grown up to maintain corporate independence, but also allow clan ties to corporations, furnishing a continuity to the conduct of business. Small businesses pass from clan to clan through the marriage of the female business owner. Larger companies have safeguards built in to avoid direct ties to a clan. That said, there are strong connections between the corporate and clan spheres, leading some to compare Aslan corporations to organised crime. It is not unknown for a corporation to be granted exclusive trading rights within a domain, or for a landowner to block passage through his territory for all goods except those handled by his sister's corporation.

Some companies may be owned by a female who has decided not to marry. Ultimately, control passes to another female who has made a similar pledge. An owner may always opt out of management if (or when)

Aslan Megacorporations

Four megacorporations exist in Aslan space.

Tlasayerlahel

The largest existing Aslan merchant company is Tlasayerlahel (the name means Interstellar Merchants in Aslan). Tlasayerlahel is clan-controlled: it is operated and managed by Aslan females from the Yerlyaruhi clan. Aslan males from the clan hierarchy provide basic policy guidance to the company, but day-to-day management is provided by the more capable Aslan females. Tlasayerlahel was originally established to provide transport service between worlds owned by, or subservient to, the Yerlyaruwo clan. As the clan grew, the company grew as well, and today it provides cargo and passenger service between major worlds in all sectors of the Aslan Hierate.

Home Port: Kusyu.

Reastirlao

The number two megacorporation in Aslan space is Reastirlao, an independent corporation which has grown from a small trading company which served parts of Hlakhoi sector. During the clan war between *Yerlyaruwiwo* and *Tralyeaeawi* (614 to 693), Reastirlao provided transport support to *Tralyeaeawi* clan and reaped large profits. During the war, the company also established many trading bases (often displacing existing bases belonging to Yerlyaruwo clan's Tlasayerlahel); when the war ended, Reastirlao was positioned to retain those bases and to build on the foundation they had created. By 900, the company had attained megacorporation status with trading bases in all of the Hierate's sectors.

Reastirlao has retained its independence by prohibiting marriage by its higher level managers. Its female managers thus cannot be influenced by the male leaders of various clans. Successful managers are rewarded with large cash settlements when they leave the company, and many of the managers pursue marriage and family after their career with the company is over. Reastirlao, in addition to merchant operations, maintains a base of

heavy industry in Hlakhoi and Ealiyasiyw sectors, and its product mix includes starships, machine tools, and construction materials.

Home Port: Htyaaeirl.

Iyalil

The third largest megacorporation specialises in heavy industry and electronics, and was for many centuries the backbone of the Hierate's military-industrial complex. Iyalil is closely associated with the *Hlewela* clan, who founded the corporation in the early days of Aslan space exploration, before the development of the jump drive. Iyalil benefited greatly from the rush into space, providing hulls and other components for the *Khaukheairl/Yerlyaruwiwo* jump engineers, as well as terraforming and life support gear for the new colonies.

The *Hlewela* clan leadership argued with the corporate management during the Cultural Purge of the 2300s – the *Hlewela* males were hidebound members of the *Tlaukuh*, while the sympathies of the managers were with the outer colonies. Divisions grew until Iyalil managed to tear itself away from the founding clan. It remained neutral in the war, and is now owned by females from many different clans. It is based in Staihaia'yo Sector.

Home Port: Eafoarei

Khtularoihowa

This giant corporation is the youngest of the four great corporations. Originally founded to trade with human colonies along the trailing border, Khtularoihowa adapted to supply weapons and ships to raiders during the Border Wars. Its clever managers predicted (and some say, influenced) the course of the Border Wars, and Khtularoihowa profited greatly from every phase of the conflict. By the time the wars ended, the corporation's position was unassailable, and today there are many worlds along Reaver's Deep that are wholly owned by Khtularoihowa.

Home Port: Kusyu

Hierate Megacorporations by Size



she decided to marry; a successor is always being groomed as a hedge against the possible marriage, death, or disability of the current owner.

In other cases, the ownership may indeed be clan-controlled, with the upper levels staffed by the unmarried females and wives of the clan. In such cases, marriage of an executive outside of the clan will result in an exchange of assets; in essence, she will sell her stock in her native clan's company to other executives of that company and buy stock in her new clan's company as a condition of her marriage. If a large potential monetary loss is involved, simultaneous cross-marriages or other methods of equalising the value of the exchange may be arranged or required. Marriages of this type are frequently more complex than complicated corporate mergers within the Imperium.

A third type of corporation is the jointly-owned company, in which executives may be drawn from many different clans, and clan interest in and control over such corporations is proportional to the power of its females within the corporate hierarchy. The aim is to strike a balance, and this type of company strives to be beyond the possible control of any one clan.

Finally, a single female might amass enough wealth during her lifetime to elevate her to the circles of the large corporations. She may adopt a conventional business organisation, establish a unique organization, or simply allow the corporation to be broken up on her death.

THE SPACE FORCES

Space Forces are operated by any Aslan group which finds a need for them. Most are operated by clans, but some companies also maintain Space Forces for corporate purposes.

Aslan Space Forces perform missions of a greater diversity than does a corresponding human space Navy. In addition to military operations, an Aslan Space Force provides transportation for clan members (for colonization expeditions), conducts exploration and scouting expeditions (usually to accommodate ihathei in search of new lands), supports clan territory with transportation and by carrying trade goods, and even engages in merchant operations. Aslan Space Forces also perform more traditional space Navy operations such as space combat, and offensive and defensive operations.

Types of Space Forces

There are typically three sizes, or types, of Space Forces within the Hierate.



Kinships & Secret Schools

Kinships are Aslan organisations roughly cognate to human guilds or social clubs, focussed on a particular topic or skill. Kinships can cross clan lines, and are often one of the few peaceable connections between warring clans. The oldest kinships were gatherings of experts in a particular field. The Healers' Kinship was formed of physicians from a dozen different clans, who gathered under a flag of truce to exchange medical knowledge and secrets; other ancient kinships include the Secret Schools (*hoaawli*) of the warriors, which preserved secret fighting techniques and martial arts.

One of the most important kinships is the Brotherhood of Stars. The Aslan jump drive was developed by the *Yerlyaruiwo* and the *Khaukheirl* clans, and the secrets behind its operation were held only by those clans. Initially, the other clans had to pay the two star-faring clans to passage on their jump-capable ships, but as the demand for star travel grew, the *Yerlyaruiwo* and the *Khaukheirl* could not build enough ships to cope. They therefore formed a kinship, the Brotherhood of Stars. Aslan admitted into this kinship were taught to build and operate jump drives, but also swore oaths not to reveal these secrets and not to use their skills against the kinship's founders. In this way, the two clans were able to open up the jump drive to the other clans without losing their influence, while still avoiding an otherwise-inevitable war for control of the drive technology.

In modern society, the kinships are close to the Traveller's Aid Society in the Imperium. A member of a kinship may appeal for aid or shelter from other members of the kinship. Membership of a kinship cannot be purchased – it is awarded to talented students or to family members.



- Planetary Space Forces are usually small, and restricted to a single system; they are operated by a clan which controls only one world or system. Such a Space Force will have few (less than ten) starships, although it may have quite a few more non-starships.
- Clan Space Forces are operated by a clan which controls more than one system. Most Aslan Space Forces are in this category.
- *Tlaukuh* Space Forces are operated by clans which are members of the Twenty-Nine. *Tlaukuh* Space Forces are more proficient, better equipped, and more technologically advanced.

Organisation

The composition of crews on Aslan ships is dictated by Aslan psychology and culture. Upper-class males command, and hold jobs such as pilot and gunner (those in which no more knowledge is needed than that required to punch the right buttons or give correct orders). These officers may be highly capable in the performance of their duties, superb space tacticians, and so forth, but they only know what to do, not necessarily why. Females hold all officer positions that call for technical knowledge, and lower-class males and females are found performing maintenance and repair duties. While the captain, an upper-class male, commands in combat, his female executive officer runs the administrative details of the ship.

In combat, the Aslan are a tricky proposition. The average Aslan combatant is more skilled than his opposite number; an Aslan gunner has done nothing except learn to acquire and destroy targets, an Aslan fighter pilot has spent years practising dogfighting and attack runs. The downside is that the average Aslan combatant has no idea how his weapons work, and can be thrown off by even minor damage or a change in circumstances (one probably apocryphal tale from the early Border Wars tells of an Aslan ace who destroyed half-a-dozen Solomani fighters in a single engagement without taking a scratch – then flew his fighter into a star because he didn't know it would damage his ship).

Privateers

Clans involved in clan wars of very high intensity can (under the elaborate rules of clan warfare) issue letters of marque and reprisal. These letters permit a corporation to attack starships and spacecraft of the enemy clan wherever it is found. Since the corporation is involved in the operation for profit, such an attack tries to disable the enemy vessel and then capture it; prize crews then board the ship to take the capture and its cargo to port. Personnel on board the ship are identified by clan: those not in the enemy clan must be released safely; those in the enemy clan can be killed, but more frequently are ransomed (the profit motive is primary in a privateering operation).

Privateering is a business venture much like mercenary operations. It can take place only in limited circumstances, however, so it is relatively rare. In addition, the risk of losing a privateering ship are great enough that it is usually undertaken only by corporations with some ties (even informal ties) to one of the clans involved.

Space Hazards

In space, Aslan systems have a far lower risk of piracy and similar hazards than many systems in human space. Piracy as a profession is tainted with dishonour, and most Aslan would never pursue such a career. It is not, however, completely unknown; it is possible to rationalize such pursuits with enough thought and effort.

More frequent dangers, however, are those of direct encounters with vessels of a hostile clan, or with privateers. When vessels belonging to clans which are at war with each other meet, their actions are governed by the particular rules applicable to the clan war. A chase and battle may ensue; ritualised (but still deadly) games of coward (collision courses, deliberate near-misses, ramming) may take place; insults and threats may be exchanged; or nothing at all may happen. When a clan war has escalated in intensity enough for there to be open hostilities, then there is also the potential for privateers: corporate-owned raiding ships licensed by a clan to raid the ships and commerce of the enemy clan. Such corporate activity is profit-oriented, and considered a legitimate enterprise.

THE MILITARY

Each clan maintains its own armed forces to defend and protect it, and many companies own mercenary forces which are hired out to clans—or to groups outside the Hierate—for profit. The necessity for such forces is demonstrated by the fact that clan warfare is constant in the Hierate; somewhere there is always a clan war in progress. Although such wars are formal, and governed by elaborate rituals, they are no less deadly for the combatants.

External threats to the Aslan are infrequent (the last of the great Aslan Border Wars ended in 380 Imperial), and also are handled on the clan level.

One problem Aslan sometimes have is recognising that non-Aslan are less likely to fight by the strict set of rules which govern Aslan-Aslan conflicts. Until realised, Aslan often fight at a disadvantage. When they do recognise the enemy is not abiding by the supposed rules, Aslan tend to over-react and begin all-out warfare.

Organisation

Military organisation for the Aslan military places males in leadership and fighting positions, and females provide administrative or technical support. Unit commanders are male, assisted by a female executive.

The commander leads the troops and determines tactics, while the executive oversees logistics and has a strong influence over operations through her creation of battle plans. Maintenance and supply units are staffed by lower-class males and females. Fighting units are staffed mostly by males, support units mostly by females, although there is some crossover. Males of low social level in combat units have some chance of social (and hence military) advancement, while those in non-combatant arms have virtually none.

Mercenaries

Mercenary units are typically organised as business ventures by a female (often as part of a corporation). The owner, or a female relation appointed to act as representative of the owner, negotiates tickets and generally sees to business. This individual accompanies the unit headquarters and is the ultimate source of decisions regarding the employment of the unit. In practice, however, she lets the (male) commander make the combat decisions, intervening only when the male's lack of a balanced viewpoint threatens the best business interests of the unit.

The profession of mercenary is an honourable one, since there are usually more landless males (lower-class and ihatsei alike) than there are positions in a clan's military force. Mercenaries win land, honour, and glory through their actions, and females have run mercenary units as a source of wealth since long before the Aslan went into space.

Some mercenary units are composed of highly trained assassins; skilled less in mass warfare than in individual or small unit combat techniques. These units need fewer females, since logistics and similar operations are less a part of a war of assassins. There is nothing

dishonourable about such assassinations, as long as they are part of a prescribed clan war. Such units might be comparable to the ninja of Japan, but without the stigma attached to ninja by contemporaneous samurai society. All in all, however, assassins and wars of assassins are far less frequent than more orthodox warfare and military forces.

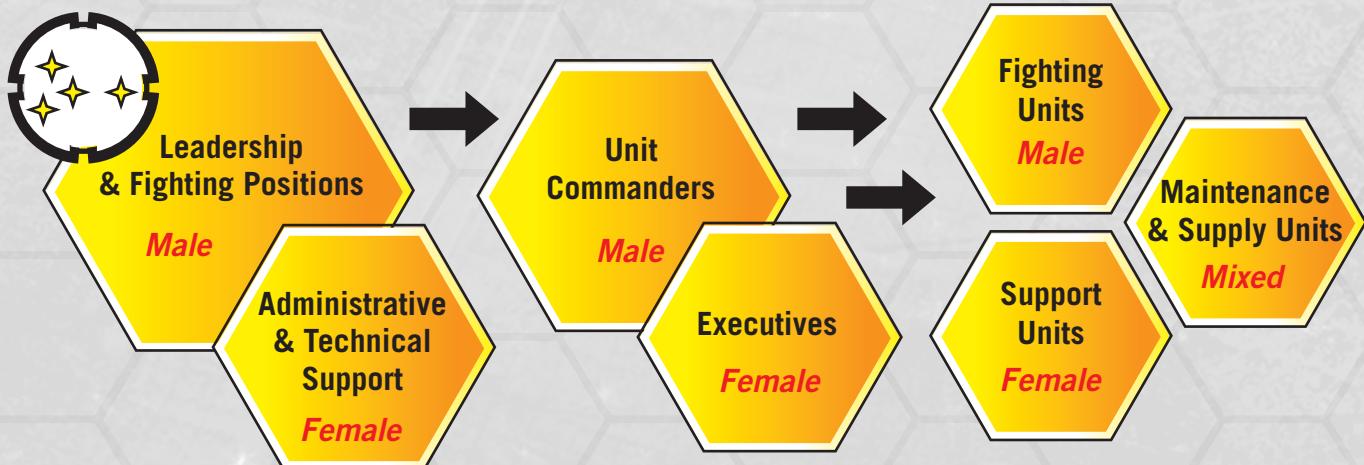
LANGUAGE & NAMING

All Aslan (with the exception of a few lost colonies) share a common language and culture. However, this culture is highly complex and custom-bound, and individual names and words can become rather unwieldy.

The clan head of an independent clan (vassal to no other clan) is known simply by the clan's name; where differentiation is necessary, the particle *ko* (himself) is added. For example, the head of clan *Hlyueawi* would be known as *Hlyueawi* or *Hlyueawiko*. At the opposite extreme, an Aslan lower in the social order (but still a noble) might be named *HlyueawififyAhoay'iifyWahtoiLayeauiwahfeaktelih lalikhtyeiteyahhtateisiyu*, roughly meaning, 'unmarried first son of the third son of the grandfather of the head of the pride which holds the valley in the fork of the *Iwah*-feal River, part of clan *Wahtoi*, which is a vassal of clan *Aroaye'i*, itself a vassal of clan *Hlyueawi*.'

Females are named for their husbands, fathers, or brothers, depending on circumstances. Non-nobles are named for the nobles of whom they are vassals or clients. Needless to say, while formal or ritual speech (which is frequent) calls for Aslan to use their full names, nicknames are commonly used among intimates. Nicknames usually commemorate some supposed virtue or achievement, and can be chosen and discarded whenever the holder desires.

Hierate Military Organisation



In coming up with names or words for Aslan Travellers, places, or things, a simple system for generating random, Aslan-sounding words is provided. This neatly avoids all considerations of syntax and vocabulary. Simply generate a word as desired and assign a suitable meaning to it, such as 'Killer of Ten Thousand,' or, less bloodthirstily, 'He Honours His Ancestors,' or 'Place of the North Wind.' Since Aslan does not translate well into English (most Aslan words are an entire phrase of meaning, much like written Chinese ideograms), meanings can vary considerably. *Tehleikhoi* is the name of an Aslan mercenary regiment; it can be translated as 'Soldiers of the Falling Night,' 'Knights of the Setting Sun,' or 'Warriors of the Evening Star.' There is a great deal of latitude in the development of Aslan words and names.

Aslan Language

The Aslan common language is called *trohk*. Humans find it difficult to learn, but quite beautiful to listen to. For the most part, *trohk* is a lyrical tongue, although there is the occasional dissonant growl or roar. There are several dialects of *trohk*; all of the major clans have their own version of the language, and *trohk* has been greatly expanded by the females to cover scientific and economic topics. Common *trohk* can be understood by all Aslan, but males are quickly left behind when females start talking in the technical dialects. A male dialect of *trohk* exists; this is a highly formal language, used in legal and political circles.

A few ultra-conservative clans preserve older Aslan languages, such as *trow* or *haeto*.

Aslan Script

The common Aslan writing system is composed of hundreds of glyphs called *tao*. These glyphs were originally pictorial, coupled with several symbols that are clearly derived from claw-marks, but have become greatly stylised. Common sentences can be understood with knowledge of only three dozen common *tao*.

A scientific form of *tao* is used by females for technical purposes. On board an Aslan ship, consoles used by males will use simplified, traditional *tao*, while female controls will be labelled using the female glyphs to provide more accurate information.

Aslan Mathematics

The Aslan have four fingers, so they naturally use base 8 mathematics (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 20 and so on). Powers of 8 are therefore nice round numbers to the Aslan. An Aslan epic poem might say that 4096 warriors died in a battle, or that a warrior took 64 wounds before dying; these are not precise measurements, but the equivalent of a human saying

10,000 people fought in the battle, or that the warrior took a hundred wounds.

Generating Aslan Words

Words in Aslan, like English, have definite letter frequencies and syllable patterns which are independent of information content; it is possible to randomly generate words which look and sound Aslan. Aslan syllables are composed of up to three elements: an initial consonant, a vowel, and a final consonant. The Aslan sound frequency table shows the relative frequencies to be expected for various sounds in the Aslan language. For example, the relative frequency of 'f' as an initial consonant is 5:87, and that of 'h' as a final consonant is 10:47.

Pronunciations: This table is a guide to Aslan speech, but many Aslan sounds are not reproducible by human vocal cords.

*Separately means that the two letters are pronounced separately, but very close together.

Aslan has four syllable types: those consisting of just a vowel (V), those beginning with a consonant (CV), those ending with a consonant (VC), and those both beginning and ending with a consonant (CVC). In Aslan words, their relative frequency of occurrence is about 3:3:2:2. Out of ten syllables, three will be V, three will be CV, two will be VC, and two will be CVC.

Initial Consonants (87)

Sound	Freq	Pronunciation
F	5	like <i>whew</i>
FT	4	<i>rift</i>
H	7	<i>hit</i>
HF	2	like <i>hfang</i>
HK	5	like <i>hkang</i>
HL	3	like <i>hlang</i>
HR	3	like <i>hrang</i>
HT	5	<i>height</i>
HW	2	<i>what</i>
K	7	<i>kite</i>
KH	6	<i>loch</i> Scottish
KHT	4	<i>Nachte</i> German
KT	4	<i>backed</i>
L	2	<i>like</i>
R	3	<i>run</i>
S	4	<i>sun</i>
ST	3	<i>stop</i>
T	8	<i>ton</i>
TL	2	<i>Tlaloc</i> Aztec
TR	2	<i>trip</i>
W	6	<i>win</i>

Vowels (52)

Sound	Freq	Pronunciation
A	10	lock
AI	3	kite
AO	2	Mao Chinese
AU	1	house
E	6	get
EA	6	separately*
EI	2	bay
I	4	kit
IY	3	feet
O	2	gone
OA	1	separately*
OI	2	noise
OU	1	separately*
U	1	lute
UA	1	separately*
UI	1	separately*
YA	2	yard
YU	1	feud

Final Consonants (47)

Sound	Freq	Pronunciation
H	10	how
KH	4	loch Scottish
L	7	all
LR	3	all right
R	5	far
RL	4	earl
S	5	hiss
W	6	like wow
‘	3	glottal stop

*Separately means that the two letters are pronounced separately, but very close together.

A few rules govern how sounds are grouped together. No syllable ending with a consonant can be followed by a syllable beginning with a consonant. A single letter vowel can never be followed directly by the same single letter vowel; for example, aa should not occur, but aeae, or even aeee could.

HUMANS IN THE HIERATE

Just as Aslan are found in the Imperium, so, too, humans may be encountered within Hierate space. This can occur in two ways: the humans may be outsiders, or they may actually be part of the Hierate social structure.

The reception of human Travellers in a Hierate system depends largely on their business there. If they are seen as

being useful to the clan, they will be welcomed. Otherwise, they will be requested to refuel and depart as quickly as possible. Most probably, they will be doing business with some local corporation, buying or selling, and humans spending large amounts of money are likely to be quite welcome (at least as far as that corporation is concerned).

Most dealings within Aslan space require that Travellers seek out influential Aslan patrons, either nobles or corporate executives, who can smooth the way for them to travel in Hierate space. A lord might give a party a letter of introduction to his vassals elsewhere, or a vassal a letter of recommendation to his lord. Corporate dealings would be essentially contractual.

Tourism is not beyond the bounds of possibility, with corporations providing guided tours of Aslan worlds (and paying part of the profits to the controlling clan). Tourists would, however, be shepherded closely by assigned guides (who need a high level of Tolerance skill - see page 71). In general, most Aslan space would be considered an Amber Zone for most humans, due to the dangers associated in dealing with touchy Aslan individuals. A human's best recourse is to attempt to understand and make use of Aslan customs, to obey the judgements of Aslan lords, and above all, to fight for honour are the most important virtues a visiting human can display. By and large, such humans have nothing to fear while in Aslan space, as long as their own actions and intentions are honourable and they behave with propriety and respect.

Humans may also exist as vassals of some Aslan clan. In such a case, the humans thus encountered will be almost indistinguishable from racial Aslan in terms of behaviour and culture, having thoroughly embraced all aspects of Aslan culture. Others will be barbarians who have been actively kept from interstellar travel by a locally dominant clan.

Human Travellers who have adopted Aslan culture follow basic Aslan character generation. Humans do not gain the various physiological differences (enhanced strength and endurance, the claws, bursts of increased speed, superior senses, etc.), but are otherwise treated pretty much as Aslan. Men and women thus generated will be much like their Aslan counterparts. Their drives, motivations, and ways of looking at things will be thoroughly Aslan.

HISTORY OF THE HIERATE

The history of the Aslan race is a history of conflict and forced development under the threat of law. Aslan technological development and exploration of the stars are driven by clan strife and the constant hunger for new territories. The result is a race whose reach threatens to exceed its grasp, a vibrant dangerous species who will

either accomplish great things or dash themselves to oblivion in endless wars.

Prehistory

From the earliest days when they were hunters on Kusyu's grassland plains, the Aslan have had a curious dichotomy in their social organization. Females were traditionally responsible for provisions and improvement of life, while males existed largely for defence and war. The early hunts were conducted by females, and females are generally credited as the innovators in the areas of toolmaking, animal husbandry, and eventually, agriculture (developed to support herds of livestock, not for direct consumption). Males adopted female innovations reluctantly, but it was the female of the species who strived always to improve the Aslan way of life.

The Aslan eventually hunted to virtual extinction most of the large carnivores which threatened them on Tatohti, the largest of the planet's continents. At this point, fire, metalworking, agriculture, and many other developments had brought the Aslan to the verge of civilisation, and the security they now enjoyed permitted development of a number of civilized communities on Tafohti.

The territorial instincts of the Aslan male made the general trend of Aslan social development a feudal one. Families formed into prides, and prides formed into clans under the leadership of a dominant pride. Clans practiced a variety of semi-feudal procedures of fiefdom and vassalage which led to the development of a few very powerful clans, but this was generally the limit of social organisation in most Aslan civilisations. Although tradition and ritual gradually evolved to curb the aggressive male character, wars were common as clans sought greater power or greater territory, and as population pressure increased on Kusyu, wars grew both more common and more intense.

The Dawn of the Hierate

By -167 Aslan (-2250 by the Imperial calendar), the Aslan had attained roughly TL3, although their military technology was pushing into TL4. Worse, the whole planet was now controlled by the ruling class of landowners – there was no territory left for young Aslan to expand into. Duels to inherit a father's territory became more brutal; wars, too, became more common as the disenfranchised males pushed to invade the territory of other clans. A permanent class of awkhea – landless vassal families – arose.

As technology advanced in a forced march, warfare became an increasingly specialised field. Firearms, tanks, poison gas – while the males who wielded these weapons did not know how they worked, they still have to be extensively trained in their operation. A clan who



Tale of Heroes

<Red-Maned-Warrior-From-The-Hills-By-The-Roaring-River> came to the place where <Holds-His-Ground-Son-of-Broken-Tooth-Grandson-of-He-Who-Rules-The-Sunny-Valley> had made his camp. <Red-Maned-Warrior> saw the signs of ownership, and he gave honour to <Holds-His-Ground>, and <Holds-His-Ground> gave honour in return and welcomed <Red-Maned-Warrior> to the camp. Now, <Holds-His-Ground> had three wives, and these wives were out hunting.

The first wife returned at sunset, and she brought back a <goat> she had slain.

The second wife returned when the fast moon rose, and she brought back seven <rabbits> that she caught with a cunning trap.

The third wife came back not at all, not even when the slow moon rose, not even when the embers of <Holds-His-Ground>'s fire became ash.

<Holds-His-Ground> said to <Red-Maned-Warrior>: <Third-Wife-of-Holds-His-Ground> is missing. I shall search for her.

And because <Red-Maned-Warrior> shared his fire, he went with <Holds-His-Ground> into the night.

They came to a fork in the trail, and <Holds-His-Ground> went to the left and <Red-Maned-Warrior> went to the right, and in a cave in the hills <Red-Maned-Warrior> found <Third-Wife-of-Holds-His-Ground>, and she was threatened by a ferocious monster who had trapped her in the cave. With great bravery, <Red-Maned-Warrior> leapt on the monster and drove his dew-claws into its eyes.

That morning, <Holds-His-Ground> came to the cave, and found <Red-Maned-Warrior> lying by the side of <Third-Wife-of-Holds-His-Ground>, and he was greatly angered. He roared a challenge to <Red-Maned-Warrior> and the two fought, and <Holds-His-Ground> slew <Red-Maned-Warrior>.

And in this way, <Holds-His-Ground> guarded the honour of <Third-Wife-of-Holds-His-Ground>.



fielded armies of peasants would be easily defeated by a single male with a belt-fed machine gun. Some clans took to employing mercenaries who were trained in the new weapons; others stopped fighting petty border wars every year, and launched devastating blitzkriegs every ten years.

While there were nigh-constant limited wars between clans, the pressure continued to build. The larger clans built coalitions of lesser clans and vassals, bound by honour and treaty to aid their masters in time of war. The situation was broadly similar to that of Terra's Europe in the early 20th century, when webs of alliances and treaties ensured that local conflicts would spark greater ones. The situation on Kusyu was even worse, as the natural aggression and territorial nature of the Aslan pushed the clans inexorably towards a world war.

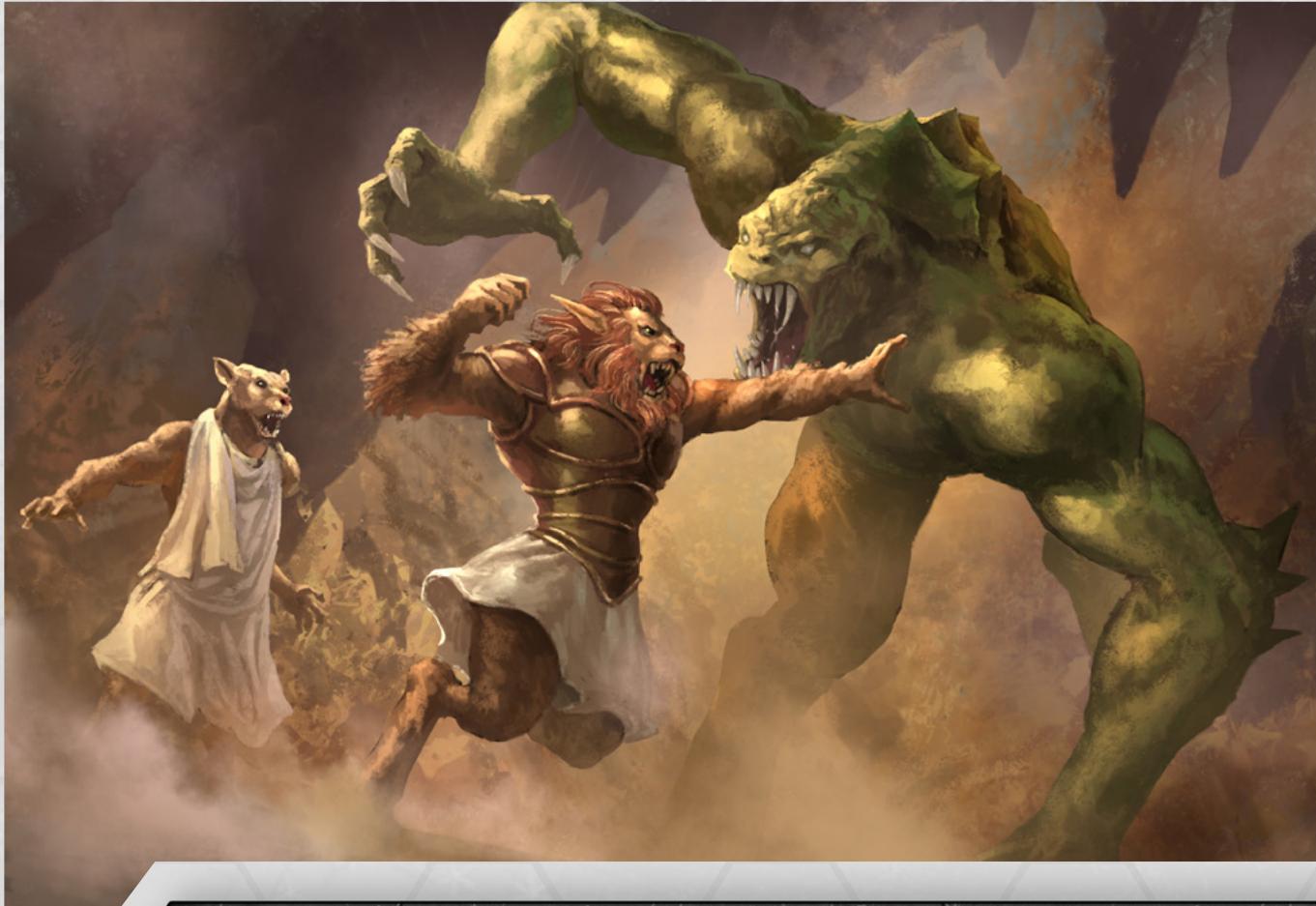
The first Aslan world war ended abruptly with the use of atomic weapons. The defeated clans recoiled, retrenched and launched their own crash programs to develop such bombs. The second and third wars, following within a decade, were catastrophic for the Aslan. Atomic and then thermonuclear bombs were used with abandon. Over twenty million male warriors died in the war; the number of female civilian casualties has never been precisely determined, but likely exceeds forty million. Worse, the wars pushed the battlefields to new territories that were unaffected by the atomic devastation.

Kusyu barely escaped a global conflict of devastating proportions, saved by two developments which took place at about the same time. First, the Aslan instituted their Hierate—an agreement on the part of the twenty-

nine pre-eminent clans to meet and discuss their differences on a regular basis, replacing the previous procedures which dealt with each problem on a case-by-case emergency basis. The Hierate was initially formed as a trade organisation, as female-run corporations desperately tried to rebuild the global trade network in the aftermath of the wars, but was quickly adopted by male politicians and envoys who recognised the threat posed by the new weapons and the lack of new territory. The Hierate's efforts did greatly improve the flow of commerce, giving war-torn regions a chance to rebuild.

One of the Hierate's first great innovations was the expansion of the *earleatrais* system of external judges for duels. The same concept of limited conflict arbitrated by a neutral party was applied to warfare. The decision of the *earleatrais* would be backed not only by the honour of the warring parties, but by the political pressure of the twenty-nine greatest clans on Kusyu. Where there were a few large-scale wars, most of the clan conflicts in the century after the establishment of the Hierate were resolved using limited forces and without any atomic blasts.

Aslan scientific development flourished in that century. The principles behind atomics were applied to power generation. The Aslan developed computers, which allowed males to perform much more complicated tasks



than before. The first rockets were launched, and the Aslan began to explore their solar system. Some in the Hierate began seriously discussing the possibilities of settling other planets.

Others worried about the renewed threat of population pressure. The rebuilding fuelled by the economic boom and opportunities offered by new technologies had absorbed much of the surplus energy of the males, but now a new and much larger generation of males was reaching the age of *akhuaeuhrekhyeh*, and these males demanded territory. Vicious duels were fought between sons to inherit their father's estates, and the number of second challenges (where a younger son challenges the winning brother) rose sharply for the first time in a generation. The Hierate's shaky political system proved inadequate to maintain the tradition of limited war in the face of such pressure. Something had to give.



Tlauku Structure

Formally, the Tlauku is made up of the Twenty-Nine clan heads who rule the twenty-nine largest and most powerful clans. Each clan head brings a retinue including his wives and other matriarchs, his eldest son, bodyguards and other advisors, both male and female, as well as all manner of envoys, scribes, lawyers, champions and other specialists. Meetings of all the Twenty-Nine are exceedingly rare, though, and are called only in times when the whole Hierate must agree on a decision. Most of the time, the clan heads work through representatives (koso) who attend meetings on Kusyu while the clan heads dwell on their respective homeworlds. The delay in interstellar communications means that the koso of distant clans have almost as much influence in the Tlauku as the ko they represent.

In addition to the high council of clan elders, the Tlauku has several sub-committees and associated groups. Each clan dispatches a number of ministers (fteaoko) to discuss specialised topics such as trade, war, technology, foreign relations, legal matters and so forth. All these ministers are appointed by the clan heads.

There are also honoured Aslan who are elevated to council for their own deeds instead of family connections. These honoured individuals are called to the ongoing Grand Conclave to discuss matters of honour and tradition. The most important duty of this conclave is to review the composition of the Twenty-Nine every thirteen years.



The Hunt of the Stars

About 96 Aslan (-1999 Imperial), barely a century after the *Tlauku* came into being (the exact date and circumstances of the discovery remain shrouded in mystery); the two most powerful clans (the *Yerlyaruwo* and the *Khaukheairl*) co-operated to an unprecedented degree to produce a jump drive. It opened the stars to the Aslan race. The Aslan developed the jump drive at early TL7, before they even mastered gravitic manipulation technology. They leapt out to the stars in ships that could barely break orbit.

Star travel was the ideal way to satisfy the territorial drives of the race. Initially, the jump drive was kept a secret, and the two clans who possessed it used it to establish colonies on neighbouring worlds, but their boastful males could not claim the territory on these new worlds – an Aslan warrior who claimed he had a vast estate on another planet would be laughed at in. They were forced to reveal the drive's existence (although most of the other *Tlauku* already suspected that the two clans had some strange new technology). The *Yerlyaruwo* and the *Khaukheairl* kept their monopoly on the drive, but offered to transport colonists from other clans offworld.

The two clans built as many jump-capable ships as they could, and when their own factories were strained to the limit, they permitted the female engineers of other clans to study the drive. The Aslan flooded into space with eager abandon. After three hundred years of monopoly, the *Yerlyaruwo* and the *Khaukheairl* went to war with each other, and as part of the peace settlement, the Hierate demanded that they share the secrets of the jump drive with the other clans for the good of the race.

At first expansion was slow, limited by the gradual development of jump technology. The Aslan colonised a chain of worlds within Jump-1 range; few of these worlds were especially desirable as colony worlds, but they were virgin territory, unclaimed by any male, though some were garden planets. A landless male could become a lord with a single lucky discovery (of course, the only males who could afford a jump-capable ship were scions of rich families, so the Aslan social divisions between *awkhea* vassals and *hahea* nobles endured even on new worlds. Aslan society did evolve, though. One notable change was the acceptance of primogeniture, previously used by only a few minor clans. Now the first son was guaranteed to inherit his father's domain, while his younger brothers would receive no land and so would have to find their own. This consolidated the estates on Kusyu and the older colonies, while providing a ceaseless supply of eager *ihatei* explorers and wanderers.

Within three centuries, the Aslan developed Jump-2 technology and a tiny hundred-ton scout vessel that could be crewed by a handful of explorers, along with huge colony vessels that could bring tens of thousands of females and workers to a newly-claimed world. Every new planet discovered opened new territories for colonisation. The era of 96 to 2100 Aslan (approximately -1999 to -242 Imperial) was an era of expansion and cultural flowering not unlike Earth's Ages of Discovery (1450 to 1600 AD, and 2100 to 2300 AD).

There were still clan wars in this era, most of which heeded the Hierate's call for limited warfare. New weapons were developed instead to battle other species. The Aslan encountered several other sentient species in this expansionist era. Primitive species were enslaved or even eaten by the Aslan; the practise of treating sophonts as prey continued for another five hundred years, until a great philosopher named Aewier convinced the clans that this was *rukhiywe* (un-Aslan) behaviour.

The most significant species encountered by the Aslan was humanity – the first contact with a Solomani vessel came within a decade of the development of jump drive. The Hierate's primary expansion was directed to spinward, away from human worlds, but the Aslan still regularly encountered human worlds and ships. Some of these contacts were peaceful – human traders penetrated Aslan space as far as Kusyu, looking for new markets, and trader clans and corporations imported technology and luxury goods from Terran space. An increasing number of these contacts, however, were violent. The Terrans had superior technology, but the Aslan had the edge in skill and aggression.

Luckily, the Aslan had come on the scene during the Long Night (342 to 2323 Aslan; - 1776 to -30 Imperial) in human space: the era between the Second and Third Imperiums in which humanity was splintered into many rival states. As a result, the Aslan never confronted any human state at a time when it was significantly stronger than an Aslan clan. This was important, for the clans of the Hierate were never (and are not now) capable of acting in concert as a human empire could; clans each conduct wars on their own, sometimes with assistance of others, sometimes without, but never with a sense of central purpose or unity.

Some human worlds accepted Aslan domination as a superior alternative to the chaos of the Long Night, and now remain within the Hierate with human or mixed human and Aslan population embracing Aslan culture and society.



The Jump Drive Question

Historians ask a number of questions about the development of the Aslan jump drive. How did the Aslan leap straight to a working Jump-1 model without first mastering gravity manipulation, unlike every other major race? How did two warring clans, traditional rivals in every way, come to work together in secret on what must have been a massively expensive and hugely difficult crash program to develop a drive? Why is the development of the Aslan jump drive – the most recent such development in known space – so shrouded in mystery?

Some suggest that the Aslan did not discover the principles of the jump drive independently, but instead acquired them from another race. The Vegans could have sold the Aslan the drive, or a crashed Vegan ship might have been salvaged (the same suggestion has been made about the Solomani of Terra). For that matter, the Solomani sent a number of expeditions into what is now Aslan space, and not all of these expeditions returned – and Aslan technology is remarkably similar to Solomani in many respects.

Without archaeological evidence or other proof, of course, all these speculations are meaningless. The Aslan exploded onto the interstellar stage just as all the other races were falling into the Long Night, and none can dispute their claim to be a Major race.



Retrenchment & Kinstrife

The rapid expansion of the Aslan from a single homeworld to an empire of several hundred worlds threatened to transform their society. Males were born on worlds that had never known territory disputes. On new colony worlds, where every pair of hands was needed, males learned technical skills and females learned to fight. The epic poems of the deeds of the ancestors were meaningless to the ears of Aslan who had never looked upon the plains of Tatohti or the mountains of Ashria. Many of the new Aslan worlds had their own cultures and beliefs.

The Hierate itself was under stress. Formerly minor clans that had embraced space travel now commanded territory and resources dwarfing those of the original *Tlaukuh*. These clans, and even several of the *Tlaukuh* moved their clan centres offworld to their own planets, diminishing the centralised power of the homeworld. The Hierate's always-limited power to enforce the collective will of the Aslan people was diminishing yet further.

A Grand Conclave of philosophers, poets and clan elders was called on Kusyu in 2302. This conclave argued that the defence and cultivation of traditional Aslan values was the highest expression of honourable behaviour, and that the deviant strains of Aslan thought must be brought back into accord with orthodoxy. The cultural conclave offered numerous concessions to the progressive elements in Aslan society – enshrining clan heroes from the age of exploration in new epic poems, loosening the strictures on lower-class males who performed traditionally peaceful, female tasks, and honouring offworld territories of particular size and worth. The conclave also tried to improve the standard of living across Aslan space – the rights of non-Aslan sophonts were enshrined, along with the possibility that non-Aslan who behaved in an honourable fashion could be considered to have Aslan souls. Overall, though, the recommendations of the Grand Conclave was that to be Aslan was to act in accordance with tradition, and the outer worlds were not doing so. It was a brave attempt to gather the diversifying strains of Aslan culture into one universal system.

The Grand Conclave had no legal weight behind it, but its recommendations were adopted by the Tlauku – which had no legal weight either, but did represent the majority view of the most powerful clans. The Tlauku ordered that all clans adopt the Grand Conclave's recommendations. They expected some resistance to this edict.

They got *aisekhokhe entse*, kinstrife in the stars.

The Aslan have no term for 'civil war' – the closest equivalent is *aisekhokhe*, kinstrife where two families in the same clan fight against each other. The cultural wars from 2512 to 2701 were inter-clan wars, but they had all the divisions and bitter struggle of a civil war.

On one side was the majority of the *Tlauku*, the old great clans and the militant clans who had 'sharpened their claws' in the Aslan Border Wars (see page 57) against the humans, and who 'still understood the meaning of honour'. They were joined by a number of younger clans who hungered for the respect and the trappings of power held by the *Tlauku*, and a small few ultra-traditionalist clans who had been decrying the decadence of Aslan society for generations. This alliance referred to themselves as Crusaders, *khiraokhaor'ya*.

Opposing the Crusaders was an even looser alliance of forces. There were the nouveau riche clans who had grown powerful on their colony worlds and eclipsed the wealth and power of the *Tlauku*; there were 'deviant' or 'progressive' clans who had adopted their own beliefs and customs (in many cases, copied from humans).

There were also a few *Tlauku* clans who believed that standing in the path of progress and evolution was futile, and who were therefore throwing their lot in with the winning side, and a small few ultra-traditionalist clans who had been decrying the decadence of Aslan society for generations (and were appalled to see such decadent ideas as 'not eating humans' enshrined in the Grand Conclave's recommendations). Dozens of names were applied to this faction; most historians refer to them as the *tsekho*, the starborn.

Aisekhokhe entse lasted nearly two hundred and fifty years, although there were long periods of relative peace or at least limited war during this period. Most of the truly bloody battles happened in the first century (*Uwaralyekose*, or Cultural Purge), when great fleets of *khiraokhaor'ya* and *tsekho* warships engaged each other in systems close to Kusyu. Clans that had endured for thousands of years were wiped out down to the youngest male; both sides committed atrocities not seen since the foundation of the Hirate.

On the *khiraokhaor'ya* side, the bulk of their fighting forces was drawn from the clans along the Solomani border, and these clans often had to divide their troops between the civil war and the Border Wars with the remnants of the Second Imperium and, towards the end of this period, the growing might of the Third Imperium as imperial forces expanded out from the Sylean heartlands. The *khiraokhaor'ya* were initially more aggressive, but they were trapped between two fronts and could not afford to push too far into *tsekho* space lest some human warlord mount an attack on the Aslan.

For their part, the *tsekho* were unable to capitalise on any weakness on the part of the *khiraokhaor'ya*. Their alliance was a very disjointed one, united only by their opposition to the *khiraokhaor'ya*. Inter-clan fighting was a constant problem, as the *tsekho* leadership were unable to get the various clans to swear loyalty to one another. Many of the *tsekho* had no desire to fight back against the Hirate, so long as their traditions were not swallowed up by the Conclave's.

By 2432, over a third of the *tsekho* clans had abandoned their worlds and moved en masse to systems spinward and rimward of the Hirate. The majority of the *tsekho* who remained were willing to adopt – grudgingly, in some cases – the Grand Conclave's recommendations, now refined into a set of books called the Codicils. The original twenty-nine clans making up the *Tlauku* had been devastated – three of them no longer existed, and another ten to twelve had lost so much of their influence and territory that they were effectively broken as great powers. To end the strife, the *Tlauku* was reformed.

Infamous Deviants

Over two hundred clans were wiped out during the Cultural Purges. Most of these clans were simply slaughtered; others integrated themselves into another clan with more orthodox beliefs. Many others fled the Hierate, and either founded their own small empires or died in the emptiness of space. Those who established themselves had only a few centuries of peace before the expanding borders of the territory-hungry *khiraokhaor'ya* engulfed and destroyed them. All these deviant clans are gone – or so the Hierate says, anyway.

Awryraolr: Perhaps the most fearsome fighting clan in Aslan history, the aggressive burned too brightly. The clan conquered several worlds inhabited by sentient species, who they *Awryraolr* treated as non-people food stock. Their allies grudgingly tolerated this behaviour, until the *Awryraolr* leadership declared that the *khiraokhaor'ya* were non-people and the whole clan turned cannibal. Defeated Aslan warriors were devoured live on the battlefield. The *Awryraolr*'s allies turned on them, and the clan was destroyed by *khiraokhaor'ya* and *tsekho* forces working together.

Hfuah: This clan had a higher female population than other clans, and its culture became progressively more matriarchal as it expanded. They bred their males for strength and stamina, and their females for intelligence. By the time of the Purges, the *Hfuah* males were unintelligent animals fit only for procreation, and their females had taken over every aspect of clan life. The *Hfuah* fled the Hierarchy rather than fight, heading across the Rift to settle in the coreward regions. There are rumours that the clan survives, having switched to a form of parthenogenesis to reproduce.

Trui'kt: The *Trui'kt* were among the most powerful of the *tsekho* clans, due to their mastery of technology. The *Trui'kt* had technology considerably greater than the rest of the Hierate, and their warships were almost unbeatable in a one-on-one fight. They experimented with cybernetic enhancement and other dangerous technologies, including a much greater use of artificial intelligences than other Aslan cultures.

The *Trui'kt* vanished abruptly in the middle of the Cultural Purge. Their colonies were found empty; hundreds of their ships were discovered floating in space, empty and lifeless. Other vessels were never found again, leading to speculation that the clan had migrated beyond Aslan space. Investigations hinted at the possibility that the *Trui'kt* found a way to upload their minds to a virtual reality. Perhaps the clan found their home territory in the infinite expanses of the virtual realm.

Trui'ah: An offshoot of the *Trui'kt*, the *Trui'ah* used genetic engineering to improve their stock. The clan elders were obsessed with creating a superior breed of Aslan, and each generation was altered and enhanced. For a time, the *Trui'ah* were a rising star among the *tsekho* – their technicians thought faster, their warriors had superior strength and reflexes, their children were free of diseases and genetic weaknesses. Then the *Trui'ah* introduced a life-extending genestrain, increasing their lifespan by hundreds of years. The following generation grew up in the shadow of nigh-immortal parents; there was no prospect of their sires dying and passing their territory on. The younger *Trui'ah* were forced to strike out in greater numbers to conquer new territory. They pushed their neighbouring clans too hard, the other clans turned on the *Trui'ah*, and the *khiraokhaor'ya* forces were able to destroy the weakened *Trui'ah* clan.

Khoafteirtah: This minor clan was a unique aberration in Aslan society. Psionics are virtually unknown to the Aslan outside their myths and legends; there are no psionic foundations or traditions in the Hierate, and the Aslan have no concept of psionics as a science. There is considerable debate as to whether or not the Aslan race even possesses the genetic or mental capacity for psionics. The *Khoafteirtah* clan, though, are said to have vast psionic powers. They were always on the fringe of Aslan space with few close allies and their own mysterious traditions, so the truth of the matter is hard to determine. The *Khoafteirtah* may have been able to use genetic engineering to add psionic capabilities to their line, or may have found an Ancient mental enhancement device, or perhaps they unlocked some dormant power in the Aslan mind.

Whatever they found, it died with them when a Syoisuis fleet turned their territories into molten glass.

Ten new clans were included in the list of the Twenty-Nine, and it was agreed that the composition of the council would be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure it represented the strongest of the Aslan.

United once more, the Aslan threw themselves into resuming the Border Wars. Skirmishes related to the Cultural Purge continued for many more years, as feuds worked themselves out and minor clans continued to resist the Grand Conclave's decisions.

The Aslan Border Wars

The Border Wars lasted from 1100 to 2810 Aslan (-1120 to 380 Imperial), from the time the Aslan expanded into the borders worlds of the old Second Imperium to the rise of the Third Imperium and the Peace of Ftahalr. There were few grand invasions or huge battles during the Border Wars, except in the early stages (when the Second Imperium could easily mount a strong defence against the comparatively primitive Aslan) and the closing years (when the Third Imperium was able to hold the border against the Aslan. Most of the conflicts were between individual Aslan clans or *ihatei* raiding parties.

The Border Wars still evoke terror in many of the worlds invaded by the Aslan. The skies would darken with attack ships; huge golden-furred monsters would drop down on grav belts to storm the cities; children would be taken as slaves, and those who attempted to hide from the Aslan would be butchered or even eaten. As human civilisation slipped into the Long Night, their ability to build warships to fight the Aslan diminished. The few human vessels capable of withstanding an Aslan raiding squadron became wandering mercenaries, swooping in to defend colonies from attacks. Often, these mercenaries were just as damaging as the Aslan raiders, as their prices rose to extortionate levels.

Not all the Border Wars were destructive. At several times during the long period of the wars, Aslan invasions gave way to trade ships and peaceful contact. Aslan mercenaries even fought on the side of human colonies.

Towards the year 2600 Aslan (170 Imperial), Aslan raiders in Reaver's Deep encountered surprisingly heavy resistance from human colonies there. Undeterred, they pushed onwards. In a desolate system, they stopped to refuel at the local gas giant – and then a huge jump burst was detected by the Aslan sensors. A warship, tens of times bigger than any human-built ship seen by the Aslan in generations, had jumped into the system and was descending into the gas giant's gravity well. Trapped in the upper reaches of the hydrogen-rich atmosphere, the raiders were doomed.

The Third Imperium had made contact with the Hierate.

In the years that followed, Aslan forces clashed again and again with Imperial fleets. Unlike other human foes, the Imperium was more than a match for any one clan, even a great clan and its vassal clans. To win, the Hierate would have to marshal all its forces – and that is impossible for the Aslan race. Several times, a clan tried to rally its neighbours to drive back these new human foes, but the neighbours would wait until the aggressive clan was weakened by the Imperium, then seize the lightly-defended Aslan territory. Meanwhile, the Imperium pushed closer and closer to Kusyu – a capital world dangerously close to the border worlds. The nerve of the *Tlaukuh* failed, and they sent envoys to the Imperium to negotiate a settlement.

The Peace of Ftahalr (2810 Aslan) established much

Aslan Imperial Event

Aslan	Imperial	Event
-123	-2190	First World War
-88	-2160	Second World War (Nuclear)
-60	-2136	Aslan space travel.
-22	-2102	Orbital bases
-18	-2098	Third World War
0	-2083	Formation of the <i>Tlaukuh</i> .
94	-1999	Aslan invention of jump drive.
117	-1980	First contact with humans (Hisol'i).
350	-1776	The Long Night begins for humaniti.
1100	-1118	Aslan Border Wars begin.
1185	-1044	First crossing of Great Rift.
2304	-63	Great Conclave begins
2312	-7	Cultural Purge begins
2432	82	Reform of <i>Tlaukuh</i>
2701	290	Cultural Purge ends
2810	380	Peace of Ftahalr; Border Wars end.
2902	461	First contact with Zhodani (Istoi Hkayu).
3077	614	Yerlyaruiwo-Tralyeaeawi War begins.
3120	652	Hlyueawi clan joins <i>Tlaukuh</i>
3167	693	Yerlyaruiwo-Tralyeaeawi War ends.
3610	1082	Fourth Frontier war begins.
3638	1105	Current date.

of Aeitle Sakh (Reaver's Deep) sector as a buffer zone between Aslan and Imperial spheres of influence; the population in the buffer zone was left independent of both interstellar communities. The Border Wars were over.

Crossing The Great Rift

The Great Rift limited Aslan expansion to coreward for thousands of years until explorers from the *Wahtoi* clan equipped with new long-range Jump-5 scout managed to plot a course to the far side. The scouts and traders from the *Wahtoi* mapped several subsectors of *Iyaihuakh* (Reftspan) and *Hlaorioahaurl* (Trojan Reach), and established a few small colonies, but it took many more centuries before the Aslan began a serious push into this new territory.

The *Wahtoi* and the other clans that colonised *Iyaihuakh* and the neighbouring sectors laboured to set up a series of fuel dumps and waystations along the Rift, allowing slower vessels like colony ships to make it across. They expected a flood of new colonies and *ihatei* flotillas, but the Aslan were expanding spinward instead of coreward, and a landless male could more easily carve out a territory in *Waroatahe* or *Etakhasoa* instead of making the long pilgrimage across the Rift. The rift crossing route was still vastly profitable, thanks to trade in rarities such as dustspice, but the Aslan colonies across the Rift were left largely to their own devices. With extremely limited communications back to the *Hierate*, the *Iyaihuakh* clans set up their own local version of the *Tlaukuh*, the *Ya'soisthea*. This organisation

was modelled on the *Hierate*'s governing council, but never adopted the same reforms that the *Tlaukuh* went through several centuries later.

The *Ya'soisthea* is discussed in more detail on page 122.

Following the Cultural Purge, dozens of clans driven out of the *Hierate* made the crossing. Wishing to keep the favour of the *Tlaukuh*, the *Ya'soisthea* clans resisted attempts by these refugee clans to integrate into the existing Aslan worlds. Most of the refugees pressed on Spinward or Coreward, settling unexplored systems. Others settled on the fringes of the Glorious Empire, conquering human worlds that had fallen to the Long Night or pushing onto the borders of the resurgent Imperium.

CONTACT WITH OTHER RACES

The Aslan have incorporated numerous minor races into the *Hierate*. These species, ranging from the avian-descended Pol Nox to the reptilian Z'kr to the Ulane. Races encountered by the Aslan early in their expansion were usually enslaved or annihilated, but modern Aslan are more likely to incorporate other races into the *Hierate* or trade with them. Incorporated races are permitted to form clans and own territory, and may even be treated as the equals of Aslan if they behave properly, although few non-Aslan ever rise above the rank of awkhea (landless serf).



The Hierate's relations with the Imperium are... fluid, at best. The Solomani have had the most dealings with the Aslan race, and they remember the Border Wars vividly. The Aslan respect the Imperium's strength, and most clans honour the Peace of Ftaheir.

The Vargr were first encountered by Aslan scouts exploring along the Great Rift. The two races are naturally prone to aggression, which is an explosive mixture. Aslan raiders have clashed with Vargr forces again and again. The only reason there has not been a full-scale war between the two races is the sheer distance between their respective domains. The Vargr see the Aslan as pompous and deliberately antagonistic; the Aslan hold that the Vargr are dishonourable warriors who deserve extermination. Humans joke about the two species 'fighting like cats and dogs' and stay out of the fights.

Aslan merchants first encountered Zhodani when searching for dust-spice in the Spinward Marches. Human behaviour is strange enough to the Aslan even without introducing psionics into the mix. Zhodani tend to find Aslan overly emotional and psionically jarring; the Aslan consider the Zhodani to be too passive and confusing, but maintain diplomatic contact with the Consulate to use as leverage against the Imperium.

Droyne are among the races incorporated into the Hierate, and are considered little more than amusing pets or pests.

The K'kree and Hiver worlds are on the far side of the Imperium to the Aslan, and so there is extremely limited contact between the two. The K'kree vegetarians find the ultra-carnivorous Aslan distasteful. As for the Hivers, the Aslan monomanaical drive makes simple manipulations easy, but the Aslan's hidebound code of honour poses a problem for larger-scale re-makings of society.

THE ASLAN CLANS

Clans in capital letters are part of the *Tlaukuh*, the Twenty-Nine. This is by no means an exhaustive list of the clans – there are hundreds of major clans and hundreds of thousands of lesser ones.

Aroaye'i: Gatekeepers of the Great Rift; the Aroaye'i have dug in on their home world of Aulryakh and have held that key world for centuries. The Aroaye'i are notoriously conservative and slow to expand, but they keep what they conquer. They are experts at building fortifications and defensive emplacements, as well as armed satellites and system defence boats; clan corporations are sought-after experts in construction.

Ahroay'if: Dominant clan in the *Tlaiowaha* sector; rapidly rising in power because of trade with the Imperium.

Hlewela: One of the original *Tlaukuh*, the *Hlewela* lost much of its influence and many of its members when the clan leadership on Kusyu was shown to be entirely out of touch with the needs of the clan. The *Hlewela* are a cautionary example to other clans about the important of strong leadership and wisdom.

Hlyeawi: The *Hlyeawi* ascended comparatively recently to the *Tlaukuh*. They were vassals of the *Yerlyaruwiwo*, specialising in tactical and political analysis and advice. During the *Yerlyaruwiwo/Tralyeaeawi* war, the *Hlyeawi* identified a weakness in their own faction, and betrayed their former masters. They attacked the *Uawairlew*, a fellow ally of the *Yerlyaruwiwo*, and captured much of their territory and their seat on the council. The *Hlyeawi* are mistrusted by many Aslan, but have an impressive ability to innovate and adapt.

HRASUA: A militant clan, the *Hrasua* were one of the major belligerents in the Border Wars, and were responsible for numerous attacks on Solomani worlds. A *Hrasua* mystic once prophesised that the clan would 'rip Terra from the stars' and claim it as *Hrasua* territory, and the clan fervently believes in this legend.

Hrakoea: An offshoot of the *Hrasua*, the *Hrakoea* were virtually destroyed by Imperial forces at the end of the Border Wars. The survivors mostly migrated across the Great Rift to rebuild their territories there.

HRAWOAO: Another offshoot of the old *Hrasua*, the *Hrawoao* rule many worlds along the border with Reaver's Deep.

IKHTEALYO: Allies of the *Tlaiowaha*, the *Ikhteyalo* made their fortune from trade. They control Tyeyo Fteahrao Yorl.

Khaukheairl: Hereditary rivals of the *Yerlyaruwiwo*, the *Khaukheairl* are known as patrons of the arts and keepers of Aslan cultural traditions. Despite their deep-seated antagonism to the *Yerlyaruwiwo*, the two clans both represent the older side of the *Tlaukuh* and so agree on many matters.

SYOISUIS: a notoriously secretive clan, the *Syoisuis* favour spies and assassins over direct conflicts. They are also a deliberately moderate force in the *Tlaukuh*, aiming for the middle ground in all matters to gather as many allies as possible.

Tlaiowaha: The *Tlaiowaha* are known for their ability to plan for the long term. They are considered poor warriors, but have vast financial sway. They are closely allied with Syoisuis.

Tokouea'we: An infamously touchy and arrogant clan, the *Tokouea'we* were driven out of Hierate space by their rivals, the *Yerlyaruiwo*. They fled to the Trojan Reach and rebuilt their holdings there; they eventually broke off from the *Hierate* entirely and formed the so-called 'Glorious Empire'.

Tralyeaeawi: The *Tralyeaeawi* are 'alien-lovers' or 'accomplished diplomats' depending on who you ask. They have the largest percentage of non-Aslan members, and have contacts with numerous alien races. Although they are one of the older clans, they advocated a progressive agenda during the Cultural Purge, an act that won them the enmity of the traditionalist *Yerlyaruiwo*.

Uawairlew: The *Uawairlew* clan was once considered great, and is one of the oldest extant clans. Five hundred years ago, they were attacked by their erstwhile allies, the *Hlyeawi*, and lost over eighty percent of their territory including their capital world. The few *Uawairlew* who survived swore an eternal oath of vengeance, and all members of the clan are honour-bound to bring down the

Hlyeawi. Unfortunately, the passage of five hundred years has seen the power of the *Usurpers* continue to grow.

Wahtoi: The *Wahtoi* first mapped the route across the Great Rift, and have a strong tradition of exploration. They have colonies everywhere in the Trojan Reach, and are considered excellent traders and diplomats. Their military forces, however, are notoriously laughable ('khira ji a'Wahtoi'he', 'you fight like a *Wahtoi* male' is an insult in Aslan society), and they rely heavily on mercenaries for defence. Vassals to *Tlaiowaha*.

Yerlyaruiwo: Another ancient and august clan, the *Yerlyaruiwo* and their vassals and allies makes up the single most powerful political bloc in the Hierate. They are a conservative clan, holding to the old ways, and were strong supporters of the Grand Conclave and the ensuing purges. The *Yerlyaruiwo* clan itself is not as powerful as it once was, but it has gathered so many sworn allies around it that its position as guardian of *Tlaukuh* honour is unassailable. The *Yerlyaruiwo* are sought after as *arbiters* and *earleatrais*.

ASLAN STARPORTS

Unlike the ports in the Imperium, which are run by the Imperium and are considered extraterritorial zones, Aslan ports are run by the ruling clan or corporation.



This makes doing business in the Hierate a trickier business, as a clan can dictate the rules to visiting spacecraft. Business rivals can be squeezed out of space, or a clan could restrict the size or nature of vessels permitted to visit its starports. On planets whose control is divided between clans, there can be multiple starports.

Only a fool or madman would attack an Imperial starport – doing so is an attack on the Imperium, and so would draw retribution from the mighty Imperial fleets. Aslan starports have no such protection, so an attack on an Aslan ‘port is ‘merely’ an attack on the clan that owns it. Their starports are therefore heavily fortified and equipped with defensive weapon emplacements.

Aslan ports usually have berths reserved for clan vessels; strangers must use lower-class berths. Aslan Class A starports are prestigious possessions of their respective clans, and are invariably lavishly decorated to impress visitors with the clan’s power and wealth. The architecture reflects this; statues of clan heroes tower over the landing bays, and the market sections overflow with rare goods. On worlds with Highports, some nobles are even egotistical enough to have holograms built into the station’s viewports, so that when a visitor looks out a window at the planet below, he sees the outline of the noble’s territory highlighted on the surface.

Small starports are obviously less important – Class C and below are local ports, maintained by the local population or a corporation. Local ports have few facilities for visitors, and may not even have accommodation for non-Aslan.

ASLAN CITIES

The defining element of Aslan cities is open space. All but the meanest homes are surrounded by at least a few metres of open ground. Large structures are often supported on arches, or at high tech levels built on floating platforms, leaving open ground beneath. The Aslan like to have room to run.

This need for open space means that Aslan cities are sprawling affairs, much greater in sheer ground coverage than a human city of comparable population (on average, the population density of an Aslan city is a tenth that of a human one). The cities take up so much space that they overlap with Aslan agricultural lands – it is not an uncommon sight to see herds of food

animals wandering through the grounds of an Aslan civic structure or even a military base. There is very little distinction between ‘urban’ and ‘rural’ for the territory-loving Aslan.

When a city covers thousands of square kilometres, an advanced mass transit system is a necessity. Every Aslan city has an extensive light rail system, where fast-moving pods whisk passengers to their destinations. This rail system also carries cargo and livestock, sating the city’s vast hunger for fresh meat.

Aslan architecture is rounded and organic. Every building is unique, even the mass-produced ones. Concealed rooms, balconies, hidden passageways and hideaways are common, as are bright open rooms of great size. The Aslan prefer to use crystals to refract natural light into their internal rooms. They have excellent night vision, so their culture has never relied on artificial light sources as much as humanity.

RURAL AREAS

Aslan cities are so spread out that it is hard to tell the difference between the city and the countryside. As the buildings thin out, the traveller must be even more wary – rural landowners are much less forgiving about those who trespass onto their domains. A human traveller should have a guide or a Boundary Beeper (see page 105) to avoid inadvertent insults.

The Aslan are much more accepting of dangerous wild animals than humans are – they consider fellow predators to be a challenge and worthy quarries in a hunt, and have even imported predators to worlds where none exist. The vast herds of livestock support both the Aslan and any wild animals. The Aslan also use far more labourers than a comparable high-tech human world – while they do use robots, it is a sign of prestige to use living labourers or even non-Aslan slaves.

ASLAN ANIMALS

The Aslan regularly import creatures from their homeworld of Kusyu to their new colonies. Most imported creatures are livestock, brought to supply the race’s ceaseless hunger for fresh meat. A few are predators hunted by the Aslan for sport, or creatures useful for other products or their place in the ecosystem.

ASLAN ANIMALS

ATEKTEIA

Atekteia are large poisonous insects who lay their eggs in aua dung. The vermin have spread along with the Aslan livestock herds, and now infest worlds across the galaxy. They are disturbingly resilient; the Aslan have used various methods to wipe out the insects, but nothing keeps the species down for long.

ANIMAL	HITS	SPEED
Atekteia (scorpion)	8	6m
SKILLS	Melee (natural) 1, Stealth 2	
ATTACKS	Sting (1D)	
TRAITS	Poison (Difficult/1D1D minutes)	
BEHAVIOUR	Carnivore, Scavenger	



AUA

Aua are large herbivores that have been the Aslan's main prey for millions of years. Modern *Aua* have been bred and genetically engineered to grow quickly, to thrive in a variety of environments, and to consume a wide range of vegetable matter. *Aua* look like a cross between a rhinoceros and a cow. They are quite docile under most circumstances.

ANIMAL	HITS	SPEED
Aua (Hoofmeat)	30	6m
SKILLS	Melee 0, Survival 1	
ATTACKS	Horns (2D)	
TRAITS	Armour (+1)	
BEHAVIOUR	Herbivore, Grazer	



AUA'KA

These huge animals are rare on Kusyu outside reservations, but have been successfully transplanted to numerous colony worlds. The *aua'ka* are titanic creatures, more like walking tanks than animals. Hunting an *aua'ka* is a difficult prospect, and best accomplished with a rocket launcher, but they are part of many Aslan ceremonial feasts.

ANIMAL	HITS	SPEED
Aua (Hoofmeat)	64	5m
SKILLS	Athletics (strength) 3, Melee (natural) 2, Recon 1, Survival 3	
ATTACKS	Horns (3D+3), Trample (6D)	
TRAITS	Armour (+6)	
BEHAVIOUR	Herbivore, Grazer	



KHEKHA

These predators are hunted by the Aslan for sport. They are highly aggressive, and have been known to attack lone travellers.

ANIMAL	HITS	SPEED
Khekha	24	6m
SKILLS	Melee (natural) 1, Recon 1, Survival 2	
ATTACKS	Bite (2D)	
TRAITS	Armour (+1)	
BEHAVIOUR	Carnivore, Chaser	



KHTA

Khta are fast-moving predators that the Aslan have domesticated and trained to use as mounts. *Khta* resemble horses, but they are primarily carnivorous. They are foul-tempered beasts, and have a taste for human flesh.

ANIMAL	HITS	SPEED
Khta	28	10m
SKILLS	Athletics (dexterity) 2, Melee (natural) 1, Survival 1	
ATTACKS	Bite (2D), Hooves (1D+2)	
TRAITS	None	
BEHAVIOUR	Carnivore, Chaser	



STII

Stii are small, furry simian-like creatures about the size of a human child. They are omnivorous scavengers, eating almost anything from fruit and nuts to fabric and bark. The Aslan consider them a tasty snack, and also keep them as living garbage disposals in small communities. Humans look like overgrown shaven *stii* to Aslan, a fact that never ceases to amuse them.

ANIMAL	HITS	SPEED
Stii (Monkeymeat)	10	8m
SKILLS	Recon 1, Stealth 2, Survival 1	
ATTACKS	Teeth (1D)	
TRAITS	Fast Metabolism (+2), Heightened Senses	
BEHAVIOUR	Omnivore, Gatherer	



ASLAN TRAVELLERS

Traveller creation for Aslan follows the same procedures and concepts as described in the Traveller Core Rulebook. Though Aslan are covered on page 50 of the *Traveller Core Rulebook*, it is assumed Travellers created that way were born and raised within the Imperium or, at least, human-based society. The Traveller creation rules presented here are suitable for Aslan born and raised within the Hierarchy. Unless otherwise stated in this chapter, use all the creation and career rules described in the *Traveller Core Rulebook*.

As you will discover, an Aslan's gender and clan have far more bearing on the Traveller's career choices than those of a human.

INITIAL TRAVELLER GENERATION

Use the characteristics and traits for Aslan Travellers shown below:

Characteristics: STR+2, DEX-2

Traits: Dewclaw, Heightened Senses.

For further detail see page 51 of the *Traveller Core Rulebook*.

However, male Aslan Travellers have an additional characteristic, Territory (TER), which starts at 0, and SOC for all Aslan is determined by Ancestral Territory, described below.

Gender

Aslan may be either male or female. Aslan biology dictates there are approximately three females born for every male. As a result, males are in the distinct minority. Travellers may select their gender or it may be determined randomly on the Aslan Gender table.

2D	Gender
2-5	Male
6-12	Female

In Aslan society, males are permitted to be warriors, rulers and diplomats; females are the scientists, technicians, merchants and managers.



Territory

The Territory (TER) characteristic is unique to the Aslan. TER measures the amount of land owned by that Aslan male. It is the foundation of Aslan SOC – for a landless male or female, his or her SOC is derived from the TER of his or her sire. A mated female's SOC is based on her mate's TER.

TER can be used in place of SOC. For example, instead of rolling Diplomat using his SOC DM, an Aslan lord could use roll Diplomat and add his TER DM instead.

In Aslan social contests between males, TER can be used to trump SOC – a male with TER may automatically win any social contests against a male who has less TER. Any amount of TER trumps any amount of SOC – the son of an Aslan clan head with TER 0 and SOC 15 will lose a contest to a penniless mercenary who has TER 1 and SOC 2. That does not mean that the mercenary is more important in Aslan society than the clan heir, but he has Territory, and that is what counts, and he can overrule the clan heir (of course, doing so would be a grievous insult and would likely result in some ally of the clan heir overriding the mercenary soon after).



CLAN, FAMILY & PRIDE

To determine if a Traveller comes from one of the twenty-nine Great Clans of the Tlaukuh or a minor clan, roll on the Clan table, or the referee may choose to dictate which clan the Traveller comes from. Note that if any Travellers are kinfolk with one another, they will share a clan and possibly a family.

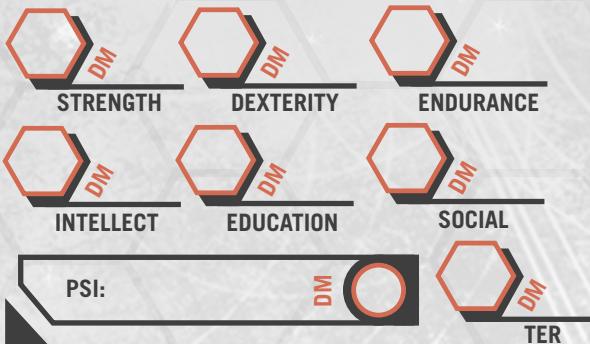
1D	Clan
1-3	Minor Clan
4-6	Major Clan. DM +1 to Ancestral Deeds roll.

There are hundreds or thousands of families in a clan. To determine the SOC of the Traveller, roll on the Ancestral Deeds table and twice on the Past Deeds table to work out what Territory his forebears acquired. Ancestral Territory starts at 0. The first Past Deeds roll is for the deeds of their grandfather, and the second is for the deeds of their father.

ARMOUR

NAME: GENDER:
 RADS: AGE:
 SPECIES: ASLAN
 SPECIES TRAITS:
 HOMeworld:

CHARACTERISTICS



ANCESTRAL TERRITORY

TYPE	RAD	PROTECTION	KG	OPTIONS

FINANCES

PENSION Cr _____
 DEBT Cr _____
 CASH ON HAND Cr _____
 MONTHLY SHIP PAYMENTS Cr _____
 LIVING COST Cr _____

ALLIES, CONTACTS, ENEMIES, RIVALS

STUDY PERIOD

TRAINING IN SKILL: _____
 WEEKS: _____ / _____
 STUDY PERIODS COMPLETE: _____

SKILLS

Admin	Drive ()	Heavy Weapons ()	Profession ()
Advocate	Electronics ()	Heavy Weapons ()	Profession ()
Animals (handling)	Electronics ()	Investigate	Profession ()
Animals (training)	Electronics ()	Jack of all Trades	Recon
Animals (veterinary)	Engineer ()	Language ()	Science ()
Athletics (dexterity)	Engineer ()	Language ()	Science ()
Athletics (endurance)	Engineer ()	Language ()	Science ()
Athletics (strength)	Explosives	Leadership	Seafarer ()
Art ()	Flyer ()	Mechanic	Seafarer ()
Art ()	Flyer ()	Medic	Stealth
Art ()	Flyer ()	Melee ()	Steward
Astrogation	Gambler	Melee ()	Streetwise
Broker	Gunner (turret)	Navigation	Survival
Carouse	Gunner (artillery)	Persuade	Tactics (naval)
Deception	Gun Combat (archaic)	Pilot (small craft)	Tactics (military)
Diplomat	Gun Combat (energy)	Pilot (spacecraft)	Vacc Suit
Drive ()	Gun Combat (slug)	Pilot (capital ships)	Independence (aslan only)

WEAPONS

WEAPON	TL	RANGE	DAMAGE	KG	MAGAZINE	TRAITS

AUGMENTS

TYPE	TL	IMPROVEMENT

EQUIPMENT	MASS	MASS	MASS
TOTAL CARRIED MASS			

1D Ancestral Deeds

1	Your ancestor shamed the clan, and you come from a branch long dishonoured. +0 Ancestral Territory
2	Your family's glory days are long gone, all that is left is the tales of great landholdings now lost to upstarts. +0 Ancestral Territory
3	Your family made its fortune in the great expansion after the discovery of jump drive; most family holdings are on distant worlds. +1 Ancestral Territory
4	Your family are the descendants of an ancient hero forgotten by most Aslan. +1 Ancestral Territory
5	Your family's ancestor was a trickster who deceived his enemies. +2 Ancestral Territory
6	Your ancestors were conquerors and great warriors. +2 Ancestral Territory
7	Your family is one of the most influential and wealthy in the Hierarchy. +3 Ancestral Territory

2D Past Deeds

2	Dishonoured! Your forebear committed some dishonourable act that caused the clan to strip your family of all territory. Gain Independence 0 (if male) or Profession 0 (if female). Lose all Ancestral Territory
3	Your forebear was beset by many foes, one of whom conquered much of your land. Gain an Enemy and Gun Combat 0. -4 Ancestral Territory
4	Your forebear was a fool who gambled away much of your land. Gain Gamble 0 or Carouse 0. -3 Ancestral Territory
5	Your forebear suffered from a degenerative genetic disease that you may have inherited. Gain Medic 0. -2 Ancestral Territory
6	Your forebear barely managed to hold onto your landhold. -1 Ancestral Territory
7	+1 Ancestral Territory
8	+2 Ancestral Territory
9	+3 Ancestral Territory
10	+4 Ancestral Territory
11	+5 Ancestral Territory
12	+6 Ancestral Territory

Travellers have SOC equal to their Ancestral Territory. If you have SOC 10+ and are male, gain Leadership 1.

Only the first son in the family inherits the family Territory. Next, determine your Traveller's place in the family. In the case of multiple Travellers from the same family, only the eldest need roll on the Family Inheritance table – all other Travellers in that family are automatically younger.

Family Inheritance

2D	Male	Female
2-3	First Son	Eldest Daughter
4-10	Second Son	Middle Daughter
11-12	Third Son	Youngest Daughter

Finally, at the start of Traveller creation, the Traveller has left their parent's pride. The Traveller may become part of another pride through Life Events, or form one during a campaign.

STARTING AGE

Aslan Travellers begin their careers at 16 Aslan years of age (about 14 standard years). Careers are resolved on the basis of Aslan terms of service which are four Imperial years (four and a half Aslan years) each.

NAMES

The material on language on page 48 gives some basic guidelines on names and words used by the Aslan. Travellers may wish to use Aslan names (if so, they are encouraged to pick relatively pronounceable ones!). There is no necessity for doing so, though it adds flavour and atmosphere to a campaign.

Even when names from the Aslan language are chosen, these are unlikely to be the individual's full names, since an Aslan name is a long, sonorous, and intricate structure which changes to note the background, accomplishments, and life of its owner. Names for game purposes are of necessity greatly shortened.

Because the particle *ko* on the end of an Aslan name means himself and is used exclusively by the head of a clan, care should be taken that an Aslan name ending in *ko* not be chosen unless the individual is the head of a clan (usually SOC 16).

Titles

Aslan do not have titles, as such, though a high social standing may be denoted by certain portions of the individual's name. In Aslan society, the social level characteristic denotes the relative status of both the individual and his or her family, but no special titles are applied for specific social levels.

AKUAEUHREKHYEH

(RITE OF PASSAGE)

At the age of fifteen (Aslan years), all Aslan Travellers undergo a rite of passage, the *Akhuaeuhrekhyeh*. This rite tests the individual's fitness to enter society and has an impact on careers.

The actual rite is a test which examines the Traveller's abilities and qualities, and males and females undergo different rites.

A male Aslan rolls 2D which is compared to each of his characteristics apart from TER. A Rite of Passage score is created by adding +1 for each characteristic greater than the roll.

Example: Two male Aslan siblings, Hwelyr and Karinvyr both have the same characteristics: STR 10, DEX 7, END 8, INT 6, EDU 5, SOC 7. Hwelyr rolls a 6 for his rite of passage; Karinvyr rolls a 10.

Hwelyr's Rite of Passage number is +4 (+DEX, +END, +SOC). Karinvyr's Rite of Passage number is +0.

A female Aslan rolls 2D which is compared to INT, EDU, and SOC. A Rite of Passage score is created by adding +2 for each characteristic greater than the throw.

If doubles are rolled for the rite of passage, consult the Rite of Passage Events table.



Rite of Passage Events

Roll	Event
1+1	You are believed to have a great destiny, and the clan looks for great things from you. You must excel or disappoint your ancestors. He gains 1D Clan Shares.
2+2	Impressive Performance. You are given Cr5000 as a reward for your exemplary performance in the rite.
3+3	You befriend one of the other young Aslan undergoing the rite that day. Gain a Contact.
4+4	One of the other Aslan undergoing the rite tries to outdo you. Gain a Rival.
5+5	You are wounded in one of the tests, leaving a distinctive scar across your fur.
6+6	I Will Not Fail! Your rite tests you to the limit, but you are determined not to give in. Gain END +1.

CAREERS

Aslan careers, in general, are used in the same way as described in the *Traveller Core Rulebook*. However, there are exceptions, which are noted here.

Note that some Aslan careers are restricted to a specific gender.

Ceremonial: The Aslan have a rich cultural heritage. Those involved in ceremonial tasks occupy a position of great importance within their clans.

Envoy (Males only): Interclan relations are often entrusted to specific Envoy's empowered to arrive at agreements and commit clan resources. The term Envoy (rather than diplomat) is used because the individual represents a clan rather than a government.

Management (Females only): Many female Aslan opt to enter a business-oriented career, rather than pursuing marriage and family. Such females may rise to positions of importance within the structure of various corporations. The career gives a variety of skills concerned with commerce, finance, and relations with others.

Military and Military Officer: These careers are equivalent to both Army and Marine in the *Traveller Core Rulebook*. They represent clan military forces which may be employed in interclan warfare, on Hierate service, as mercenaries, or as adjuncts to a corporation's activities where the military force is needed for security or other purposes.

Males in Military service are fighters or combatants; females are support personnel. Male Military Officers are commanders and leaders; females serve as staff and advisors.

Outcast: Outcast Travellers, for one reason or another, do not fit within normal Aslan society. Generally scorned as misfits, they tend to pick up an unusual assortment of skills; frequently such Travellers will be more independent, but also nurse a fierce desire to prove themselves and thus rejoin the society which has scorned them.

Outlaw: Some Outcasts become Outlaws, travelling between the stars raiding other clans or other races. Such activities represent a deviant subculture within Aslan society; normal standards for male and female pursuits have broken down to some extent, with each learning and performing tasks of the other. Pirates, like Outcasts, privately nurse a desire to return to normal Aslan society, but see little chance for success.

Scientist (Females only, with the exception of Healer): Travellers involved in the pursuit of the sciences (whether biological, physical, or social) can become Scientists. In Aslan practice, most scientists are actually technicians, adept at the creation of mechanisms to accomplish specific tasks.

Spacer and Space Officer: These two careers embrace all forms of interplanetary and interstellar service which may be carried out by a clan, including operation of all forms of spacecraft. Thus, the career is similar to both the Navy and Merchant (and to some extent, Scout) in the *Traveller Core Rulebook*. However, members of this career are strictly concerned with the operation of ships; a clan vessel involved in trade would also carry Travellers of a management background for the conduct of business.

Spacer males are primarily gunners; females are technicians or support personnel. Male Space Officers are pilots, gunners, and leaders; females are navigators, engineers, and staff advisors.

Wanderer (Males only): Many *ihatei* are given vessels by their clans and then use them for exploration in the hopes of discovering new landholds. Wanderers are much like the Scouts of the *Traveller Core Rulebook*, exploring in a lonely, risky way which provides a wide range of skills but also great chance of disaster.

It should be emphasised that most careers (except Outcast and Outlaw) are governed on a clan level. The Hierate has no integrated Army or Navy; individual clans maintain forces which may be contributed to the service of the Hierate, or not, as the situation and attitudes of the clan dictate.

QUALIFICATION

Once a career is selected, the Traveller attempts to qualify for it. For Aslan careers, the Rite of Passage score is used as a DM to qualify for all careers except for Outlaw and Scientist instead of the standard characteristic check. If the Traveller fails to qualify, they are immediately reduced to SOC 2 and become Outcast.

If any event during creation indicates the Traveller has become Outcast, they must either take the Outcast career in their next term or attempt to qualify for the Outlaw career. Alternatively, they may instead leave Aslan space and attempt to become a Rogue or Drifter from the *Traveller Core Rulebook*.

After serving at least three terms in a career (other than Outcast or Outlaw) an Aslan Traveller may attempt to qualify for another career or assignment using the standard rules – the Aslan are a more hidebound culture than the Imperium, and expect Travellers to remain in a single career for some time. Aslan who have spent time as Outcasts or Outlaws may only attempt to qualify for other Outcast or Outlaw assignments while in Aslan space, as their past is too dishonourable to allow them to enter a more respectable career (such Travellers may be best served by either leaving Aslan space or mustering out and starting the campaign).

SKILLS

The Aslan deal with skills primarily on a gender basis – males feel that some skills are dishonourable and beneath them; females feel that some skills are shallow or simply unsuitable. As a result, Aslan perceive and identify skills as common (available to both sexes), male (suitable only for males), and female (suitable only for females).

In addition, there are a few skills that a non-Aslan would classify as rare (generally unknown or unappreciated in Aslan society). On the rare occasions that an Aslan learns a skill inappropriate for his or her gender, that fact will usually be kept secret; for the fact to be

Career Summary

Career	Assignment	Gender	Qualification	Survival	Advancement
Ceremonial			Rite 10+		
	Poet	Male	Rite 10+	EDU 7+	INT 7+
	Clan Agent	Either		END 8+	INT 6+
	Priest	Either		SOC 6+	EDU 8+
Envoy			Rite 10+		
	Negotiator	Either		SOC 7+	INT 7+
	Spy	Either		SOC 8+	INT 6+
	Duellist	Either		END 8+	DEX 6+
Management			Rite 8+		
	Corporate	Female		INT 7+	INT 7+
	Clan Aide	Female		EDU 8+	SOC 6+
	Governess	Female		SOC 6+	EDU 8+
Military			Rite 7+		
	Warrior	Male		END 8+	STR 6+
	Cavalry	Male		DEX 7+	DEX 7+
	Flyer	Male		DEX8+	INT 6+
	Support	Female		END 6+	SOC 8+
Military Officer			Rite 10+		
	Leader	Male		END 7+	INT 7+
	Executive Officer	Female		END 6+	EDU 8+
	Assassin	Male		END 8+	DEX 6+
Scientist			Rite 7+ (10+ for males)		
	Healer	Either		END 6+	SOC 8+
	Researcher	Female		EDU 7+	INT 7+
	Explorer	Female		END 8+	INT 6+
Spacer			Rite 8+		
	Pilot	Male		DEX 7+	INT 5+
	Gunner	Male		END 6+	INT 6+
	Engineer	Female		END 6+	INT 6+
	Crew	Either		EDU 5+	INT 7+
Space Officer			Rite 10+		
	Commander	Male		SOC 8+	INT 6+
	Shipmaster	Female		EDU 7+	SOC 6+
	Navigator	Female		INT 6+	SOC 8+
Outcast			None		
	Labourer	Either		STR 8+	STR 7+
	Trader	Either		END 8+	INT 7+
	Scavenger	Either		END 8+	EDU 7+
Outlaw			STR 6+		
	Pirate	Either		END 7+	INT 7+
	Raider	Either		END 8+	STR 6+
	Thief	Either		DEX 7+	INT 7+
Wanderer			Rite 8+		
	Belter	Male		END 6+	INT 8+
	Nomad	Male		DEX 7+	INT 7+
	Scout	Male		END 8+	INT 6+

revealed would be shameful. Further, Aslan society is rigid enough on the subject of skills that no respectable Aslan would hire someone for a job which required a skill inappropriate to the employee's gender.

At times, Aslan are forced to learn what they consider inappropriate skills in order to survive. For example, it is widely known that Wanderers often learn Engineering on the small ships they commonly use; polite society ignores this breach of propriety, and a former Wanderer with Engineering skill would never discuss it, and never expect to be hired as an engineer.

Male Skills: Some skills can be learned in Aslan society only by males. Females consider such skills naturally the province of males, and rarely try to learn them. In some extreme circumstances, females may learn them, but will almost never admit to it in polite company. Most direct combat skills are the province of males.

Independence is a uniquely Aslan male skill in that it indicates the degree to which the male has overcome Aslan cultural and psychological barriers to the comprehension of money. Females do not need Independence since they are not faced with these barriers.

Female Skills: Some skills can be learned in Aslan society only by females. Males consider such skills dishonourable for them to learn, and will avoid learning them if at all possible. If they have learned them, honour forbids them from admitting it.

Males Only	Females Only	Rare
Art (epic poetry)	Art (all except epic poetry)	Gambler
Gunner	Astrogation	Melee (blade)
Heavy Weapons	Broker	Melee (unarmed)
Independence	Electronics (all except sensors)	
Leadership	Engineer	
Tactics	Mechanic	
	Profession	
	Science	

Rare Skills: These skills may be learned by Aslan, but are extremely rare.

The Aslan Skills table indicate which skills various Aslan might consider distasteful or unacceptable to learn. The rare Aslan skills table shows skills which very few Aslan would learn.

Skills not shown as male, female, or rare may be considered common skills.

AGING

Aslan aging is slower in its onset but more severe in effects than in human Travellers. The first roll on the Aging table is not made until age 40 (after six terms of service have been completed); thereafter, it is checked every term, and twice the Traveller's number of terms served is applied as a negative DM to the roll.

Aslan Traveller Creation Summary

Initial Physical and Mental Capabilities

Characteristics & Traits

Use characteristics and traits shown on page 51 of the *Core Rulebook*

Select Gender before following traits:

Additional Aslan Trait (male only):
+ **TERR** (TER) starting at 0

Additional Aslan Trait (male and female):
+ **SOC** (determined by Ancestral Territory, page 64)

» Background and Background skills

Select:
Starting Age and
Name, page 66

Determine:
Ancestral Territory,
page 64, and note
down the new **SOC**
characteristic

Akuaeuhrekhyyeh
The Right of Passage:
At 15 years old (aslan years)
Roll on the table, page 67

» Embark on a Career !

Use **Aslan Careers** in the same way as the careers described in the *Traveller Core Rulebook*

Note the following exceptions:

Some Aslan Careers are **gender specific**, see page 67

Embark on one or more 4-years career Terms, which grant various skills and benefits



New Skills for Aslan

The following two skills are unique to Aslan.

Independence

The Traveller is capable of dealing with the concepts of money. In Aslan society, money is traditionally a female responsibility, and males (particularly upper-class males) rarely understand such matters, a fact which handicaps them in a technological society.

Independence is an Aslan male skill, acquirable only by males; females have no need of it. When Independence skill appears, males must roll 2D and score higher than their SOC to acquire the skill. Independence is a guide governing the Traveller's ability to function without supervision. Lack of the skill indicates no concept of money at all; the Traveller must be looked after by a wife or companion who can pay for things and generally see that he has his financial needs cared for.

Realising a Price is Extortionate: Average (8+)

Independence check (INT or EDU)

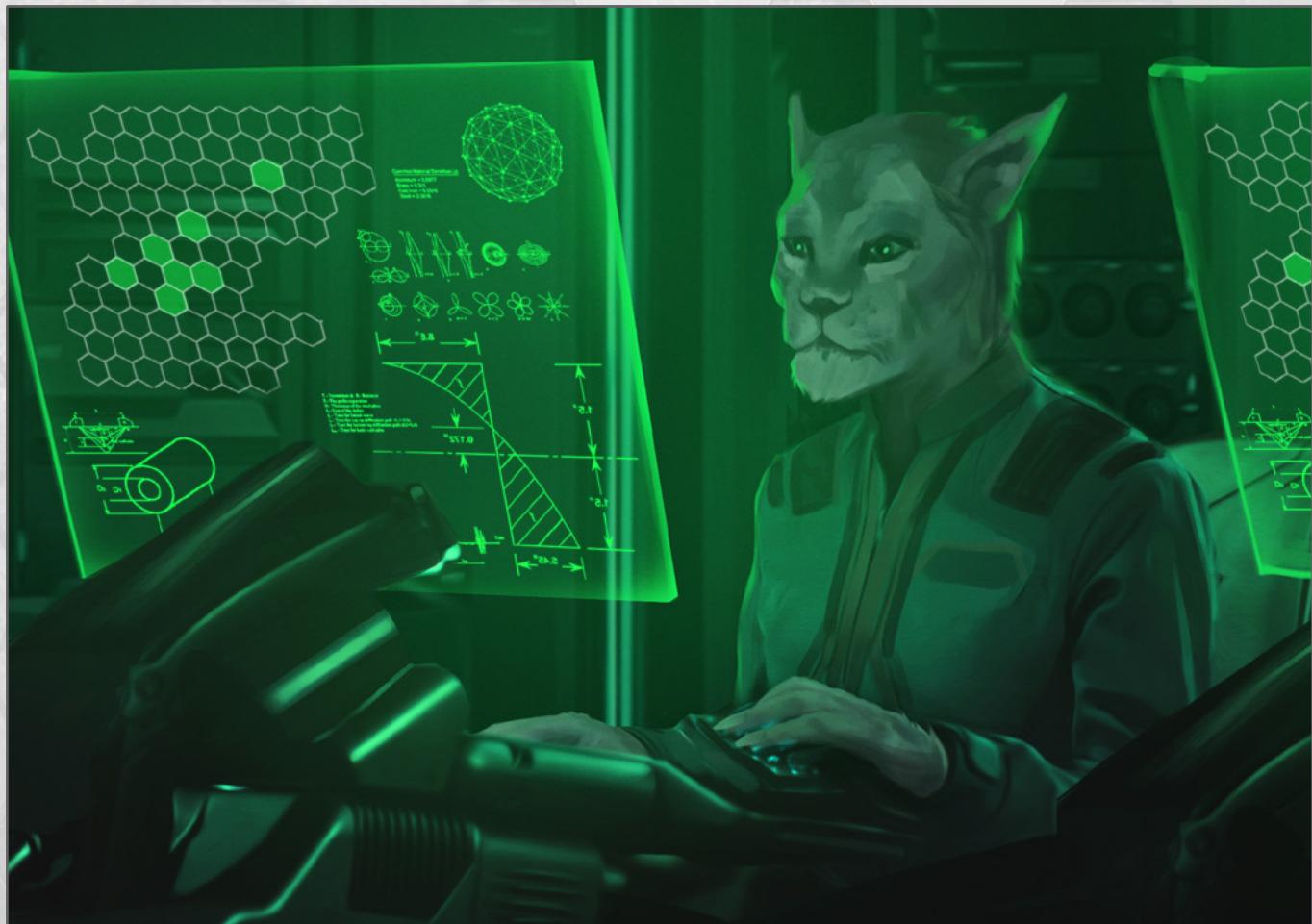
Understanding an Economics Treatise: Difficult (10+)

Independence check (1D x 10 minutes, INT)

Tolerance

The Traveller is accustomed to dealing with non-Aslan, and has learned to ignore lapses in propriety on the part of such persons. It should also be used to help determine the degree to which an Aslan is capable of getting along with others outside of the family, pride, clan, and race. An Aslan without Tolerance is unlikely to be found in the company of non-Aslan.

In any Aslan's dealings with others, Tolerance offsets the negative DM called for under the reaction rules (see page 32).



Those who follow this career uphold the ancient traditions and honour of the Aslan race. Only Aslan of high standing are normally admitted to these hallowed halls.

Qualification: Rite of Passage 10+ DM+2 if SOC 9+

ASSIGNMENTS

Choose one of the following.

Poet: You study and compose epic poetry, and maintain the history of your clan.

Clan Agent: You enforce the will of your clan elders and investigated crimes.

Priest: You honour the ancestors, officiate at ceremonial occasions, and arbitrate disputes.

Gender: Any except Poet, who must be male.

CAREER PROGRESS

	SURVIVAL	ADVANCEMENT
Poet	EDU 7+	INT 7+
Clan Agent	END 8+	INT 6+
Priest	SOC 6+	EDU 8+

MUSTERING OUT BENEFITS

ID	CASH	BENEFITS
1	Cr0	1 Clan Share
2	Cr0	Contact or 1 Clan Share
3	Cr0	Ceremonial Kinships
4	Cr5000	EDU +1
5	Cr5000	SOC +1
6	Cr10000	TER +2 or 4 Clan Shares
7	Cr20000	SOC +2 or 4 Clan Shares

- DM+1 if SOC 9+

SKILLS AND TRAINING

ID	PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT	SERVICE SKILLS	ADVANCED EDUCATION (MIN. EDU 8)
1	STR +1	Diplomat	Art
2	DEX +1	Investigate	Electronics
3	INT +1	Advocate	Language
4	EDU +1	Melee (natural)	Tolerance
5	SOC +1	Science	Admin
6	Independence	Persuade	Science

ID	SPECIALIST: POET	SPECIALIST: CLAN AGENT	SPECIALIST: PRIEST
1	Art	Investigate	Admin
2	Art	Gun Combat	Advocate
3	Persuade	Streetwise	Diplomat
4	Carouse	Stealth	Persuade
5	Electronics	Electronics	Tolerance
6	Deception	Deception	Melee (natural)

RANKS AND BONUSES

RANK	POET OR PRIEST	SKILL OR BENEFIT
0	Supplicant	
1	Acolyte	
2	Initiate	SOC +1
3	Sojourner	
4	Practitioner	SOC +1
5	Master	
6	Grand Master	EDU +1

RANKS AND BONUSES CONT...

RANK	CLAN AGENT	SKILL OR BONUS
0	Probationary	
1	Agent	Investigate
2		
3		
4	Field Agent	Streetwise
5		
6	Master Agent	Admin

MISHAPS TABLE

1D	MISHAP
1	Injured. Roll on the Injury table.
2	You commit a grievous breach of protocol and are Outcast. Drop your SOC to 2 and you must take the Outcast or Outlaw career next term.
3	You are exiled because of some political scandal. Gain one of Survival 1, Pilot 1, Independence 1 or Streetwise 1.
4	You are wounded in a duel. Roll Melee 8+; if you succeed, you won the duel, and gain SOC +1.
5	You are accused of a crime you did not commit. Roll Advocate 8+ to stay in the career.
6	You are embroiled in a rivalry with another official, who ends your career. Gain him as a Rival.

EVENTS TABLE

2D	EVENT
2	Disaster! Roll on the Mishap table, but you are not ejected from this career.
3	You uncover an embarrassing secret related to your clan or family. Either trade it for 1D Clan Shares, or you keep it in reserve. Whenever you use this secret, gain a clan elder as an Enemy.
4	You witnessed one of the great duellists in action. Gain Melee (natural) 1, Athletics (strength) 1, Carouse 1 or Medic 1.
5	You are assigned a challenging task. Roll Art, Investigate or Persuade 8+. If you succeed, gain DM+2 to your next advancement roll. If you fail, you suffer DM-2 to your next advancement roll.
6	You are given advanced training in a specialist field. Roll EDU 8+ to gain any skill.
7	Life Event. Roll on the Aslan Life Events table.
8	Your clan prospers, and so do you. Gain Carouse 1, Survival 1, Admin 1, or Independence 1.
9	You rise in influence in your clan. Gain TER +1 and any one skill.
10	You discover that one of your kinfolk has acted dishonourably. If you cover up his failing, gain him as an Ally. If you expose him, he challenges you. Roll Melee 8+ to defeat him. If he wins, gain him as a Rival and SOC -2. If you win, gain him as an Enemy, but also gain TER +2.
11	You are trusted by the great lords of your clan. Gain TER +2, or gain DM+4 to your next advancement roll.
12	You excel in your role. You are automatically promoted.

Interclan relations are often entrusted to Envoys empowered to arrive at agreements and commit clan resources. Many Envoys are also spies.

Qualification: Rite of Passage 10+

ASSIGNMENTS

Choose one of the following.

Negotiator: You are the voice of your clan in diplomatic or contract negotiations.

Spy: You watch rival clans and analyse their activities.

Duellist: You fight as a champion of your clan in ritual honour duels.

CAREER PROGRESS

	SURVIVAL	ADVANCEMENT
Negotiator	SOC 7+	INT 7+
Spy	SOC 8+	INT 6+
Duellist	END 8+	DEX 6+

MUSTERING OUT BENEFITS

ID	CASH	BENEFITS
1	Cr0	Contact
2	Cr0	Contact or 1 Clan Share
3	Cr0	INT +1
4	Cr5000	EDU +2
5	Cr5000	Independence or 2 Clan Shares
6	Cr10000	Weapon
7	Cr20000	3 Clan Shares

SKILLS AND TRAINING

ID	PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT	SERVICE SKILLS	ADVANCED EDUCATION (MIN. EDU 8)
1	STR +1	INT +1	Admin
2	DEX +1	Diplomat	Advocate
3	END +1	Tolerance	Science
4	Melee (natural)	Carouse	Language
5	Independence	Survival	Electronics
6	Independence	Leadership	Diplomat

ID	SPECIALIST: NEGOTIATOR	SPECIALIST: SPY	SPECIALIST: DUELLIST
1	Persuade	Persuade	Tolerance
2	Tolerance	Investigate	Melee (natural)
3	Diplomat	Deception	DEX +1
4	Deception	Stealth	STR +1
5	Diplomat	Electronics	END +1
6	Art	Diplomat	Melee

RANKS AND BONUSES

RANK	ENVOY	SKILL OR BONUS
0		
1	Junior Envoy	Tolerance 1
2	Envoy	
3	Senior Envoy	Diplomat 1
4	Respected Envoy	
5	Honoured Envoy	Carouse 1
6	Voice of the Clan	TER +2

MISHAPS TABLE

1D	MISHAP
1	Injured. Roll on the Injury table.
2	A blunder in a negotiation shames you and your clan. You are now Outcast – drop your SOC to 2 and you must take the Outcast or Outlaw career next term.
3	You fail in a difficult assignment because of the manipulations of another Envoy. Gain him as a Rival.
4	An assassin attempts to murder you. Roll Melee (natural) or Recon 8+ to avoid the attempt. If you fail, you are injured; roll on the Injury table. If you succeed, you may continue in this career.
5	You are dispatched to a distant world for a long period; by the time you return, your position has been taken by someone younger and more ambitious. Gain one of Survival 1, Pilot 1, Carouse 1 or Independence 1.
6	A human ambassador insults you. Roll Tolerance 8+ to avoid eating him. If you succeed, you may continue in this career. If you fail, gain one of the human's allies as an Enemy.

EVENTS TABLE

2D	EVENT
2	Disaster! Roll on the Mishap table, but you are not ejected from this career.
3	Your clan places you in a difficult situation. You can flee if you wish, salvaging something of your reputation but losing SOC -1. If you stay and fight, roll one of Diplomat, Investigate or Stealth 8+. If you succeed, gain DM+2 to your next advancement roll. If you fail, lose SOC -1 and suffer DM-2 to your next advancement roll.
4	You develop a taste for hunting. Gain Animals (training) 1, Survival 1, Stealth 1 or Athletics (dexterity) 1.
5	You attend a clan council on the homeworld. Gain a Contact there.
6	You are given advanced training in a specialist field. Roll EDU 8+ to gain any skill.
7	Life Event. Roll on the Aslan Life Events table.
8	You spend time in diplomatic circles. Roll Carouse or Persuade 8+ to gain an Ally; if you fail, gain a Rival instead.
9	You are insulted by a noble of a rival clan. You may challenge him or her to a duel; if you refuse, lose SOC -2. If you challenge, roll Melee (natural) 9+. If you succeed, gain SOC +1 and DM+2 to your next advancement roll; if you fail, lose SOC -2 and suffer DM-2 to your next advancement roll.
10	You are offered membership of a conspiracy in the upper echelons of your clan. If you refuse, gain the conspiracy as an Enemy. If you accept, roll Deception 8+ or Persuade 8+. If you fail, roll on the Mishap table as the conspiracy collapses. If you succeed, gain one of Deception, Persuade, SOC +1 or TER +1.
11	You are trusted by the great lords of your clan. Gain TER +2, or gain DM+4 to your next advancement roll.
12	You excel in your role. You are automatically promoted.

You manage an Aslan corporation or serve in another bureaucracy.

Qualification: Rite of Passage 8+

ASSIGNMENTS

Choose one of the following.

Corporate: You work as an administrator or trader in one of the great Aslan corporations.

Clan Aide: You serve in the bureaucracy of your clan.

Governess: You are the protector and teacher of a rich Aslan prince.

Gender: Female only.

CAREER PROGRESS

	SURVIVAL	ADVANCEMENT
Corporate	INT 7+	INT 7+
Aide	EDU 8+	SOC 6+
Governess	SOC 6+	EDU 8+

MUSTERING OUT BENEFITS

1D	CASH	BENEFITS
1	Cr5000	1 Clan Share
2	Cr5000	INT +1
3	Cr10000	EDU +2
4	Cr20000	2 Clan Shares
5	Cr20000	Gun
6	Cr40000	3 Clan Shares
7	Cr100000	10 Ship Shares or 5 Clan Shares

- DM+1 if SOC 9+

SKILLS AND TRAINING

1D	PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT	SERVICE SKILLS	ADVANCED EDUCATION (MIN. EDU 8)
1	INT +1	Advocate	Advocate
2	STR +1	Broker	Electronics
3	DEX +1	Admin	Language
4	END +1	Gun Combat	Science
5	Tolerance	Tolerance	Tolerance
6	Broker	Admin	Diplomat

1D	SPECIALIST: CORPORATE	SPECIALIST: AIDE	SPECIALIST: GOVERNESS
1	Admin	Admin	Admin
2	Broker	Advocate	Persuade
3	Profession	Melee (natural)	Streetwise
4	Deception	Medic	Broker
5	Streetwise	Steward	Steward
6	Electronics	Tolerance	Steward

RANKS AND BONUSES

RANK	SKILL OR BONUS
0	
1	Admin 1
2	
3	Tolerance 1
4	
5	
6	SOC +1

MISHAPS TABLE

1D	MISHAP
1	Injured. Roll on the Injury table.
2	You are accused of stealing from your employer. If this is true, gain 3 Benefit rolls and become Outcast, dropping your SOC to 2. If it is false, roll Advocate 8+ to defend yourself. If you fail, you leave this career; if you succeed, you may remain in this career.
3	A shift in clan politics leaves you shut out in the cold. Gain a Contact who stays in touch despite your new status.
4	Your clan's fortunes decline. You may continue in this career if you wish, but you will gain no Benefit rolls this term or the next.
5	You are sent to a border world, where your career stagnates. Gain Survival 1, Flyer 1, Profession 1 or Navigate 1.
6	A clan elder takes a dislike to you. Gain her as a Rival.

EVENTS TABLE

2D	EVENT
2	Disaster! Roll on the Mishap table, but you are not ejected from this career.
3	A rival clan attacks and your place of work is targeted by an assault force. Roll Melee (natural), Stealth or Gun Combat 8+. If you succeed, gain any skill. If you fail, roll on the Injury table.
4	You pick up some useful skills. Gain Pilot 1, Mechanic 1, Electronics 1 or Drive 1.
5	You have the opportunity to take a risk in business. Wager up to three Benefit rolls and roll Broker 8+. If you succeed, gain an equal number of Benefit rolls to those you wagered. If you fail, lose any wagered Benefits.
6	You are given advanced training in a specialist field. Roll EDU 8+ to gain any skill.
7	Life Event. Roll on the Aslan Life Events table.
8	You expand into new territories. Gain Broker 1, Profession 1, Streetwise or a Contact.
9	A foolish decision by a clan member threatens your business. Roll Diplomat or Admin 8+ to fix the damage. If you succeed, gain that clan member as a Rival. If you fail, you suffer DM-2 to your next Advancement roll.
10	Your clan thrives and prospers. Gain DM+2 to your next advancement roll.
11	You trade with aliens and barbarians. Gain Tolerance, or gain DM+4 to your next advancement roll.
12	You excel in your role. You are automatically promoted.

MILITARY

You serve in the military forces of your clan. Males in the Military service are fighters or combatants; females are support personnel.

Qualification: Rite of Passage 7+

ASSIGNMENTS

Choose one of the following.

Warrior: You are a front-line warrior in the Clan forces.

Cavalry: You drive a grav tank or other combat vehicle.

Flyer: You pilot an atmospheric fighter.

Support: You are a mechanic, medic, commtech or other support engineer.

Gender: Only males can enter Warrior, Cavalry or Flyer. Only females can enter Support.

CAREER PROGRESS

	SURVIVAL	ADVANCEMENT
Warrior	END 8+	STR 6+
Cavalry	DEX 7+	DEX 7+
Flyer	DEX 8+	INT 6+
Support	END 6+	SOC 8+

MUSTERING OUT BENEFITS

1D	CASH	BENEFITS
1	Cr500	1 Clan Share
2	Cr500	END +1
3	Cr1000	EDU +1
4	Cr1000	Weapon
5	Cr5000	Secret School
6	Cr5000	2 Clan Shares
7	Cr10000	SOC +1
8	Cr10000	3 Clan Shares

- DM+1 if SOC 9+
- DM+1 when rolling on Benefits if Male

SKILLS AND TRAINING

1D	PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT		SERVICE SKILLS	
1	Independence	Gun Combat	Navigation	
2	STR +1	Drive	Electronics	
3	DEX +1	Survival	Melee	
4	END +1	Melee (natural)	Engineer	
5	END +1	Athletics	Tactics (military)	
6	Athletics	Recon	Admin	
1D	SPECIALIST: WARRIOR	SPECIALIST: CAVALRY	SPECIALIST: FLYER	SPECIALIST: SUPPORT
1	Vacc Suit	Drive	Flyer	Medic
2	Gun Combat	Gunner (turret)	Gunner (turret)	Mechanic
3	Heavy Weapons	Heavy Weapons	Electronics	Electronics
4	Recon	Mechanic	Pilot (small craft)	Navigation
5	Stealth	Gun Combat	Gun Combat	Admin
6	Athletics	Drive	Flyer	Gun Combat

RANKS AND BONUSES

RANK	WARRIOR/FLYER/CAVALRY	SKILL OR BENEFIT
0	Recruit	
1	Soldier	Melee (natural) 1
2	Veteran Soldier	
3	Warrior	END +
4	Veteran Warrior	
5	Leader of Warriors	
6	Honoured Warrior Leader	3 Clan Shares

RANKS AND BONUSES CONT...

RANK	SUPPORT	SKILL OR BENEFIT
0	Recruit-Technician	
1	Soldier-Technician	Mechanic 1
2	Blooded Soldier-Technician	
3	Warsister	EDU +1
4	Veteran Warsister	
5	Master Technician	
6	Honoured Master Technician	2 Clan Shares

MISHAPS TABLE

1D	MISHAP
1	Severely injured. Roll twice on the Injury table and take the lower result.
2	A superior officer has you drummed out of the service. Gain a Rival.
3	You are lost behind enemy lines. Gain Stealth, Survival, Streetwise or Gun Combat.
4	You are captured and ransomed back to your clan. Lose SOC -1.
5	You risk severe injury in a dangerous skirmish. If you fight bravely, roll Gun Combat or Athletics 8+. If you fail, you are injured and must leave this career. If you succeed, you may remain in this career. If you refuse to fight bravely, you must leave this career.
6	Injured. Roll on the Injury table.

EVENTS TABLE

2D	EVENT
2	Disaster! Roll on the Mishap table, but you are not ejected from this career.
3	Your unit is sent into the maw of hell. Roll Recon or Gun Combat 8+ to avoid rolling on the Injury table, and gain one of Stealth 1, Medic 1, Heavy Weapons 1 or Leadership 1 as you fight to survive.
4	You are assigned to garrison duty on a clan outpost. Gain a Contact there, or one of the following skills: Streetwise, Electronics (comms) or Mechanic.
5	You are involved in a border skirmish with another clan. Gain one of Melee (natural), Gun Combat, Drive or Survival, then roll that skill. If you get an 8+, your clan is victorious – gain DM+2 to your next advancement roll.
6	You are given advanced training in a specialist field. Roll EDU 8+ to gain any skill.
7	Life Event. Roll on the Aslan Life Events table.
8	You fight against an alien race. Gain one of Gun Combat, Language, Melee, Recon or Survival.
9	An officer insults your courage. You may either duel him or try to prove him wrong. If you duel him, roll Melee (natural) 8+. If you succeed, gain SOC +1. If you fail, lose SOC -1. If you instead try to prove him wrong, roll 1D. On a 1-3, you are wounded because of your bravado – roll on the Injury table. On a 4+, you perform heroically under fire. Gain that officer as a Rival and gain DM+4 to your next advancement roll and gain SOC +1.
10	You are considered for promotion in the officer caste. You may add the number of terms served in this career as a DM if you attempt to qualify for the Military Officer career next term, and may apply even if you have not served the minimum number of terms in this career.
11	You serve under a hero of the clan. Either gain Tactics (military), or DM+4 to any advancement roll thanks to his aid.
12	Your efforts strike a great blow for your clan. You are automatically promoted.



MILITARY OFFICER

The Aslan military officer caste is notoriously aggressive, pushing for a military solution to every problem. The strict rules of conduct limit the destructive effects of warfare, so the Aslan are more willing to use force to resolve disputes. The Assassin path is also part of this career. Assassins are highly trained Aslan warriors, who fight the shadowy wars of assassins.

Qualification: Rite of Passage 10+

ASSIGNMENTS

Choose one of the following.

Leader: You command a host of Aslan warriors.

Executive Officer: You advise male generals on technical and administrative matters.

Assassin: You are the unseen claw of your clan.

Gender: Only males can enter Leader or Assassin. Only females can enter Executive Officer.

CAREER PROGRESS

	SURVIVAL	ADVANCEMENT
Leader	END 7+	INT 7+
Executive Officer	END 6+	EDU 8+
Assassin	END 8+	DEX 6+

MUSTERING OUT BENEFITS

ID	CASH	BENEFITS
1	Cr1000	2 Clan Shares
2	Cr5000	INT +1
3	Cr5000	EDU +2
4	Cr10000	Secret School
5	Cr20000	3 Clan Shares or Secret School
6	Cr50000	Armour
7	Cr50000	SOC +2
8	Cr50000	5 Clan Shares

- DM+1 if SOC 9+
- DM+1 when rolling on Benefits if Male

SKILLS AND TRAINING

ID	PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT	SERVICE SKILLS	ADVANCED EDUCATION (MIN. EDU 8)
1	Independence (if male) or Admin (if female)	Tactics (military)	Navigation
2	STR +1	Drive	Electronics
3	DEX +1	Gun Combat	Melee
4	END +1	Melee (natural)	Science
5	INT +1	Leadership	Engineer
6	Jack-of-All-Trades	Tolerance	Diplomat
ID	SPECIALIST: LEADER	SPECIALIST: EXECUTIVE OFFICER	SPECIALIST: ASSASSIN
1	Tactics (military)	Admin	Melee
2	Recon	Medic	Stealth
3	Melee (natural)	Electronics	Streetwise
4	Heavy Weapons	Electronics	Recon
5	Gun Combat	Advocate	Deception
6	Electronics	Navigation	Athletics

RANKS AND BONUSES

RANK	LEADER	SKILL OR BENEFIT
0	Probationary Lieutenant	
1	Junior Lieutenant	Vacc Suit 1
2	Lieutenant	
3	Captain	Leadership 1
4	Commandant	
5	Division General	
6	General	TER +2

RANKS AND BONUSES CONT...

RANK	EXECUTIVE OFFICER	SKILL OR BENEFIT
0	Probationary Lieutenant	
1	Junior Lieutenant	Electronics 1
2	Lieutenant	
3	Captain	Admin 1
4	Executive	
5	Division Chief of Staff	
6	Chief of Staff	2 Clan Shares

RANK	ASSASSIN	SKILL OR BENEFIT
0		
1	Hunter	Stealth 1
2		
3		Melee (natural) 1
4	Veteran Hunter	
5		
6	Claw of the Clan	2 Clan Shares

MISHAPS TABLE

1D	MISHAP
1	Severely injured. Roll twice on the Injury table and take the lower result.
2	A failing on your part causes a catastrophic loss for your clan. You are Outcast, and drop to SOC 2.
3	A shift in clan politics ruins your career. Lose SOC -2.
4	You are defeated in battle. Gain the foe who defeated you as a Rival.
5	You are captured by a rival clan and ransomed back, but the disgrace ends your career. Gain a Contact in the rival clan.
6	Injured. Roll on the Injury table.

EVENTS TABLE

2D	EVENT
2	Disaster! Roll on the Mishap table, but you are not ejected from this career.
3	You fight a brutal ground war. Gain Stealth, Heavy Weapons, Vacc Suit or Drive.
4	You must discipline a disobedient junior officer. Roll Persuade or Melee (natural) 8+. If you succeed, gain him as an Ally. If you fail, lose SPC -1 and he becomes a Rival.
5	You garrison one of the richest Aslan worlds. Gain one of Carouse, Streetwise, Independence or Survival.
6	You are given advanced training in a specialist field. Roll EDU 8+ to gain any skill.
7	Life Event. Roll on the Aslan Life Events table.
8	You have the opportunity to establish a landhold in your name. Gain TER +2.
9	After a battle, you capture an enemy commander. You may ransom him back, and gain TER +2, or free him and gain him as a trusted Ally.
10	You are challenged to a duel by a rival. If you refuse, you lose 1D SOC. Accept, and roll Melee 8+. If you fail, you lose all Benefits from this term. Succeed, and gain DM+2 to your next advancement roll.
11	Your deeds are legend among the cubs of your clan. Either gain Tactics (military), or DM+4 to your next advancement roll.
12	Your efforts strike a great blow for your clan. You are automatically promoted.



Science is an almost exclusively female occupation among the Aslan. The exception is that of doctor as, by ancient tradition, males are allowed to practice the art of the physician. This custom is believed to date back to days when males fought on the battlefield and so had need of healers – and had plenty of practical anatomy lessons. This tradition is rarely observed these days.

Qualification: Rite of Passage 7+ (males 10+)

ASSIGNMENTS

Choose one of the following.

Healer: You tend the sick and wounded.

Researcher: You develop new inventions and technologies for your clan.

Explorer: You explore new worlds and catalogue useful resources.

Gender: Males may only enter Healer.

CAREER PROGRESS

	SURVIVAL	ADVANCEMENT
Healer	END 6+	SOC 8+
Researcher	EDU 7+	INT 7+
Explorer	END 8+	INT 6+

MUSTERING OUT BENEFITS

ID	CASH	BENEFITS
1	Cr1000	Scientific Equipment
2	Cr5000	EDU +1
3	Cr5000	INT +1
4	Cr10000	Weapon or 1 Clan Share
5	Cr20000	Science Kinship
6	Cr40000	SOC +1 and 1 Clan Share
7	Cr70000	Scientific Equipment and 2 Clan Shares
8	Cr100000	3 Clan Shares

- DM+1 if SOC 9+
- DM+1 when rolling on Benefits if Male

SKILLS AND TRAINING

ID	PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT	SERVICE SKILLS	ADVANCED EDUCATION (MIN. EDU 8)
1	INT +1	Electronics	Admin
2	EDU +1	Science	Astrogation
3	SOC +1	Science	Engineer
4	Diplomat	Science	Electronics
5	Tolerance	Investigate	Advocate
6	Independence or Tolerance	Admin	Medic

ID	SPECIALIST: HEALER	SPECIALIST: RESEARCHER	SPECIALIST: EXPLORER
1	Medic	Science	Navigation
2	Science	Electronics	Pilot
3	Persuade	Engineer	Science
4	Medic	Investigate	Recon
5	Electronics (sensors)	Admin	Survival
6	Admin	Recon	Drive or Flyer

RANKS AND BONUSES

RANK	SKILL OR BONUS	
0		
1	Scholar	Electronics (computers) 1
2		
3	Respected Scholar	Admin 1
4		
5		
6	Revered Scholar	SOC +1

MISHAPS TABLE

1D	MISHAP
1	Injured. Roll on the Injury table.
2	A lab accident exposes you to something dangerous. Lose END -1.
3	Another researcher sabotages your work. Gain a Rival. You may continue in this career if you wish, but gain no Benefit rolls from this term.
4	A lab ship misjumps, stranding you on an alien world. Gain one of Survival 1, Astrogation 1, Mechanic 1 or Science 1.
5	A clan elder challenges your work as being flawed. You may challenge the elder if you wish. If you challenge, roll Melee (natural) 8+. If you succeed, increase your SOC +1 and you may continue with this career. If you fail, reduce your SOC -2 and leave this career.
6	Your clan cancels your line of research. You may, if you wish, leave to continue it in human space, in which case you may automatically qualify for the Scholar career from the Traveller Core Rulebook next term.

EVENTS TABLE

2D	EVENT
2	Disaster! Roll on the Mishap table, but you are not ejected from this career.
3	Spending all your time in the laboratory is never a good thing. Gain one of Carouse 1, Survival 1, Streetwise 1 or a Contact.
4	You are assigned to work on weapons technology for your clan. Gain one of Science 1, Engineer 1, Gunner 1 or Gun Combat 1.
5	You work closely with a scientist from another species. Gain Tolerance 1 and a Contact.
6	You are given advanced training in a specialist field. Roll EDU 8+ to gain any skill.
7	Life Event. Roll on the Aslan Life Events table.
8	You teach the young cubs of your clan. Gain Admin 1, Art 1, Science 1 or a Contact.
9	A researcher working for another clan is close to making a breakthrough you covet. You can try to complete your research first, attempt to sabotage his work, or do nothing. If you try to complete your work first, roll Science 10+. Fail, and lose any Benefit rolls from this term. Succeed, and gain DM+2 to your next advancement roll. Gain the researcher as a Rival. If you instead try to sabotage his work, roll Stealth or Deception 8+. Fail, and lose SOC -2. Succeed, and gain DM+2 to your next advancement roll. Gain the researcher as an Enemy.
10	You obtain a rare alien artefact or life form to study. Roll any Science 8+. If you succeed, you uncover the subject's secrets, and gain DM+2 to your next advancement roll. If you fail, suffer DM-2 to your next advancement roll.
11	You study at one of the great universities or research facilities. Gain Investigate, or gain a +4DM to your next advancement roll.
12	You make a scientific breakthrough. You are automatically promoted.

This career embraces all forms of interplanetary and interstellar service which may be carried out by a clan, including operation of all forms of spacecraft. Males in the Space service are primarily gunners and pilots; females are technicians or support personnel.

Qualification: Rite of Passage 8+

ASSIGNMENTS

Choose one of the following.

Pilot: You fly one of the large Aslan vessels, or the smaller shuttles and fighters that accompany them.

Gunner: You man a turret or other weapon, slaughtering your foes with claws of laser-light.

Engineer: You maintain the systems of a starship, despite the best efforts of the male crew to wreck it.

Crew: You serve as a general labourer and deckhand on board ship.

Gender: Only males can enter Pilot or Gunner. Only females can enter Engineer..

CAREER PROGRESS

	SURVIVAL	ADVANCEMENT
Pilot	DEX 7+	INT 5+
Gunner	END 6+	INT 6+
Engineer	END 6+	INT 6+
Crew	EDU 5+	INT 7+

MUSTERING OUT BENEFITS

1D	CASH	BENEFITS
1	Cr500	1 Clan Share
2	Cr1000	INT +1
3	Cr1000	EDU +1
4	Cr5000	Weapon
5	Cr5000	2 Clan Shares
6	Cr10000	Brotherhood of Stars
7	Cr20000	SOC +1
8	Cr30000	3 Clan Shares

- DM+1 if SOC 9+
- DM+1 when rolling on Benefits if Male

SKILLS AND TRAINING

1D	PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT		SERVICE SKILLS	
1	DEX +1	Steward	Astrogation	
2	Tolerance	Flyer	Broker	
3	Independence (male) or Broker (female)	Mechanic	Tactics (naval)	
4	INT +1	Athletics	Electronics	
5	Jack-of-All-Trades	Electronics	Leadership	
6	Vacc Suit	Vacc Suit	Admin	
1D	SPECIALIST: PILOT	SPECIALIST: GUNNER	SPECIALIST: ENGINEER	SPECIALIST: CREW
1	Pilot (small craft)	Gunner (turret)	Electronics	Mechanic
2	Pilot (spacecraft)	Gunner (any)	Engineer (j-drive)	Athletics
3	Tactics (naval)	Tactics (naval)	Engineer (power)	Vacc Suit
4	Athletics (dexterity)	Athletics (dexterity)	Engineer (m-drive)	Mechanic
5	Gunner (turret)	Electronics	Engineer	Engineer
6	DEX +1	INT +1	EDU +1	Engineer

RANKS AND BONUSES

RANK	PILOT/GUNNER	SKILL OR BENEFIT
0	Raw Recruit	
1	Recruit	Vacc Suit
2	Spacehand	
3	Veteran Spacehand	EDU +
4	Honoured Spacehand	
5	Petty Officer	
6	Veteran Petty Officer	3 Clan Shares

RANKS AND BONUSES CONT...

RANK	ENGINEER/CREW	SKILL OR BENEFIT
0	Raw Recruit	
1	Recruit	Mechanic
2	Spacehand	
3	Veteran Spacehand	EDU +1
4	Honoured Spacehand	
5	Petty Officer	
6	Veteran Petty Officer	2 Clan Shares

MISHAPS TABLE

1D	MISHAP
1	Severely injured. Roll twice on the Injury table and take the lower result.
2	A superior officer has you drummed out of the service. Gain a Rival.
3	You are infected by an alien parasite. Roll END 8+; if you succeed, you do not lose any END; otherwise lose END -1.
4	You are accused of smuggling illegal goods into clan space. Lose SOC -2.
5	You get into trouble on an alien world. Roll Tolerance 8+; if you succeed, you lose any Benefit rolls from this term but are not ejected from the career. Otherwise, you attack the alien and are punished by losing your place in the Space service.
6	Injured. Roll on the Injury table.

EVENTS TABLE

2D	EVENT
2	Disaster! Roll on the Mishap table, but you are not ejected from this career.
3	Your ship is attacked by pirates. Roll either Pilot 8+, Gunnery 8+ or Mechanic 8+. If you succeed, you drive off the attackers – gain DM+2 to your next advancement roll. If you fail, the pirates steal your cargo. Lose all Benefit rolls from this term and gain the pirate captain as an Enemy.
4	You have the opportunity to smuggle illegal goods. If you accept, roll Deception 8+. Succeed, and gain 3 Benefit rolls. Fail, and you suffer DM-6 to your next advancement check.
5	You are considered for promotion in the officer caste. You may add the number of terms served in this career as a DM if you attempt to qualify for the Space Officer career next term, and may apply even if you have not served the minimum number of terms in this career.
6	Your trading mission exposes you to many different worlds and cultures. Gain a leve, in either Survival, Streetwise, Science or Tolerance
7	Life Event. Roll on the Aslan Life Events table.
8	Your ship carries Aslan colonists to their new world. Gain a Contact from among their ranks.
9	You are engaged in a series of vicious battles against enemies of your clan. You may demonstrate heroism or prudence in battle. If you demonstrate heroism, roll END 9+ to avoid rolling on the Injury table, and gain DM+2 to your next advancement roll. If you cower, roll Stealth 8+ to avoid losing SOC -1.
10	You are considered for promotion in the officer caste. You may add the number of terms served in this career as a DM if you attempt to qualify for the Space Officer career next term, and may apply even if you have not served the minimum number of terms in this career.
11	The captain sees you as a promising crewman, and entrusts you with an important ceremonial duty. Either gain a leve in Steward or DM+4 to any advancement roll thanks to his aid.
12	Your efforts strike a great blow for your clan. You are automatically promoted.

SPACE OFFICER

There is a sharp divide in Aslan society between officers and crewmen; the officers are clearly of a higher caste, and it is a grievous breach of custom for the two groups to associate socially.

Qualification: Rite of Passage 10+

ASSIGNMENTS

Choose one of the following.

Commander: You command one of your clan's mighty starships.

Shipmaster: You advise the captain on technical matters and administer a ship.

Navigator: You pilot a ship through jump space

Gender: Only males can enter Commander. Only females can enter Shipmaster or Navigator.

CAREER PROGRESS

	SURVIVAL	ADVANCEMENT
Commander	SOC 8+	INT 6+
Shipmaster	EDU 7+	SOC 6+
Navigator	INT 6+	SOC 8+

MUSTERING OUT BENEFITS

ID	CASH	BENEFITS
1	Cr1000	2 Clan Shares
2	Cr5000	INT +1
3	Cr5000	EDU +2
4	Cr10000	Independence or Tolerance
5	Cr20000	3 Clan Shares
6	Cr50000	Brotherhood of Stars
7	Cr50000	SOC +2
8	Cr50000	5 Clan Shares

- DM+1 if SOC 9+
- DM+1 when rolling on Benefits if Male

SKILLS AND TRAINING

ID	PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT	SERVICE SKILLS	ADVANCED EDUCATION (MIN. EDU 10)
1	INT +1	Electronics	Admin
2	EDU +1	Tolerance	Engineer
3	Broker	Pilot	Electronics
4	Jack-of-All-Trades	Advocate	Leadership
5	Diplomat	Admin	Science
6	SOC +1	Gunner	Astrogation

ID	SPECIALIST: COMMANDER	SPECIALIST: SHIPMASTER	SPECIALIST: NAVIGATOR
1	Tactics (naval)	Admin	Astrogation
2	Diplomat	Engineer	Pilot
3	Leadership	Electronics	Engineer (j-drive)
4	Pilot	Engineer	Electronics
5	Gunner	Diplomat	Leadership
6	Tactics (naval)	Broker	Astrogation

RANKS AND BONUSES

RANK	COMMANDER	SKILL OR BENEFIT
0	Probationary Intendant	
1	Intendant	Leadership 1
2	Lieutenant	
3	Senior Lieutenant	
4	Commandant	Tactics (naval) 1
5	Captain	
6	Admiral	TER +2

RANKS AND BONUSES CONT...

RANK	SHIPMASTER	SKILL OR BENEFIT	RANK	NAVIGATOR	SKILL OR BENEFIT
0	Probationary Lieutenant		0	Trainee Navigator	
1	Intendant	Admin 1	1	Junior Navigator	Astrogation 1
2	Lieutenant		2		
3	Senior Lieutenant	Advocate 1	3	Navigator	Computers 1
4	Executive Lieutenant		4		
5	Executive		5		
6	Chief of Staff	2 Clan Shares	6		2 Clan Shares

MISHAPS

1D	MISHAP
1	Severely injured. Roll twice on the Injury table and take the lower result.
2	A disaster cripples your ship, and you are blamed for this failing. Roll Advocate 8+ or Melee 8+ to challenge this decision. If you succeed, you may keep any Benefit rolls from this term.
3	A shift in clan politics ruins your career. Lose SOC -2.
4	Your vessel is destroyed in battle. Gain the foe who defeated you as a Rival.
5	You are captured by a rival clan and ransomed back, but the disgrace ends your career. Gain a Contact in the rival clan.
6	Injured. Roll on the Injury table.

EVENTS

2D	EVENT
2	Disaster! Roll on the Mishap table, but you are not ejected from this career.
3	Your ship is attacked by pirates. Roll Tactics 8+ or Engineer 8+. If you succeed, you drive off the attackers and gain DM+2 to your next advancement roll. If you fail, the pirates steal your cargo. Lose all Benefit rolls from this term and gain the pirate captain as an Enemy.
4	You have the opportunity to smuggle illegal goods. If you accept, roll Deception 8+. Succeed, and gain 6 Benefit rolls. Fail, and you are ejected from this career and drop to SOC 2.
5	You spend time in alien space. Gain one level of Tolerance, Diplomat, Language or Science.
6	You are given advanced training in a specialist field. Roll EDU 8+ to gain any skill.
7	Life Event. Roll on the Aslan Life Events table.
8	You have the opportunity to establish a landhold in your name. Gain TER +2.
9	Your clan goes to war with another clan, and your vessel attacks one of their worlds. If you drive the colonists offworld with vicious tactics, gain TER +2, but lose SOC -2.
10	You are challenged to a duel by a rival. If you refuse, you lose SOC -1D. Accept, and roll Melee 8+. If you fail, you lose all Benefits from this term. Succeed, and gain DM+2 to your next advancement roll.
11	You befriend an old Aslan admiral. Either gain Tactics (naval) or DM+4 to any advancement roll thanks to his aid.
12	Your efforts strike a great blow for your clan. You are automatically promoted.



OUTCAST

Those Aslan who fail to find their place in society become Outcasts, and are seen as the scum of the stars by the rest of their species. Outcasts who survive may be able to build on their skills and self-reliance, and eventually make something of themselves... but few survive.

Qualification: Automatic

ASSIGNMENTS

Choose one of the following.

Labourer: You work in whatever dead-end job is not being done by robots or slaves.

Trader: You trade in black market and marginal goods.

Scavenger: You pick the bodies of the dead or retrieve salvaged ships.

Note: No matter the event or mishap, you can never be ejected from the Outcast career.

CAREER PROGRESS

	SURVIVAL	ADVANCEMENT
Labourer	STR 8+	STR 7+
Trader	END 8+	INT 7+
Scavenger	END 8+	EDU 7+

MUSTERING OUT BENEFITS

1D	CASH	BENEFITS
1	Cr0	INT +1
2	Cr500	EDU +
3	Cr500	Weapon
4	Cr1000	Independence or Streetwise
5	Cr1000	Contact
6	Cr5000	END +1
7	Cr10000	END +1 and EDU +1

SKILLS AND TRAINING

1D	PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT	SERVICE SKILLS
1	Independence (if male) or Melee (if female)	Profession
2	STR +1	Streetwise
3	Streetwise	Mechanic
4	Gambler	Melee (natural)
5	END +1	Deception
6	Jack-of-All-Trades	Survival

1D	SPECIALIST: LABOURER	SPECIALIST: TRADER	SPECIALIST: SCAVENGER
1	Athletics	Broker	Mechanic
2	Drive	Streetwise	Streetwise
3	Streetwise	Admin	Drive or Flyer
4	Gun Combat	Profession	Engineer
5	END +1	Electronics	Independence
6	STR +1	INT +1	END +1

RANKS AND BONUSES

RANK	SKILL OR BENEFIT	SKILL OR BENEFIT
0	Outcast	
1		Independence 1
2		
3	Survivor	Streetwise 1
4		
5		
6		

MISHAPS TABLE

1D	MISHAP
1	Severely injured. Roll twice on the Injury table and take the lower result.
2	Your friends desert you. Lose an Ally or Contact. If you have none, lose all Benefits from this term.
3	You are attacked by a band of young Aslan thugs. Roll on the Injury table, and gain the leader of the thugs as an Enemy
4	You suffer a life-threatening disease. Reduce your END -1.
5	You steal from a noble lord to survive. He orders you hunted down by clan agents, forcing you to flee his territory. Lose any Benefits from this term.
6	Injured. Roll on the Injury table.

EVENTS TABLE

2D	EVENT
2	Disaster! Roll on the Mishap table.
3	A landowner offers you the opportunity to serve him. You gain DM+4 to your next qualification roll, but you owe that Aslan a great debt.
4	You pick up a few handy skills. Gain Jack-of-All-Trades.
5	You find working passage on a starship. Gain a level in either Mechanic, Vacc Suit, Engineer or Tolerance.
6	You survive on the edge. Gain a Contact.
7	Life Event. Roll on the Life Events table on page 44 of the <i>Traveller Core Rulebook</i> .
8	You are attacked by thieves. Roll Melee 10+ to fight them off, or Stealth 8+ to escape. If you fail either, lose all Benefit rolls this term. If you fight them off, gain an extra Benefit roll.
9	An <i>ihatei</i> heading for the frontier worlds offers you a place in his retinue. If you accept, gain the <i>ihatei</i> as an Ally and you must attempt to qualify for a career from the Traveller Core Rulebook next term.
10	You have the opportunity to join an outlaw band or serve on the crew of a wanderer ship. You can automatically qualify for the Outlaw or Wanderer career next term.
11	Your clan offers you a chance at redemption. You may restore your SOC to its original value and may attempt to qualify for another career next term, but you owe a great debt to a clan elder.
12	You survive. You are automatically promoted.



You rejected – or were rejected by – Aslan society, and forge your own path in the criminal sphere.

Qualification: STR 6+

ASSIGNMENTS

Choose one of the following.

Pirate: You attack shipping and the colonies of other, lesser races.

Raider: You attack outlying settlements and vulnerable lesser clans.

Thief: You work alone and steal from the wealthy.

CAREER PROGRESS

	SURVIVAL	ADVANCEMENT
Pirate	END 7+	INT 7+
Raider	END 8+	STR 6+
Thief	DEX 7+	INT 7+

MUSTERING OUT BENEFITS

ID	CASH	BENEFITS
1	Cr5000	Contact
2	Cr10000	INT +1
3	Cr20000	Independence or Streetwise
4	Cr20000	Weapon
5	Cr40000	INT +1, Independence or Streetwise
6	Cr70000	EDU +1, Independence or Streetwise
7	Cr100000	5 Ship Shares

- DM+1 if male and rolling on the Benefits column.

SKILLS AND TRAINING

ID	PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT	SERVICE SKILLS
1	Independence (if male) or Melee (if female)	Streetwise
2	INT +1	Gun Combat
3	EDU +1	Melee (natural)
4	Gambler	Tactics (military)
5	END +1	Persuade
6	Independence (if male) or Melee (if female)	Stealth

ID	SPECIALIST: PIRATE	SPECIALIST: RAIDER	SPECIALIST: THIEF
1	Pilot	Gun Combat	Broker
2	Engineer	Medic	Stealth
3	Gunner	Streetwise	Streetwise
4	Mechanic	Recon	Deception
5	Athletics (dexterity)	Stealth	Electronics
6	Vacc Suit	Melee	Mechanic

RANKS AND BONUSES

RANK	SKILL OR BENEFIT	SKILL OR BENEFIT
0	Outlaw	
1		Melee (natural) 1
2		
3	Feared Outlaw	Independence 1 or Streetwise 1
4		
5		
6	Outlaw Chief	Leadership 1

MISHAPS TABLE

1D	MISHAP
1	Severely injured. Roll twice on the Injury table and take the lower result.
2	You are captured and punished by the clan you stole from. Reduce your END -2, and gain a member of that clan as an Enemy.
3	A rival outlaw band attacks. Roll on the Injury table and lose any Benefit rolls from this term.
4	You are forced to flee off-planet. Gain Deception 1, Pilot 1, Independence 1 or Streetwise 1 as you flee.
5	A friend betrays you. One Ally or Contact becomes a Rival (if you have no Contacts or Allies, then you never saw the betrayal coming; gain a Rival anyway).
6	Injured. Roll on the Injury table.

EVENTS TABLE

2D	EVENT
2	Disaster! Roll on the mishap table, but you are not ejected from this career.
3	You barely survive on the fringes of Aslan space. Lose 1 Endurance, but gain any one skill.
4	One of your crimes pays off. Gain a Benefit roll.
5	A clan puts a price on your head. Gain an Enemy, and Stealth, Streetwise, Gun Combat or Survival. Alternatively, you can try to claim the reward yourself. If you do so, roll Deception 8+. Succeed, and gain 3 Benefit rolls. Fail, and you are recognised – lose 2 Endurance and you are ejected from this career.
6	You acquire a contact in the criminal sphere. Gain a Contact.
7	<i>Life Event. Roll on the Life Events table.</i>
8	You pick up some useful skills. Gain Electronics, Independence, Stealth or Gun Combat.
9	You attempt an audacious raid on a rival. Roll either Pilot, Stealth or Gun Combat 8+. Fail, and you are Injured. Succeed, and you gain an extra Benefit roll or +1 Social Standing.
10	You are offered employment by a clan to perform some deed that they want accomplished covertly. If you accept, roll Stealth 8+. Fail, and you gain nothing. Succeed, and you gain an extra benefit roll. Alternatively, you can inform the clan's enemies; gain a Benefit roll, but gain the clan as an Enemy.
11	If male, you have the opportunity to reclaim your standing in society. Gain +1 Territory and restore your Social Standing, but you must leave this career this term. If female and unmarried, then you may marry a male of good family. If you accept, reroll your Social Standing and you must leave this career this term.
12	Your deeds are the stuff of legends and nightmares. You are automatically promoted.



Young second sons (ihatei) and other landless Aslan may be assigned small starships by their clan, to seek out new worlds and new opportunities. Such wanderers often end up as mercenaries, but also serve much the same function as scouts do in the Imperium.

Qualification: Rite of Passage 8+

ASSIGNMENTS

Choose one of the following.

Belter: You mine asteroids for valuable minerals and salvage.

Nomad: You wander from system to system.

Scout: You explore unknown worlds and survey planets for colonisation.

Gender: Male only.

CAREER PROGRESS

	SURVIVAL	ADVANCEMENT
Belter	END 6+	INT 8+
Nomad	DEX 7+	INT 7+
Scout	END 8+	INT 6+

MUSTERING OUT BENEFITS

ID	CASH	BENEFITS
1	Cr0	1 Clan Share
2	Cr0	INT +1
3	Cr0	EDU +2
4	Cr2000	Independence
5	Cr5000	Tolerance
6	Cr10000	Scout_Ship
7	Cr20000	TER +2

- DM+1 if SOC 9+

SKILLS AND TRAINING

ID	PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT	SERVICE SKILLS	ADVANCED EDUCATION (MIN. EDU 8)
1	Independence	Independence	Astrogation
2	STR +1	Pilot	Engineer
3	DEX +1	Gunner	Electronics
4	END +1	Engineer	Advocate
5	Tolerance	Gun Combat	Science
6	Jack-of-All-Trades	Mechanic	Medic

ID	SPECIALIST: BELTER	SPECIALIST: NOMAD	SPECIALIST: SCOUT
1	Mechanic	Astrogation	Astrogation
2	Electronics	Pilot	Science
3	Science	Engineer	Survival
4	Profession	Gun Combat	Electronics
5	Broker	Electronics	Pilot
6	Pilot	Mechanic	Recon

RANKS AND BONUSES

RANK	SKILL OR BENEFIT
0	
1	Mechanic
2	
3	Engineer
4	
5	
6	Contact

MISHAPS

1D	MISHAP
1	Severely injured. Roll twice on the Injury table and take the lower result.
2	Your ship crashes on an uninhabited world. Gain any one of Survival 1, Mechanic 1, Animals 1 or Recon 1.
3	You fail to find work or usable territory. Starvation reduces your END -1.
4	You are attacked by outlaws or raiders from another race. Roll Pilot 8+ to avoid rolling on the Injury table.
5	A rival <i>ihatei</i> sabotages your ship. Gain Mechanic from the experience of fixing it, and gain him as a Rival.
6	Injured. Roll on the Injury table

EVENTS

2D	EVENT
2	Disaster! Roll on the Mishap table, but you are not ejected from this career.
3	Your vessel runs into a border patrol. Roll Pilot or Gunner 8+ to escape; if you fail, suffer DM-2 to your next survival roll.
4	You have extensive dealings with barbarians. Gain Tolerance and one of the following: Broker 1, Diplomat 1, Independence 1 or a Contact.
5	You have the opportunity to trade Aslan goods. Roll Independence 8+; if you succeed, gain an extra Benefit roll.
6	You gain a Contact in a distant spaceport.
7	Life Event. Roll on the Aslan Life Events table.
8	You pick up some useful skills working on your ship. Gain one of Pilot (spacecraft), Gunner (turret), Engineer or Mechanic.
9	You are forced to recruit a new crew. Roll Carouse or Streetwise 8+. If you succeed, gain an Ally as one of your new crew proves a true friend. If you fail, one of the new crew robs you – lose any Benefit rolls from this term and gain an Enemy.
10	You spent time on the fringes of Aslan space. Roll Survival 8+ or Pilot 8+; if you fail, roll on the Mishap table but you may stay in this career. If you succeed, gain a Contact and any one skill.
11	You find new worlds for your clan to conquer. Gain DM+2 to your next advancement roll.
12	You find unclaimed territory. Gain TER 1D+1.



MUSTERING OUT

Aslan receive mustering out Benefits when they leave the service as normal. Remember to apply benefits of rank as shown on page 44 of the *Traveller Core Rulebook*.

Kinships

Kinships are secret societies and trade guilds within Aslan society. A Traveller given membership in a kinship may ask other members of the kinship for aid, learn skills, or obtain funding for further studies related to the kinship's purpose. There are scientific kinships, engineering kinships, warrior secret schools and so forth.

Pensions

There is no pension system for Aslan. An old Aslan should have accumulated Clan Shares to have enough money to live on.

Cash Benefits

Females, being more skilled in handling financial matters, may consult the Cash column any number of times. Males are restricted to consulting the Cash column no more times than they have levels of the Independence skill; in addition, males receive only half the amount rolled for.

Other Benefits

Some Benefits are unique to Aslan.

Brotherhood of Stars: This grand kinship of starfarers grants the Traveller one free Low Passage per month, and one free High Passage per year.

Ceremonial Kinship: A Traveller who is a member of a ceremonial kinship gains D3 Allies within the Aslan hierarchy.

Clan Shares

Aslan Travellers do not receive Ship Shares. Instead, they receive Clan Shares, which represent the clan placing an increasing amount of trust in the Traveller's abilities, and the Traveller gaining more control over the assets of the clan.

A Traveller may trade Clan Shares for any of the following benefits. Travellers from the same clan may combine Clan Shares.

Cash: A Traveller may trade Clan Shares for simple cash. Each Clan Share gives the Traveller to obtain Cr10000.

Corporation: The Traveller owns an operating corporation. It has MCr5 in assets per Clan Share spent and produces gross profits equal to 1D% of its assets per year. The Traveller need not do anything to administer the corporation, but may become involved if desired.

Favours: Clan Shares can be kept in reserve, and used to apply political pressure to the clan in the future. A Clan Share can be spent to acquire a Contact in the clan's upper echelons, or turn such a Contact into an Ally.

Land: This option can only be taken by a male Aslan with SOC 9+. The Traveller receives a landhold. Owning lands is the dream of all Aslan males, the chief ambition which drives them. To determine the landholding's quality and size, first select or generate the world where the landhold is located (see page 42). The size of the holding on that world is then determined based on the number of Clan Shares invested in the holding. Three Clan Shares grants TER +1.

Ship Shares: Clan Shares may be converted to Ship Shares directly on a one-for-one basis.

Scientific Kinship: A scientific kinship is a school of experts on a topic. A Traveller who is a member of a scientific kinship may make a Difficult (10+) SOC check once per year; if successful, they obtain the use of a kinship laboratory ship for six months.

Scout Ship: This is as detailed on page 45 of the *Traveller Core Rulebook*, but will instead be an *Ihateisho* scout ship, as detailed on page 64, *Ships of the Reach*.

Secret School: A secret warrior school teaches secret combat techniques. In addition to being part of this brotherhood of warriors, the Traveller may obtain DM+1 to attack rolls in any one of the following situations:

- **Melee (natural):** When duelling
- **Gun Combat (energy):** After having aimed for at least two rounds*
- **Gun Combat (slug):** After having aimed for at least two rounds*
- **Heavy Weapons (any):** After having aimed for at least two rounds*
- **Gunner:** When engaging a target at Adjacent range

ASLAN LIFE EVENTS

Outcast Aslan must use the Life Events table on page 44 of the *Traveller Core Rulebook*, reflecting their disconnection from Aslan society. All others use the Aslan Life Events table.

2D	Event
2	Sickness or Injury: You are injured or become sick. Roll on the Injury table
3	Birth or Death: Someone close to you dies, like a friend or pride member. Alternatively, someone close to you gives birth (or is born!). You are involved in some fashion (father or mother, pridekin, honour guard).
4	Territory Challenge: A rival attempts to claim some of your Territory (or your sire's or mate's Territory, if you have none of your own). Make a Diplomat, Broker, Melee (natural) or Gun Combat check, and increase or decrease your TER (or SOC, if you have no Territory) by the Effect of the roll.
5	Change in Marriage Status: If not married, you are now married (either to an existing Ally or Contact, another Traveller, or a mate arranged by your clan). If already married, roll 1D. On 1-4, another female is added to the pride. On a 5-6, your mate is slain. See page 38 for the effects of marriage.
6	Clan Event: Roll on the Clan Event table.
7	New Contact: You gain a new Contact.
8	Clan Event: Roll on the Clan Event table.
9	Travel: You move to another world. Gain DM+2 to your next qualification roll.
10	Duel: You are challenged to a duel over a matter of family honour. If you refuse, lose SOC -1. If you accept, roll Melee (natural) 8+. If you succeed, gain SOC +1; otherwise, lose SOC -2.
11	Dishonoured: You are accused of a crime. Roll Advocate 8+ or Melee (natural) 10+ to defend yourself (if you have any Contacts or Allies in the clan, you gain DM+2 to the Advocate roll). If you cannot defend yourself, you drop to SOC 2 and become Outcast.
12	Unusual Event: Something weird. Roll 1D. 1 – Psionic: You have an encounter with a psionic phenomenon, such as a human psionic institute, a Zhodani agent or a telepathic plant. 2 – Aliens: You travel extensively with non-Aslan. Gain Tolerance. 3 – Alien Artefact: You come into possession of a curious piece of alien technology or an archaeological relic. 4 – Amnesia: There is a gap in your memory. 5 – Contact with Clan Leaders: The elders of your clan entrust you with a mission or a secret. 6 – Ancient Technology: You have an item that is older than the Aslan race.

Clan Events

1D	Event
1	Prosperous Times: The clan acquires new Territories or trade routes. Gain an extra Benefit roll or DM+2 to your next advancement roll.
2	Rising Fortunes: Your clan's political standing improves. Gain SOC +1.
3	New Ally: A member of your clan rises to an influential position. Gain him or her as an Ally.
4	Feud: Your family is now feuding with another Aslan family. Gain the enemy family as an Enemy.
5	War: Your clan goes to war. If male, you suffer DM-2 to survival rolls next term. If female, lose one Benefit roll.
6	Hard Times: Your clan suffers economic hardship. You suffer DM-4 to advancement rolls this term, and gain no Benefit rolls for it.

CENTRAL SUPPLY CATALOGUE: ASLAN

Aslan equipment is broadly similar to human items. While the aesthetics are different – Aslan items are bigger and heavier, and much more likely to include natural materials like wood, fur or bone, or at least synthetics that resemble natural materials – both races are physiologically similar, and Aslan borrowed much of their advanced technology from humanity.

There are obvious differences between items made for Aslan males and those made for females. Male items, such as most weapons, are simplified to the point of elegance (or beyond). A human laser rifle has a wealth of options and controls, allowing the user to set power consumption rates, adjust the weapon's focus, connect the weapon to different types of heads-up-displays or diagnostic equipment, and conduct field repairs. An Aslan laser rifle has an on-off switch and a trigger. Nothing comes between the warrior and his kill. There are no distractions, no fuss, no pointless women's work – just the kill.

By contrast, female Aslan items have a wealth of controls and options, and seem overcomplicated or even deliberately obfuscated to human operators. This is partly because of the Aslan love for decoration; every item of worth is engraved, gilded, jewelled or adorned in some fashion. It also serves to reinforce the cultural bias of the Aslan that technical topics are the preserve of females.

In cases where an item is designed to be used by both genders, such as a vehicle, there will generally be two sets of controls, or else a core control system and a wealth of secondary controls. In general, though, the further one gets from the core Aslan worlds and the influence of the Tlauku culture, the more the two strands of Aslan interface design merge – rough colony worlds do not always have the luxury to accommodate what is essentially a cultural affectation.

The Aslan have reached TL14, but are well behind the Imperium in several key fields.



The Travellers Aid Society presents the

CENTRAL SUPPLY COLLECTION



6

WHENEVER YOU NEED IT!

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PERSONAL PROTECTION -

Use a *Su'yerl* armour on the battlefield. Page 101



MODIFICATIONS -

Use your dew claw in armoured combat, with a *Claw Port*. Page 104

1

PERSONAL PROTECTION

Armour is a much more common sight in Aslan society than it is on human worlds. Most upper-class males will at least wear ceremonial armour as part of their daily wardrobe, and virtually all military personnel habitually wear heavier body armour than a human would feel comfortable in. Aslan armour is always ornately decorated and includes furs and other natural materials.

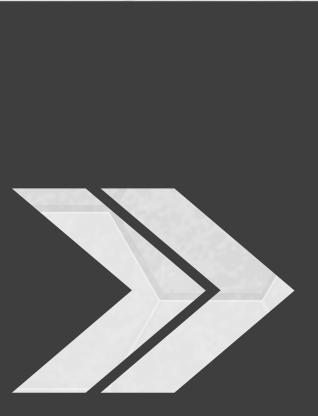


SECTION 1: ARMOUR

Many suits of armour also include full-face masks made to resemble the features of the wearer or an ancestor. These masks are a sign of prestige among the Aslan, and worn only by those of high status.

STANDARD ARMOUR

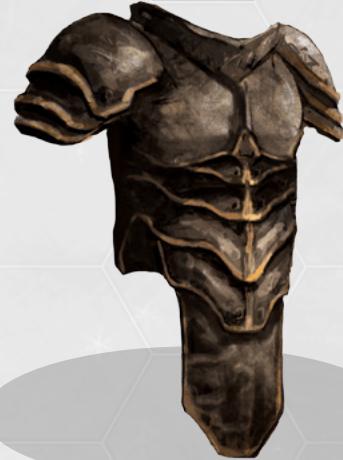
Unless otherwise noted, an Aslan may use his dewclaw while wearing armour.



01/91111

AUA-LEATHER

Aua-hide clothing is the traditional garb of most Aslan warriors, and the heavy, musky stench of the leather is part of the bouquet of every Aslan world and starship. The Aslan produce so much aua-hide that it is used for everything from armour to cargo restraints to children's toys.



Armour Type	Protection	TL	Rad	Kg	Cost	Required Skill
Ballistic Vest	1	2	-	2	Cr40	None

01/595978

ASLAN BATTLE DRESS

Aslan battle dress is bulkier and less advanced than human designs. It lacks the built-in computer of human suits (and so does not come with the electronics suite described in the *Central Supply Catalogue*), but offers six hours of life support and protection from environmental hazards. An Aslan may not use a dewclaw while wearing this armour.



Armour Type	Protection	TL	Rad	STR	DEX	Slot	Kg	Cost	Required Skill
Aslan Battle Dress	19	14	2650	+6	+3	6	105	MCr1	Vacc Suit 2

01/01155663

ASSASSIN'S GARB

Assassin's garb consists of a form-fitting body glove studded with small armour plates. It is designed for stealth rather than protection, and granting the wearer DM+1 to Stealth checks. An Aslan may not use a dewclaw while wearing this armour. More advanced versions replace the armour plates with a reactive layer that becomes rigid when struck, and also incorporates the Vislight Chameleon option (see *Traveller Core Rulebook*, page 96).



Armour Type	Protection	TL	Rad	Kg	Cost	Required Skill
Assassin's Garb	3	8	-	1	Cr10000	None
Assassin's Garb	6	13	-	1	Cr100000	None

01/0766543

CEREMONIAL ARMOUR

A full suit of *khirshukaya* is a rare sight these days; only the oldest clans have preserved these suits. They are worn by ceremonial honour guards and nobles, and is roughly comparable to human plate armour. It is reserved for those of SOC 9+ their guards; wearing armour without the necessary standing is insulting.

Armour Type	Protection	TL	Rad	Kg	Cost	Required Skill
Ceremonial Armour	4	3	-	6	Cr2000	None



01/251299

CEREMONIAL BREASTPLATE

These ornamental breastplates are designed to deflect the razor-sharp dewclaws of an attacker, and are not strong enough to stand up to a bullet. Most Aslan nobles of SOC 9+ will wear one of these breastplates at all times – wearing such armour without the requisite SOC is considered discourteous.

Armour Type	Protection	TL	Rad	Kg	Cost	Required Skill
Ceremonial Breastplate	2	3	-	3	Cr500	None

01/07715

COMBAT ARMOUR

Su'yerl armour is a common sight on the battlefields of the Hierate. It uses a sandwich of composite materials over a 0.5cm layer of bonded superdense plating, and is then coated in a reflec lacquer. The armour is too heavy for most humans to wear, and even Aslan warriors find long fights in *su'yerl* to be difficult propositions. Travellers with STR 8- suffer DM-2 to all checks involving physical actions while wearing *su'yerl*.

Armour Type	Protection	TL	Rad	Kg	Cost	Required Skill
Flak Shell	15	12	120	14	Cr180000	Vacc Suit 1



01/1666666

COMBAT FLEX

Combat flex armour is made up of interlocking plastic plates, designed to resemble *khirshukaya*. These suits are worn by clan agents, mercenaries, and even some Aslan traders and explorers.

Armour Type	Protection	TL	Rad	Kg	Cost	Required Skill
Combat Flex	4	6	-	4	Cr300	None

01/113111

COMBAT VACC SUIT

The *suya'uiyekhyerl* is a combat variant of the standard heavy vacc suit, incorporating extra armour plating and weapon mounts. Aslan fighters and dropships are all designed with the bulky *suya'uiyekhyerl* in mind. It has life support for six hours, though an Aslan may not use a dewclaw while wearing this armour.

Armour Type	Protection	TL	Rad	Kg	Cost	Required Skill
Combat Vacc Suit	9	12	120	36	Cr22000	Vacc Suit 2



01/822222

HEAVY COMBAT ARMOUR

Only the strongest and most worthy warriors can bear the weight of *su'yerlva* armour. The armour is even thicker and stronger than basic combat armour, and normally augmented with grav assist equipment. Travellers with STR 11- suffer DM-2 to all checks involving physical actions while wearing this armour.

Armour Type	Protection	TL	Rad	Kg	Cost	Required Skill
Heavy Combat Armour	17	12	150	20	Cr300000	Vacc Suit 2

01/5811811

HEAVY VACC SUIT

Heavy vacc suits are designed for use in hostile environments, much like the human HEV suit. The *suya'uiyekhva* includes powered actuators to aid the wearer's movements, as well as a limited built-in artificial intelligence to advise male wearers on correct operation. It offers twelve hours of life support, though an Aslan may not use a dewclaw while wearing this armour.

Armour Type	Protection	TL	Rad	Kg	Cost	Required Skill
Heavy Vacc Suit	8	10	75	32	Cr15000	Vacc Suit 1



01/171987

VACC SUIT

The Aslan vacc suit is similar to human models. The Aslan find the open vistas of space to be highly disconcerting, and so most have narrower viewports than human models to compensate. A standard vacc suit provides life support for six hours. An Aslan may not use a dewclaw while wearing this armour. More advanced models are self-sealing and considerably lighter.

Armour Type	Protection	TL	Rad	Kg	Cost	Required Skill
Vacc Suit	4	9	10	26	Cr8000	Vacc Suit 1
Vacc Suit	6	10	50	6	Cr16000	Vacc Suit 0

SECTION 2: MODIFICATIONS

All standard modifications listed in the *Traveller Core Rulebook* (page 96) or *Central Supply Catalogue* (page 27) may be used with Aslan armour. In addition, some are unique to the Hierate.

Claw Port

A claw port allows an Aslan to use his dewclaws in combat while wearing armour. Basic claw ports are flexible orifices that are hooked onto the muscles at the base of the claw. When the Aslan unsheathes his claw, the movement pulls the claw port open. More advanced claw ports, designed for use in hostile environments, allow the claw to be extruded without damaging the suit. Aslan planning to use their claws in such environments should invest in Claw Coating (see page 109). A claw port must be of at least the same TL as the armour it is fitted to.

Modification	TL	Kg	Cost
Claw Port	5	-	Cr75
Claw Port	8	-	Cr500



Command Suite

This upgrade adds a specialised computer weave and communications system to any armour. This computer runs Intellect/1 and Expert (Electronics – comms) 2, handling unit co-ordination and control, allowing a male to command his troops using modern telepresence and communications without having to deal with technical issues

Modification	TL	Kg	Cost
Command Suite	12	-	Cr12500

Ornamentation

Even basic items are decorated by Aslan craftsmen, but a fine suit of armour deserves much more.

Modification	TL	Kg	Cost
Ornamentation	2	-	SOC x Cr100

Tail Armour

An Aslan with a full tail can only wear armour that includes this modification.

Modification	TL	Kg	Cost
Tail Armour	2	-	Cr50 or +2.5%

2

COMMUNICATIONS & COMPUTING

04/10122

BOUNDARY BOX

A necessity for any Traveller on an Aslan world, the boundary box contains maps of the planet's surface as well as a database demonstrating which territory is owned by which Aslan noble. The box signals the Traveller when he is about to cross into an Aslan's territory, ensuring he does not inadvertently cause offence. Additional maps for a boundary box cost Cr25.

Item	TL	Kg	Cost
Boundary Box	7	-	Cr150



04/29292

CLAN COMM

The standard Aslan personal communicator has dedicated channels for the owner's family, pride and clan in addition to normal comm features. The gift of a clan comm to an outsider is an expression of trust and honour; illegal possession of another clan's comm is an insult.

Item	TL	Kg	Cost
Clan Comm	7	-	Cr150



3

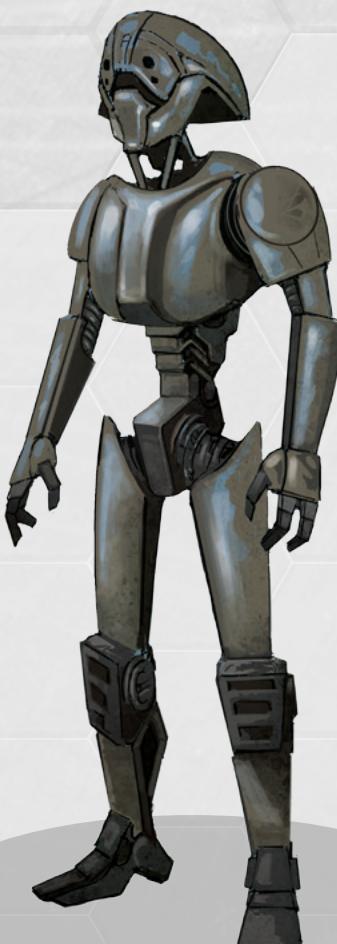
ROBOTS

05/85100

MOUSEBOT

These little drones are mobile food carriers, designed to remind Aslan of natural prey on Kusyu. They are used where live food would be impractical. Freshly heated meat is attached to the khyeseir's spikes, and the drone is released to run around the dining area.

	Hits	Speed	TL	Cost
Skills	3	10m	7	Cr125
Attacks				Athletics (dexterity) 1, Recon 1, Stealth 2
Traits				None
Programming				Armour (+2), Small (-3)
				Basic (scurry and hide)



05/84980

SLAVE MACHINE

These are humanoid robots, mass-produced and used as labourers. The Aslan could perhaps have developed more efficient non-humanoid designs, but the arerl appeals to some atavistic instinct in the Aslan.

	Hits	Speed	TL	Cost
Skills	36	4m	12	Cr120000
Attacks				Athletics (strength) 3, Profession (labourer) 1
Traits				None
Programming				Armour (+6)
				Basic (labourer)

05/63450 TECHNICIAN

A personal robot of great sophistication, the hikare' is capable of serving as an engineer on a one-man scout ship, or as a personal servant. On larger ships, they are used to replace or aid female crew members. The hikare' design has evolved over time, and older hikare' are often encountered on backward Aslan colonies. These robots are equipped with functioning, though limited, grav drives and completed technical and engineering toolkits.

Skills

Hits	Speed	TL	Cost
24	6m	14	Cr650000
Engineer (all) 2, Electronics (computers) 2, Electronics (sensors) 2, Mechanic 2, Steward 2			
None			
Armour (+4), Flyer (idle), IR/UV Vision			
Very Advanced			

Attacks**Traits****Programming**

4

MEDICAL SUPPLIES

07/93338

BIO-ADJUSTMENT PILL

Bio-adjustment pills alter an Aslan's digestion, allowing them to metabolise alien meats. Different planets require different types of pill, although broad-spectrum pills exist that are suitable for a variety of worlds. Cr20 will buy enough pills to last an Aslan a month.

Item	TL	Kg	Cost
Bio-adjustment Pills	8	-	Cr20



07/83333

SLASHPATCH

The slashpatch is a specialised bandage designed to treat dewclaw cuts. It glues the wound shut and releases painkillers and clotting agents at a rate optimised to deal with slashing injuries. If a slashpatch is applied within one minute of a claw attack, it immediately heals 1D points of damage.

Item	TL	Kg	Cost
Slashpatch	6	-	Cr5



07/6669

FIELD MEDICAL KIT

This is a backpack-sized medical kit for doctors, combat medics and paramedics. The kit contains drugs, surgical supplies, and diagnostic equipment as well as very basic surgical tools. A field surgery kit provides all the necessary equipment required for most basic (or desperate operations).

Item	TL	Kg	Cost
Field Medical Kit	6	3	Cr500



5

PERSONAL AUGMENTATION

The Aslan of the Hierate frown on augmentation and genetic engineering. Cybernetics are a necessary evil, as many Aslan are maimed in duels or wars and need replacement limbs, but attempts to improve the species through technology are against tradition. Other Aslan states such as the Glorious Empire are less conservative, and permit limited augmentation.



08/77777

CLAW COATING

This augmentation covers the Aslan's dewclaw in a polymer seal that protects it from environmental damage such as extremes of temperature and pressure

Weapon	TL	Cost
Claw Coating	9	Cr1500



08/77556

CLAW EDGING

This augmentation sharpens a dewclaw and lines its cutting edge with a blade so sharp it approaches monofilament. It also includes all the benefits from Claw Hardening, and increases the damage from a successful claw attack to 3D.

Item	TL	Cost
Claw Edging	11	Cr6000

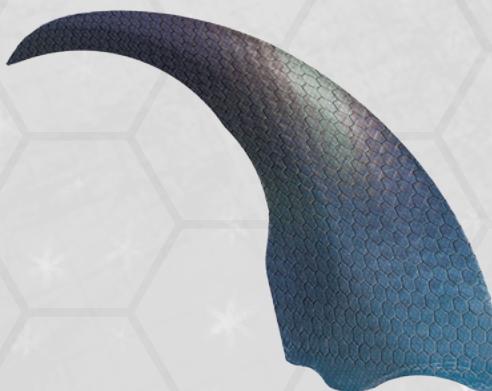


08/55555

CLAW HARDENING

Claw hardening weaves carbon nanotubes and bands of tough synthetics into a dewclaw, making it tougher than most armour. A Traveller with claw hardening can scratch a starship hull or parry an attack from a chainsaw without damage. A dewclaw that has been augmented with Claw Hardening inflicts 2D damage.

Item	TL	Cost
Claw Hardening	10	Cr3000



08/32234**CLAW IMPLANT**

Human Travellers living in Aslan space are at a disadvantage as they lack dewclaws. They can carry hi'a'soi blades or, alternatively, can go all the way and have an artificial dewclaw implanted into the forearm. The human claw is embedded into the forearm; when unsheathed, it slides forward and projects under the palm. A human with a claw implant may make claw attacks dealing 1D damage.

Weapon	TL	Cost
Claw Implant	10	Cr5000

**08/0000****PREDATOR SUITE**

This enhancement was developed by the Awyraolr clan during the Kinstripe, and is banned throughout Aslan space. Nonetheless, some clans have kept the technology and even refined it. The predator suite sharpens the recipient's senses and tweaks the endocrine system, enhancing the predator instincts of the Aslan. This augmentation increases the recipient's STR, DEX and END by +2 permanently, though INT and EDU are both reduced by -2, and DM-4 is applied to all Tolerance checks.

Item	TL	Cost
Predator Suite	12	Cr100000

**08/57220****PREHENSILE TAIL**

This modification implants artificial nerve and muscle cells into the tail, strengthening it and increasing its fine motor control, allowing the Aslan to effectively use the tail as a third limb. A Traveller with a prehensile tail may take an extra minor action in any combat round, so long as this minor action can be accomplished with the tail.

Item	TL	Cost
Prehensile Tail	11	Cr12000

**08/5900****TAIL IMPLANT**

Aslan with only vestigial tails (or humans who suffer from tail envy) can purchase this augment. The tail is purely decorative, but can be upgraded to a prehensile tail.

Item	TL	Cost
Tail Implant	9	Cr4000

6

WEAPONS

Unless otherwise stated, all the weapons here use the Melee (blade) skill.

SECTION 1: WEAPONS OF HONOUR



12/13810

ASSASSIN'S BLADE

The traditional weapon of an assassin is a curved blade, often with funnels in the blade containing poison. The delivery of a soisu'soi is part of the ceremony that begins a War of Assassins. Modern blades are made of sensor-baffling materials, fold down to the size of a small coin, and contain poison tailored to the metabolism and genetics of the intended family. An Aslan of the target genetic family who is struck by a modern assassin's blade must make a Difficult (10+) END check or suffer another 1D damage every hour for the next 1D hours.

Weapon	TL	Range	Damage	Kg	Cost	Traits
Assassin's Blade	3	Melee	2D	0.5	Cr500	-
Assassin's Blade	10	Melee	2D+3	-	Cr5000	-



12/19284

CRESCENT BLADE

The *taleryu* is a symbol of a noble's authority; it was traditionally used to execute trespassers, but works well as a combat weapon. *Taleryu* are sometimes used in zero-gravity combat in the same way cutlasses are used by humans of the Imperium.

Weapon	TL	Range	Damage	Kg	Cost	Traits
Crescent Blade	3	Melee	2D+3	1.5	Cr100	-



12/8620

FIERAH

The fierah is a strip of flexible material (originally hide, now frequently plastic) approximately 150cm in length, and frequently worn like a sash or belt. It can be used in a variety of ways – looped, it can be used to snare or throttle an opponent using the Melee (unarmed) skill; it can also be used as a sling or the loose strands at each end can be tied around weights to form an improvised flail or bolo (taking two rounds), using the Gun Combat (archaic) skill. Highly decorated fierah are part of the traditional costume of a noble.

Weapon	TL	Range	Damage	Kg	Cost	Traits
Fierah	1	10	1D	--	Cr10	-



12/24242

MONKEY KNIFE

Hi'asoi are ceremonial weapons used by humans who have integrated into Aslan society. The blade resembles a dewclaw, and is worn strapped to the wrist, allowing a human to fight in duels, using the blade as a proxy claw. The chances of survival against an Aslan male are, of course, minimal.

Weapon	TL	Range	Damage	Kg	Cost	Traits
Monkey Knife	3	Melee	1D	-	Cr150	-



12/16161

REAVER'S AXE

An oversized great-axe, the yuhaih is a weapon of terror, as it makes a thunderous noise as it is whirled through the air. Dewclaws are needed to wield the yuhaih properly, as the wielder's claws slot into a round hole in the shaft, allowing him to spin it at great speed before he drives it into a foe's skull.

Weapon	TL	Range	Damage	Kg	Cost	Traits
Reaver's Axe	4	Melee	4D	5	Cr500	-



12/14111

SPEAR-HOOK

A combination of spear (at one end) and four-pronged grappling hook (at the other), the yurletya is 250cm in length, and was a favourite duelling weapon of early Aslan cultures. It is still frequently used for ritual or ceremonial purposes. After any attack is made with the weapon, regardless of the result, a second attack may be made immediately after at DM-2.

Weapon	TL	Range	Damage	Kg	Cost	Traits
Spear-hook	2	10	2D	2	Cr15	-



SECTION 2: WEAPONS OF THE HUNT

When it comes to firearms, Aslan have many equivalents with slug weapons of the Imperium and other races, with Hierate-manufactured autopistols, autorifles and submachine guns commonly found throughout Aslan space. However, the Aslan have developed some weapons that have arisen directly from their culture and history.

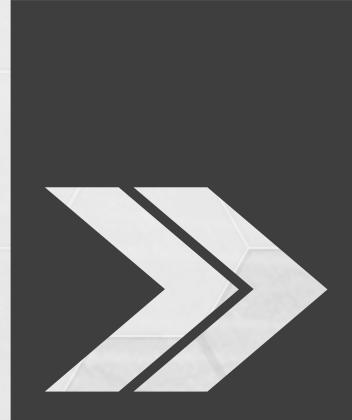
The *trakhtyaua* (laser pistol), *triluealikhe* (laser carbine) and *trolitakheal* (laser rifle) are functionally identical to human models and, indeed, were originally based on borrowed human technology. Only ergonomics to accommodate differing physiology and cultural bias were changed.

Unless otherwise stated, all the weapons here use the Gun Combat (slug) skill.

12/28754

YEHEAL AUTORIFLE

This automatic rifle functions much like the human model, and can be equipped with shoulder sling, sights, bipod, and muzzle brake, and may be switched from semi-automatic to full automatic fire as needed. The yeheal is magazine fed; it uses a dual magazine feed with an internal mechanism which strips cartridges from one magazine until it is empty, and then proceeds to strip cartridges from the other. As a result, the total magazine capacity is a massive 64 rounds, and the weapon can be reloaded with a single new magazine whenever the remaining rounds are less than 32.



Weapon	TL	Range	Damage	Tons	Cost	Magazine	Magazine Cost	Traits
Yeheal Autorifle	6	275	3D	7	Cr850	64	Cr40	Auto 2



SECTION 3: HEAVY WEAPONS

Unless otherwise stated, all the weapons here use the Heavy Weapons (man portable) skill.

12/5111

GRAVITY SPEAR

This weapon is a recent breakthrough by the Aslan, and still largely experimental. It works on the same principle as a gravity plate or repulsor, projecting a 'lance' of gravitational force forward. Anything within the path of the beam is subjected to a 10G force, pulling it towards or away from the

hlaulrakh. The hlaulrakh's beam flickers on and off a dozen times a second and circles around a small area, causing thousands of tears and fractures in the internal organs of the target. Armour is never counted against the damage caused by the gravity spear.

Weapon	TL	Range	Damage	Tons	Cost	Magazine	Power Pack Cost	Traits
Gravity Spear	14	250	2D	10	Cr200000	10	Cr2000	AP Special



12/28091

PLASMA STREAMER

A primitive version of the human PGMP, this weapon lacks the magnetic containment needed to focus the plasma blast into a coherent beam. The *wye'oiheasarl* is fired much like a flamethrower, vomiting a stream of star-hot matter over a wide area. Proper use of the *wye'oiheasarl* requires proper protective gear (the operator takes 1D damage when the *wye'oiheasarl* is fired, though this damage can be reduced by armour).



Weapon	TL	Range	Damage	Tons	Cost	Magazine	Power Pack Cost	Traits
Plasma Streamer	11	10	1DD	12	Cr75000	-	-	Blast 5, Very Bulky

12/18109

TAOYUHRIR HEAVY MACHINEGUN

This is a massive drum-fed machine gun that fires explosive bullets. In human terms, it is a support weapon, but large Aslan males can and do carry it as a personal weapon. The roar of the taoyuhir heralds a hail of destruction. The taoyuhir requires the Heavy Weapons (man portable) skill.



Weapon	TL	Range	Damage	Tons	Cost	Magazine	Power Pack Cost	Traits
Taoyuhir Heavy Machinegun	7	500	4D+3	18	Cr4000	200	Cr800	Auto 3, Very Bulky

The Travellers Aid Society presents

JAYNE'S GUIDE

TO VEHICLES OF THE ASLAN



Vehicles are a necessity on most Aslan worlds, as settlements are spread out across a wide area.

CLAWBIKE

TL	7
SKILL	DRIVE (WHEEL)
AGILITY	+2
SPEED (CRUISE)	MEDIUM (SLOW)
RANGE (CRUISE)	300 (450)
CREW	1
PASSENGERS	1
CARGO	-
HULL	1
SHIPPING	1 TON
COST	CR7800

ARMOUR

FRONT	2
REAR	2
SIDES	2



EQUIPMENT AND WEAPONS

Control System (improved)

No weapon

Autopilot (skill level)	-
Communications (range)	-
Navigation (Navigation DM)	-
Sensors (Electronics (sensors) DM)	-
Camouflage (Recon DM)	-
Stealth (Electronics (sensors) DM)	-

TRAITS

ATV,
Open Vehicle

DESCRIPTION

The clawbike is an oversized four-wheeled dirt-bike, used for both civilian and military purposes by the Aslan. The wheels are equipped with long curved spikes that are normally held retracted inside the tire; these spikes can be extended like a dewclaw, allowing the bike to scramble over especially rough terrain and climb very steep surfaces. Considerable strength is preferable when driving a clawbike, as the vehicles are infamous for bucking or toppling if not properly controlled.



CRAWLER

ARMOUR

FRONT	10
REAR	10
SIDES	10



TL	10
SKILL	DRIVE (TRACK)
AGILITY	+0
SPEED (CRUISE)	SLOW (VERY SLOW)
RANGE (CRUISE)	500 (750)
CREW	1
PASSENGERS	7
CARGO	2 TONS
HULL	99
SHIPPING	15 TONS
COST	CR285000

TRAITS

Tracked

Autopilot (skill level)
 Communications (range)
 Navigation (Navigation DM)
 Sensors (Electronics (sensors) DM)
 Camouflage (Recon DM)
 Stealth (Electronics (sensors) DM)

2
 500 km
 +2
 +1
 -
 -

EQUIPMENT AND WEAPONS

Autopilot (enhanced), Communications (improved), Computer /2, Control System (enhanced), Navigation System (improved), Sensor System (improved)

No weapon

DESCRIPTION

Heavy tracked crawlers are multipurpose utility vehicles. The four track sections are individually powered, giving the vehicle considerable agility at the cost of power and added complexity. The body of the crawler is akin to a flattened dome, but is divided into sections with a healthy amount of space for passengers to make long journeys comfortable. The driver's cab is located in the front third of the dome.

A successful Mechanics check and a suitable crane allows the rear section of the dome to be removed, effectively making the Crawler a flatbed carrier. This reduces Passengers to 1 (to sit alongside the driver) but increases Cargo capacity to 8 tons.

Military crawlers have only 1.75 tons of cargo space, but feature a second dome with a small turret. These versions cost Cr295000.





ASLAN ASSAULT GRAV TANK

TL	14
SKILL	FLYER (GRAV)
AGILITY	-1
SPEED (CRUISE)	HIGH
RANGE (CRUISE)	100 YEARS
CREW	3
PASSENGERS	-
CARGO	-
HULL	165
SHIPPING	30 TONS
COST	MCR31.8

Autopilot (skill level)	3
Communications (range)	1000 km
Navigation (Navigation DM)	+4
Sensors (Electronics (sensors) DM)	+2
Camouflage (Recon DM)	-4
Stealth (Electronics (sensors) DM)	-

WEAPONS

Large Turret (fusion gun-y x 2, advanced fire control)
 Small Turret (medium autocannon, Enhanced fire control)
 Anti-missile System (advanced laser)

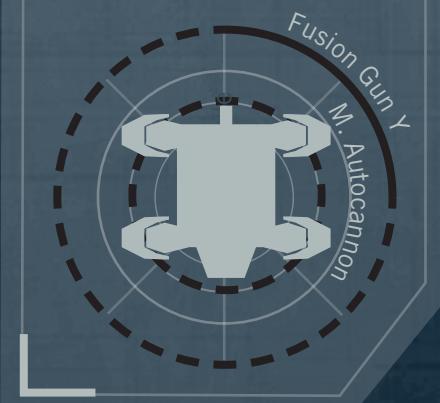
EQUIPMENT

Airlock, Autopilot (advanced), Camouflage (advanced), Communications (advanced, encryption, meson communicator, satellite uplink, tightbeam), Computer /5, Control System (advanced), Electronic Countermeasures (advanced), Electrostatic Armour, Fire Extinguishers, Fusion Plant (advanced), Life Support (short term), Navigation System (advanced), Sensor System (advanced, hardened, sensor mast), Vacuum Protection



ARMOUR

FRONT	120
REAR	60
SIDES	110



TRAITS

AFV

DESCRIPTION

The Khtachwel assault grav tank exemplifies Aslan fighting techniques. The tank is larger and heavier than comparable human designs, and has a crew of three – a male commander/gunner, a male driver, and a female engineer/comms officer. The main armament is a heavy turret containing a dual fusion gun system, and the tank also mounts a medium autocannon to deal with infantry and light vehicles.

WEAPON	RANGE	DAMAGE	MAGAZINE	MAGAZINE COST	TRAITS	FIRE CONTROL
Fusion Gun-Y	5	3DD+3	-	-	AP20, Blast 20, Radiation	DM+4
Medium Autocannon	1	8D	100	Cr1500	Auto 3	DM+3
Anti-missile System	1	2D	-	-	Auto 4	-

GRAV BARGE

ARMOUR

FRONT	4
REAR	4
SIDES	4



Autopilot (skill level)	3	TL	12
Communications (range)	1000 km	SKILL	FLYER (GRAV)
Navigation (Navigation DM)	+2	AGILITY	-1
Sensors (Electronics (sensors) DM)	+1	SPEED (CRUISE)	VERY SLOW (IDLE)
Camouflage (Recon DM)	-	RANGE (CRUISE)	100 YEARS
Stealth (Electronics (sensors) DM)	-	CREW	1
		PASSENGERS	30
		CARGO	4.5 TONS
		HULL	1000
		SHIPPING	125 TONS
		COST	MCR47.4

TRAITS

None

Autopilot (advanced), Communications (advanced, meson communicator, satellite uplink), Computer /3, Control System (enhanced), Crane (heavy), Entertainment System (Cr25000), Fire Extinguishers, Freshers (large) x 10, Fusion Plant (advanced), Galley (full, serves 20), Holding Tanks (25 Spaces), Internal Bays (50 tons), Navigation System (improved), Sensor System (improved), Staterooms x 30

No weapon

EQUIPMENT AND WEAPONS

DESCRIPTION

A variation on grav platforms, grav barges are large, stately vehicles used by Aslan as semi-mobile bases when travelling through their territory. The barge hovers using anti-gravity suspensors, but is propelled by sails or drawn by beasts of burden like a giant flying chariot. Most grav barges can actually move under their own power, but it is considered gauche to actually fly a grav barge; the whole point of the vehicle is to slowly tour one's territory in a traditional manner. Understandably, grav barges tend to undergo a great deal of customisation – fortunately, space is the one thing they do not lack.



EXPLORING THE TROJAN REACH



If the Spinward Marches are an isolated outpost to the rest of the Imperium, then the Trojan Reach is where the wilderness begins. The sector is an expanse of uncharted worlds and petty, backward barbarian kingdoms, a chaotic, treacherous zone of space teetering on the maw of the Great Rift.

And somewhere, out there beyond the little one-world kingdoms and failed Second Imperium colonies, are the ferocious and fearsome Aslan, unrestrained by the Peace of Fthair.

At least, that is the Imperial perspective. To the Aslan, the Trojan Reach is a feast they have only begun to savour. As far as the eye can see and scout ship can jump is a vista of worlds begging to be conquered. These are not lifeless, rocky wastelands – they are vibrant, rich worlds, living worlds. The Aslan know that expansion in this direction must, inevitably, lead to conflict with the Imperium, but they welcome this challenge. The Reach is there to be conquered!

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

If a historian were to sum up the whole sorry history of the Reach in one phrase, it might be 'treacherous opportunity'. At first glance, the Trojan Reach looks inviting – a whole sector of settled worlds, ready to welcome the explorer, trader, colonist or conqueror, but almost every venture in the Reach founders and fails, often violently. The Second Imperium never managed to tame the Reach, and its own native kingdoms are beset by barbarism and their own internal squabbles. The Aslan invaders, too, have been affected by this strange curse of thwarted ambition ever since they set foot in the Reach.

The Ancients

The mysterious Ancients were active across the Trojan Reach, but there is less evidence of their activities here

than in the neighbouring Spinward Marches. This is largely due to the lack of scientific investigation in the Reach – the little warring pocket empires and barbarian kingdoms have little interest in the relics of the past. The one obvious exception is the Ancient ruins on Floria, the homeworld of the Floriani, a minor human species transplanted from Terra thousands of years ago. There are other potential traces of the Ancients, such as the patently artificial singularity in 627-301 or the Canals of Fomalhaut, but a full inventory of Ancient sites in the Trojan Reach is a task for future generations.

Old Empires

The Ziru Sirku never counted the Trojan Reach as part of its holdings, but Vilani scouts and colonists did settle a few of the worlds of the sector. These colonies were left to fend for themselves as the First Imperium began to decay and turn inwards, and were ravaged by Vargr raiders and their own disputes. There was little in the way of organised trade in the Trojan Reach until the Terrans began an aggressive colonisation project here thousands of years later.

What most natives of the Reach refer to as the old empire, though, is the Empire of Sindal, which ruled much of the sector from -2000 to -1400. See page 121 for the Sindalian Empire.

Vargr & Zhodani

Despite the distance between the Trojan Reach and coreward space, both the Zhodani and alien Vargr have a long history in the Reach. Zhodani traders passing through the Spinward Marches in times of peace have done more to cultivate relations with the barbarian states than the Imperium, while long-range Zhodani military patrols have been encountered 'snooping' around this region. Imperial analysts believe the Zhodani Consulate is capable of launching a pincer attack on the Spinward Marches, simultaneously attacking from both coreward and rimward using vessels hidden in Egryn

or Sindal subsectors. The probability of such a pincer attack is low, but nonetheless the Imperium has always watched closely for signs of Zhodani in the Reach.

Vargr are much more common and much more dangerous in this region. Almost all the Trojan Reach Vargr are descendants of corsairs and raiders who migrated here millennia ago, during the fading years of the First Imperium. These corsairs were drawn to the rich shipping along Corridor sector, then skirted round the still vital Domain of Deneb and along the edge of the Great Rift until they ended up in the Reach. Some historians blame these Vargr corsairs for starting the tradition of raiding that blighted development in the Long Night; while barely one in ten raiders is non-human, the Vargr corsairs could have been the seed around which raider culture formed.

Terran Explorers

While the Trojan Reach was neglected by the Vilani, the Terrans embarked on an ambitious colonisation project, settling more than two dozen worlds in the sector. They also explored and charted the whole region, stopping only at the abyss of the Great Rift. As there was comparatively little Vilani presence in this sector, the Trojan Reach attracted settlers who wanted virgin, untamed worlds instead of trying to integrate into Vilani society. To this day, several worlds in the Reach (such as Strend) are heavily influenced by 'pure' Terran cultures.

In many ways, this eager expansion into the Reach was responsible for the chaos that followed. The Terrans set up colonies that were overly specialised and dependent on support from offworld. When the Second Imperium abruptly collapsed, the Trojan Reach colonies fell hard. Elsewhere in the galaxy, worlds cut off from the Imperium became insular, refusing to deal with outsiders, but in the Reach, colonies turned to raiding their neighbours. Agricultural worlds attacked industrial planets for spare parts and machinery; mining colonies were raided for raw materials, starports were cannibalised and torn apart to find jump-capable ships, no matter how small. With a little push towards diplomacy, perhaps interstellar society in the Reach could have been preserved, but every colony acted in its own interest and chaos engulfed the sector.

Raider culture took hold in this era. Small bands of thieves would jump into a system, land and loot what they could before fleeing. As these raider bands grew more successful, they acquired larger flotillas of repurposed civilian ships. At the height of raider culture, a single band could number a hundred ships (though displacing no more than fifty thousand tons in total), which would descend on an undefended world like a

swarm of locusts and steal everything they could pack into their cargo holds. Raiders were beholden to no planet or government save their own captains, and were a twisted reflection of the modern free trader.

The prevalence of raiding not only ruined any chance for the Reach to pull itself out of the Long Night by its own efforts, but also blocked any chance of external aid. The Trojan Reach quickly gained a reputation as a hive of scum and villainy, a barbaric, chaotic region. This was largely accurate, but the image of the sector as the 'Outrim Void', an irredeemable and downright wicked region of space, meant that when the Third Imperium expanded spinward, they ignored the 'dangerous' Reach in favour of developing the Spinward Marches.

The Sindalian Empire

The threat of raiders caused a few worlds to band together and fight the fall of night. The former subsector capital of Noricum was one of the most advanced and stable worlds in the whole Reach, and joined with the neighbouring planets of Thebus and Salif in a mutual-defence pact. This pact quickly strengthened until Noricum found itself at the head of a growing Empire.

The Sindalian Empire was formed by a coalition of Terran worlds, and had its seat at Noricum in the Sindal Sector. At its height, the Empire covered nine of the sixteen subsectors of the Trojan Reach and drove the raiders towards the fringes of the sector. The empire succeeded in building trade links and staving off collapse for a few centuries, but its focus was always on defence and expansion instead of consolidation or scientific development. When the Empire ran out of worlds to conquer, the central government became autocratic and unnecessarily brutal towards the end of its existence. In the last two centuries of its existence, the sole purpose of the Sindalian Empire was the preservation of Sindalian authority over its member worlds. Planets were bombed from orbit if they refused to render exorbitant taxes and fees. Ironically, an Empire founded to defend against raiders became the biggest raider of them all.

In the end, rebel worlds deployed a plague against the Imperial forces, and the Old Empire collapsed heavily in on itself. The Empire's centralising influence meant its member worlds were unable to maintain their technological base without interstellar trade, and interstellar trade was dangerous because of the lethal artificial plagues let loose in the final wars. Virtually all the member planets of the Empire slipped into barbarism, and the Sindalian Empire was remembered not as a tyrannical police state, but a golden age.

Memories of Sindal

The Old Empire still casts a shadow over the whole sector. There are signs of its faded glory if a Traveller knows where to look. On Oghma, the starport still bears the dragon sigil of the Sindalians. Look at the controls of the water purification plants on Yggdrasil, and you will see a perfectly preserved example of the old Imperial technical language. On Homestead, a villager will greet a friend with a hearty 'Peror's blessing upon ye' (where Peror, the Homesteaders' deity, is derived from memories of the Emperor of Sindal) and challenge a stranger by saying 'who goes there, in the name of the Star Guard', even though the Sindalian Star Guard has not flown a ship in two thousand years.

There are other memories too. Blast craters on Ace, mass graves on Thebus, and plagues on Lacidaeus bear testament to the vanished Empire of Sindal.

The Florian League

The Florian League is the oldest extant human civilisation in the sector. Florian history is quite similar to the Vilani – both groups of humans were transplanted by the Ancients, and lived side-by-side with their alien masters for some time. The Floriani were the subject of a multi-generational experiment by the Ancients to produce specialised forms of Humaniti. The Floriani come in two forms – Feskals and Barnai. The Feskals were designed for strength and endurance; they are hulking brutes, standing more than two metres tall when fully grown and capable of incredible physical labour. The Barnai were made to be supervisors and lab assistants. They are physically weak and underdeveloped, but have huge heads and are highly intelligent. Despite the apparent inequity of this system, where the Feskals are seen as little better than slaves to the Barnai, both subspecies are content and respectful of each other's rights.

When the Ancients vanished, the Florian way of life continued almost unchanged. The Feskals deferred to the orders of the Barnai, and the Barnai organised and catalogued and oversaw the production of food and industrial machinery, but innovation and development were virtually forbidden. The Florians had to develop agriculture from scratch when the Ancient food-production machines broke down, and their progress remained stalled for millennia after that. They changed their ways only when another Ancient machine failed and could not be repaired.

The Floriani developed the jump drive from a crashed Aslan ship, and their empire has expanded steadily

Floriani Travellers

The following adjustments can be used to create Floriani Travellers.

Characteristics

Feskals: STR+2, END+2, INT-2, EDU-2, SOC-2

Barnai: INT+2, EDU+2, STR-2, END-2

Careers

Feskals: Army, Navy, Merchant or Citizen.

Barnai: Agents, Army, Citizen, Merchants, Navy, Scholars or Scouts. During each term, roll 2D – on a 12+, the Barnai must take the Noble career next term for a single term.

A Barnai character is always accompanied by a number of Feskal servants equal to 1+ his SOC DM.

but conservatively since then. They incorporated a number of Terran worlds into their nascent League, and the influx of Terran innovation (the Floriani are perhaps the only subrace of Humanity to whom the ultra-conservative Vilani seem dangerously radical) has helped push the Floriani a little towards independent development and trade.

By 500, the Floriani had settled enough worlds to require an overarching government structure, so they formed the Florian League in 506, adding an extra tier of lotteries to their existing planetary governments. The Florian League is one of the most stable and secure governments in the Trojan Reach, and has also expanded strongly into the neighbouring Beyond sector.

The Ya'soisthea

The Aslan successfully crossed the Great Rift more than two thousand years ago, but other than a few tentative trade missions and minor colonies, the Hierate never bothered to expand across the difficult jump-5 route until the era of the aisekhokhe entse, the Kinstrife or Aslan Cultural Purge. When the 'deviant' tsekho clans were defeated, many fled across the Great Rift to the Iyaihuakh (Reftspan) or Hlaorioahaurl (Trojan Reach) sectors. The existing Aslan colonies refused to accept the refugees, and so they moved onwards. A wave of territory-hungry Aslan flooded into the Trojan Reach and Beyond sectors.

Soon afterwards, a second wave followed – this second wave was triggered by the Peace of Fthair, which restricted Aslan expansion along the Solomani border.

Without anywhere else to go, clans crossed the Rift and began settling and fighting for territory in the Reach. Other clans soon followed, hoping to take advantage of trade with the Third Imperium and newly-contacted pocket empires. Between these two waves of colonisation, the Aslan went from having a dozen colonies coreward of the Rift to holding hundreds of worlds. Some of these worlds were unoccupied, but others were human colonies incorporated into the Hierarchy.

For the human colonies, this period was a grim reminder of the military power of the Aslan race. The Third Imperium managed to blunt the Aslan's claws in the Peace of Fthair, but in some ways all they accomplished was moving the war from the Dark Nebula/Reaver's Deep to the Trojan Reach. The Aslan dared not invade the Imperium directly, but all unaligned human colonies in the Reach were fair game. Once again, the fearsome warships and giant savage warriors of the Aslan conquered human worlds; once again, dewclaws ran red with human blood.

During this expansionist period, the Aslan of the Trojan Reach/Riftspan/Vanguard Reach and Beyond Sectors also formed their own local government. In fact, this

government had existed for more than a thousand years, in the form of an organisation called the Ya'soisthea. The Ya'soisthea was initially established by the Wahoi and Aroaye'i clans and their vassals in -802, to cope with the communications delay back to Kusyu. It was patently infeasible for clans on the far side of the Great Rift to send regular messages to their representatives back on the homeworld, so they established their own local form of the Tlauku. Just like the original council, this new council – the Ya'soisthea – had no formal authority, but existed as a discussion forum and method of structured political hierarchy. The old Ya'soisthea had fallen into disuse by the modern era, due to increasing availability of jump-5 couriers, but was revived to serve the needs of the new Aslan colonies.

The Ya'soisthea is a far more fractious and divided body than the current Tlauku (of course, a large portion of the Ya'soisthea comes from clans exiled from the Tlauku in the first place). Unlike the Tlauku, which meets only on the Aslan homeworld, the Ya'soisthea moves from world to world, meeting on the home planet (or a nominated substitute) of a different member clan each year.



The Glorious Empire

The Tokouea'we clan was one of the first to migrate across the Great Rift during the Cultural Purge. Unable to settle in the existing Aslan colonies, they travelled onwards until they reached Goertal subsector. There, they embarked on an ambitious period of conquest. Goertal subsector was full of easy prey – lightly populated, lightly defended and comparatively primitive human colonies. While the Tlaukuh had just outlawed slavery under the terms of the Grand Conclave, the Tokouea'we embraced it. Human slaves drove the expansion of the Tokouea'we clan, until it was the single greatest Aslan military power in the sector.

As more Aslan moved into the Trojan Reach and established their own clan holdings, the Tokouea'we were the loudest voice calling for the formation of a new, local version of the Tlaukuh – as the largest, most powerful clan, the Tokouea'we would be assured a prime place in this new council, and have the respect of other clans they had long been denied. They proposed using the old Ya'soithea as a model for the new government, and used their considerable influence to bring other clans on board.

However, they were, if anything, too successful. The Ya'soithea was supported not only by clans already present in the region, but also by Tlaukuh clans. When the Tokouea'we saw old rivals and persecutors claiming places in the new government, they cut off all relations with the rest of the Hierate and declared themselves to be an independent Empire, the Glorious Empire.

The Glorious Empire has survived, albeit somewhat diminished, to the present day, and still enslaves humans for brute labour and cannon fodder.

The Imperium

The Third Imperium began tentative expansion into the Trojan Reach within a century of the crowning of Emperor Cleon I, but this expansion soon stalled as the threat posed by the Zhodani Consulate became obvious. Reconquering and pacifying the whole of the Trojan Reach would require money, effort and ships better spent fortifying the coreward border of the Spinward Marches. The Imperium established two great fleet bases at Pax Rulin and Tobia, then effectively declared they would go no further.

Following the end of the Aslan Border Wars, word was sent to Deneb warning them that the Aslan might expand into the Trojan Reach now they could no longer push into Terran space. The Archduke doubled

the border guard and established a chain of listening posts to watch for Aslan forces, but as yet neither the Imperium nor the Aslan have gone to open war in the Trojan Reach. As the Aslan press every closer to the border, though, conflict may be inevitable.

STATES & PEOPLES OF THE TROJAN REACH

The Trojan Reach is divided between two great powers, the Aslan Hierate and the Third Imperium; two lesser powers of the Glorious Empire and Florian League; and innumerable minor states and independent worlds. The Imperium has largely fixed its borders, and any expansion comes in the form of client states and defence pacts. By contrast, the Aslan Hierate is aggressively pushing outwards, and its holdings in the sector are likely to grow by 10-20% in the coming century by even the most conservative estimates.

The Aslan Hierate

The Hierate in the Trojan Reach is quite unlike the Hierate on the far side of the Rift. The old Hierate is a near-monoculture following the Cultural Purge, which forced a single set of beliefs on all the clans. Here on the fringe of Aslan space there are clans driven out by the Cultural Purge, clans who settled the trans-Rift sectors millennia ago, and newly arrived trade and militant clans. The Trojan Reach Aslan are a wild and heterogeneous group compared to their cousins.

Aslan politics are opaque to outside observers. Attempts to paint the Tlaukuh as a unified organisation are futile – the Tlaukuh and the Ya'soithea have no real power, and individual clans are capable of independent action. Further, clan leaders usually only make short-term decisions, and have little influence over either clan trade (run by the corporations) or migrations and conquest (which are largely in the claws of the ihatei). Population pressure, not politics, dictates much of Aslan military policy. As a new generation of landless males reaches maturity, the Aslan clans must either fight amongst themselves or push out to new systems.

Officially, the Hierate respects the Peace of Fthair, which states that the Aslan will not encroach upon Imperial territory. Their primary goals in the Reach are guarding their own borders (mainly against the Glorious Empire), protecting the trade route with the Imperium, and 'gathering' any unsettled worlds they can. In practice, the Aslan protect their own – if the ihatei migrations trigger conflict with the Imperium, the Hierate will commit military assets to the ensuing



Great Clans of the Trojan Reach

Twelve clans make up the grand council of the Ya'soisthea. Clan standings in the region are much more fluid than in the Tlaukuh, so a clan can rise to the grand council for a brief period and then be cast down again. The ruling Ya'soisthea clans with an interest in the Trojan Reach are:

Ahroay'if: Centred in Tlaiowaha subsector, the Ahroay'if benefit greatly from trade with the Imperium.

Aroaye'i: This clan holds the crucial worlds on the jump-5 route across the Great Rift.

Hrakoea: A highly aggressive clan, the Hrakoea are looking to expand their holdings in the Borderlands subsector.

Ikhtealyo: Another trader clan, specialising in dust-spice and other Imperial goods.

Yerlyaruwiwo: One of the Tlaukuh clans; highly traditionalist.

Khaukheairl: A Tlaukuh clan; guardians of Aslan culture.

Tlaiowaha: A Tlaukuh trader clan; patrons of the Ahroay'if.

Tiykhisto: Agitating for war with the Imperium.



war. The Peace of Fthair is a very weak brake on Aslan expansion anyway – it only applies to the clans who fought in the Border Wars and their vassals, and those clans make up less than 40% of the Trojan Reach clans.

Many Aslan see the Trojan Reach as a region of opportunity. There are territories to be conquered here that offer little challenge to a true warrior, but are close enough to the Imperium and even the Zhodani Consulate to be wealthy trade hubs in years to come.

The Imperium

There are three Imperial-dominated subsectors, each of which has its own unique character. Pax Rulin is dominated by the military, and the people there see themselves as the watchmen on the walls of the Imperium. They are fiercely opposed to any Aslan expansion into the Reach. Gazulin is the oldest settled subsector, and is considered to be as close as the Trojan Reach comes to a bastion of culture and civilisation. Finally, Tobia is the ducal seat; it has benefited greatly from trade with the Aslan and is the most cosmopolitan of the three.

The Imperium has little knowledge of the rest of the sector, especially Aslan-held subsectors and Menorial, Egryn, Yggdrasil and Dpres. Surveys of Menorial were only completed in 1105, and the Scout Service rates all charts of the sector as 'questionable'. The Trojan

Reach has a poor reputation elsewhere in the Imperium, especially in the Spinward Marches, where most people believe the whole sector outside Pax Rulin is full of bandits, barbarians and vicious Aslan marauders, when in fact it is at most half full of these things.

The Florian League

For 300,000 years, the Floriani culture remained in virtual stasis. Abandoned by their Ancient masters, the Floriani continued as they had done, changing only when one or another of the machines broke down. It was not until they recovered jump technology from a crashed Aslan scout ship that they made any attempt at real change. The Floriani are still highly conservative, expanding only to take advantage of needed resources. They have never attacked another interstellar power, although they have incorporated degenerate human colonies into the League (that said, the Floriani are far from pacifistic, and have shown no hesitation in using nuclear weapons and overwhelming force in war). They are guided by amoral logic in all political decisions.

The Florian government works on a system of lotteries. Randomly selected Barnai must serve a term on one of a number of councils (municipal, provincial or world); after serving on a council, the Barnai's name is removed from the lottery register so he will never be elected again. Theoretically, this serves to ensure no Barnai can establish a political power base and dominate the government. Leaving aside the fact that the very concept of ambitious, self-centred Barnai is bizarrely incongruous, this policy results in extreme conservatism as the elected officials spend most of their term studying and learning in order to make informed decisions.

Florian criminal justice is equally unusual. Instead of determining whether or not a crime has been committed based on evidence, their philosophy is to learn precisely what happened, then determine if it was a crime. Killing another Florian might be murder, or self-defence, or a charitable act, or the most efficient use of resources. The Florian system is utterly confusing to non-Floriani, and their equivalent of lawyers would be philosophers on any other world.

The Florian League has an extremely utilitarian approach to trade and contact with others. They trade only to acquire the resources they need but cannot obtain inside their own borders; the League has in fact closed its borders entirely in times of surplus. Similarly, diplomacy's sole purpose for the League is to safeguard the League; the leaders appear to have no agenda save maintaining the status quo. The League has

trade and diplomatic relations with the Imperium and several states to spinward in Beyond sector; they have occasional diplomatic talks with the Aslan, but refuse to trade with most Aslan corporations.

The Glorious Empire

This breakaway Aslan state is ruled by a single Emperor. The Empire declared independence from the Hierate in 650 following a political dispute, but disputes were brewing for centuries before that. The economy of the Glorious Empire is founded on slavery – between 30% to 60% of its population are humans (exact tallies are hard to come by, as the Empire is fiercely xenophobic), who were enslaved by the Empire during its expansionist period. The rights of these humans vary from territory to territory – at best, they are third-class citizens, at worst, food animals to be slaughtered at a whim. The Empire's policy towards humans is only one of the reasons it is ostracised by other Aslan clans, but it is an important one, and it has shaped the attitudes of human worlds of the Reach towards the Glorious Empire. The Empire is feared and hated by virtually every world who knows of it, and tales of Aslan brutality are told across the sector.

The Glorious Empire is almost always at war with the other Aslan clans, the surrounding non-aligned worlds, or the Florian League. Its sole exports are mercenaries, and its economy is stagnating due to lack of skilled technicians among the slave caste. The Empire maintains diplomatic links with the Aslan Hierate and still has the right to a seat in the Ya'soisthea, but has no trading partners or real allies. The Imperium finds

the Glorious Empire to be useful bogeyman with which to scare neutral worlds into line ('accept our terms and we'll protect you from the Aslan monsters'), but the Empire is too far from the Imperium for either side to be a real threat to the other.

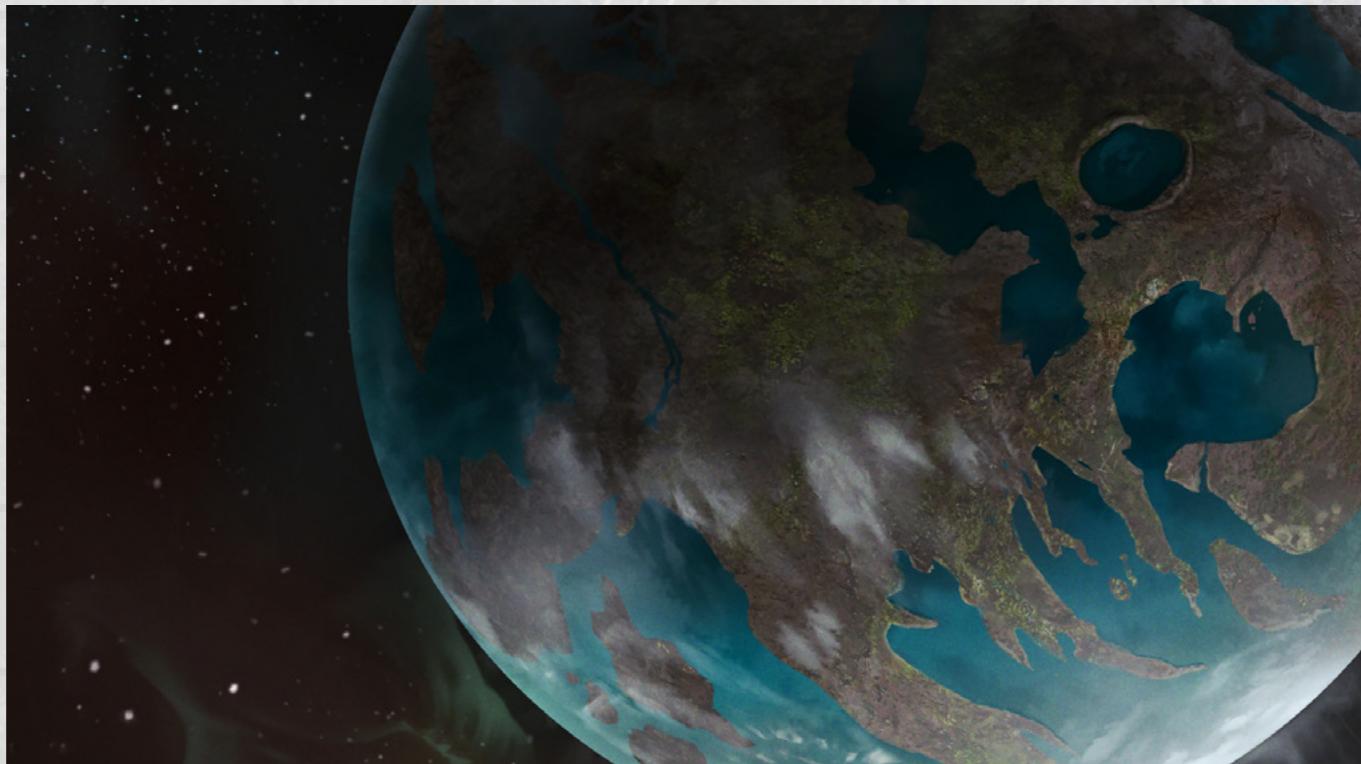
Aside from practicing slavery, Glorious Empire culture is much like traditional Aslan culture. Males are warriors and landowners; females are technicians, merchants and advisors. Herding and disciplining slaves is considered a male task.

Travel within the Glorious Empire is heavily restricted. Outsiders must present themselves at a starport and contact the local representative of the Glorious Empire; the bureaucracy to obtain a visitor's visa is labyrinthine and involves a lot of bribery. Even then, the visitor will only be permitted to travel to a limited number of places and will be accompanied by Imperial observers at all times.

Minor States

There are several smaller polities in the Trojan Reach. None of these have any reach beyond their individual subsector, but are considerable players within that subsector.

Belgardian Sojournate: Located in the Egryn subsector, the Sojournate is a desperately poor group of worlds ruled from Belgard. The Sojourners are descended from a crew of a colony expedition that stalled on Belgard; they raid surrounding worlds for supplies. The Sojournate is also known as a pirate base.



Senlis Foederate: In Pax Rulin subsector, the Senlis Foederate is a protectionist trade pact opposed to the Imperium. The Foederate is technologically advanced, but contains only three worlds and has very limited influence over the rest of the subsector.

Strend Cluster: The Strend Cluster is found in Menorial subsector. It is a group of worlds ruled by the totalitarian government of Strend. They are technologically advanced and moderately powerful, but expend so much of their energy in futile cold wars with the Imperium and Florian League that their power is severely limited.

Dustbelt Worlds: The Dustbelt is a string of worlds along the Sindalian Main, a region of space once ruled by the old Empire of Sindal. The Dustbelt worlds regularly war with each other, which is unfortunate as the main trade route to the Florian League runs through the Sindalian Main. If one world or another managed to dominate the main, it would greatly reduce the danger of trade with the League.

Kingdom of Drinax: Formerly the major human power in Tlaiowaha subsector, the Kingdom of Drinax was smashed by the Aslan Hierate in a recent conflict. When it existed, the Drinaxians were opposed to Aslan expansion, but were proudly independent of the Imperium.

Raiders

Piracy and raiding is endemic to much of the Trojan Reach. Raider culture has plagued the sector for thousands of years, and the pattern has remained the same all that time. A band of raiders jumps into the target system, which is usually a low-tech planet, and loots whatever valuable and portable goods they can find. Traditional raider targets are precious metals and gemstones, electronics, radioactives, art items, starship parts and slaves. Once their holds are filled, the raiders flee and jump back to their base or a raider-friendly port. Raiding is not viable in the Imperium as the Imperial Navy would hunt down and destroy such thieves, but there is no law in the Outrim Void.

Imperial agents estimate there are fifty to one hundred raider bands operating in the Trojan Reach, many of whom are based on the world of Theev. Their numbers are difficult to estimate, partly because many smaller raids go unreported, partly because Aslan raiders are sometimes confused with human raiders, and partly because many of the raider bands are seasonal. A farming village on some backwater world might have an ancient and barely functional free trader hidden in a cave or forest clearing. When the winter comes, the villagers reactivate the ship and go marauding for a few weeks, stealing from their neighbours in the next system over.

The average raider band, though, comprises professional looters. They have three to five small ships and are well-equipped with personal weapons and armour. They are more than a match for a TL6 world's military, and so can fly in, loot, and escape without risking casualties. Such raiders may also find employment as mercenaries, tramp merchants or adventurers when not raiding. There is a much higher proportion of Vargr in the raider community than in any other demographic; about 10% of raiders are Vargr, with 60% being human and 30% Aslan.

Piracy is an equally large problem in the Reach. There are two major trade routes running through the sector, and both routes run through neutral space. To protect against piracy, traders are advised to group into large convoys, with Imperial or Aslan warships escorting them. Less than half of traders avail themselves of convoy protection; both governments charge a fee for protection granted by their warships (and many unscrupulous captains charge more when the convoy enters a danger zone), it can take weeks for a convoy to gather and an escort to become available, and a convoy takes the slowest, safest route across the sector, restricted to the jump capability of the slowest ship (usually jump-2). Megacorporations can afford to provide or hire their own combat ships. Independent traders who are unwilling to wait for a convoy must make their own way across the sector without protection.

The jump routes across the sector are well known, so pirates prefer to lie in wait for convoys, attacking just before the group jumps. With luck, the pirates can catch a few freighters after the escorts have jumped out.

The Zhodani Consulate

The Zhodani are a constant if unseen presence in the Reach. They have no worlds, no permanent bases (at least, none that the Imperium knows about), but in any given year, two to five Zhodani cruisers make a patrol of the spinward Reach. The Zhodani insist they are engaged in long-range survey missions and protecting their trade interests (the Zhodani do have considerable trade links with the Hierate via the jump-5 Rift Crossing), but they have also had secret talks with the governments of numerous independent worlds in the sector, suggesting a longer-term plan to develop a presence or at least a network of friendly worlds in the Trojan Reach.

WAR

War with the Aslan is inevitable. The desire for territory is irresistible to the Aslan males, so sooner or later, they must invade new worlds. The only question is, when?

The Aslan/Imperium Question

The Trojan Reach is the borderland between the great power of Charted Space – the Third Imperium – and an aggressive, expansionist power. The Hierate has advanced to within twenty parsecs of the Imperial border, and shows little sign of slowing down. Every generation, the Aslan come closer to Imperial territory. In two hundred years at current rates, Imperial worlds – not merely client states, but full members worlds – will be seen by the Aslan as prime targets for ihathei invasions. Neither side can easily avert this conflict.

For the Aslan, the problem is a cultural one – the young landless males have to go somewhere, and conquering new territory is preferable to infighting within the Hierate. The clans might be able to deflect the young warriors, sending them into Beyond or the unclaimed subsectors of the Trojan Reach like Egryn, but this is a stopgap measure.

Analysis suggests that in most cases, the Imperium would win the conflict. The Aslan clans have proved unwilling to co-operate on military matters except in rare cases, and no one clan is a match for the Imperium. An Aslan war, however, would be extremely messy. There would be no grand armadas pitted against each other in key systems, no precision strikes against fortress worlds. Instead, the Imperium would face a few Aslan capital ships, which would be formidable but not insurmountable foes, and a vast swarm of smaller raiders and ihathei warbands. These warbands would sweep through Imperial space, conquering minor worlds by the dozen. The Aslan are capable of mustering tremendous fighting forces from among their male population, and each Aslan is the equivalent of a trained human soldier. The problem with a warrior race is that they are all warriors on some level.

Such a mass invasion could be defeated, but it would take decades to root out every petty Aslan conqueror and guerrilla fighter. The Aslan Border Wars lasted nearly two thousand years; based on that model, an Aslan invasion of, say, Tobia and Gazulin could involve three years of conflict and thirty years of police action removing Aslan invaders from backwater worlds. It is a victory of sorts, but would be hugely costly for the Imperium.

More pessimistic analysts argue this confidence may be misplaced. If an Aslan/Imperium conflict began, then the war would draw warriors and mercenaries from all over the Hierate. The population in the Trojan Reach would be swelled by recruits from all over the galaxy. If the war reaches a tipping point, then it could

escalate immensely. Projections show the Hierate could overrun the whole Reach within five years given the right conditions, especially if the Imperium were distracted by another frontier war with the Zhadani or a civil war.

The Peace of Fthair may block Aslan attacks on the Imperium. Technically, the Peace only applies to the clans who signed it, and only a few of those clans are active in the Trojan Reach. The Aslan may respect the treaty to honour those clans, or those clans might even attack anyone who breaches the treaty. More likely, though, the Aslan will decide the Peace only applies to the human 'clans' who fought in Reaver's Deep, and that the Imperium in the Trojan Reach is too far away from the Deep to be honoured in the same way. While many in the Imperium, especially in Tobia and Gazulin subsectors, hide behind the Peace of Fthair as if it guarantees peace with the Aslan, a paper treaty may not be proof against the razor-sharp claw of the invader.

Of course, Aslan infighting may render all these fears of a mass invasion fanciful. The Cultural Purge of a thousand years ago set Aslan expansion and development back by centuries, and the Ya'soithea is at least as divided as the Aslan of that era were. If another two or three clans break off like the Glorious Empire did, then the ensuing conflicts would absorb the energies of the ihathei for several generations.

The Aslan and Everyone Else

The Aslan are the thousand-dton elephant in the room when considering the rest of the Trojan Reach. They are a highly advanced and territory-hungry great power; two-thirds of the Reach is made up of small, lightly defended worlds ready to be conquered. Thus far, the Aslan have been lazy when it comes to conquests, picking off worlds at their leisure. Their ongoing wars with the Glorious Empire and Florian League have also sapped some enthusiasm for conquest – but any day, a particularly charismatic ihathei or ambitious clan could launch an invasion of any of two dozen worlds. Half the Reach worlds survive solely because the Aslan have not yet bothered to conquer them.

Some worlds are aware of the Aslan threat, but have failed to rally any coalitions to resist the inevitable invasion. The Kingdom of Drinax, the one independent coalition that acknowledged the danger posed by the Aslan, was destroyed with almost casual ease by the clans. Other defence pacts might be more successful at warding off invasion, as the Aslan tend to go for the weakest targets first. Most planets, though, are more concerned with internal or local politics than the Aslan

Hierate. For these unfortunates, the sign of trouble will come when the Aslan warriors arrive and claim the planet as their new domain.

The Glorious Empire

There is a saying in the Reach – ‘when cats fight, Goertal bleeds’. The Glorious Empire is fighting a losing war against the Aslan Hierate, and when the Empire loses worlds to its cousins, it tends to respond by conquering more human worlds and enslaving the population. The Glorious Empire’s borders have moved six parsecs coreward since it was formed as worlds change hands at either end.

The Empire’s recent setbacks are by no means irreversible. A shift in Ya’soithea politics could divide the clans battling the Glorious Empire, giving the slaves a chance to reclaim lost territory or fortify their position and slow their decline. Conquering a few more choice worlds like Colony Six or Delta Theta could also give the Glorious Empire the strength to stall a Hierate advance.

TRADE

If there is one factor that might prevent the whole Trojan Reach from slipping into war, it is trade. The trade route between the Hierate and the Imperium is worth trillions of Credits to both sides each year. Both sides want this trade to continue – the Tliaowaha/Ahroay’if axis has benefited hugely from the trade, and both clans have gained influence in the Tlaukuh and Ya’soithea respectively. Any major conflict between the Imperium and the Hierate will be strongly opposed by these clans and their allies.

Trade has also improved the lot of many of the independent worlds across the sector. The worlds along the Imperium-Hierate trade route and, to a lesser extent, the Florian trade corridor, have benefited from the passing convoys. This has caused a shift from raiding to piracy; piracy is damaging and costly, but much less damaging in the long run. If the sector remains largely peaceful for another three centuries or so, then it may shake off its reputation as a chaotic and dangerous place. Corporate development of the Outrim Void section would help immensely.

The Florian Route

The main Imperium/Florian League trade route runs from Tobia to Yggdrasil. Starting at Fist/Tobia, the route follows the Aslan route for several jumps before diverging at Arunisiir. From there, the route passes through Tliaowaha subsector, via Blue, Torpol and Oghma, then into the Sindalian Main via Thebus, then

Acis and along the Main to Janus, then a jump to the refuelling station at 291-540 and then finally to Yggdrasil. For a jump-2 freighter, this is a journey of fourteen jumps, taking on average 140 days. There are several faster jump-4 routes from Pax Rulin or Glisten, but these routes are extremely hazardous.

The Florian League provides no protection for traffic along this route; Imperial ships do sometimes accompany convoys along the corridor, but most traders are on their own after leaving Arunisiir. The Florian League imports radioactives, computers and electronics, biochemicals, spices and medical supplies; they export advanced manufactured goods, advanced vehicles, advanced weapons and other manufactured goods.

The Hierate Route

The Imperium-Hierate trade route sees nearly five times more traffic than the Imperium-Florian League route and is both shorter and safer. Like the Florian route, most traffic starts at Fist in Tobia subsector, then Wildeman and Cordan. Jump-3 ships can take the shorter route from Acrid to Tech-World, while slower ships must go via Argona and Sperle before reaching Tech-World. The final stages of the journey are a jump to Paal and then onto Tyokh. For a jump-2 freighter, this is a journey of seven jumps taking an average of 55 days (the turnaround time between jumps is much higher on this well-travelled route). Most ships will have escorts the whole way, although many Imperial escorts take the shorter route from Cordan to Acrid instead of Cordan-Argona-Sperle, making the latter two worlds prime regions for pirate attacks.

Both sides are permitted to escort convoys as far as the other side’s border (Imperial ships from Fist to Paal; Aslan ships from Tyokh to Wildeman), but in modern times it is customary for Imperium ships to go from Fist to Acrid, and then Ahroay’if escorts meet the convoy at Tech-World.

The Aslan import high-technology goods, spices, and live animals; they primarily export petrochemicals, textiles, precious metals, crystals and gems and uncommon ore and raw materials.

CORPORATIONS

In the absence of any interstellar government, several corporations have taken on added importance in the Trojan Reach. The General Development Company is easily the most important of these, followed by the Company of Grandmotherly Kindness, the Florian Trade Company and PRQ.

General Development Company

Human Megacorporation

GeDeCo, as it is commonly known, is much more than a trading company. It was founded in the Year 700, in the wake of the Civil War, with a mandate to foster trade and development in the wild space along the Reft and Trojan Reach sectors. The company was formed by nobles in Deneb, who purchased several failing shipping lines and combined them into the new business. GeDeCo began by 'bootstrapping' backwards and underdeveloped worlds along Reft, selling them progressively more advanced technology in exchange for raw materials.

By the year 800, the standard GeDeCo contract had evolved. Sign the contract, and your world will be provided with a Class C or Class B starport, technical knowledge, equipment and training to raise your world's Tech Level at a stable and non-disruptive rate, and a market for your planet's raw materials, ores, textiles and other low-tech goods. All it costs you is a percentage of those low-tech goods, giving a seat on your ruling body to GeDeCo, and obeying various customs such as safe passage for Travellers, the Imperial rules of war and so forth. GeDeCo made a moderately good return and brought civilisation to dangerous regions of the galaxy.

The Trojan Reach directorate of GeDeCo is based on Vorito, and is largely independent from the main office on Deneb. The company is responsible for building and maintaining starports all over the sector, especially along the Florian Trade Corridor, and for sending trade missions out to minor worlds, drawing them into the web of galactic commerce. GeDeCo has been accused of questionable and even unethical policies in the past; the influential Ahroy'if clan has accused GeDeCo of espionage, piracy and anti-Aslan propaganda, and now refuses to trade directly with the megacorporation.

Home Port: Vorito (in the Reach) and Deneb (main office)

Territory: Deneb, Reft, Trojan Reach, Beyond



Florian Trade Company

Human Sector-wide Line

The FTC was founded by entrepreneurs from Gazulin subsector, soon after peaceful relations were established with the Florian League. The insular Floriani initially rejected any offers to trade with outsiders for cultural reasons. The initial idea came from a historian and archaeologist, Brahma haut-Vorhes, an expert on the lost Empire of Sindal. Her research indicated that the Sindalians occasionally traded with a strange race somewhere to spinward, who were described as 'child-like'. She reasoned this description could apply to the Barnai caste of the Floriani, and that the old trade protocols and treaties used by the Sindalians and the Floriani could be used to reopen trade links.

She gathered a consortium of merchants and investors, who sent out two far traders armed with a copy of haut-Vorhes' *A New Appraisal of Trade and Commerce in the Middle Period of the Sindal Empire* and two holds full of precious metals. The traders returned with a cargo of high-tech goods and tales of a wondrous world full of Ancient ruins – Floria.

The FTC was launched to great acclaim in 171 and traded for nearly thirty years, garnering vast profits, until the Florians suddenly closed their borders. It was later discovered that the Florians made contact with the Zhadani around the year 200, and this incident led to the Florians recoiling from contact with the rest of the galaxy for centuries. Three centuries later, when the Florians re-established themselves, GeDeCo investors reformed the FTC.

The FTC today is an independent corporation, although GeDeCo is still a significant shareholder. In addition to its normal trade runs, the FTC has a number of jump-4 liners which bring rich tourists to visit the Ancient ruins on Floria.

Home Port: Gazulin

Territory: Trojan Reach



PRQ

Human Sector-wide Corporation

This corporation began as a side business – during the chaos of the late 400s and the Civil War, the massive military base at Pax Rulin was left short of vitally needed supplies and raw materials. The base quartermaster began using naval vessels as trade ships, exchanging out-of-date military equipment for steel, uranium, lanthanum and other goods. By the time the Civil War ended and regular shipments were once again assured, the contacts established by successive generations of quartermasters were too valuable to be allowed to lapse. PRQ (Pax Rulin Quartermasters) was spun off as an independent company, although it is still closely associated with the Imperial Navy.

Today, PRQ trades in Pax Rulin subsector as well as along the Florian and Aslan trade routes. It is seen as a safe company, mainly because most of its crew are ex-navy and ships are invariably heavily armed. In a sector notorious for piracy, this is an excellent reputation to have.

Home Port: Pax Rulin

Territory: Trojan Reach

Tobia Commerce Guild

Human Sector-wide Corporation

The Tobia Commerce Guild is a conglomerate built to profit from trade with the Aslan Hierate. It buys goods from across the Spinward Marches and Deneb, then ships them to the Hierate. Most of the shareholders are nobles from Tobia subsector, and the company has the nickname of the 'Duke's Own', reflecting persistent rumours that the Duke of Tobia is heavily (and illegally) invested in the company.

Guild ships make up over a third of traffic across the Aslan trade route, and this proportion is growing.



The Guild has recently put in orders for another four 50,000-ton megafreighters, doubling its capacity (diminished since the loss of the Yarrow in 1099 to misjump). Some observers fear the Guild is flooding the Aslan markets in an attempt to drive competitors out of business, and the Tobia navy has issued a warning that the Guild is sending more trade ships than it has escorts to allocate.

The Guild is notoriously quick to take offence, and has in the past claimed GeDeCo is engaged in sabotage and that PRQ is using its naval connections to claim all the escort slots. The Duke of Tobia has intervened several times on the company's behalf, furthering speculation of his involvement behind the scenes. The Guild is the newest megacorporation to open in the Trojan Reach, and is rapidly eclipsing all the others save the Company of Grandmotherly Kindness (technically, GeDeCo is still larger, but most count GeDeCo's Trojan directorate as separate to its Deneb and Reft branches).

Home Port: Tobia

Territory: Trojan Reach

Company of Grandmotherly Kindness

Aslan Sector-wide Corporation

The trading arm of the Ahroay'if clan, this company also has significant investment from the powerful Syoisuis and Tlaiowaha clans. The corporation's main business is selling imported goods from the Imperium throughout the Hierate, but it has diversified and supplies everything from barbecues to warship hulls and fusion reactors. The Company of Grandmotherly Kindness is known throughout the Hierate, but its main sphere of influence is on the coreward side of the Great Rift in the Trojan Reach and Riftspan sectors.

The Company of Grandmotherly Kindness is run by a council of elderly siyajkhoara, so its actions do not always accord with the interests of the clans who own it. The Company is extremely influential and can ignore pressure from the Ya'soisthea. In the past, it has acted to snuff out wars and territorial conflicts that threaten its trade routes. It has had a virtual monopoly on general trade with the humans for centuries.

Lately, the Company has begun to face increased competition since Tyeyo Dust-Spice Importers started carrying other human goods, and Glories Under The Claw is taking much of its business on border worlds. The Company has grown fat and lazy, and a new generation of ambitious siyajkhoara are plotting to overthrow the ruling council and put the Company back where it belongs.

Home Port: Tlaiowaha

Territory: Trojan Reach, Riftspan Reaches

Glories Under The Claw

Aslan Subsector-wide Corporation

This corporation was originally founded by Aslan from the *Yerlyaruiwo* clan, but is now fiercely independent. The company's business is usually described blandly as 'colony supply and commodities trading', but in fact Glories Under The Claw is a one-stop shop for would-be conquerors. It supplies everything from ihatei scout ships, troop transports and weapons to mining equipment, temporary and permanent structures, kusuforming technology (to adapt worlds to support Aslan food animals and crops) and even slave collars. Tellingly, Glories Under The Claw is one of the few corporations to do extensive business in the Glorious Empire.

The corporation wields significant influence along the Aslan border, and is not above inciting ihatei invasions and border conflicts to grow new markets.

Home Port: Khtiyro

Territory: Rimward half of Trojan Reach

Tyeyo Dust-Spice Importers

Aslan Sector-wide Corporation

During the period immediately after the Border Wars with the Imperium (380 to 500), Aslan traders found a large market for dustspice, a novel spice which appealed to Aslan tastes, but which was available only in the Spinward Marches of the Imperium. Tyeyo Fteahrao Yolr (Tyeyo Dustspice Importers) was established to import the novelty.

Since then, synthetic dustspice has become available, and natural dustspice is a gourmet treat but no longer imported in great quantities. Tyeyo Fteahrao Yolr instead seeks out and imports any novel or valuable trade goods along the route from Mora in the Spinward Marches and the Aslan capital of Kusyu. Its diversification into other trade goods puts it in direct competition with the Company of Grandmotherly Kindness. Currently, the Company is a bigger player in the Trojan Reach, but Tyeyo's business interests run from the Spinward Marches all the way to the Dark Nebula sector. If a trade war between these two corporations does happen, then the Dust-Spice Importer's vastly greater reach and influence may give them the edge in the long term, even if the Company can squeeze them out of the lucrative short trade route.

Home Port: Kusyu

Territory: Dark Nebula, Ealiyasiyw, Riftspan Reaches, Trojan Reach, and Spinward Marches

Five Shields

Aslan Sector-wide Corporation

Soon after the jump-5 route across the Liyihuakh sector (the Riftspan Reaches) was discovered in -1044, the Wahtoi clan staked its claim to many of the worlds of the sector. Naturally enough, a trading company tied to the Wahtoi clan soon developed a monopoly on trade across the Great Rift. In about -750, however, the Aroaye'i established itself on Aulryakh as the dominant clan; after a clan war lasting several years, they forced Wahtoi clan to accept the Aroaye'i in partnership on the trade routes across the Great Rift.

Over the years, the participation of Aroaye'i clan females has increased to the point today that the two clans are equal partners in ownership of Khu Su'ikh. Khu Su'ikh means Five Shields in Aslan; the name refers to the five major worlds along the route across the rift.

Khu Su'ikh maintains a benevolent monopoly on rift passage service. Its fleet includes large cargo carriers capable of jump-5 for the rift crossing, and it provides navigation information for ships which are themselves capable of jump-5. Its even-handed treatment makes rift crossings relatively simple. The company makes its profit from repair and resupply services on worlds within the rift.

Home Port: Wahtoikoeakh

Territory: Riftspan Reaches

Acquisition of Things Not-Us

Florian Subsector-Wide Company

This is a Florian merchant line, one of the few Florian companies to trade outside the League. It has a number of long-range scout ships that wander the galaxy, looking for items that would be of use to the League, but not yet being offered by the FTC or any other trader. In the past, Acquisition-of-Things-Not-Us has brought back items as diverse as anagathics, Vargr artwork, library data, textiles and coyns. A canny human merchant who shadows an Acquisition-of-Things-Not-Us trader can predict what the Florian League will next demand.

Home Port: Floria

Territory: Yggdrasil

MENORIAL SUBSECTOR

Menorial Subsector sits uneasily between the Imperium and the rest of the sector. It nestles against the Rimward border of Five Sisters, and sees a limited amount of Imperial traffic from that region, mostly passing through to trade with the Florian League along the 'Florian Corridor' route from Szirp to Dustpan to Crescent to Viceroy and then into the League. Worlds like Adhara and Fomalhaut see only a handful of visitors per year.

The Imperium officially frowns on travelling into Menorial, and patrols the border with Five Sisters. It is easy enough for a free trader to slip over the border, and large caravans with Imperial escort travel to the Florian League once every three months or so.

The Florian League holds roughly a quarter of the sector. The worlds along their border – Heath, Viceroy and the Arhada domains of Arhada, Adhara and Hadara – are all protectorates of the League, having agreed to give extremely favourable trading rights to the Florians in exchange for defence. The Arhadans are the descendants of a colony that settled on a watery moon; they have a highly tribal culture, where respect for one's kin and family is the highest virtue.

The other major player in this sector is the Strend cluster, settled by an independent Solomani trader named Lucien Strend in the 800s. Strend and his followers were devotees of the ancient French culture from Terra, and French is the official language of

Subsector Worlds

Name	Location	Bases	Statistics	Trade Codes	Travel Code	Allegiance	Gas Giants
Adhara	0609		B57A687-8	Wa Ni			G
Allemagne	0503		X688000-0	Ba	R	Strend Cluster	
Armada	0608		A540244-A	De Lo Ni Po			
Bilke	0110		D987341-7	Ni Lo Ga		Florian League	G
Crescent	0307		B420778-7	Na Po De			G
Dustpan	0204		A550779-9	De Po			
Fomalhaut	0802		B510200-D	Lo Va Ni Ht			G
Hadara	0809		E311796-7	Ic Na Lt			
Halka	0510	N	B865544-A	Ag Ni Ga		Florian League	
Heath	0209		B587532-B	Ag Ni			G
Marseilles	0403		D540312-7	Lo De Po Ni		Strend Cluster	G
Paques	0404		B9E6400-E	Fl Ni Ga Lt			
Sable des Etoiles	0504		B000899-D	As Na Ht		Strend Cluster	G
Sam's World	0202		E100856-7	Na Va			G
Strend	0505	N	B436AFB-E	Po Hi Ht	A	Strend Cluster	G
Szirp	0201		A436538-D	Ni Ht			
Taltern	0103		E530240-6	Ni			
Trossachs	0310		B897A54-C	In Hi Ga Ht		Florian League	G
Viceroy	0408		B8D3515-C	Fl Ni Ga Ht			G
Vip	0210	N	A421644-D	Na Ni Po Ht		Florian League	
Zephyr	0702		B999545-7	Ni Ga			G

the cluster. The Strend planets are technologically advanced, but politically isolated. They have an ongoing cold war with both the Florian League (who are simply confused by Strend culture) and by the Imperium (Strend and his followers are strong supporters of the Solomani movement). There are rumours linking the cluster to various anti-Imperial factions operating in the Marches and to occasional attacks on Imperial shipping along the 'Florian Corridor'. If these rumours are true, then the dukes of the Marches may eventually rally enough support for a punitive war against the Cluster.

Allemagne

The jungle world of Allemagne is a failed colony of the Strend Cluster. The planet was settled some years after the initial landing on Strend with fifty thousand colonists moving to Allemagne over the course of a five-year colonisation effort. The jungle world seemed welcoming at first, rich in resources and bursting with vitality. The colonists built a starport and a city they named Burgundy.

Unfortunately, the initial survey of Allemagne was incomplete – a species of lethal predator dwells in the deep jungles. These predators swarmed Burgundy in 865, overwhelming the Strend defences and devouring the population. Only a handful of ships escaped the slaughter, carrying tales of two-metre tall lizard-like humanoids with a natural camouflage ability and enough intelligence or mimicry to use guns. Today, only the Allemagne starport is detectable from orbit – all other buildings are covered in thick jungle.

The Strend have returned to Allemagne a dozen times since that initial catastrophe. No troops sent into the jungle ever returned, even the elite *Champions* equipped with Strend-made battle dress and advanced augmentations. Orbital bombardment remains an option, although any attack powerful enough to wipe out the lizard-folk would also render the planet's land surface uninhabitable by humans. The Strend government is researching other ways to bring the natives of Allemagne to heel.

Dustpan

Dustpan is a balkanised desert world, divided among six clans locked in a constant struggle over the few usable water-bearing aquifers buried deep beneath the sandy surface. These wars are fought using short-range flyers launched from titanic aircraft-carriers that crawl across the sand. There are ice-bearing asteroids in the system which could be mined for water, but none of

the Dustpan governments have their own spacecraft. Centuries ago, one of the clans used satellite-mounted weaponry to rain down missiles on its rivals, wiping out several thousand people. Since then, there has been an absolute ban on any development of space technology, and it has become a cultural taboo to travel beyond the atmosphere. Visiting traders planning to sell water ice to the thirsty Pansmen will find that richer customers refuse to drink 'tainted spacewater'.

The planet's spaceport was built by offworld traders, and is considered neutral territory. Mercenaries are used to provide security in the spaceport, and there are some hopeful signs that the starport will grow into a neutral meeting place for the clans, perhaps eventually bringing an end to the constant Dustpan wars.

Fomalhaut

The surface of this dry, lifeless world is criss-crossed by thousands of kilometres of artificial trenches. These trenches are all approximately six metres deep and ten metres wide, and made of polished stone with a mirrored base. They form bizarre geometric patterns on the surface; most of these patterns can only be appreciated from orbit. Over 90% of the trenches are buried beneath layers of dust, or have been destroyed by asteroid impacts of the millennia. The Imperial Scout Service has dated the trenches to approximately 100,000 years ago.

The only inhabitants of Fomalhaut are devotees of an odd cult who believe the trenches are a communication from God, and that their duty is to clear the blocked trenches and rebuild damaged ones. When the face of Fomalhaut is clear once more, and the light of the star is reflected from the canals, only then will the message from the divine become clear. The cult has temporarily roofed over a network of tunnels in the southern polar region, and are using that as a base as they painstakingly restore the ancient structures. At their present speed, it will take them thousands of years to accomplish their goals, so the cult has sent out missionaries to find more converts and purchase robotic labour.

Hadara

Hadara is usually bypassed by ships capable of refuelling by gas giant skimming. Its rudimentary port thus receives very few visitors. Hadara itself is little more than a rockball, with a minimal atmosphere and some water locked up in ice. It is home to around ten million people but lacks sufficient technology or industry to do more than maintain the life support equipment of

the cities of the world. The locals are not very interested in offworld contact, other than a handful of trade ships which have established a relationship over the years.

Sable des Etoiles

The asteroid field here is used by Strend as a prison, with criminals from Strend sent to mine the asteroid field. The prisoners are given special belter vessels with severely limited power and oxygen reserves. If a prisoner fails to bring his weekly quota of ore back to the warden's ship, he will not receive a fresh oxygen ration.

Strend

The capital of the Strend Cluster is a beautiful world – from a distance. Glittering cities float on shimmering grav fields; ornamental gardens the size of continents stretch to the horizon, irrigated by canals of marble and steel. It is an art deco wonderland; engineering and science combined in tribute to thousands of years of Terran culture. Many of the buildings are copies of famous structures from Earth, rebuilt using Strend technology and vision. The Tower Strend is a space elevator two hundred kilometres tall that is a precise scale model of the old Eiffel tower on Earth.



Unfortunately, the people of Strend are treated as little more than mobile adjuncts to these wonderful cities. Genetic and cybernetic engineering are commonplace – a child might be assigned his future role at birth, and then physically optimised for that purpose. Strend cybernetics are both highly advanced and surprisingly beautiful, resembling sculptures more than prosthetics, but aesthetics cannot excuse the crippling lack of freedom on Strend.

There is an underclass of unaugmented on Strend, *les Misérables*. These unfortunates are restricted to the sublevels of the floating cities and a few slums on the surface. Many are shipped offworld to labour in the colonies of Sable, Pacques or Marseilles. Why the government tolerates the existence of this underclass is a mystery, but then there are many mysteries about the leaders of Strend. They are said to be the original command crew of Lucien Strend's flagship, *the Chevalier*, who have extended their lives unnaturally using advanced cybernetics. They are referred to as *les Mechanisms*.

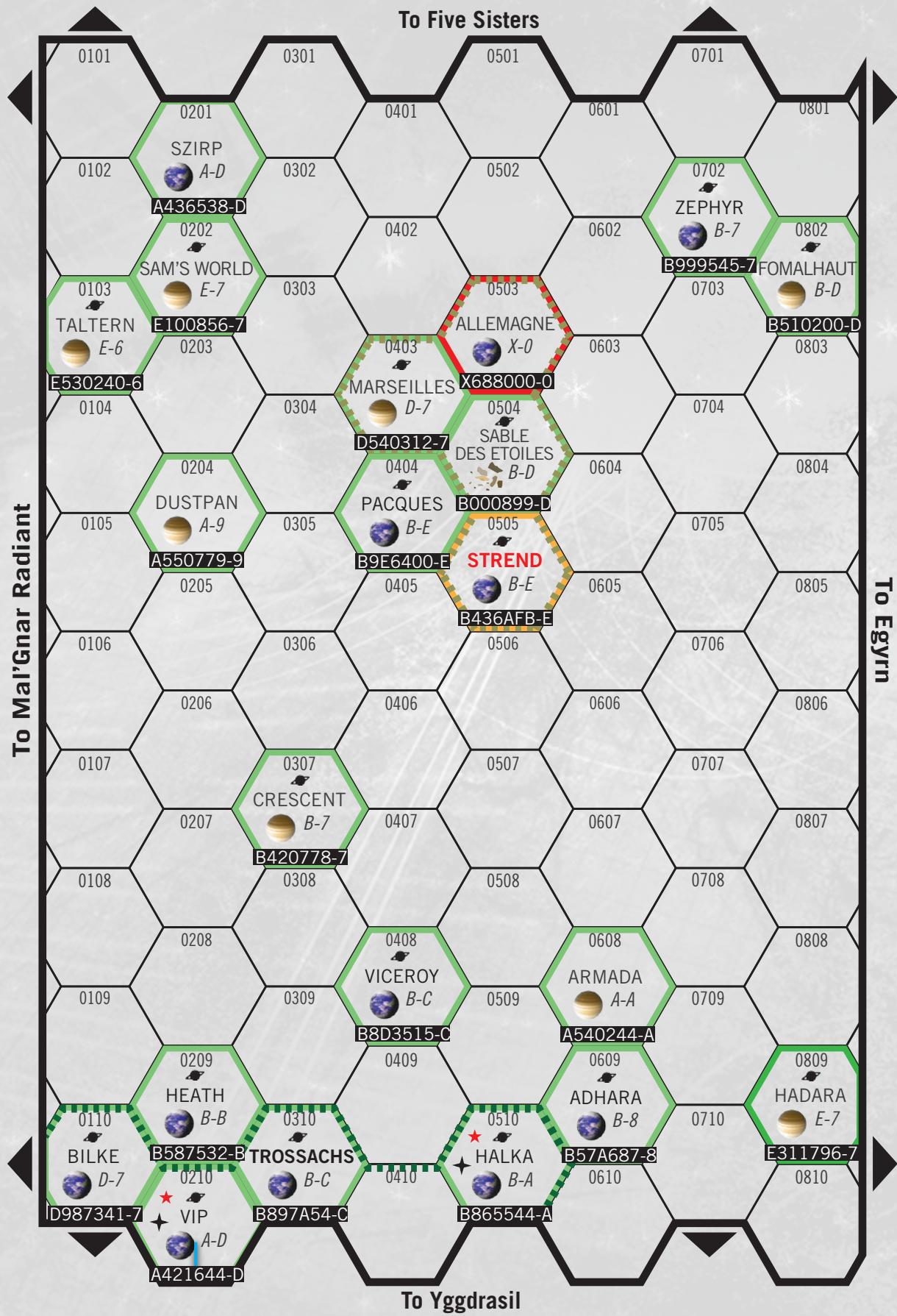
The *Chevalier* remains in orbit of Strend, where it forms the core of the orbital Bastille station, the home of the not inconsiderable Strend navy. The Bastille would be a tough nut to crack, even for an Imperial assault squadron. It is equipped with TL15 weapons, including spinal meson cannons of tremendous power.

Trossachs

The industrial planet of Trossachs is one of the key manufacturing centres of the Florian League. Much of the vast planet's surface is covered in factories, mines or cyclopean barracks for the billions of Feskals who labour here. The Barnai population of Trossachs is less than ten million – this is by far the lowest Barnai/Feskal ratio anywhere in the League, and there are some Feskals in the Barrack-cities who have never even seen a Barnai. Strend agents have tried to foment disputes and industrial action on Trossachs, but the notoriously stoic Feskals refuse to be incited.

Trossachs' natural ecosystem was long ago erased by the expansion of the factories. A few species survived, adapting to their new environment. Native creatures learned to hide in the crevices between pipes or in pools of industrial sludge instead of in trees or swamps. The oceans are covered in a thick layer of chemical scum, and the atmosphere's taint is such that the Floriani are obliged to build floating air scrubbers that slowly swim through the clouds, filtering out the worst pollutants. Some Barnai fear that Trossachs is about to plunge over the edge of an environmental cliff, leading to billions of deaths and the collapse of the Coreward third of the Florian League. The Florians' lack of understanding of the life sciences and ecology means they will need outside aid to avert this impending catastrophe.

MENORIAL SUBSECTOR



• Gas Giant
 B-6 Starport Class & Tech Level
 ★ Military Base/Garrison
 ★ Other Naval Base

— Secure System
 - - - Florian League
 - - - - Strend Cluster
 — Trade Route
 — Red Zone
 — Amber Zone
 ● Planet (dry)
 ● Planet (water present)

EGYRN SUBSECTOR

Except for the extreme coreward end, Egryn subsector is largely unknown to the public - most Navy and Scout data on this region is classified. The sector was mostly first settled during the Ramshackle Empire era (around the -1700s) and since regressed to isolated low-tech societies. The mid and rimward areas are part of the Outrim Void, and the subsector name preserves the original title of Ashley's Rock. Sir Gildemar Tomas Ashley was a staunch supporter of the Solomani faction who settled this world after the Solomani Rim War (990-1002).

Most of the data available on the subsector is due to another famous character, Bennett Lai da Santos, a gentleman-explorer and rogue of the mercantile persuasion (regrettably, da Santos' good reputation was

abused by another writer, who published another volume of entirely fraudulent library data under his name. This infamous document, *The Adventures of Bennet Lai da Santos*, has wormed its way into the databases of many ships. Travellers are advised to disregard library data that refers to solid gold asteroids, planets inhabited by people who have no heads, planets inhabited by brain-eating zombies, or any battle tactics that involve leaping into the barrel of a meson gun at precisely the right moment to be teleported onto the enemy vessel and cutting it in two with one's cutlass).

Of course, high tales of adventure and swashbuckling are preferable to the truth of Egryn. The sector is a low-tech wasteland of regressed colonies and barbarians. The Twilight still enfolds these worlds, even after a

Subsector Worlds

Name	Location	Bases	Statistics	Trade Codes	Travel Code	Allegiance	Gas Giants
985-373	0409		X775000-0	Ba	R		
Ashley's Rock	0801		D100120-7	Ni Lo Va Lt			G
Belgard	0306	N	C571321-9	Ni Lo		Belgardian Sojurnate	G
Braudel	0808		X543200-5	Lo Ni Po Lt	R		G
Carben	0702		X5555A9-2	Ag Ni Lt	R		
Eleson	0508		E541100-8	Ni Po Lo		Belgardian Sojurnate	G
Ganulph	0507		X500000-0	Ba	R		G
Gollere	0505		D574756-7	Ag			
Gorgon	0205		E590224-6	De Lo Ni		Belgardian Sojurnate	G
Goria	0610		E422475-7	Ni Po			
Kaldamar	0401		E745326-7	Ni Lo			G
Nabeth	0402	S	D426579-8	Ni		Imperium	G
Pa'an	0109		E649333-5	Ni Lo Lt			G
Selshor	0602		X430576-6	De Ni Po Lt	R		G
T'yana	0802		E568752-7	Ag Ri			
Velscur	0310		X574479-5	Ni Lt	R		G
Vior	0805		D500401-7	Va Ni Lt			G
Walei	0102		E7B4776-8	Fl Lt			G

thousand years. There are a few worlds with viable starports, mostly along the Imperial border, but precious little other civilisation worthy of the name.

The only local power in Egryn is a minor polity called the Belgardian Sojournate. The small population of Belgard have limited interstellar travel, and have claimed several surrounding planets, although their claim stands only because no other power has bothered challenging them. The Sojournate's technology is barely capable of getting them from one world to another, let alone mounting a defence of their little empire.

985-373

985-373 is a Terra-Prime world, with conditions almost exactly right for human habitation. There are clear indications that the world was once inhabited by a technological civilisation; debris and an assortment of satellites in decaying orbits, and radioactive craters where cities once were. Some areas of the world are dangerous due to radioactive contamination, but levels have fallen in most places to a safe level. Remnants of smaller cities remain, but are not inhabited. It is not clear if the devastating conflict was internal or the world was bombed by some other power. It is possible there are survivors somewhere, but if so they have become accustomed to avoiding the cities.

Belgard

The name of this planet is probably a corruption of Beauregard, which was the name of an infamous admiral who fled the Empire during the Civil Wars, accompanied by a flotilla of ships. The fate of Beauregard was a mystery for many years until the Sojournate was discovered.

The lone settlement on Belgard is the city of Sojourn, located high in the mountains. Sojourn is the site of the spaceport and home base of the Belgardian fleet, which is made up of ancient and increasingly dilapidated Imperial escorts and small military craft, none displacing more than two thousand tons. The Belgardians do not have the technology or trained crew to maintain their fleet; the skies above Sojourn are dotted with floating hulks and mothballed or cannibalised warships. Their effective TL is 6 in most areas; TL9 refers to their spacefaring technology.

The Belgardians believe other starfaring humans are invariably hostile, and attack any vessels that enter their space. They have conquered several neighbouring worlds to loot them for resources and occasionally press-ganged crew.

The Sojournate government keeps the population in line through a combination of xenophobic propaganda about an always-impending Imperial invasion, and a religious cult revolving around a 'sojourn' to a promised land. As soon as possible, promise the rulers, the flotilla will continue on its way to its ultimate destination, as laid down by the Admiral all those centuries ago. Dissent against the government is punishable by spacing.

Eleson

Eleson is a possession of the Belgardian Sojournate, and its population of about thirty-odd people are even less friendly than those on Belgard itself. The tiny settlement is a mining community, with some machinery to process ore and create alloys which are shipped home to Belgard. There is little to trade, except at the personal level – a decent meal and a couple of beers would be worth a lot to many of the people who work here, but there is no large-scale profit for a commercial starship.

Ganulph

Ganulph is a dismal, miserable place. Once a dry but almost habitable world, it was devastated by the explosion of its munitions base. This left a truly gigantic crater which can be seen from space. Speculation is possible about what sort of weapons were stored here, with ideas ranging from antimatter torpedoes through to giant planet-busting nukes or even Ancients artefacts with a grenade taped to the side. There is simply no way to know.

A beacon in orbit declares Ganulph to be a Red Zone by order of the Imperial Navy, but there are no navy ships here. It might be possible to find some wreckage of former settlements in areas far from the titanic blast, but the destruction of the atmospheric envelope comprehensively wrecked everything. Those few settlements that survived are boneyards, with vacuum-dried corpses strewn about wherever the blast left them. This is a grim and depressing place, where an entire world died. There is a little mid-tech salvage to be had but quite possibly at the price of nightmares for years to come.

Gollere

Gollere was colonised long ago and, like many similar worlds, did not make the transition to being self-sufficient. However, even with a tainted atmosphere, Gollere was well able to support life, and total collapse did not occur. The new social order that emerged was based around the concept of feudal technocracy – clans specialising in one area or another traded goods and

services with others and thus built a society capable of returning to space. At present, Gollere lacks the ability to manipulate gravity and thus cannot build 'modern' space vehicles but has a mature rocketry capability.

Gollere's rockets have been used to put a few satellites into orbit and create a modest defensive capability. Although clumsy, the surface-to-orbit missiles deployed by Gollere are quite capable of wrecking a starship. Thus far, there has been little need for them. The same technology has been used to launch components for a rather basic space station. This is being used for research purposes, conducting experiments into gravity manipulation. Gollere has databases containing relevant science, bought at great cost from trade ships, but lacks the practical experience necessary to begin implementing it.

The people of Gollere know very well that this information is available for next to nothing on most advanced worlds, but are willing accept they paid a fair – if steep – price for it. Until recently, the only offworld contact Gollere had was with Belgard, and this was intermittent at best. If someone offered a better deal, then Gollere would be an enthusiastic trade partner. The problem at present is that the world has little to offer except agricultural goods.

Nabeth

Nabeth is the most civilised system in the sector, and therefore the de facto capital, at least as far as the Imperium is concerned. The planet's population is restricted to a ring of spaceborne habitats and hollowed-out asteroids moved into stable orbits around the little world. Each satellite is an independent state, some of which have a population of only a few dozen. Many of these satellites are so close together that the Nabethi have developed the practise of physically leaping from one to another – most Nabethi have a vacc suit and an 'orbit checker' that precisely calculates the angle and force needed to hop to the next nearest satellite. Some of these hops take hours to complete, leaving the spacewalker floating in the void as he waits for his destination to approach him.

The Nabethi have a reputation as excellent if unscrupulous traders, and the bazaars of Nabeth are a good place to go for rumours or pick up curious artefacts from elsewhere in the Trojan Reach. Visitors are warned to stay clear of Nabethi alcohol, which is traditionally served in zero-gravity, a practise that causes digestive chaos for those unused to it.

There is an Imperial scout base located in this system; the Nabethi agreed to let the Imperium establish the facility here and to share their knowledge of the Reach in exchange for the technology and vitally needed supplies to maintain their orbital habitats.

As an Imperial client state, visitors from the Imperium are permitted to jump from Motmos in District 268 to Nabeth, but are prohibited from travelling onwards. There are numerous Nabethi satellites that specialise in arranging temporary flags-of-convenience, allowing a trader to travel on into the Outrim Void without breaking Imperial law.

Pa'an

Pa'an's small population are the descendants of a long-range Zhodani expedition that misjumped and was forced to settle on this world. The lack of dry land on Pa'an limited their population growth, and they were unable to maintain their technological base. Today, the people of Pa'an have only basic industrial techniques and have little interest in advanced technologies.

Each island in the archipelago is ruled by a psionic noble family, who keep the serfs in line using telepathic manipulation and clairvoyance. Without technological distractions, the nobles of Pa'an have honed their telepathic powers to a high level (the Zhodani speculate there may be an environmental factor on Pa'an that enhances human psionic potential as, unusually, psionic powers invariably breed true – the child of two psionically gifted individuals is always psionic). War is unknown, as the nobles can psionically suppress violent thoughts or cause amnesia. Disputes between islands are resolved by psychic duels, and the only weapons on Pa'an are used those for hunting.

Most offworld Travellers are not welcome on Pa'an. Peaceful visitors have their memories erased and are sent on their way; violent invaders are telepathically manipulated into fighting each other.

The Zhodani Consulate re-contacted Pa'an some four hundred years ago. The Pa'an nobles still considered themselves Zhodani, and welcomed their long-lost cousins. The Consulate visitors were impressed by the nobles' psionic skills, and set up a base to study mental powers on Pa'an. Occasionally, a Pa'an prince will leave home and travel to the Consulate to study or serve in the government there.

Velscur

Velscur is not normally visited by passing ships, which usually skim fuel from the gas giant and move on. The world is subject to various advisories and prohibition orders imposed by distant powers, but these are not enforced due to the difficulty of maintaining a presence. Velscur has a population of around thirty thousand, regressed survivors of a failed colony. These people are scattered between several areas, each ruled by its own elite. The locals are not hostile, though they are wary of outsiders, and will happily trade for anything they can use. The only valuable exports Velscur has to offer are some interesting spices, woven fabrics and a good brandy.

Vior

Vior is important as a jump-3 link across the Outrim Void, linking the Belgardian Sojournate with Imperial space. It has a rough starport of sorts, but many ships crossing the Void skim fuel at the system's gas giant rather than landing on what can be a dangerous planet.

Vior was long thought to be uninhabited, but this was found not to be the case when an underground community was detected; the population of around thirty thousand were overcrowded and somewhat inbred. Evidence of cannibalism was also discovered, though it is believed that the practice has now been stamped out.

The tiny downport is run by a private concern which employs a few dozen locals but is mainly staffed by offworlders. The port receives the occasional ship but this is a very isolated outpost on top of a cave full of possible cannibals – it is not a popular place to live or work. The most frequent visitors to the port are trade ships making the long haul across the Outrim Void and navy vessels – typically obsolescent destroyers assigned to frontier patrol – out of the Berengaria naval base. The navy is popular in Vior's downport, since its ships bring in new faces with money to spend each time they visit.

Facilities at the port are, as might be expected, very basic and trade opportunities are virtually non-existent. The underground habitat is off-limits to visitors, not least since most of the locals just want to be left alone. Their living conditions have improved since they were discovered, and aid packages are delivered from time to time by the Scout Service or vessels hired by it. Other than this, the local population has little contact with outsiders.

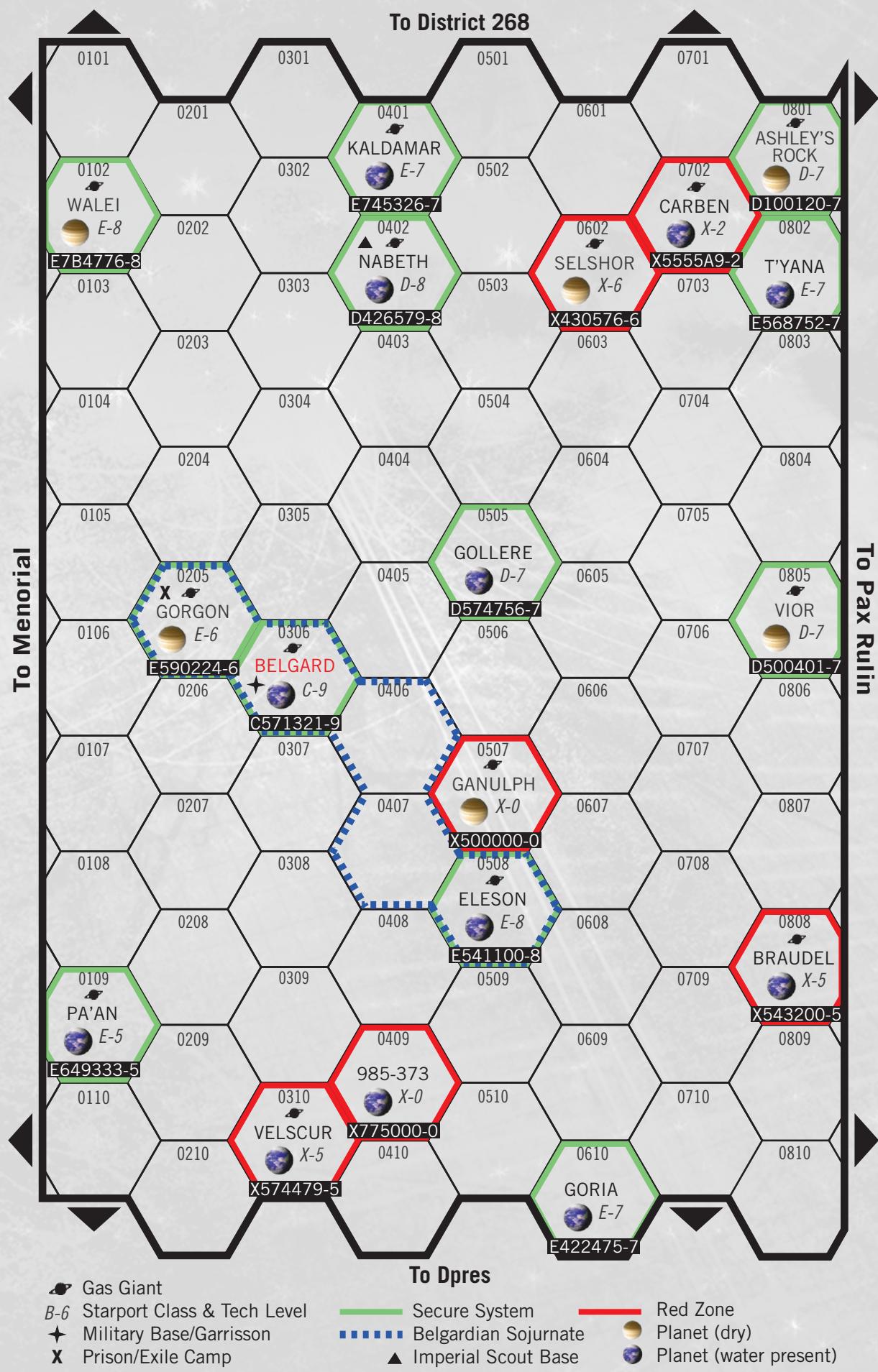
Walei

The world of Walei is unrelentingly hostile towards human life. The atmosphere is poisonous and corrosive, while acid rain storms lash the rocky, lifeless landscape, and the temperature is nearly 90° C at night and much, much hotter during the day.

Still, a colony of some twenty million people thrive here. The world was initially settled in the hope it could be terraformed for easier access to its mineral resources. The terraforming effort failed, but the industrious workers expanded the underground terraforming base. Today, Walei's population dwell in thousands of kilometres of buried tunnels. These are not mere shelters, but beautiful wide avenues between vast open caverns.

Strong magnetic fields in the tunnels play havoc with electronic devices on Walei, so the population were forced to virtually abandon electricity except in its most basic form. They have a few heavily shielded computers for specialised purposes, but in the main turned to clockwork, steam power and other older technologies. While Walei is listed as TL5, they are capable of producing TL7 or even TL8 devices that do not use electricity, including basic computers. Waleian clockworks are obviously heavier and bulkier than conventional equivalents, but are works of art as well as being perfectly functional.

EGYRN SUBSECTOR



Gas Giant

B-6 Starport Class & Tech Level

Military Base/Garrison

X Prison/Exile Camp

Secure System

Belgardian Sojurnate

Imperial Scout Base

Red Zone

Planet (dry)

Planet (water present)

PAX RULIN SUBSECTOR

More than half the worlds of this subsector are ruled by the Imperium. Pax Rulin subsector is dominated by a string of naval bases and military outposts, a bulwark against aggression from the Aslan and barbarian cultures of the Trojan Reach. Despite the sheer number of Imperial worlds and client states, the subsector is administered from Glisten – Pax Rulin itself is the largest and oldest naval base, although the world of Perrior is growing in importance and has launched a bid to be named the new subsector capital.

Several of the inhabited worlds in this subsector were originally settled by Vilani explorers, but all those

colonies save Caraz died out (there appears to be no single cause of these mass extinctions – the old colony on Kydde died of plague, Isilent of starvation, Doradon to solar flares and so on). Later explorers looking for worlds to colonise were able to reclaim the now-empty Vilani colonies, although after several hundred years, little trace remained of the Vilani on some planets.

The Senlis Foederate is a small polity of three Solomani-settled worlds which survived the Twilight relatively well by the standards of the Trojan Reach. They retained comparatively high technology, especially at the capital of Senlis, and are capable of defending their space

Subsector Worlds

Name	Location	Bases	Statistics	Trade Codes	Travel Code	Allegiance	Gas Giants
Alexin	0805		B000420-C	Ni As Ht		Imperium	
Bantral	0306	S	C886589-9	Ag Ni Ga			G
Berengaria	0505	N, S	B566644-7	Ag Ni Ri		Imperium	G
Candia	0201		D4006A9-7	Na Ni Va Lt			G
Caraz	0706	N	E311959-A	De Hi Ic In Na	A	Imperium	G
Cyan	0502	WS	C5689B9-A	Hi	A	Imperium	
Doradon	0602	S	A400369-B	Ni Va Lo		Imperium	
Isilent	0802		BAC0789-9	De	A	Imperium	G
Kryslion	0402		D583AA9-9	Hi		Imperium	
Kydde	0210		B644779-5	Ag Lt			G
Magen	0709		C543550-9	Ni Po		Senlis Foederate	G
Orsasch	0408		E541364-7	Ni Po Lo		Senlis Foederate	G
Pax Rulin	0604	N	A402231-E	Ic Lo Ni Po Va Ht		Imperium	G
Perrior	0603	N	A633966-B	Na Po Hi		Imperium	
Rhysk	0704		X413730-7	Ic Na Po Lt	R	Imperium	G
Senlis	0508		B671633-A	Ni Ht		Senlis Foederate	

against raiders. Foederate relations with the Imperium are strained due to 'an alarmingly militant build-up of Imperial naval assets along our mutual border' – in short, the Foederate has no conception of the sheer size and power of the Imperium, and self-consciously believes the vast Imperial fleet stationed at Pax Rulin is there because of them. The Foederate was highly expansionist until the Imperium established a presence in the subsector – Bantral was their next target until it obtained Imperial protection.

Berengaria

The world of Berengaria is one of the more stable worlds in the Outrim Void. It is an Earth-like planet, and was the recipient of significant terraforming and engineering to bring it to its current state. The planet's soil was enriched with phosphorous and other fertilisers, while mountains were levelled to alter weather patterns, ensuring regular rainfall and lengthening the growing season. Silicon-bearing asteroids were spun into solar mirrors and parasols, reflecting extra sunlight onto the surface. By the time the terraformers were finished, the world's agricultural potential was three times what it had been.

The primary purpose of this epic feat of geo-engineering was to create a highly productive agricultural world to supply the chain of military bases along Pax Rulin, but was also a showcase for what could be accomplished elsewhere in the Trojan Reach. The General Development Corporation aided in the engineering of the world, one of the few successful co-operative ventures between the Imperium and its erstwhile agency.

While Berengaria's native technology is only TL7, the colony's basic infrastructure was built at a much higher level. Every community has high-speed holographic communications links to central computer nodes (which also model planetary weather patterns and adjust the solar mirrors to compensate) and the elected representatives of each community meet in a virtual parliament.

Berengaria is considered a naval asset, as most of its food exports go towards supplying the chain of bases along the border. The navy has a permanent seat in the parliament, and has occasionally intervened to ensure food supplies are not disrupted. This outside interference rankles the agricultural engineers of Berengaria, and they have protested to both Pax Rulin and Glisten, asking for outside arbitration.

Bantral

Bantral is an Imperial client state; that is, it is an independent world with strong ties to the Imperium. Indeed, it is sufficiently pro-Imperial as to host a small Scout Service base, which supports reconnaissance missions into the Outrim Void and communications links with more distant areas. Jump-5 couriers occasionally transit through Bantral, Kydde and (after refuelling at the gas giants of Tlazolteotl and Gabriel) connect the client state of Dpres to Imperial territory.

The Baraccai Technum has a major trade delegation at Bantral's highport, and dominates the world's trade with the Imperium. This mostly takes the form of agricultural exports, which are exchanged for higher-tech goods at a rate very favourable to Imperial traders.

The world itself is pleasant enough, though the dense atmosphere can result in very heavy rainfall on a frequent basis. The population, numbering a half-million or so, are mostly clustered into the region around the starport. The remainder of the planetary surface is largely undeveloped, though there are a few small enclaves here and there. Not all of these are official; parties of settlers have at times set up tiny colonies in the Bantral outback, and there have even been incidents of pirate vessels operating out of remote valleys.

Caraz

Caraz was never intended to be home to more than two billion people. The rocky outpost was originally built as a refuelling station, cracking water-ice into hydrogen fuel for the flood of Vilani ships fleeing the Vargr wars of the -2100s. As the Vilani colonies in Pax Rulin dwindled and died, Caraz saw fewer and fewer visitors. Eventually, the ships stopped coming altogether, leaving a thousand ice miners and their families alone in the dark.

The Caraz system had no lanthanum reserves, and so could not build its own jump-capable ships. The people did what they could, though. They hollowed most out Caraz Rock and built cities on the inside of the world; they ground asteroids to dust and developed microorganisms from scratch to transform the regolith into fertile soil. With resources so limited, everything in Caraz had to be carefully measured and accounted. Economics, politics and religion are all the same thing in Caraz rock – every object and person has a precisely calculated value, and anything that costs more than it produces is eliminated and

recycled – including those people who fail to make a net contribution to the Carazian economy. The rulers of Caraz are the all-powerful Actuaries who decide on the worth of things.

Membership in the Imperium and recovery of jump drive technology means Caraz no longer needs to conserve resources quite so brutally, but an obsession with efficiency is ingrained into their culture.

An Imperial Naval base has been established at Caraz, and a new starport is under construction. Caraz will be upgraded to Class A status within ten years, assuming all goes well.

Pax Rulin

The Pax Rulin naval base is the lynchpin of Imperial naval power in this subsector. While only a few hundred people call the base their permanent home, there are usually a dozen or more capital ships in-system, along with hundreds of smaller craft. Pax Rulin has no shipyard – construction facilities are at Perrior – but it is a naval depot of great importance. It is designated a fortress world – in the event of a full-scale invasion of the sector, Pax Rulin has the stockpiled supplies and firepower to hold out against almost any attacker, and would provide a rallying point for Imperial ships until a larger fleet could be mustered in the Spinward Marches to relieve the invaded worlds.

Pax Rulin was founded early in the Third Imperium's history, and the system acquired an almost legendary reputation among those who remembered the great Imperial navies of the past. Warships have been known to make pilgrimages just to dock at the ancient and sacred asteroids of Pax Rulin.

Civilian traffic to Pax Rulin is discouraged. Warnings are broadcast in all neighbouring worlds, informing Travellers they may only jump into specific regions within the Pax Rulin system. Jump traffic outside these zones is treated as an incoming attacking force, and is met with immediate hostility.

Senlis

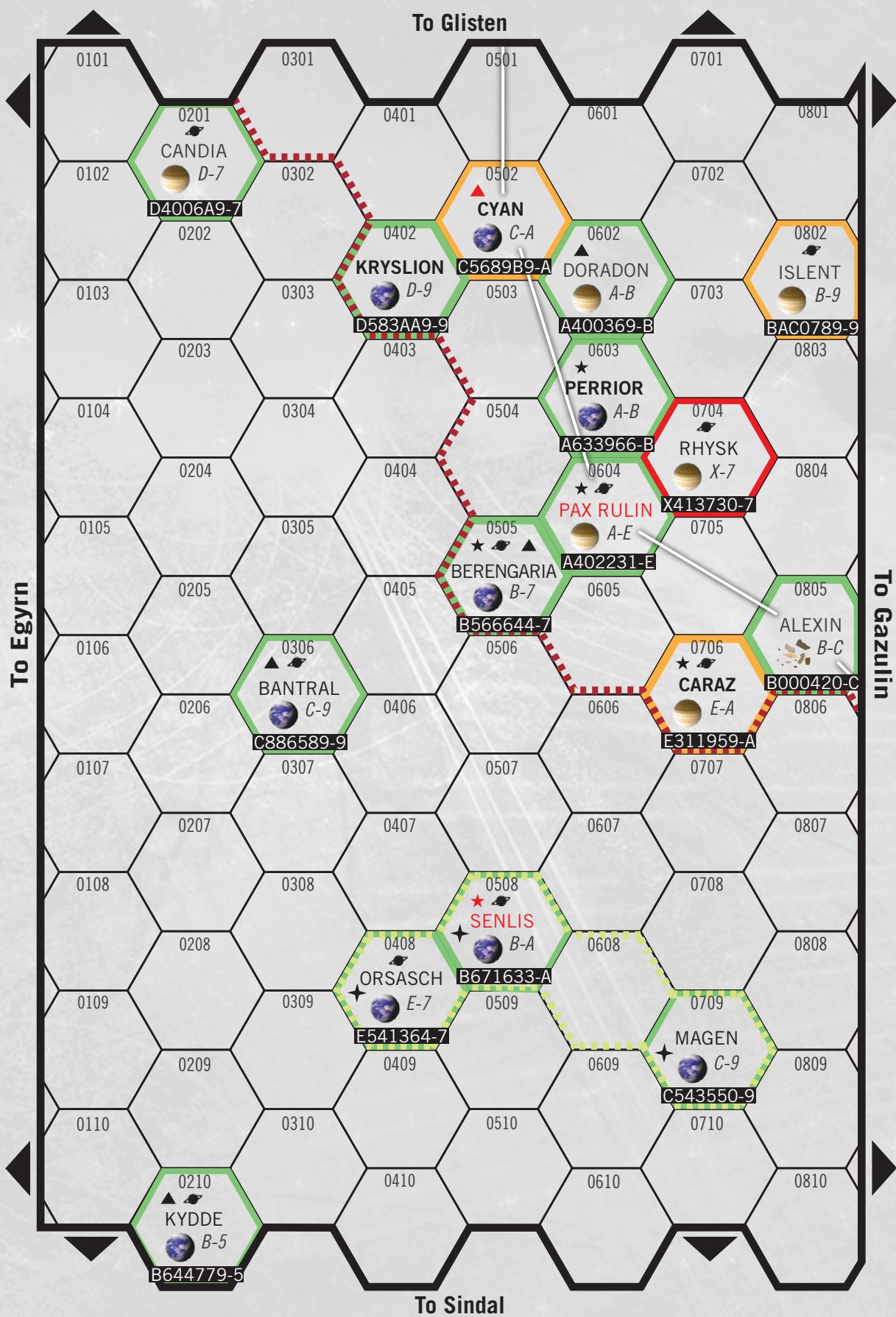
Senlis is a dry world; the only body of water on the surface is the Great Lake, an expanse of brackish, tainted water, with the population of Senlis dwelling along great artificial canals that surround the Great Lake. There are nine of these canal networks, and at the head of each is a huge water-purification plant. The rulers of Senlis control the water-purification plants, and social status is defined by the freshness of one's water. Higher-class citizens live further upriver.

Some three hundred years ago, the rulers of Senlis began experimenting with adding drugs to the water supply. Initially, these drugs were used to combat disease and improve the general health of the population, but following a period of political upheaval and dissent, fearful rulers began using drugs to sedate or manipulate the emotions of their population. When the Foederate goes to war, stimulants are used to drive military recruitment and aggression; when the Foederate suffers a downturn, sedatives and appetite suppressants are pumped into the only water sources on the whole planet. Different canal networks have different drug mixes. On Senlis, politics is another word for the narcotic and hydraulic despotism.

Beyond the canals, the landscape of Senlis is harsh and arid. Over 70% of the planet is utterly uninhabitable without significant technological aid. There are a few hardy hermits living in the wilderness; these outcasts are free of the drugs that enslave the rest of the population, and considered criminals by the Senlis government.

Of the other two worlds in the Foederate, Orsasch is equally dry, and the same system is used there. The recently conquered world of Magen, though, has enough surface water for the population to escape the drugs, and so Magen's population is considerably less subservient. So far, Senlis has been able to keep the younger world in line with the threat of force, but opposition parties on Magen continue to support leaving the Foederate and applying for Imperial membership or at least protection from their former allies.

PAX RULIN SUBSECTOR



- Gas Giant
- B-6 Starport Class & Tech Level
- Military Base/Garrison
- Imperial Naval Base
- Other Naval Base
- Secure System
- Senlis Foederate
- Imperial Border
- Imperial Scout Base
- Imperial Scout Way Station
- X-Boat Route
- Red Zone
- Amber Zone
- Planet (dry)
- Planet (water present)

GAZULIN SUBSECTOR

Gazulin subsector would like to forget that it is part of the Trojan Reach. It has been part of the Third Imperium for hundreds of years, and considers itself much more civilised than the barbarians of the Outrim Void. The Gazulin worlds pride themselves on their cultural and technological sophistication, and over the last three centuries the region has undergone a prolonged economic boom, further emphasising the divide between it and the rest of the sector. It has strong ties to Tobia subsector, and is often treated as an adjunct or even suburb of Tobia.

The primary X-boat route goes through Tobia subsector and from there off to Vestia; this circuitous route means it takes months for news to reach Gazulin from the Spinward Marches, as the Vestia route heads back along Deneb sector to the core worlds. There is a secondary X-boat network via Bleak, primarily maintained not by the courier service but by the navy,

but there is still comparatively little traffic between Gazulin and Pax Rulin. According to stereotypes along the border, Pax Rulin are all militaristic marionettes, while the Gazulin are effete buffoons who have no idea how close they live to danger.

Politically, Gazulin is balanced between the 'Junction bloc' in the centre of the subsector, and the Gazulin/Mirage pair. Junction is actually a minor member of the bloc, but sits in the middle of a knot of rich industrial or agricultural worlds, making it a vitally important trade hub. Old Gazulin tries to retain its pre-eminence in the sector by controlling trade from Tobia and emphasising its cultural influence, but the nexus of power in the subsector slips coreward with each passing generation. Mirage, once a vibrant world, has fallen into drug-fuelled decadence, and can no longer help Gazulin cling to fading glories.

Subsector Worlds

Name	Location	Bases	Statistics	Trade Codes	Travel Code	Allegiance	Gas Giants
627-301	0603	R	X000120-7	As Lo Ni	R	Imperium	G
Belt-9	0202		B000213-E	As Lo Ni Ht		Imperium	G
Bleak	0502	S	C9C6229-9	Ni Lo Fl		Imperium	G
Corben	0304	N	E545455-8	Ag Ni		Imperium	G
Fintor	0407		B540344-7	Po Ni De Lo		Imperium	G
Gazulin	0308	N, S	AA86887-B	Ri		Imperium	G
Iscand	0504	N	B795553-B	Ag Ni		Imperium	G
Junction	0404		B763776-6	Ri		Imperium	G
Labora	0101		B533544-7	Po Ni		Imperium	G
MacDermont	0401		D200768-8	Va Na	A	Imperium	G
Mirage	0509		A560676-A	De Ni Ri		Imperium	G
Neumann	0705	N	B876AA9-D	In Hi Ht		Imperium	G
O'Keefe	0309	S	D879625-7	Ni		Imperium	G
Peridot	0405	N	B989894-A	Ri		Imperium	
Ploderash	0707		D303696-8	Ic Na Ni Va		Imperium	
Susanawo	0510		D68A430-5	Ni Wa Lt		Imperium	G

627-301

This highly restricted system is a mystery to the Imperium. The gravitational centre of 627-301 is not the main star, but a tiny black hole the sun orbits. The research station orbits a gas giant that itself orbits the star. Computer projections show this arrangement is not stable, and that the star will be destroyed within half a million years. The black hole is believed by some to be artificial, but others theorise the singularity 'collected' the system as it travelled through space.

Neumann

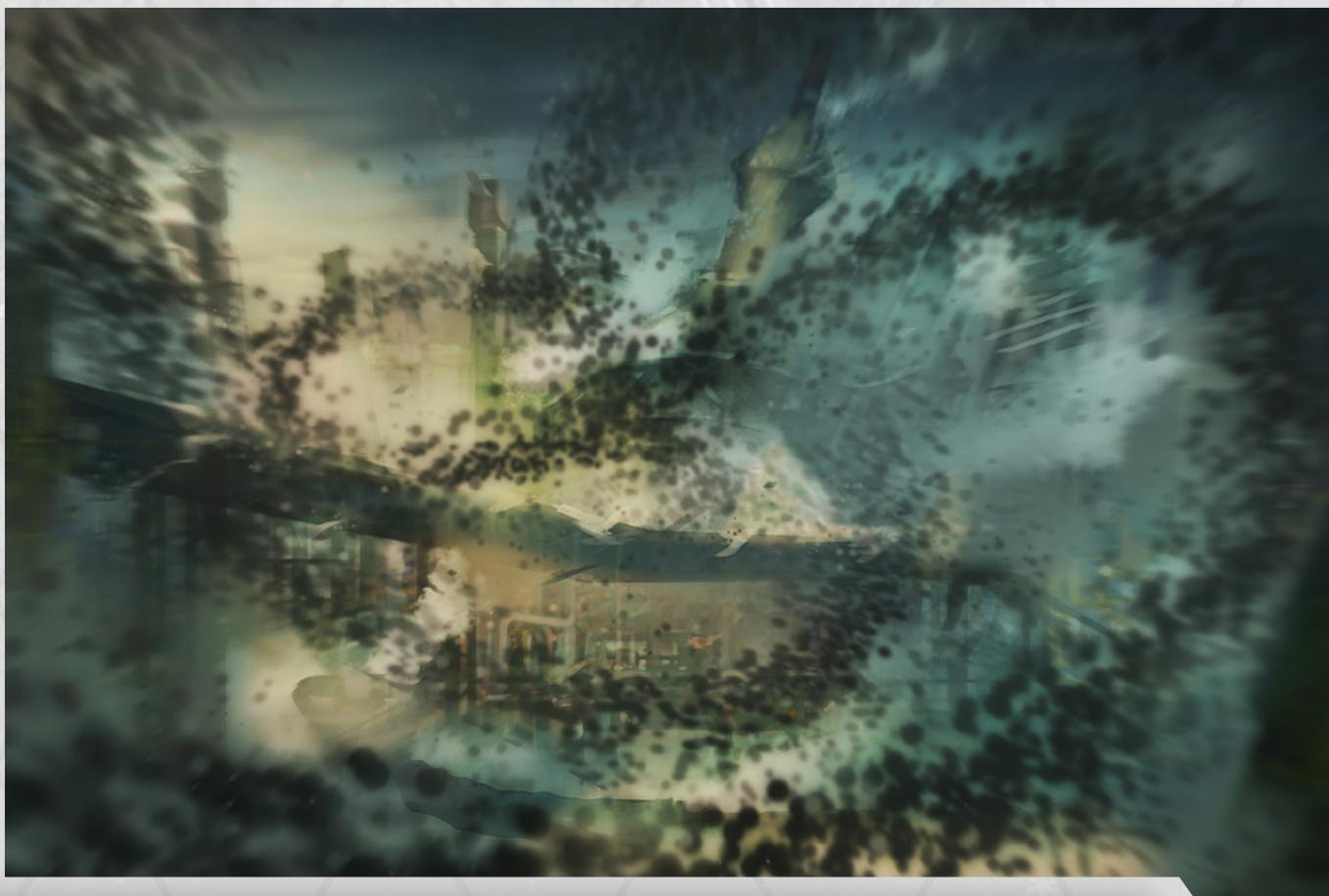
The Neumann system was settled by the Terrans, specifically a transhumanist sect who believed in the extensive use of cybernetics, nanotechnology and artificial intelligence. The colony developed rapidly; self-replicating robots transformed the world's surface into shining cities, and all-knowing machine minds guided development. Citizens of Neumann were altered and upgraded, and Neumann rose to TL15, verging on TL16. For a brief time, it seemed as though Solomani ingenuity had finally triumphed over Vilani conservatism, and that humanity was about to make a great leap forward.

The disaster that then struck Neumann was not as dramatic as the Maghiz that ruined Darrian civilisation, but was just as devastating. A self-replicating swarm or

'grey goo' was released and within days had devoured much of the Neumann civilisation. More than three quarters of the population was transformed into featureless, formless goo, their bodies pulled apart molecule by molecule and remade into more of the swarm. City after city was swallowed by the encroaching tide of destruction.

A few isolated research laboratories managed to stall growth of the swarm by releasing even more self-replicating swarms. The new swarms were programmed to demolish the old, but replicated themselves at a much slower rate. The tide of destruction stopped, and the few survivors began to rebuild as best they could. Much of their technology had been lost, and a new religious cult, the Shield Church, took over the rule of the planet following the suicide of the AIs who had controlled Neumann.

Today, Neumann is but a shadow of its former self, but still an incredibly productive industrial planet. More than a third of the surface is swarm zone, where different evolving breeds of nanotech fight. Visits to the swarm zone are illegal without Shield Church permission, but daredevils have been known to try flying or even driving across the warped and shifting zone of chaos. Few survive, and none survive unchanged.



There are sometimes outbreaks of swarms even in settled areas – a building and everything in it might suddenly sag and melt, but the Shield Church's nanotamers know the correct formulations and combinations to contain any infestation. Visitors are advised to report any stains or moulds discovered immediately, as they could be the leading edge of a hegemonising swarm outbreak.

The Shield Church is led by the Immortal Protector (a semi-mythic figure said to reincarnate into every new generation) is the absolute master of the planet. The cult's primary goal is to hold back the swarms, which they do with their own swarms and the cleansing power of plasma fire. The Church also strictly controls technology on Neumann, ensuring no new technological development threatens the world. Actually running the government and caring for the immortal souls (uploaded into a memory aleph) of the citizens come a distant third and fourth priority for the cult.

O'Keefe

While the official name of this planet is O'Keefe, after the Solomani explorer who first discovered it, millennia of linguistic drift has led to the mangled pronunciation Ochkeefee. This world is mostly bog – sea levels rose several metres in the past and are slowly receding, leaving behind thousands of square kilometres of stagnant, muddy, worm-ridden bogland. Structures are built on tall stilts, and natives navigate the myriad shallow streams on flat-bottomed boats and rafts. There are few large cities on the planet; the largest is the aptly named Stiltown, surrounding the small starport.

The fens of O'Keefe produce some useful fungi and a sweet-smelling moss used in luxury cosmetics. These items are gathered by the poor inhabitants and

dried in long smokehouses before being sold through Stiltown. The chief threat to both this industry and the fensmen are the worms of O'Keefe, which grow up to six metres long and sometimes attack humans. The worms feed primarily on fungi, but also instinctively kill animals to provide the rotting corpses that the fungal spores grow on.

Susanawo

The storms of Susanawo are legendary. A combination of massive ongoing volcanic activity throwing dust and heat into the air and the planet's eccentric orbit has created the sort of megastorm Travellers normally associate with gas giants. The Great Storm covers a fifth of the planet's surface and has circled the globe once every four months for the last two centuries, and is expected to last for another three at least. Lesser storms, apocalyptic by the standards of other worlds, are common in most regions. The ecosystem has collapsed in the face of this chaos, with extinctions across all native lifeform groups running at more than 95%.

A small outpost was established on Susanawo, with the intention of using the volcanoes as natural smelters and chemical factories. The outpost was equipped with a stockpile of atomic mines to shape tectonic activity, and powerful drill robots to create lava channels. The vicious storms made it impossible for cargo ships or flyers to land regularly, and the colony collapsed. A few thousand people now live in tunnels and caves, hiding from winds strong enough to tear a man's skin from his bones within thirty seconds of exposure.

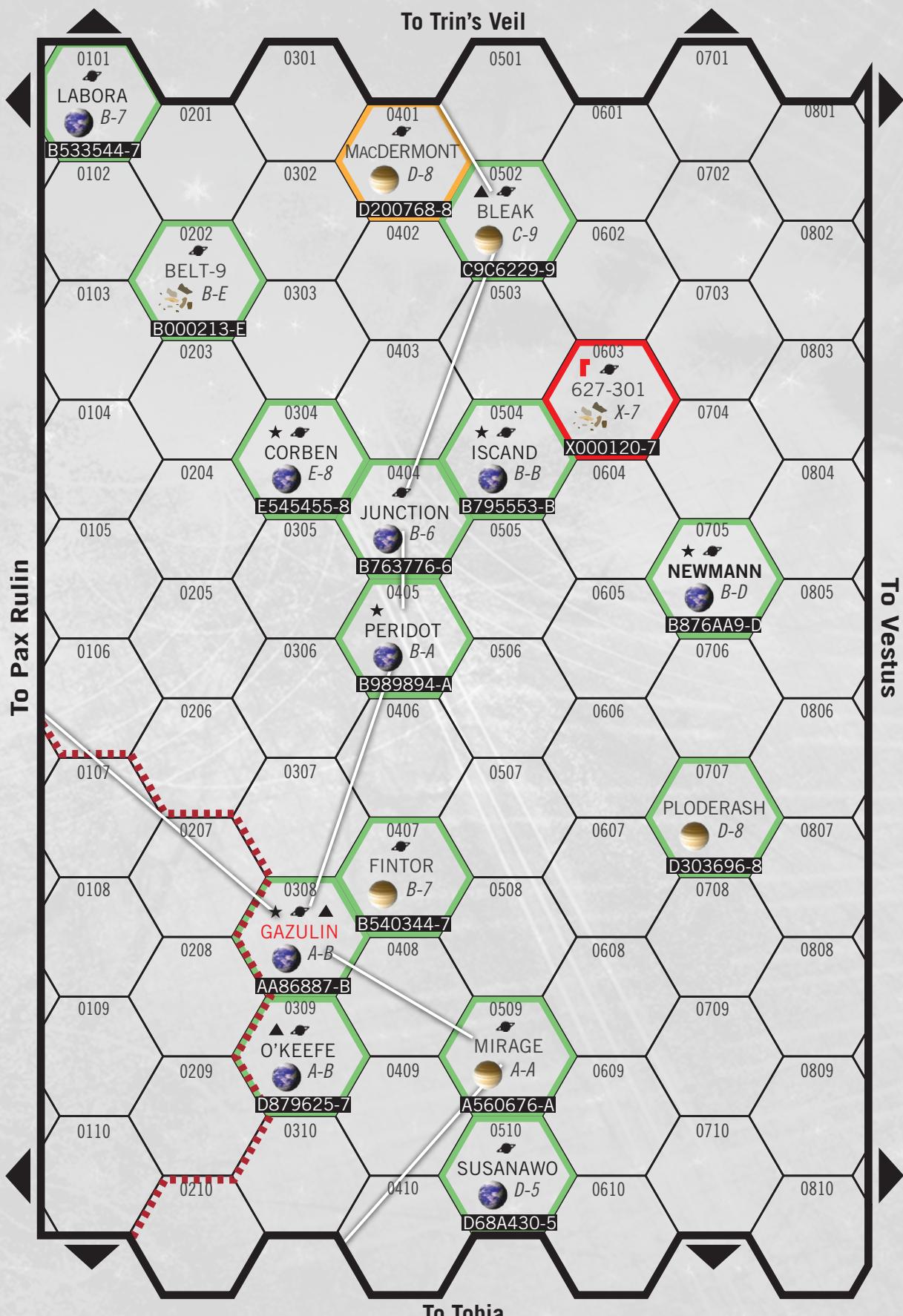
The neighbouring world of Mirage recently began using Susanawo as a prison colony, dispatching political prisoners using one-way drop shuttles. This punishment is reserved for the worst offenders.

OCHKEEFEE WORM

ANIMAL	HITS	SPEED
Ochkeefee Worm	84	5 m
SKILLS	Athletics (dexterity) 1, Melee (unarmed) 2, Survival 2	
ATTACKS	Fanged Maw (5D)	
TRAITS	Amphibious, Armour (+3), Large (+4), Slow Metabolism (-2)	
BEHAVIOUR	Carnivore, Killer	



GAZULIN SUBSECTOR



Gas Giant

B-6 Starport Class & Tech Level

Imperial Naval Base

Imperial Scout Base

Secure System

Imperial Border

X-Boat Route

Research Station

Red Zone

Amber Zone

Planet (dry)

Planet (water present)

YGGDRASIL SUBSECTOR

The name Yggdrasil only appears on old charts, such as those used by the Imperial Scout Service. Most natives of the Trojan Reach refer to this subsector by its common name of Floria, for this region is the seat of the Florian League. The Floriani were slow to start expanding, as they only obtained jump technology from a crashed Aslan ship in -225, by which time much of the sector had been explored, claimed and then abandoned by the Sindalian Empire.

The Terra-derived Sindalian names for most of the worlds were retained, hence the slew of planets named after figures from Norse mythology. The desert world of Yggdrasil was the Sindalian capital of the sector, and when the Imperium made contact with the Floriani in the 200s, Yggdrasil was returned to its former importance as the primary trade gateway into Florian space.

Subsector Worlds

Name	Location	Bases	Statistics	Trade Codes	Travel Code	Allegiance	Gas Giants
Bolsush	0119		D585741-6	Ag Ri		Florian League	G
Boronu	0614		B966741-A	Ag Ri		Florian League	G
Cimmen	0320		E7C0140-9	De Lo Ni		Florian League	G
Daruf	0116		D540358-5	Ni Po De Lo Lt		Florian League	G
Fissolon	0318		B69A742-8	Wa		Florian League	G
Floria	0213	N	A567942-F	Hi Ht Na		Florian League	G
Forandin	0716	N	BA89646-9	Ri Ni		Florian League	G
Garnl	0516		E884940-8	Hi		Florian League	G
IInest	0616	N	B686347-9	Ni Lo		Florian League	G
Insec	0317	N	A421542-E	Ni Po		Florian League	G
Kabal	0319	F	B587147-B	Ni Lo		Florian League	G
Lucind	0416		B560642-9	De Ni Ri		Florian League	G
Odin	0811		B20149B-8	Ni Ic Va	A		G
Picard	0417		D679646-7	Ni		Florian League	G
Sif	0820		A765867-7	Ri			G
Tefsi	0418	N	B994449-B	Ni		Florian League	G
Thor	0813		D669577-5	Ni Lt			G
Thrush	0220		A436246-C	Ni Lo Ht		Florian League	G
Tibolt	0415		C575744-8	Ag		Florian League	
Vorn	0218	N	B611640-9	Ic Na Ni		Florian League	G
Yggdrasil	0815		B5507CD-8	Po De	A	Imperium Client State	
Zimt	0713		C547546-9	Ag Ni		Florian League	G

Most of the inhabited worlds in this subsector are part of the Florian main, a jump-1 chain of systems reaching from Ewoittoi/Nora'a all the way to Dpres and Connaught in Dpres subsector. Travel along the main is restricted by the Floriani – vessels should register with the League at Yggdrasil or Kabal/Nora'a before jumping along the main. Ostensibly, this is to prevent piracy, which is an increasing problem because of Aslan raiders, but the true purpose of this policy is to maintain the privacy of the Florian race.

Floria

Floria is one of the wonders of the Trojan Reach, and attracts tens of thousands of researchers and tourists every year. The Floria discovered several Ancient installations that were still largely intact, and have preserved these technological wonders for display. Travellers gasp in awe at the Seven Towers, and ponder silently the primordial mysteries of the Well of Lights.

All the way through a visit to Floria, the Traveller is aware of the constant, unobtrusive presence of Barnai administrators and their Feskals servants. If a tourist lingers too long in one section, the Barnai politely suggests he move along to the next designated viewing area. A Traveller who tries to step outside the strictly prescribed route is gently herded back to the tourist zones by a hulking Feskal. Visiting Floria is an awe-inspiring experience, but a curiously hollow one. You are left with the feeling that you never saw the real planet, that you missed something.

And that is exactly what happened. From the Starport of Welcomes to the approved 'safe' tourist zones, to the carefully sanitised Ancient sites, the whole experience is designed to ensure visitors do not see the real Floria. This planet does not contain a 'few' Ancient relics – the whole of Floria's capital city is one vast Ancient structure. The Florian researchers may only be able to replicate TL15 devices using the Ancient manufacturing complexes and matter synthesisers, but there are far more potent machines still functioning in the depths of the city. A teleport grid connects different regions of the city, allowing an individual to step across ten thousand kilometres as easy as he walks across the room. Reactors draw power directly from the fabric of the universe, powering cyclopean machines the Florians tend but do not understand. A warship of the Ancients – sentient and awesomely powerful – slumbers in a dock a hundred kilometres below the surface. It is from this vessel, not any crashed Aslan scout, that the Florians learned the secrets of jump technology.

Here, too, are the clone vats where new Floriani are produced, generation after generation formed from an organic soup and carefully spun lattices of synthetic neural fibre. It took the Floriani three hundred thousand years to uncover a fraction of the secrets of this Ancient city, and they know they have barely begun the work they were made to do. If the other races – Humaniti in any of its myriad forms, or worse, the rapacious Vargr or militant Aslan – found the truth of Floria, then they would try to take it, to conquer it and rip out the Ancient machines without understanding or reverence. The secret of Floria must be preserved at all costs, even the death of every Floriani and the destruction of all their colony worlds.

After all, they are only machines.

Vorn

Most worlds in the Florian League have a surprisingly low Law Level. They do not need law enforcement, as the rate of criminal behaviour among the Floriani is much lower than among other humans. The only breach of law on, say, the high-population world of Garnl are caused by visitors. On almost every Florian world, the instinctive caste system of the race where Barnai supervisors and thinkers guide obedient Feskal labourers holds sway.

Vorn is different. Something on this icy, inhospitable rockball interferes with the caste system. The Florian League settled Vorn in 102, but the settlement fell apart within a few weeks as the Feskals rose up and brutally slaughtered their Barnai. The Florians dispatched a military force to pacify the rebels, but as any Floriani military force uses Feskal infantry, all these accomplished was handing the rebels a lot of heavily armed troops.

Today, Vorn is an embarrassment to the League. They have to maintain the Class B highport in orbit, as Vorn sits at the junction of a key jump-2 trade route and jump-4 Florian X-boat route. However, travel to the surface is forbidden, as the surface is an icy wilderness where savage Feskal overlords rule feral tribes, and intruders are hunted down and murdered or enslaved. They torment Barnai for sport in their underground lairs.

Although the Barnai do not dare send further expeditions down to Vorn's surface, they do feel an instinctive responsibility towards the deviant Feskals. Supplies are dropped from orbit on a regular basis, and they have occasionally employed outsiders to travel down to the

ice world and investigate current conditions. Some environmental factor – a bacterium, a fungus, some quirk of radiation or perhaps even an Ancient device buried in the ice – has caused Florian society to fall apart on this one world, and the cause must be found. Some Barnai privately speculate that Vorn was created by the Ancients as a test for the race, that it is a puzzle that can only be solved by the Barnai doing the work themselves, instead of relying on Feskal muscle.

Yggdrasil

The ruler of Yggdrasil, the Golden Queen, still styles herself Empress of Sindal in Exile and Absolute Despot of the Stars in addition to more reasonable titles such as Supreme Goddess Incarnate and the Mother of Water. When the Sindalian Empire fell, one of the rulers fled to Yggdrasil and started the current royal line. For a long time, titles were all the rulers of Yggdrasil had – the planet is a waterless desert, barely habitable at the poles where fast-dwindling ice caps provide some water for the famished population.

In Norse myth, Yggdrasil was the world ash, a magic tree that supported an entire planet. The World Ash of Yggdrasil is a space elevator, six thousand kilometres of carbon nanotube and glassteel that rises from a mountain on the equator into orbit. The royal family

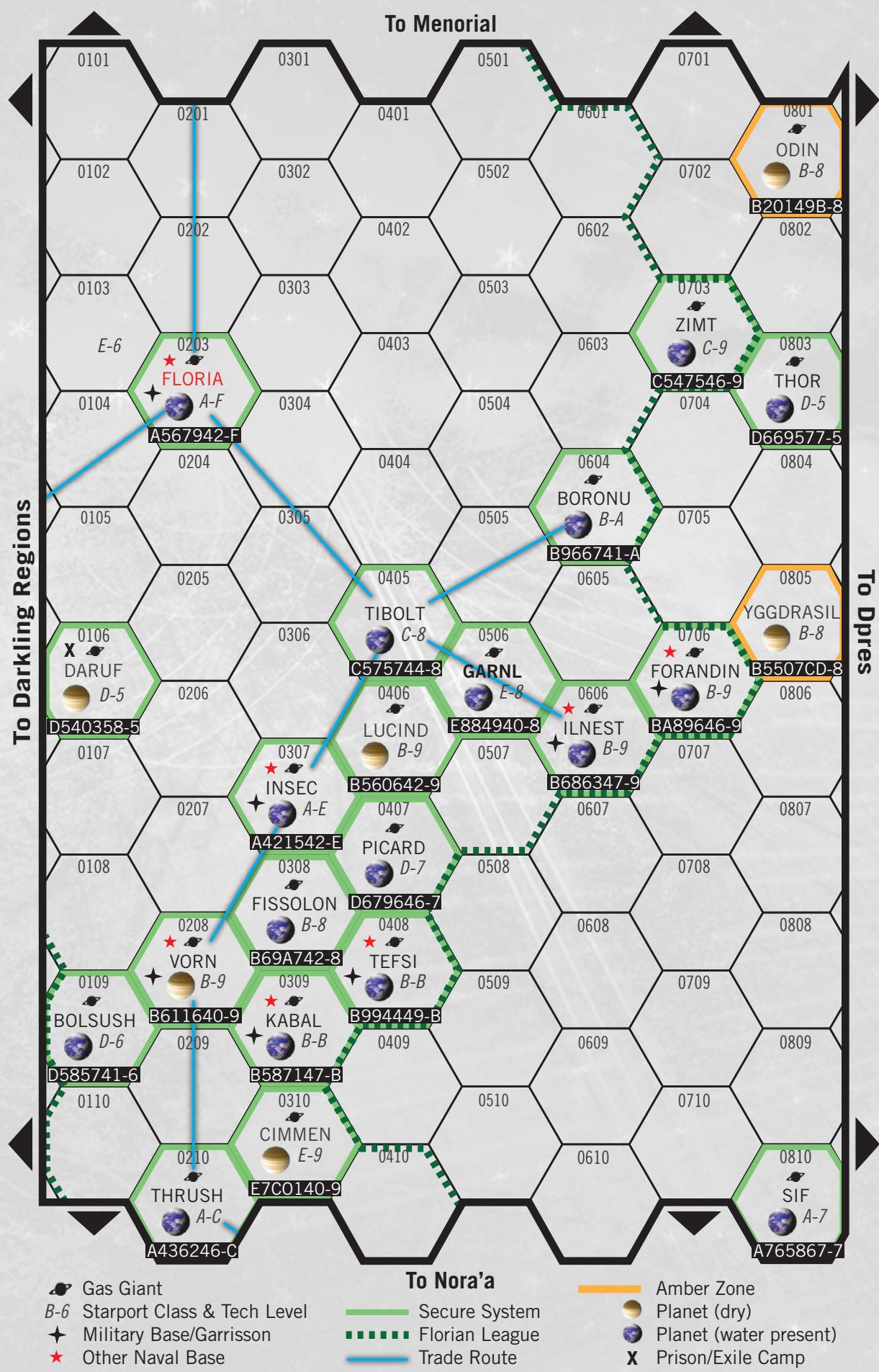
have their celestial palace on the counterweight atop the elevator. During the Sindalian Empire days, this space elevator and associated highport made Yggdrasil a trade nexus and brought in vast wealth, but few ships have visited Yggdrasil for a thousand years.

The Imperium made contact with Yggdrasil in 151, during an Imperial attempt to find a route across the Great Rift, but this contact was fleeting and unimportant. The real contact came two generations later, after the Imperium had encountered the fast-expanding Floriani. The Florians refused to join the Imperium, but were willing to entertain trade links. Yggdrasil, with its space elevator and high-capacity (if somewhat decayed) starport was the ideal place to establish a trading post.

While the population of Yggdrasil are strong supporters of this interstellar trade, the royal family of Yggdrasil has grown increasingly disenchanted with the arrangement. They receive far less tax revenue than anticipated, thanks to the use of flags of convenience by many traders passing through the Reach; furthermore, the distant Imperial court does not pay them the respect they are due – are they not cousin Emperors of like rank; why is Yggdrasil treated as an obscure border world in the middle of a moribund sector of space?



YGGDRASIL SUBSECTOR



DPRES SUBSECTOR

Dpres subsector is an anarchic wasteland. There are a few lightly populated worlds, but no multi-world confederations or interstellar governments. The coreward end of the subsector is dominated by the Trojan Bight, a starless region of space (the term Outrim Void is applied to the Bight as well as the coreward subsectors of the Trojan Reach as a whole). The Bight is a near-impassable region, devoid not only of settled worlds, but of stars. The native race of Tktk tell legends of a time when warring gods 'put out the eyes of night', and fringe scientists have speculated about an Ancient weapon capable of snuffing out a star, and that there might be frozen planets in the Bight that were lost when their star was destroyed.

There are three Imperial client states in Dpres – Gabriel and Dostoevsky both contain research centres, while Dpres itself is an outpost of the Imperium intended to defend shipping and civilise the subsector. The Gabriel facility specialises in genetic engineering, while Dostoevsky's researchers are exploring an underwater site believed to be of Ancient origin. The government of Dostevsky is divided on how to deal with the Imperium, and the world's long-term status as a client is very much in doubt.

291-540 is an automated highport built to support trade links with the Florian League (291-540's Red travel code refers to the world below, not the starport).

Subsector Worlds

Name	Location	Bases	Statistics	Trade Codes	Travel Code	Allegiance	Gas Giants
291-540	0206		EABA000-0	Ba			G
Acis	0809		B885796-A	Ag Ri			G
Caldos	0507		B530879-6	Na Ni Po De			G
Connaught	0205		D431153-9	Po Ni Lo			
Delta Theta	0410		B501610-9	Ic Na Ni Va			G
Dostoevsky	0308	R	B678673-A	Ag Ni An		Imperium Client State	G
Dpres	0105	N	B631689-A	Na Ni Po		Imperium Client State	G
Gabriel	0304		C310100-B	Ni Lo		Imperium Client State	G
Hecarda	0609		B560332-9	De Ni Lo			G
Janus	0406		C575321-7	Ni Lo			
Lacidaeus	0509		D100786-7	Na Ni Va Lt			G
Sagan	0607		C796453-8	Ag Ni			G
Solaria	0104		B665734-8	Ag			G
Thalassa	0803		B88A889-8	Wa Ri			G
Tktk	0808		D542640-6	Po Ni			G
Tlazolteotl	0604		D5409CD-7	In Po De Hi	A		G
Torrance	0409		E560256-4	De Ni Lo Lt		Na	G
Tyr	0608		A551557-B	Ni Po		Na	G

The world of Tktk is shared between human colonists and a native non-human species, also called the Tktk. These creatures resemble Chirpers and may be a genetically engineered variant of that race. The Tktk are unlikely to have evolved on this small worldlet, but human scientists have so far failed to find the Tktk's world of origin. The Imperial Scout Service is currently considering mounting an expedition to Tktk and declaring the world a Red zone to safeguard the primitives' culture.

Outside these small Imperial enclaves, the rest of the sector is in a state of near-chaos. The chain of worlds from Janus to Acis – officially the Sindalian Main, but also known as the Dustbelt - has been the site of hundreds of minor wars over the last few centuries. These conflicts began when expansionists took hold of Tyr and invaded neighbouring worlds. At the height of their power, the Tyrian Lordships held the entirety of the Dustbelt, as well as Dpres, Connaught and Solaria, but then exiles from Acis brought in Aslan mercenaries from the Glorious Empire. The Tyrian Lordships ended in a bloodbath, but the ensuing wars continue to this day.

Janus and Sagan in particular have suffered horribly from these conflicts; Janus was nearly depopulated by raiders from Tyr. Currently, Tyr and Acis are the two dominant worlds among these warring states, although the balance of power is being maintained by agents from Thalassa, covertly supporting one side or the other.

Dpres

Dpres is the oldest inhabited world in the subsector, and was the capital during the fading days of the Second Imperium and Sindalian Empire. Since those days, Dpres has suffered terribly. The planet slipped into a minor ice age, sending glaciers rolling down over the once-fertile southern plains and freezing the harbours. The elected government collapsed, taking the electoral system with it, leaving the planet under the control of an unelected bureaucracy dedicated to perpetuating the status quo. Without an effective government, many of Dpres' naval admirals fled the world. Torrance, Delta Thega and Caldos were all settled by unofficial expeditions from Dpres.

Through it all, the people of Dpres never lost their pride, and tried to maintain their reputation as a bastion of civilisation and culture amid chaos. It was especially humiliating, therefore, when Dpres was conquered by invaders from Tyr. The Tyrians held Dpres for over two centuries, during the period known as the Tyrian Lordships. During this time, many of the monuments and art of Dpres, including artefacts from Terra, were stolen and brought back to Tyr, where they decorate the

palace of the Tyrant of Tyr to this day. The occupation was ended when Acis deployed Aslan mercenaries against the Tyrians, forcing Tyr to pull its ships back from Dpres to defend worlds closer to home.

Fearing another occupation by Tyr, Acis or even the Glorious Empire, the Dpres Continuity Government sought allies, and eventually negotiated client state status with the Imperium via Gazulin subsector. The coming of the Imperium and establishment of a small naval base at Dpres was welcomed, and seemed to herald a rebirth of Dpres' supremacy over the rest of the subsector. So far, though, Imperial policy has centred around protecting trade routes with the Floriani and keeping the Glorious Empire and other Aslan clans in check, not building a new confederacy ruled from Dpres.

Thalassa

The oceans of Thalassa cover the entire planet – the only dry land is an artificial island bearing the planet's spaceport, and a few tiny islands too small to support any sort of civilisation. The Thalassan cities are built on huge floating platforms of woven reeds, some of which are more than twenty kilometres across and support hundreds of thousands of citizens. Thalassan technology is almost entirely organic – the waterworld is rich in life, and the Thalassans have learned to use the alien biosphere to support their agriculture and industry.

One of the chief Thalassan industries is snail farming. The sea-snails of Thalassa have been bred for size and strength, and grow up to six metres in length. Their shells are water-tight and strong as light steel, and the Thalassans have developed organic compounds allowing them to cut and bond the shell material much as other cultures cut or weld metal. Various forms of seaweed are cultivated for use as plastics, clothing, food or medicine. There are a few resources the Thalassans cannot obtain from their watery world – they mine the asteroids and moons for vital metals, and trade with other worlds. One key technology the Thalassans obtained from the world of Neumann was a genetic modification allowing humans to breathe underwater. The amphibious families of Thalassa comprise a special caste, respected but also feared by their fellows.

The Thalassan government is made up of a series of councils, each overseeing a particular aspect of Thalassan society. Membership on a council is given to those best suited to it – a Thalassan may apply for membership when an opening arises, and is given a gruelling series of exams and tests. Only the best and most suited serve on the councils, and even being accepted for testing is a huge honour.

The most important is the Council of Cycles – as the cities of Thalassa drift on currents at different speeds and in different directions, correctly calculating where each city will be and how it should interact with its neighbours is vital. A city in the doldrums might run low on food, so the Council of Cycles will arrange for food to be transferred along a chain of cities to one which will soon drift near the stranded community. The Council of Cycles effectively specialises in using weather and the mechanics of currents to optimise the planetary economy.

Their experience of anticipating and co-ordinating events has given the Council of Cycles a talent for manipulation and subterfuge that even a Hiver would envy. Thalassa will never be a military power in this war-torn subsector, but Thalassan envoys and trade representatives have the ear of every ruler from Dpres to Acis.

Tlazolteotl

This world was named Burgundy when initially colonised. Most of the colonists were Terrans from various European and Asian countries, as well as humans from second-generation worlds like Mars or the Centauri colonies. There were also a few special-interest groups of a few hundred people, each who bought space on the colony ships – fringe religions fleeing persecution, obscure subcultures looking for space to grow, explorers and adventurers, and other splinter factions who thought a new life out on the frontier was preferable to life back in the Rule of Man.

One of these groups was an almost-forgotten band of a few dozen settlers originally from Central America on Terra, who were devotees of the vanished Aztec culture. They intended to build a community modelled on the Aztecs in the jungles of Burgundy, and vanished into the thickly forested wilderness of the western continent.

The colony thrived for hundreds of years, and was part of the Sindalian Empire until its fall. Then, around fifteen hundred years ago, Burgundy was hit by a double catastrophe. Pro- and anti-Sindalian factions within the Burgundy government went to war, and the war quickly went nuclear. Simultaneously, the Burgundy star entered a flare period, scrambling computer systems and causing massive desertification. The planet collapsed into anarchy, and the people were open to any authority who could bring order and peace, no matter how strange or cruel.

From out of the jungle came the descendants of the neo-Aztecs. Their population had grown hugely, and they

were much more adept at using low-technology weapons than the other factions. Within a generation, they were able to pacify the war-torn world and establish a new order on Burgundy, then renamed Tlazolteotl.

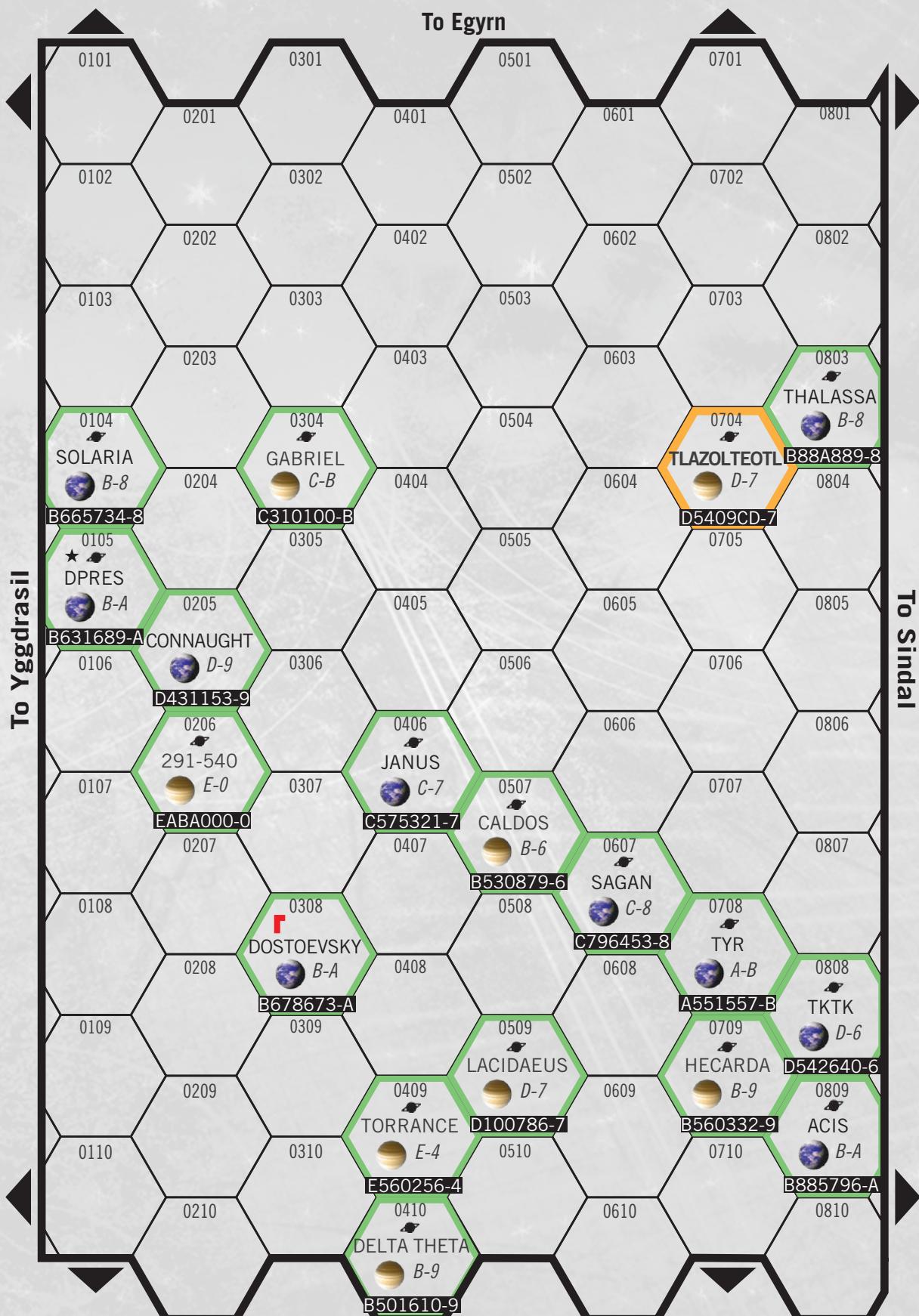
Today, Tlazolteotl is a major exporter of low-technology industrial goods to all the worlds of the Sindalian Main. Aztec-inspired culture and art is everywhere – the factories that rise out of the desert sands are more like temples than industrial facilities, stepped pyramids decorated with coiling dragons and leering warriors. Human sacrifice is practised extensively, and the government is in the hands of the priest caste. The average citizen of Tlazolteotl knows nothing about the larger galaxy (history books and educational texts were purged generations ago), and believes the universe is full of space devils and demons who the priests ward off with their magic. Visitors to Tlazolteotl are advised to land only at the starport/temple – landing elsewhere on the planet is likely to result in bloody murder at the hands of an ignorant mob.

Torrance

Two hundred years, Torrance's star entered a period of intense flare activity. Plumes of flame licked out, incinerating the closest planets and searing the world of Torrance. The oceans boiled – not quite literally, but rising temperatures and radiation wiped out most life forms, including a species of algae native to Torrance. The rotting remains of the algae poisoned the seas, leaving the planet's water undrinkable without extensive processing. Electromagnetic interference ruined the planet's technological base, destroying computers and plunging it back into a pre-industrial state.

Other worlds have investigated Torrance, and found no survivors. According to most Travellers, Torrance is a dead world (and is noted on many charts as Peroi, a Sindalian word meaning lost).

Into this chaos came a man now known as Righteous John, who rallied the survivors and led them from the roaring fury of the sun into underground shelters. John is now the absolute ruler of Torrance as he fights to keep as many people alive as possible. He has a still-working spacecraft, an old scout ship from Dpres, and plans to launch it to seek out help from other worlds. The solar activity is still so intense that the chances of a ship making it to the hundred-diameter jump limit without suffering severe damage to its sensors are slim, but without aid from offworld, Righteous John and his followers will be dead within a year.



Gas Giant

B-6 Starport Class & Tech Level

★ Imperial Naval Base

To Goertzel

Secure System

R Research Station

Amber Zone

Planet

Planet (water present)

SINDAL SUBSECTOR

The upper right corner of Sindal is held by the Imperium, with a naval base at Realgar and trade routes out to Tobia subsector. That section of the subsector is comparatively peaceful, in contrast to the rest of Sindal.

The name comes from the Sindalian Empire, which ruled this sector and those around it for a thousand years during the Long Night. The Sindilians' authority was enforced with the fusion gun and the atomic bomb, and it was by the gun, the bomb and the engineered germ that they were destroyed. Remnants of the Empire can be found across the subsector – an automated beacon here, an ancient tradition there, a once-magnificent starport or civic building on a dying world there – but the Sindilians have been gone for centuries. The former Empire's seat was at Noricum, but that world was blasted back into the dark ages and has yet to recover. The Sindalian Empire haunts this subsector like a spectre.

The Sindalian Main (or Dustbelt) continues from Dpres subsector into Sindal, terminating at old Noricum. Few

of the worlds along the main are worth conquering, although raiders from Tyr, Acis or the Glorious Empire are not an uncommon sight in those systems. Rimward, a traveller will encounter the Oghman Clans, a barbaric culture who have reduced Marduk and Borite to pre-spaceflight technology levels through constant raiding, theft of equipment and enslavement of scientists and scholars. On Borite, it is forbidden to write down anything, lest the Oghman Clans decide you are a scholar and steal you away. On Marduk, each island has its own language and there is a cultural taboo against learning the tongue of your neighbours.

The Imperial outpost in this sector is administered from Tobia. A small amount of trade flows through Sindal subsector – traders heading for Aslan space may take a longer route instead of the well-trafficked path across the Borderlands, or they can take the jump-2 route to Floria along the Sindalian main. Most ships avoid the subsector if they have any sense. Tlaiowaha subsector lies just over the border, and when the Aslan

Subsector Worlds

Name	Location	Bases	Statistics	Trade Codes	Travel Code	Allegiance	Gas Giants
Ace	0109		E7A0889-9	De Lt	A		
Albe	0601		A540A98-E	De Hi In Po Ht		Imperium	G
Borite	0609		E655796-4	Ag Lt			G
Chalchiutlicu	0704		B76A787-7	Ri Wa			G
Cordillon	0801		C431210-B	Po Ni Lo Ht		Imperium	G
Dolberg	0503		BAF889D-B	Fl	A		
Homestead	0105		D561250-6	Ni wDe Lo			G
Marduk	0510		C577436-5	Ni Lt			G
Noricum	0408		D8867BB-1	Ag Lt	A		G
Number One	0208		C9D6778-9	Fl			G
Oghma	0410		B534754-9	Ic			G
Palindrome	0606		B433334-B	Po Ni Lo			G
Realgar	0603		B540444-A	De Ni Po		Imperium	G
Salif	0206		A6236A6-A	Po Na Ni			G
Thebus	0309		B534320-7	Po Ni Lo			G
Theev	0506	N	A434500-F	Na Ni Ht	A		G
Vume	0505		B100477-C	Ni Va An			G

move coreward again, they will gobble up the warring worlds of this sector in a single bloody feast until they hit the Imperial border.

Ace

According to local tradition, the name of this world stems from an old scout report, describing it as an 'Argon-CO₂ Environment'. The atmosphere is indeed rich in argon, and is unbreathable by humans. Storms or cosmic rays excite the gas, resulting in fabulous multi-coloured light shows that outshine the sun in their brilliance and beauty. The Sages of Ace interpret these celestial portents, and it is said (in Sindal subsector, anyway) that their prophesies are infallible.

Most of the people of Ace, though, never see the heavenly glories of their world. The atmosphere is unbreathable, so the population live in huge habitation domes built centuries ago. The only trade between domes is by tunnel or by the few nomads who possess sealed vehicles. Most of these domes are in a poor state of repair, but natural decay is very much a minor problem compared to the threat of raiders from Tyr. Pirates can hold whole cities to hostage with a single missile. Pay up, or the dome gets it and you'll be breathing argon.

The ruler of Ace is not a hereditary position – instead, the king is chosen by the sages. The last king was killed when Marga Dome was destroyed by Tyrian raiders. The Sages have declared that the next king will be an offworlder, and that blessed king will deliver Ace from the threat of raiders.

Albe

This desert world was originally settled to exploit significant lanthanum deposits. During the Sindalian Empire, Albe was second only to Noricum in terms of power, and was its superior in industrial production and financial sway. The Dukes of Albe could buy and sell the Emperors of Sindal, who were insultingly called the 'Dogs of Albe' by some (a reference to the Dukes' proclivity to bring down the wrath of the Empire on anyone who crossed them). With more than two-thirds of the Empire's wealth pouring through Albe's coffers, the planet underwent a disastrous population boom. A dry world that could at most support a few million people safely overshot its carrying capacity. At its peak, the population of Albe was almost one hundred billion.

The greatest disaster to strike Albe was the last duke, known to history as Gorluun the Undying. He reigned from before the start of the last civil war to nearly ten years after its end, a reign of more than eighty years. With the vast power and wealth of Albe, Gorluun might have been able to stave off the collapse of the Sindalian

Empire, or at least ensure that Albe became the new capital when Noricum fell. Instead, Gorluun vacillated, refusing to commit to any course of action. When the Empire ended, it took with it the trade routes that kept Albe's teeming billions fed and watered.

'Gorluun's Feast', the ten-year period following the fall of Noricum, took the lives of more than fifty billion people. Gorluun himself was devoured by one of the cannibal bands that sacked Albe's capital city. Generations of civil war followed, as Gorluun's heirs fought over the scraps of power that remained. Eventually, the bureaucracy rose up and put an end to the war. The last heir, Gorluun III, was placed in a stasis field for legal reasons. He is unfrozen once a year for a few minutes, just long enough to sign various documents authorising the bureaucracy to rule in his name for another year.

The reconstruction of Albe took centuries. Through a series of austerity measures, the bureaucrats were able to end the famine while still having negative population growth. They opened up relations with the Imperium, exchanging lanthanum and loyalty for help in rebuilding their space fleet and help in terraforming the nearby Cordillion system. Cordillion, when it is habitable, will be capable of supporting billions of people, relieving some of Albe's crippling population pressure. Hundreds of colony ships equipped with cheap one-shot jump drives wait in orbit for the flood of colonists; thousands more are still under construction. The Imperium expects Albe to be a stabilising influence upon the subsector – exactly what it should have been centuries ago, if Gorluun had acted. His heir was ceremonially unfrozen to swear allegiance to the Emperor a few years ago; his reaction was described as 'somewhat confused' by observers.

Borite

Some systems were named by their inhabitants, or to commemorate the circumstances of their discovery. Others were named after legends or heroes or myths.

Borite was named for the high concentration of boron-heavy compounds in its surface. That is the most interesting thing about this system. From orbit, it looks like a yellow-brown stain of a planet, and it does not even live up to this first impression. The planet is inhabited by several million unfortunate colonists who mine the borite or try to scrape a living out of the soil; it is ruled by the Borite Continuity Authority, a decaying remnant of the old Drinaxian bureaucracy. The BCA control all trade and travel on and off-world – not that many people come here. The planet's Class E starport sees only a handful of ships every year, mostly traders trying to dodge pirate attacks on the Florian route.



One-shot Jump Drives

A product of desperate shipyards, jump drives can be constructed to be used just once. With many corners cut in both design and manufacture, it is a brave Traveller who entrusts their voyage and life to these drives, but they provide very cheap access to the stars. Though they are coined 'one-shot' jump drives, the truly freckles can push their operation into additional jumps.

A one-shot jump drive is identical to those listed on page 14 of *High Guard*, with the following changes.

- Total tonnage consumed is reduced by 20% (the minimum of 10 tons still applies)
- Cost is reduced by 75%

Using a one-shot jump drive imposes DM-2 to Engineer (J-drive) checks. If the jump drive is used a second time, this increases to DM-4, and for a third time it increases to DM-8. No one will survive a fourth jump with these drives.



Like Marduk, Borite is often attacked by the Oghma Clans, who target scientists and scholars. Writing is therefore forbidden on Borite except for the few heavily guarded members of the BCA.

Chalchitlicu

Chalchitlicu's millions dwell in a small number of island-cities. They have added to these structures over the centuries since the planet was first settled, and they are now baroque labyrinths of tenements and plumbing, hundreds of stories huge and powered by the seething tides. Population control dominates society here, as further expansion of the cities is impossible. Culture is extremely stratified (literally – the further away one is from the water, the higher one's social standing), and contact with space travellers is limited to maintain the city council's influence over the people.

Chalchitlicu exports radioactives and other minerals dredged from the sea bed.

Marduk

This small, Earth-like world has no surviving cities outside the starport shanty-town. The civilisation on Marduk has collapsed due to repeated raids from Oghma and other worlds. The planet's population has broken into several dozen clans, each of which fears all outsiders. The clans all have their own languages and wildly divergent cultures. The starport is operated by GeDeCo and is on an artificial island far away from any of the native-held archipelagos.

Noricum

Land on Noricum today, and your spacecraft will scare the sheep. The planet is entirely agrarian, and the people live in wooden huts. In the settled regions, you have to look hard for signs of Noricum's imperial past. There are clues – a wall built from chunks of ferroceramic instead of stone, an animal pen using strands of plastic cabling, a woman's necklace made from chips of computer memory crystal – but in the settled areas, the people have deliberately tried to bury the past.

Land in the danger zones, in the ruined cities, and you will scare only the ghosts. Of course, open your airlock without a vacc suit, and you'll be scared for the thirty seconds or so before the viruses infect you. After that, you have a few days of agonising pain before an even more painful death. Over thirty percent of Noricum is considered a death zone, where no living thing dare go. Most of the great structures of the Sindalian Empire were destroyed in the wars that ended it – there are now only radioactive craters where the Imperial Palace and the Ministry of Justice once stood. There are rumours that the treasury of the empire was moved in the final days before the end, and buried somewhere in the catacombs beneath the capital city. No would-be grave robber has ever returned – there are other dangers than viruses in the ruins, such as mutated animals and the last-ditch security systems left by the Sindilians.

The people of Noricum have learned to survive on their blighted world. They eat no meat, as meat is likely to contain toxins. They consume high doses of certain bitter herbs, and boil all the water they drink. When a man passes the age of forty, he is sent out into the blighted zones to build a firebreak and keep the ashen barriers between the farm and the deadly ruins intact. None survive this ritual, but a good man endures for a tenday or more before dying on the far side of the ash fields.

The Emperor of Noricum dwells in a small hut, and tends a vegetable garden. His ancestors once ruled a hundred worlds with an iron fist, and a hundred miles from his garden there is a statue a hundred metres tall that bears his family features, the face permanently frozen into a cruel sneer. The Emperor of Noricum, though, has a simple smile on his face as he tends his turnips.

Number One

Settled as an undersea mining colony and prison planet by the Sindilians, Number One should not have survived the fall of the empire. That it not only survived but flourished is testament both to the stubborn nature of humanity, and to the fact that it's hard to leave your home hellhole without jump technology.

The atmosphere of Number One is a toxic goop of insidious gases, with a high concentration of chlorine and cyanide compounds. The population live in settlements on the sea floor, and never emerge from beneath the waves. To live on Number One is to exist in a realm of tunnels, corridors, pumping stations and submarines. The planet's starport is located on a tall mountain, above the worst of the atmospheric poisons.

Oghma

Oghma is an iceworld, but retains enough of an industrial base to build jump-capable starships. The rulers of Oghma intend to conquer their neighbouring worlds along the Dustbelt by weakening their industrial and technological bases. Over the course of generations, the Oghman raiders have targeted scientists, teachers, engineers and craftsmen in their slaver raids. The Oghmans are savage xenophobes ruled by tribal warrior-kings, where a warrior's worth is determined by how many jump-capable ships he 'rides' and how many soldiers he commands. Oghman Raiders are a common threat in Sindal subsector; they are despised by all civilised worlds.

The starport is run by GeDeCo, and is comparatively safe – the Raiders know better than to attack interstellar shipping, and instead prey on weak backworlds.

Palindrome

Palindrome's only settlement is the domed town of Astrogo, and everyone on Astrogo works for Lady Yemar.

She is a former pirate who set up this little colony with her ill-gotten gains. Palindrome is a clearing house for stolen goods and a waystation for travellers. Yemar uses the profits to pay for her astoundingly expensive life-support needs; she was severely wounded in a raid and exposed to an experimental bioweapon. All of her organs except her brain have been replaced multiple times, and even her brain requires constant maintenance and augmentation. She travels to Theev several times a year for medical treatments.

Salif

Salif is a rocky planetoid, notably only for being tidally locked so that the same side always faces the system's primary. It barely sustains the eight million people who live in the narrow twilight zone between the freezing nightside and the sunside desert. The ruler of Salif is a former holostar performer, Tisnee Zazzle who inspired a rebellion against the old planetary government; now, she maintains her control over the population through carefully choreographed songs and speeches, promising them prosperity and more living space. Zazzle maintains her youth and beauty through expensive anagathics.

Thebus

Like Noricum, Thebus was virtually annihilated in the civil war that brought the Empire of Sindal crashing down. Today, the planet is a wilderness, home to only a few hundred settlers, mostly trappers, prospectors and hunters.



In recent years, Imperial cruises heading for the Florian League have taken to stopping at Thebus. Hunting is a passion for many Imperials, and Thebus is home to a species called the Thebun Lion (technically, a mutant produced by the biological weapons used in the war). A lion pelt is one of the must-have souvenirs from a Grand Tour of the Trojan Reach, along with an Ancient relic from Floria or a Tlazolteotl Death Mask (the increasing popularity of hunting Thebun Lions tracks perfectly with increasing hostility towards the Aslan Hierate).

Theev

Most believe Theev to be a myth. The fabled thieves' port, the pirate's refuge where lawlessness is king and the Imperium's police cutters and patrols cannot reach – some tales place it in District 268, others in the middle of the Great Reft, others in Vagr space. In truth, Theev is quite real, and just as lawless and dangerous as the stories claim.

The planet is an unremarkable dustball, similar to Mars on a good day. The main city, Blacksand City, is built on top of a series of plateaus linked by sealed walkways. Ships are landed out of sight in the chasms between the plateaus; bars and other entertainments are built into the sides of these chasms. Anything and everything is for sale in Theev – the city's main business is supplying raiders with weaponry and fencing stolen goods, especially cargoes stolen from traders heading for the Florian League or the Aslan Hierate. Theev's shipyards are infamous, producing advanced models of corsair and equipping pirate vessels with cutting-edge military-grade weapons.

The city is lawless, but the pirate lords who rule it punish those who use excessive violence. Stab some

fool in a bar, and the body can be dumped down the chasm and forgotten about, but bring anything heavier than a laser pistol to a fight, and you'll be down that chasm with your throat cut faster than you can say 'my, the pirate lords of Blacksand City certainly have efficient assassins working for them'.

Theev's survival is something of a mystery. It is only three parsecs away from the military base at Realgar, easily within range of patrols. Any number of Aslan warriors has sworn to wipe out that den of thieves and vipers, and while most of these are idle boasts, an aggressive Aslan could make it across the sector and strike at Theev. Then, too, there is the mystery of how Theev started, and how it is always well stocked with the latest weapons and ship parts. Someone is behind Theev, someone who is an enemy of peace and civilisation in the Trojan Reach.

Vume

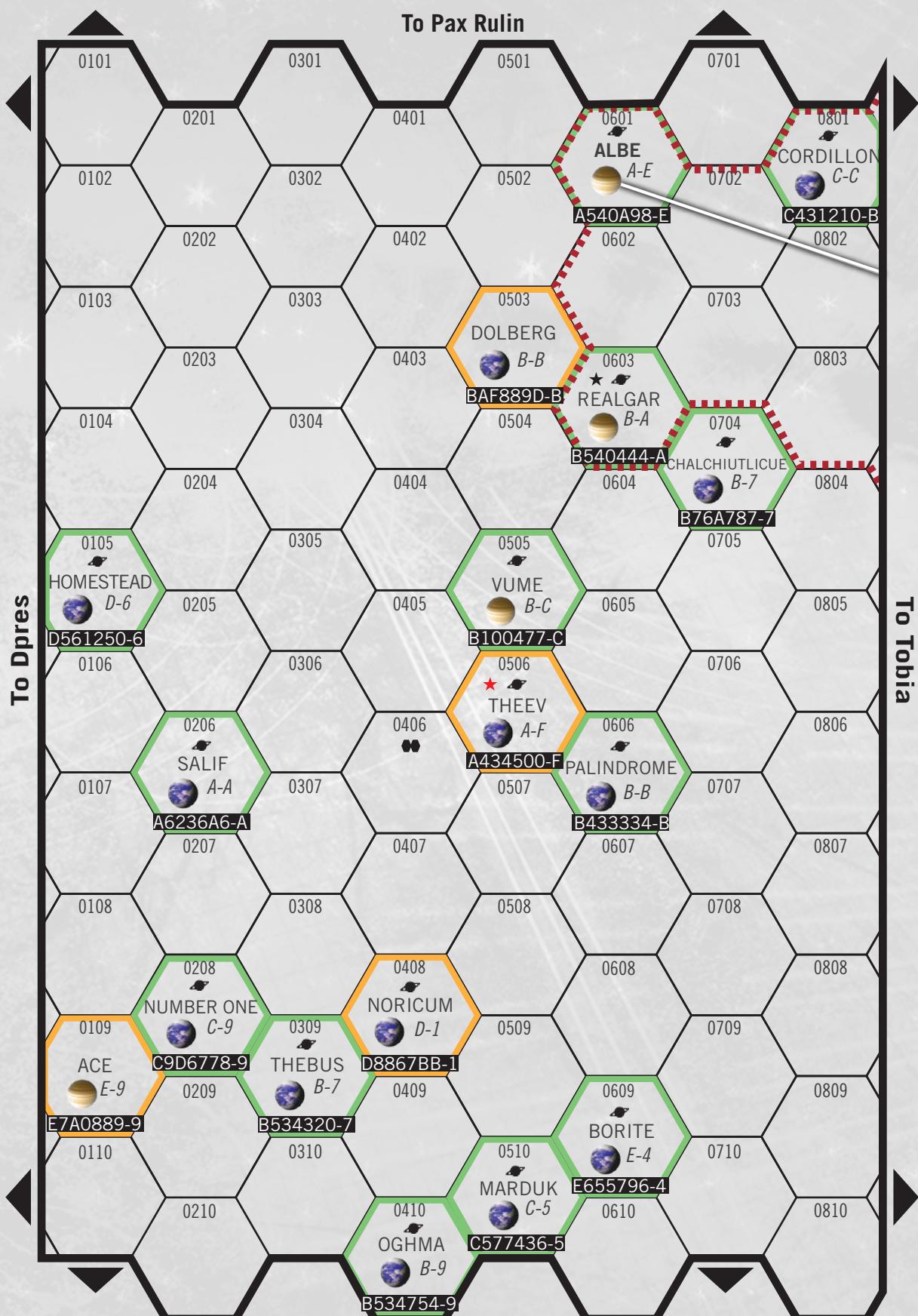
Vume Station is a huge modular habitat, built by an unknown alien civilisation many thousands of years ago. Only a tiny fraction of the structure is inhabited by human scavengers and scrap merchants. The station was originally discovered and exploited by travellers from the Imperium, but they succumbed to a bacterial infection and many of them went insane. Today, the station is divided between four different factions, each of whom has a different strain of the alien sickness. Each strain has different effects on human thought processes, so the four factions are biologically incapable of understanding each other – or uninfected outsiders.

THEBUN LION

ANIMAL	HITS	SPEED
Thebun Lion	30	16 m
SKILLS	Athletics (endurance) 1, Melee (unarmed) 2, Recon 2, Survival 2	
ATTACKS	Jaw (3D)	
TRAITS	Camouflaged, Heightened Senses, IR Vision	
BEHAVIOUR	Hunter, Killer	



SINDAL SUBSECTOR



• Gas Giant
 B-6 Starport Class & Tech Level
 ♦ Fuel Dump
 ★ Imperial Naval Base
 ★ Other Naval Base

■ Secure System
 ■ Imperial Border
 — X-Boat Route

■ Amber Zone
 ■ Planet (dry)
 ■ Planet (water present)

TOBIA SUBSECTOR

As far as the Imperium is concerned, Tobia is the Trojan Reach; Tobia is the ducal seat and holds the sector fleet. The main trade route between the Imperium and the Ya'soisthea clans of the Hierate runs through Tobia, and the sector has a considerable proportion of high-technology, high-industry worlds. It is also a highly cosmopolitan subsector, with a very large number of non-human citizens. Ayldem is a Droyne-controlled world, while more than 80% of the Hradus population are naturalised Aslan. Walk through the cities of Tobia, New Moscow or Pryme, and you will see a half-dozen sentient species on a single street. Unlike Pax Rulin, which perceives itself to be in a constant state of siege, Tobia welcomes traders and visitors from outside the Imperium.

The Duke of Tobia is also Sector Duke, and as such has vast influence over the Trojan Reach. In fact, the sector is so isolated from the rest of the Imperium that the Duke of Tobia effectively runs the sector without any advice or guidance from Capital. Tobia subsector nobility are all related, one way or the other, to the ducal family.

The main communication route back to the Imperium runs through Usher subsector in Reft Sector, not through the Spinward Marches. Hundreds of X-boats and naval vessels travel this route every year, and two subsectors – Tobia and Gazulin – rely on its security. In recent years, the route has been disrupted several times. First, the Droyne world of Ayldem closed its starport to visitors for unknown reasons, forcing the Imperium to rapidly construct a new Class-A starport on the unfortunately named Our Planet (the official name of this world is Astrolabe, but only clerks in the Scout service use it; the builders of the starport claimed the world as their own and now live there). The Droyne reopened traffic four years later, by which time a revolution on Simok destroyed the former Class-A starport there, along with two megafreighters. There have also been numerous incidents of piracy and smuggling along the route, forcing Tobia to divert more ships to patrolling the Berg cluster instead of the border worlds.

The main trade route with the Hierate runs from Pandora and Wildeman to the aptly-named Fist, and then to Imisaa, the trader's world. From there, trade diffuses to other Imperial worlds; half the worlds around Imisaa specialise in repackaging Aslan goods for sale in the Imperium, while the others specialise in stealing from the first half.

Boulder

Boulder was once a mining belt like Wildeman, but is now worked out. The population numbers in the tens of millions, clustered into a few large hollowed-out asteroid cities. While Boulder has a Class-B starport, it is unused as the natives dislike contact with the outside universe. This prejudice is cultural, the result of several epidemics brought by visitors that flourished in the hothouse conditions.

Empire

There is little on this world except the naval base and the settlement that supports it. There are mothballed vessels in orbit of Empire's third moon, officially designated the Trojan Reserve.

The world is a pleasant and fertile one, though, with wide rolling oceans and archipelagos of tropical islands. The administrators of Empire base are actively seeking colonists to settle on this world, and retired naval crews are often offered fiefdoms here. This plan serves multiple purposes – it secures the world, gives extra resources to the base, and retired naval officers can crew the mothballed ships in the event of invasion. It has also had an inadvertent consequence – there is a growing cabal of ex-naval officers on Empire, a circle of veteran officers concerned with the threat posed by the Aslan and chaos of the Trojan Reach. This group of officers, each of whom has a private island and fiefdom on Empire, along with a sizeable pension, have begun to plot measures to ensure the security of Tobia and the Imperium.

Exocet

Lying on the fringes of Imperial space, Exocet is prone to high levels of volcanism. Volcanic emissions have tainted the atmosphere, preventing large-scale colonisation, but have also created extremely fertile soil conditions. The world's small population mainly harvest exotic fungi for export.

Fist

This minor world is the first one encountered by a vessel travelling into Imperial space along the main trade route from the Hierate. Fist itself is an unremarkable world with a comparatively low population, and is best known for asteroids moved into position by an eccentric belter several centuries ago. These six nickel-iron asteroids have been sculpted and lasered, and are

Subsector Worlds

Name	Location	Bases	Statistics	Trade Codes	Travel Code	Allegiance	Gas Giants
971-852	0404		E78A000-0	Ba	A	Imperium	G
Ardasii	0405	N	B550684-9	Ni De Po		Imperium	
Attee	0706		C7529AE-5	Po Hi	A	Imperium	G
Ayldem	0603	N	A540784-C	Po De	A	Imperium	G
Batav	0809		B5A8764-A	Fl An		Imperium	
Berg	0802	N	A675542-B	Ag Ni		Imperium	
Boulder	0107		B100758-9	Va Na		Imperium	
Darchona	0502		B59A742-A	Wa		Imperium	G
Dimorus	0601		D300755-7	Na Va		Imperium	
Empire	0301	N	B679334-C	Ni Lo		Imperium	G
Eshadi	0707		B431358-E	Ni Po Lo		Imperium	G
Exocet	0110		A574126-8	Ni Lo			G
Fist	0508		B789430-C	Ni		Imperium	G
Gor	0204		C868677-3	Ag Ni Ri		Imperium	
Hexx	0305	N	B78A577-D	Ni Wa		Imperium	G
Hradus	0304	S	B54699B-7	In Hi	A	Imperium	G
Iligan	0309		C567787-8	Ag Ri			G
Imisaa	0506	N	B520867-7	Na Po De		Imperium	G
Intelia	0202		C574653-6	Ag Ni		Imperium	G
Kedus	0803		D867400-3	Ni		Imperium	G
Khaliki	0701		D31156B-9	Ic Ni		Imperium	G
Nekrino	0105	N	A788400-C	Ni		Imperium	G
New	0606	S	D66668A-5	Ri Ni Ag		Imperium	G
New Moscow	0709		B76779A-7	Ag Ri		Imperium	
Our Planet	0602		B687100-A	Ni Lo		Imperium	G
Pandora	0410		B878313-B	Ni Lo			G
Pichot	0605		E546330-5	Ni Lo		Imperium	G
Pryme	0103		B58668B-9	Ag Ni Ri		Imperium	G
Sabruse	0505	R	EAC8343-9	Fl Lo Ni		Imperium	
Saurus	0403		A550543-B	De Ni Po		Imperium	G
Scaladon	0206		AAD98DH-A	Fl	A	Imperium	
Simok	0703		D9A08CC-8	De	A	Imperium	G
Tobia	0805	N	A544A55-F	In Hi		Imperium	G
Wildeman	0409		B431674-C	Ic Na Ni Va			G

now monuments to Imperial power. A ship heading to refuel at Fistport will pass a sixty-kilometre-wide mural showing the crowning of the first emperor, or the launch of the first jump-capable vessel from Vland. A seventh asteroid was sculpted, showing several notable human victories including the Peace of Fthair, but was moved into orbit of another world of the system following complaints by Aslan envoys.

Hradus

The history of this world begins many centuries ago and hundreds of parsecs away, in the Uwaralyekose (Cultural Purge) of the Hierate. The Esuaheakhahryoyulr clan were part of the tsekho or Progressive faction; the clan had managed to wean their males away from the obsessive pursuit of territory, and instead social standing within the Esuaheakhahryoyulr was based on contribution to the clan's fortunes (it was impossible to completely erase the Aslan territorial urge, so the clan granted fiefs to those who accomplished glorious deeds, not necessarily military ones). When the culture wars turned against the tsekho, the Esuaheakhahryoyulr fled the Hierate (breeding the conqueror's instinct out of your warrior population tends to diminish your clan's fighting capability). They crossed the Great Rift and attempted to settle in the Ya'soithea, but were repeatedly attacked by the Glorious Empire, forcing them to continue onwards.

Eventually, bloodied and broken, the suaheakhahryoyulr reached Hradus. There was a small human population here already, willing to negotiate with the Aslan and allowing them to settle the southern continent. Less than a century later, Hradus joined the Imperium.

As Hradus is the world with the highest percentage population of Aslan in the Imperium, several restrictions were placed on its membership for 'security reasons' – there was considerable concern that the whole Esuaheakhahryoyulr clan was a trojan horse and would launch an attack against the Imperium once settled. Therefore, Hradus' technology is capped at TL7, even though the Esuaheakhahryoyulr have the capacity to produce up to TL12 goods. Similarly, all Esuaheakhahryoyulr vessels must be registered at Tobia, and a portion of the clan's military forces are always seconded to the sector fleet.

These restrictions have been in force for almost four hundred years, and many citizens feel the Esuaheakhahryoyulr have proved themselves repeatedly. Other worlds with a high non-human population are not so restricted, and it was only the paranoia of the Imperium in that era that required the Treaty of Hradus. Esuaheakhahryoyulr Aslan have served both as warriors and spies for the Imperium, and their ability to produce Aslan ships has been of great use in the past.

lilgan

lilgan's own biosphere was largely supplanted by imported species, and despite conservations efforts in recent years many creatures and plant native only to lilgan are now extinct. Those that have survived have adapted to a new environment, creating a mix of the hardest indigenous and introduced species.

Imisaa

Called the Trader's World, Imisaa's value comes purely from its location on the main trade route to Aslan space. Convoys or megafreighters returning from the Hierate arrive here and land at the Imisaa's sprawling starport, where they are met by huge crowds of traders, speculators and buyers, howling for rare Aslan goods and exotic merchandise. The crossing to Aslan space is a hazardous one, and Imisaa is the last 'safe' stop before leaving the Imperium.

There is nothing outside the starport, apart from a few hermits and smuggler caches. There is no planetary government on Imisaa – the starport administrator is the de facto ruler of the planet.

The Imisaa naval base is a prestigious assignment, one traditionally given to the heir to the Duke of Tobia or another favoured noble. In addition to providing escorts for trade convoys leaving for the Hierate, Imisaa maintains a squadron of jump-6 couriers on standby at all times, ready to jump for Tobia and alert the duke in the event of an attack from the wilderness. Another squadron is maintained in readiness at Nekrino, and a third is scheduled for deployment by 1110. These three squadrons are called the Border Watch, and were installed by a particularly paranoid duke who was convinced that Aslan ships were lurking just over the frontier.

Pandora

Another GeDeCo-sponsored colony, Pandora is a pleasant garden world. A previous colony here vanished during the Long Night, likely due to solar flare activity. The system's primary is a particular active and angry one, prone to dangerous flares. While GeDeCo is trying to attract more colonists, the threat of another cataclysmic flare keeps all but the desperate away.

Scaladon

Scaladon's oceans are toxic and lethal to human life; the whole human population is clustered into a few rocky plateaus towering above the caustic sea-mists. The population density of Scaladon is alarmingly high, and some plateaus have collapsed because of the sheer weight of people and buildings clinging to them. The government of Scaladon is a religious dictatorship, the

Chosen, who have the power of life and death over the people thanks to their mastery of air travel – flight is highly restricted on Scaladon, and any flying vehicles not controlled or permitted by the priests are shot down by anti-aircraft missiles (every Chosen temple includes a concealed missile launcher). According to the beliefs of the Chosen, God will one day return to take his faithful to Heaven, and only those who dwell on Scaladon will be saved. To live – or more accurately – to clutch the rock of Scaladon for dear life as you teeter above a sea of sulphur is to be eligible for salvation.

Those who displease the priests are hurled to their death into the sea. Lately, population pressure has forced the Chosen to adopt a new policy – they randomly select people by lottery, and throw them off the cliff. Despite these measures, Scaladon's population continues to grow and the amount of inhabitable territory diminishes. There are skyscrapers a thousand floors tall built on plateaus barely fifty metres across, crammed with the devoted faithful.

Simok

The only reason Simok has not been classified as a Red travel zone is political pressure from megacorporations and the Tobia dukedom – merchants would be less willing to travel through the Reach if they knew that a world on the key trade route was in the middle of a bloody civil war. For centuries, Simok was ruled the Simokian Pharaohs, a dynasty that arose after the collapse of the Sindalian Empire. The Pharaohs were part of a long breeding program where the current Pharaoh was mated to the most intelligent, healthy and beautiful members of each generation, chosen by a series of contests. After nearly two thousand years of eugenics, the Pharaohs were nigh-perfect specimens of humanity – wise, long-lived and handsome.

Unfortunately, the last Pharaoh's consort was a Zhodani agent, sent to subvert the Simokian government (or at least, that is what her enemies at court declared). The consort, Zillah, denied she was a spy and the Pharaoh supported her, sending the army in to seize their estates. The nobles retaliated by detonating a primitive atomic weapon in the desert between the capital and their estates, killing thousands of troops in their horse-drawn tanks (Simok lacks any fossil fuels). Radioactive fallout blanketed the capital; among the casualties of the ensuing riots, fires and starvation was the consort Zillah. The heartbroken Pharaoh declared every one of the traitorous nobles would be slaughtered, along with their followers.

Both sides in the civil war brought in offworld mercenaries, while the Imperium responded to the use of atomics by deploying marines to pacify the region

around the starport and restore order. Today, war rages across Simok. The Pharaoh is still alive, but rumours abound that he was rendered sterile by the radiation, ending the two-thousand-year dynasty. The nobles are said to be so indebted to their offworld allies that if they win, Simok will become a pawn of another world, and everyone is fighting the Imperial 'occupiers'.

The Duke of Tobia has given the various factions another year to sort out their differences. If Simok is still at war at that time, he will send more forces to end the war. The last thing Tobia subsector needs is a long-burning war close to the jump route back to the Imperium.

Tobia

Tobia! The name should be enough to stir the soul of any patriotic citizen of the Third Imperium.

Tobia! A world-girdling city, where mighty capital ships nestle in docks surrounded entirely by towering skyscrapers, where aliens from a hundred worlds meet to trade and wonder at the strength of Humaniti's Third Imperium! Tobia! Where the ducal palace soars like a glittering second sun over the landscape! Tobia! The bastion of civilisation in the Trojan Reach – not faded Gazulin, clinging to a thin patina of culture to stave off decay, and not militaristic Pax Rulin, where the demands of defence override any other activity. Tobia, seat of the duke and the most important world spinward of Capital.

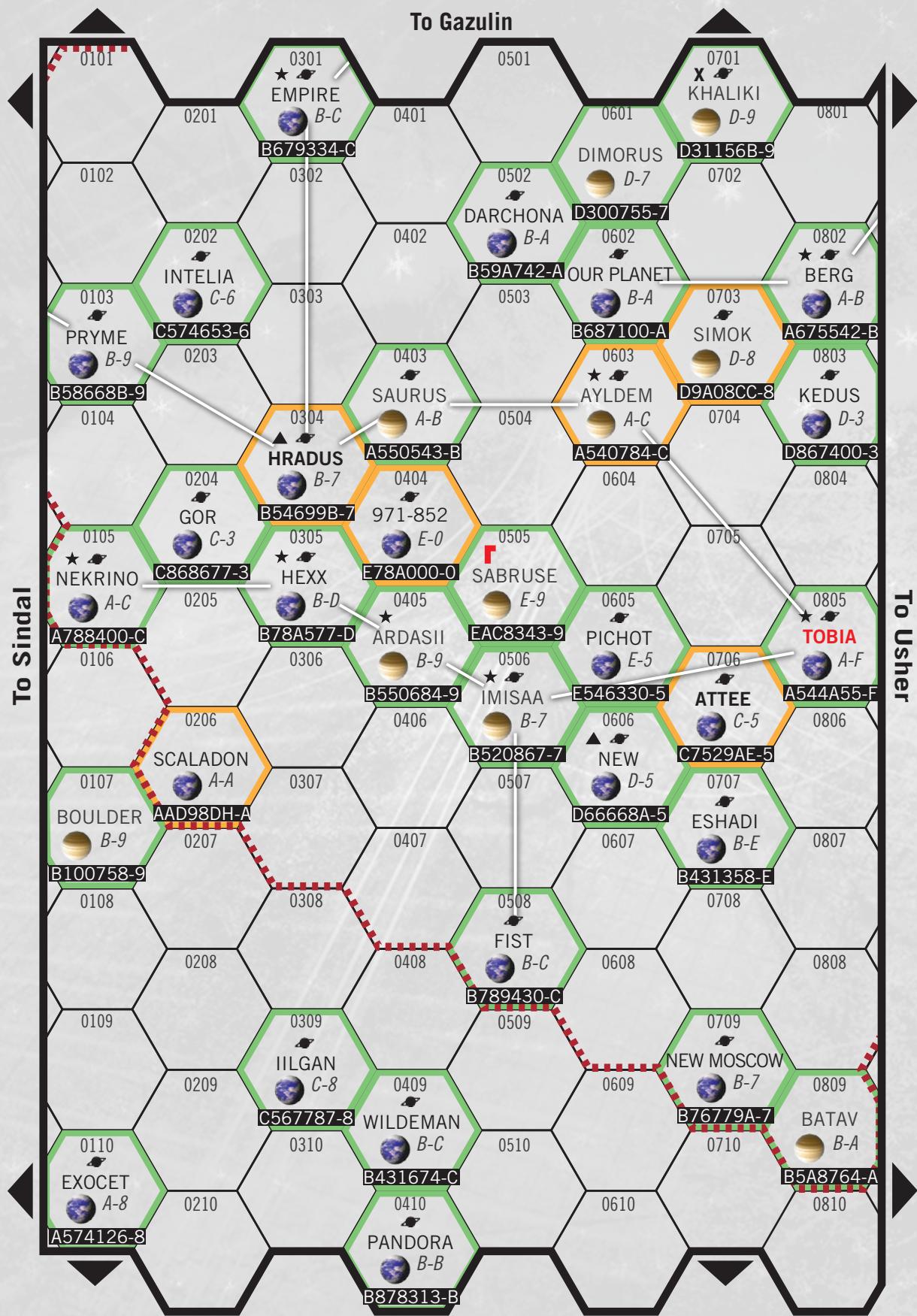
This is a technologically advanced and highly cosmopolitan world, but critics of Tobia say its culture is egotistical and self-obsessed, and that a succession of dukes has squandered the wealth from trade. While Tobia garners trillions of Credits every year from taxes and escort fees, much of this money is spent on luxuries or financial investments in the Spinward Marches and coreward sectors, instead of maintaining the fleets, expanding the Imperium or civilising the Trojan Reach. Serious questions have been raised about the readiness of Tobia to hold out against prolonged siege – especially with the ongoing turmoil around Simok and Ayldem threatening supply routes from deeper in the subsector.

Such concerns seem foolish to many – one needs only to look at the soaring towers and shining fleets orbiting Tobia to see that this world could never fall.

Wildeman

Less a planet, more a big asteroid, Wildeman's only real importance is as a trade port. The system has a bad reputation among many spacers – there are all sorts of wild tales about ghost ships, mysterious breakdowns, psionic phenomena and even space kraken sightings.

TOBIA SUBSECTOR



Gas Giant

B-6 Starport Class & Tech Level

B-0 Starport Class & Imperial Naval Base

- ▲ Imperial Naval Base
- ▲ Imperial Scout Base

Secure System

Secure System
Imperial Border

— X-Boat Route

X-Boat Route
X Prison/Exile Camp

Amber Zone

Amber Zone

● Planet (dry)
● Planet (water present)

Planet Water Research Station

NORA'A SUBSECTOR

Nora'a was a battleground subsector until comparatively recently. The region was only infrequently explored until around the year 500, when the Aslan of the Ya'soisthea expanded into the area, settling the rimward planets. Around the same time, the Glorious Empire pushed into the subsector from Goertal, and the nascent Florian League settled several worlds in the coreward quarter. All three factions met at roughly the same time, and since then the sector has been wracked by wars. Conflicts break out roughly once every ten years, when enough ihat ei gather to form an invading army, or a particularly charismatic leader arises in the Glorious Empire. The Florians are rarely the aggressors in these wars, and have started only four conflicts in the last six hundred years, all of which were campaigns aimed at recapturing worlds previously lost to the Aslan.

Currently, the Florian League have lost two worlds to the Hierate – Afty was a minor loss, but Iryao was uncomfortably close to the Nora'a transit point and the vital route to the industrial base at Vadada. The League conquered the Glorious Empire's planet of Lafkin in the chaotic tangle historians refer to as the Eahaw Campaign; the Floriani moved in to secure Lafkin as a supply base and kept it when hostilities ceased. The Glorious Empire has suffered the most casualties in recent wars, losing Yadawao, Eahaw and Woilreawau to the Hierate and – in a horribly shameful episode – ceding the world of Lafkin to the Floriani monkeys. They only managed to retain the rich world of Alirar, their sole remaining clawhold in Nora'a.

The Aslan Hierate holds most of the subsector, although Yadawao and Eahaw are both in peril of being recaptured, and Floriani scouts have been chased out of Khteiatloilr and even Ewoiftoil.

Several worlds in Nora'a are regarded as prize worlds, systems that even the Florian League would be willing to fight over. The real prize is Vadada, second only to Trossachs in Menorial Sector in production capacity for the League's industry, and the chief shipyard for the Floriani. Other prize worlds include the vast lanthanum deposits on Khtyekt, the 'Floriani breadbasket' at Tanar, and Nora'a itself. Hierate scouts have mapped the whole of Florian space, and know the Florian Main

starts at Nora'a. If they can break through the border defences, then the Aslan can gobble up a dozen or more lightly-defended worlds in a matter of months.

Alirar

This world is the last one left to the Glorious Empire in Nora'a Sector, and is a world on the verge of collapse. During the wars, virtually all Aslan citizens went off to fight, and they died on Lafkin, Eahaw, Woilreawau, and in the cold of space. Two generations of Aslan were killed, leaving only the aged, very young and infirm behind. They also left their human slaves. The Glorious Empire is built on the back of human slave labour, and Alirar was no exception. The fields of this agricultural world were tended by slave-monkeys.

During the closing stages of the last war, Hierate forces attacked the cities of Alirar in Open War, which permitted the use of weapons of mass destruction. Alirar's already-limited industrial base was ruined and its population decimated, but casualties were disproportionately high among the urban Aslan compared to the mainly rural human slaves. Once the dust cleared and war ended, the surviving Aslan of Alirar found themselves vastly outnumbered by their slaves. Of the 900,000 people living on Alirar, less than 10,000 are Aslan.

The Aslan rulers hold onto their domain through brutality and superior technology. Explosive slave collars, pain projectors and gas bombs are standard issue for all Aslan citizens, and excess human slaves have been rounded into concentration camps, and may be executed if they cannot be suitably contained. The Aslan have begun gelding slaves to lessen the chance of some charismatic liberator arising to lead a slave revolt.

Worse, they cannot appeal to the rest of the Glorious Empire for help. The Empire was on the verge of abandoning Alirar as a lost cause, until Alirar leaders proclaimed that not only was Alirar viable, but could serve as an ideal mustering point for another invasion force. Empire ships and warrior hosts have already begun to gather in the system, and their numbers will only grow.

Subsector Worlds

Name	Location	Bases	Statistics	Trade Codes	Travel Code	Allegiance	Gas Giants
Aftye	0102		A560343-D	Ni De Lo Ht		Hierate	G
Ahaikhea	0106	ACS	B422423-9	Ag Ni Po		Hierate	G
Alirar	0805	ACS	A55557A-C	Ag Ni Ht		Glorious Empire	G
Aowaih	0409	ACS	B5866A7-A	Ag Ni Ri Ht		Hierate	G
Dalfi	0202		C550345-9	De Po Ni Lo		Florian League	
Eahaw	0803		E523000-0	Ba		Hierate	G
Eawatrye	0107	ACS	B8B5756-C	Fl Ht		Hierate	G
Ehaealir	0809		B63657B-9	Ni		Hierate	
Elihfoirl	0505	ACS	A553236-D	Ni Lo Po Ht		Hierate	G
Ewoiftoil	0204		B546646-A	Ni Ag		Hierate	
Ftaleirl	0508		B53038A-8	De Lo Ni Po		Hierate	
H'a	0207		D657449-6	Ni		Hierate	G
Hkaha	0309		B897696-A	Ag Ni		Hierate	G
Hreahrya	0209	ACS	B433A79-D	Hi Na Po Ht		Hierate	G
Iryao	0302		A5588B8-C	Ht		Hierate	G
Khi	0420	ACS	B987588-B	Ag Ni Ht		Hierate	G
Khteiatloilr	0203	ACS	B423456-C	Ni Po Ht		Hierate	G
Khtyekt	0405	ACS	B200655-9	Va Ni Na		Hierate	G
Lafkin	0704		C77A846-9	Wa		Florian League	G
Nora'a	0301		A585645-9	Ag Ni Ri		Florian League	
Oiauh	0110		B1018B8-D	Na Ic Va Ht		Hierate	
Oihyeti'he	0509	AIC	B779775-B	Ht		Hierate	G
Osototail	0406		E550857-7	De Po Ht		Hierate	G
Sei'eal	0608		B510886-B	Na		Hierate	
Souftea	0500	ACS	A551754-D	Po Ht		Hierate	G
Suiaoir	0308		B651367-B	Ni Po Lo Ht		Hierate	G
Tanar	0702		C787640-8	Ri Ag Ni An		Florian League	
Tyea'ih	0109		B548889-A	Ht		Hierate	
Uao	0709	ACS	C6A2456-8	Fl Ni		Hierate	G
Vadada	0503	N	A410944-E	Hi Na In Ht		Florian League	G
Woilreawau	0707	ACS	B100855-E	Va Na Ht		Hierate	G
Yaeawaokh	0804	ACS	B43078B-C	De Na Po Ht		Hierate	

Nora'a

The first settled world in this subsector is called Nora'a now, but has had many names. The Sindalian Empire called it Farhold; after the Sindalian Empire fell, the scant few survivors called it Home for another three centuries before their civilisation fell to TL1 and they disappeared into obscurity, and the Floriani called it Humboga. It was conquered by the Glorious Empire in 730 and called Nora'a, and recaptured by the Floriani a century later who, for their own obscure reasons, chose not to change the name back again. When Imperial scouts reached this distant subsector, they took this as the name of the subsector for their charts.

Nora'a has several enviable agricultural zones – three major rivers, each of which has a flow comparable to the Amazon river on Terra; all empty into the ocean in a single massive river delta called the Trident, while the hills of the south are thickly forested with fruit trees. The Floriani have far too few Feskals farmers on Nora'a to fully exploit this bounty, so the League is considering importing more labourers. Barnai overseers flit from farm to farm using grav platforms.

Nora'a's population is approximately 90% Floriani. Another 5% are Solomani-stock from the Sindalian Empire; these hill tribes lost their technology after the fall of the Empire, and survived in a basic agrarian society until the Floriani arrived. These Solomani have been integrated into Floriani society, and are treated as Feskals.

The other 5% are Glorious Empire Aslan, left stranded when the League reconquered Nora'a. These warriors fled to the thick jungles along the Kaelca river, and have remained there ever since. The Aslan are approximately TL5; they can produce higher-tech equipment, but Floriani hunter-killer squads have learned to home in on radio emissions and heat sources in the jungle. The stranded Aslan are trapped by the jungle that protects them; any attempt to move outside the shelter of the canopy brings the Floriani down on them within hours. The Floriani have little talent for counter-insurgency warfare, and may employ mercenaries to go after the big cats in the jungle...

Oihyeti'he

Oihyeti'he underwent a period of warming in the last fifty thousand years; its ice caps partially melted, causing a rise in sea level of approximately ten metres. The planet is more than nine-tenths covered in water, but many of these seas are very shallow. The Aslan have found evidence that Oihyeti'he was inhabited before they colonised it; in some regions, ruined buildings

emerge like weed-covered skeletons from the shallow seas. The previous inhabitants were an advanced humanoid culture, possibly a lost Solomani colony. The Aslan believe the rising waters drowned the older civilisation, although curious electromagnetic and sonic anomalies in the deep ocean suggest something may have survived in the watery depths.

Oihyeti'he's largest surviving island, Ui'ila, is the site of the largest ihatei encampment in the subsector. Here, more than half a million landless second-sons and their followers gather each year, looking for territories to conquer. Oihyeti'he is situated in the middle of a cluster of worlds, and the ihatei fleet that musters here is a formidable fighting force. Most of the wars that regularly engulf Nora'a started here.

Suiaoir

With two other dangerous foes in the subsector, the clans dwelling in Nora'a cannot afford to fight open wars against each other. Doing so would sap the strength of the clans and cost the lives of too many valuable males (of course, the clans still fight wars regularly – one thing the Aslan have never been accused of is common sense). Instead, they fight limited wars, and Suiaoir is the designated battleground for Nora'a subsector. The planet has a breathable atmosphere, but few other desirable qualities; it has no mineral reserves worth exploiting, the native ecology tops out at fur-dwelling mites and slugs, and the few patches of surface water are tainted with heavy metals. As a place to live, Souiaoir is not a good choice.

As a place to blow up, it is a far better one. The permanent population of Suiaoir are all technicians, healers, military observers and earleatrais judges (as well as a few outcast salvage teams). Conflicts between clans from all over the Ya'soisthea are settled here, on the muddy craters and stony fields. Support teams can build temporary structures for use as target practice or objectives that must be captured, and the topography is varied enough to cope with most styles of combat. Simulated naval engagements can take place in the small asteroid belts nearby.

Suiaoir's tradition of war games has attracted the attention of more than a few Aslan lords, and the Suiaoir starport is a known haunt of spies and talent scouts. Some are agents, looking for promising warriors to recruit for mercenary warbands or as commanders. Others are spying on the tactics of enemy clans, or watching the troops massing at Suiaoir in case a limited war turns into a surprise attack.

Vadada

The skies above Vadada are thronged with starships. This is the core of the Florian navy, and while their ship designs are perhaps the ugliest in known space (the phrase 'flying bricks' may come to mind, although bricks have a classic elegance and a lot fewer weird flanges than Florian warships), their technological prowess cannot be denied. The Vadadan shipyards produce virtually all Florian naval vessels, and are the only shipyards capable of building their heaviest designs.

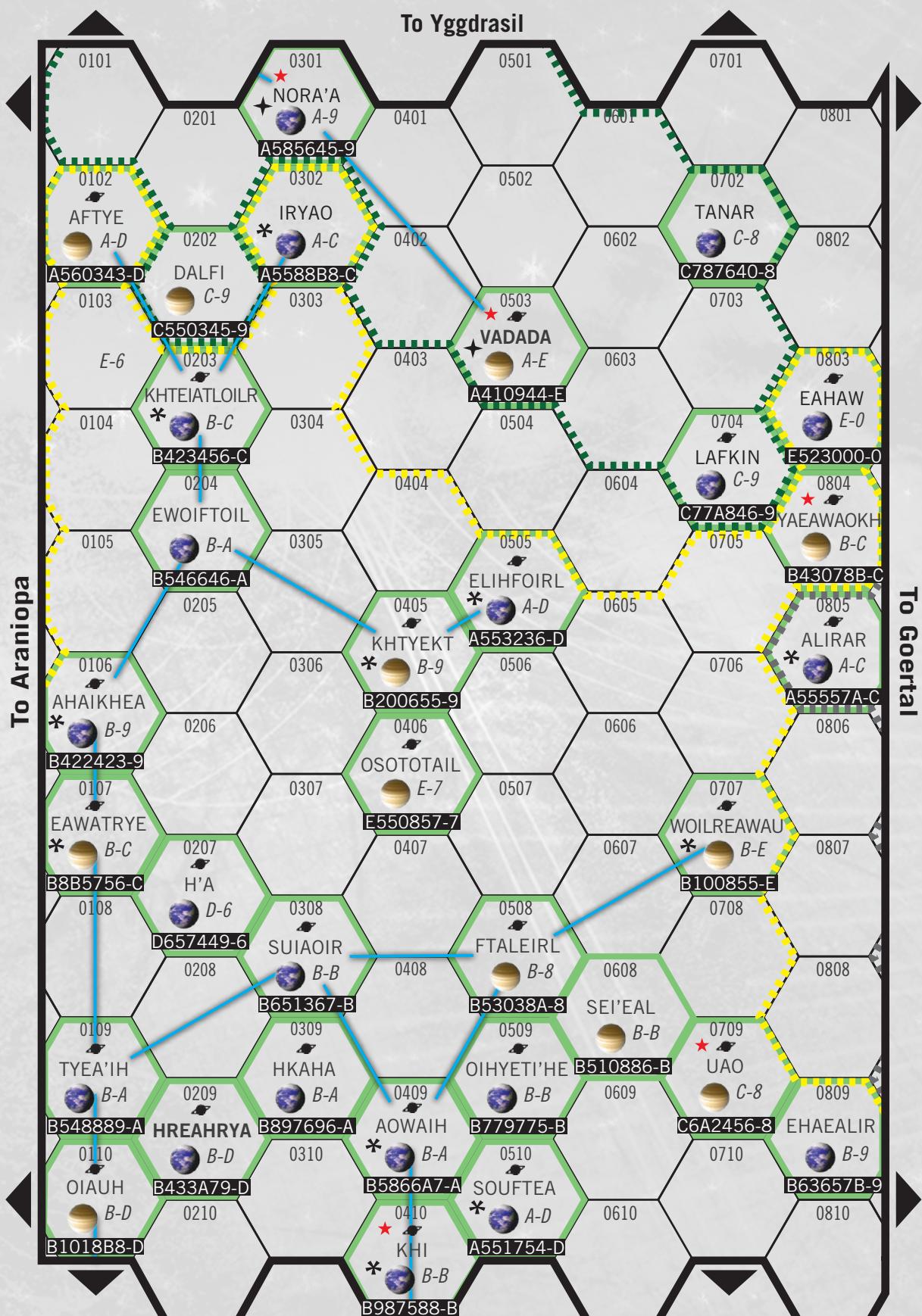
Vadada itself is a lumpy world, with a fantastically high iron content, making it an ideal site for a shipyard. The surface deposits are large enough, and of such high quality, that the Floriani employ mobile factories – effectively, cities on tracks that roll across Vadada, scrape away the thin, rusty topsoil, and then dig and refine the ore. Some of these city-factories are self-replicating, so Vadada's production capacity is rising quickly, and would do so exponentially if the Floriani were willing to use robots instead of Feskals for all labour.

Vadada's moon, Jarno, is almost as large as the planet it orbits, and is more properly termed a companion world (the orbital arrangement appears stable in the medium term, but projections past a million years show Jarno crashing into Vadada – the Florian League has made arrangements for such an eventuality). Jarno is the site

of the Florian Naval Academy. The League has always had trouble with creative thinking and leadership, and tends to win wars by vastly superior firepower, superior numbers, or both. The Naval Academy is open to both Feskals and Barnai, although only truly exceptional Feskals can qualify for the classes there. The Academy hires retired naval commanders and other specialists from the Imperium, and pays quite astonishingly well, although teaching creativity and tactical flexibility to Barnai is said to be a frustrating experience (again, more similes involve brick). Lecturers have also reported odd headaches and unexplained cranial scars, although rumours of a long-term Barnai project to harvest Solomani brain tissue and alter their own genome are, of course, nonsense.

The Vadadan Defence Force, a dedicated unit of fast-response interceptors and system defence boats, sees off regular Aslan attacks. Most of these attacks are raids by ambitious ihathei, aimed at disrupting supply runs or hitting ships still in drydock. Larger attacks are not uncommon, though the Floriani have prepared a scorched-earth defence policy in the event Vadada falls to the Aslan. All fusion reactors in the industrial belt are rigged with self-destruct charges, and a bank of gravity generators buried beneath Jarno's surface wait to disrupt the delicate orbits of the pair, sending Jarno crashing into Vadada in a matter of years, not millennia.





Gas Giant

B-6 Starport Class & Tech Level

★ Military Base/Garrison

★ Other Naval Base

* Corsair/Clan/Embassy

Secure System

Florian League

Aslan Hierate

■■■■■ Glorious Empire

— Trade Route

Planet (dry)

Planet (water)

GOERTAL SUBSECTOR

This subsector has a well-deserved reputation as one of the most dangerous regions of known space. The breakaway Aslan state called the Glorious Empire holds half the subsector, and is at war with the other half.

Goertel was originally settled by the Sindalian Empire, who established outposts as far rimward as Keawoaw. The subsector capital was Goertel, the headquarters of the Sindalian fleet. As the Sindalian Empire slipped into despotism and orbital bombardment, the population of Goertel rose up in protest against government excesses (not to mention undue taxation needed to maintain the bloated military forces). The ensuing civil war ruined Goertel and forced the Sindalian Emperors to pull their fleets back to Noricum, hastening the decline and fall of the Empire. Goertel was seized by a repressive religious cult, the Church of Nom, who claimed the starport and all remaining space vessels. Interstellar travel was then restricted to the church members. The Goertel subsector colonies were cut off from the rest of the Empire, and slowly slipped into decay.

The *Tokouea'we* clan, one of the earliest Aslan clans to migrate across the Great Rift, expanded out into this region in the 400s by the Imperial Calendar. At the time, they were a minor clan, smarting from a series of defeats back in the Hierate and looking for a new start. Their long-range jump-4 scouts first discovered the world of Syoakh, which they claimed as their capital. While Syoakh's native population consisted of only a few Chirpers, the generation of *ihatei* who set off from Syoakh found the neighbouring worlds populated by humans – and unlike the resilient humans of the Solomani rim who resisted Aslan conquest, these human worlds were technologically primitive and easy prey. Within a century, the *Tokouea'we* swallowed every world from Keawoaw to Asyuh along the spinward half of Goertel subsector. The humans of these worlds were enslaved, and this cheap labour fuelled further expansion of the *Tokouea'we* clan holdings.

More Aslan clans moved into the Trojan Reach, and political differences sparked wars between the

Tokouea'we and the newcomers. The *Tokouea'we* rejected the Hierate and declared themselves an independent polity, the Glorious Empire. War engulfed the whole subsector. These conflicts have continued to the present day – there are periods of relative peace, and the Glorious Empire has even sent representatives to the *Ya'soisthea* on occasion – but in the period from 650 to 1100, the Glorious Empire spent some 379 of those years at war with either the *Ya'soisthea*, the Florian League, or the independent worlds in Dpres subsector.

Currently, the Glorious Empire is in retreat as its economy stagnates (slave labour works very well when you are cultivating crop fields and animal herds, but less so when you want your slaves to build TL14 warships or program computers). The worlds of Hrahraiu, Hteakya and – disastrously – Hliyh have all been lost to the Hierate in the last decade, while Goertel itself managed to throw off the slaver shackles and is now human-ruled. The human slave population of these captured worlds are treated differently by each 'liberating' clan. On Hliyh, the humans have been offered a place in Aslan society, although the chances of any of them rising above *awkhea* is slim. On Hteakya, the few thousand humans have been offered the use of a clan colony ship to transport them offworld to any planet within six parsecs. Finally, for the unfortunates on Hrahraiu, the likely outcome will be extermination or at best slavery under a different band of Aslan masters. Coupled with the loss of Tryaoke a generation ago, the Glorious Empire is facing utter annihilation within another twenty years unless it can reverse the tide of fortune.

No major trade routes pass through Goertel. The Glorious Empire trades little with the Hierate, and its sole major export are mercenaries, fighting in the wars of the Dustbelt worlds in Dpres. Imperium/Hierate and Imperium/Florian League trade routes generally avoid this war-torn sector.

Agents of the Imperium or independent human worlds may look upon the carnage in Goertel and assume this infighting means the Aslan will never be a threat – any race that pits clan against clan in endless internal feuds

SUBSECTOR WORLDS

Name	Location	Bases	Statistics	Trade Codes	Travel Code	Allegiance	Gas Giants
A'eouya	0710		E550000-0	Ba			G
Akhwohkyal	0801		BA95688-9	Ag Ni An			G
Alr	0109		A779548-B	Ni		Glorious Empire	G
Asyuh	0301	ACS	B8C3225-9	Lo Fl Ni		Glorious Empire	G
Colony Six	0401		A68A541-D	Wa Ni Ht			G
Eauhti	0810	ACS	B540489-B	De Ni Po Ht			G
Ehrafou	0110	ACS	B00075A-E	As Na Ht		Hirate	G
Eiahiy	0206	ACS	B500132-B	Lo Ni Va		Glorious Empire	G
Eikhaaw	0308		C88978C-9	Ri	A	Glorious Empire	G
Eilaeah	0504		B863267-B	Lo Ni Ht		Hirate	G
Erasaso	0410	AIC	B68A136-C	Lo Ni Wa Ht		Hirate	G
Fyleakh	0609	ACS	B41389A-C	Ic Na Ht		Hirate	G
Ftiys	0806	ACS	C76A325-7	Lo Wa Ni			G
Ftulrois	0202		B56866A-9	Ag Ni Ri		Glorious Empire	
Goertel	0402		B6688DC-6		A		G
Hea'a	0205		E54026A-5	Lo Ni De Po Lt		Glorious Empire	G
Hliyh	0503	ACS	B200AB7-E	Va Na Hi In Ht		Hirate	G
Hrahraiu	0502	ACS	B42068C-C	De Na Po Ni Ht	A	Hirate	
Hteakya	0403		B423426-D	Ni Po Ht		Hirate	G
Htourlao	0208	ACS	B311978-E	Ic Na In Hi Ht		Glorious Empire	G
Keawoaw	0210		B430433-9	De Po Ni		Glorious Empire	G
Khau	0406		C687598-9	Ag Ni Ht		Hirate	G
Oatre	0203	ACS	B532336-C	Lo Ni Po Ht		Glorious Empire	G
Oihu	0306	ACS	B300454-9	Va Ni		Glorious Empire	G
Syoakh	0207	ACS	A6968BC-C	Ht	A	Glorious Empire	
Tryaoke	0704		D556978-8	Hi Lt		Hirate	G
Yero'ilra	0304		D500897-7	Va Na		Glorious Empire	G
Yestahwye	0606	AIC	B9A4656-C	De Ni Ht		Hirate	G

and turf wars can never rally a truly formidable invasion force. In truth, the Goertel wars are not emblematic of Aslan culture; it is the overweening pride and ambition of the Glorious Empire that has divided the subsector and turned the limited wars practiced by the Hierate into devastating open wars.

Colony Six

This colony is, as the name suggests, the sixth of a group of colonies seeded from Terra using sublight drives thousands of years ago. Ark Six suffered damage and was forced to stop here, much earlier than scheduled. The other five ships continued onwards and are believed to be somewhere in Ziafrplians sector in Zhodani space. The colony vessels were dispatched in -2445, before Terran development of the jump drive. While traders arriving at Colony Six after its establishment brought jump technology with them, the lack of lanthanum prevented the natives from developing their own jump-capable fleets. Even today, Colony Six has only a handful of jump ships.

The world is entirely covered in ocean, so the inhabitants are divided into three castes. Sea-riders live in raft cities that sail across the world-ocean; they are the most numerous caste, and primarily concerned with aquaculture and light industry. Even the planet's starport is on a raft (ships are warned that they must keep their m-drives operational at all times, as the landing pads are unable to sustain the full weight of even a scout ship for long). Wind-riders live on stationary platforms suspended using gravity generators, and are the home of the planet's universities, research centres and heavy industry. Finally, the smallest caste is the spacers, who mine asteroids and defend the system against regular attacks from Aslan or Glorious Empire raiders.

It is perhaps a tragedy that Colony Six never expanded into the Reach. It is a stable, peaceful and technologically advanced society that could perhaps have counterbalanced some of the violent, disruptive regimes in the sector. As it stands, Colony Six is critically short of resources and will be unable to withstand a concerted attack by any of its militant neighbours.

Goertel

Goertel is a world with a long and bloody history. It is a world of darkly wooded hills and slate-grey stone cities

under a red sky, a world of ghosts and secret passages and paranoia. Settled originally by exiles from the First Imperium (the circumstances of their exile are lost in the mists of history), the original Goertel colony was taken over by Solomani from the Rule of Man, and then became part of the Sindalian successor state. Goertel reached its height in this period; it was the headquarters of the Sindalian fleet and the subsector capital. The secret police fortress in the capital city is still, after thousands of years, the most impressive building on the planet.

After the fall of the Empire and the suicide of the last Duchess-Admiral of Goertel, the Church of Nom took over running the planet. The Church, always a bit player in Goertelan politics, had long prepared for such a catastrophe, and seized power in a comparatively bloodless coup. One of their first acts was to outlaw space travel, and only permitted sanctified technicians and ordained priests to serve on starships. The Church is a messianic cult that believes a divine entity will one day arise from humanity's collective soul, and that its ascension can be hastened by fostering psionics; most priests of the cult have some psionic ability. The church believes space travel dilutes the collective psychic capacity of humanity, and so space voyages are undertaken only when absolutely necessary (the hatred of the space fleet present when the Church took over may be the origin of this belief).

Goertel was conquered by the Glorious Empire in 556, and the Church of Nom forced underground once more. The Glorious Empire enslaved the populace and abducted many of the psionic priests. Some of the priesthood fled to Delta Theta in Dpres subsector, taking with them several antique Sindalian warships. The Church began prophesying that Nom would arrive soon to deliver the world from the Aslan slavers, but for more than five centuries, Goertel groaned under the Aslan yoke.

The world was delivered not by the exiled space fleet, nor by the coming of Nom, but by the Hierate. Attacks on neighbouring worlds forced the Glorious Empire to concentrate its followers elsewhere, allowing an uprising on Goertal to take hold and overthrow Aslan rule. The return of the old Sindalian fleet – decrepit and outdated, but still flying – from Delta Theta reinforced Goertel's independence. Wisely it is said, Nom moves in mysterious ways.

Syoakh

Or, more properly, Syoahkhaokhirtlaeakhhhtahyu, World of the Most Glorious Empire of Honourable Warriors. This earth-like world is the capital of the Glorious Empire, and is as important to the Aslan of the Empire as Kusyu is to the Hierate. Like Kusyu, land-holdings on Syoakh are considered to be of incalculable worth, and only the families highest in the Emperor's esteem may dwell here. The ratio of Aslan to human Syoakh is more than nine to one; the few humans are ceremonial slaves and servants.

Syoakh society is dominated by the government and the military. At the head of the government is, of course, the Grand Emperor. The title is not a hereditary one – any head of a pride may challenge the sitting Emperor to trial by combat, but the title has remained within the Earatokouea'we pride for nearly three hundred years. In fact, the Emperor is a puppet controlled by a junta of military officers, who ensure no prospective challenger (other than a few carefully-vetted sacrifices to maintain the deception) gets close to the Grand Emperor. The current Grand Emperor is a poetic young male named Krial, who spends his days wandering the colossal Grand Golden Palace and pursuing his hobby of archaeology. Krial is an expert on the Sindalian Empire's decline and fall, and perhaps he has read his future in the human past.

The surrounding city is mostly taken up with bureaucracy and the machinery of government. The Glorious Empire is absurdly centralised – virtually every non-military decision of note is taken by clerks on Syoakh. This policy, designed to ensure the Tokouea'we remained united, has limited the growth of the Empire and forced them to maintain a vast fleet of jump-4 couriers. There are only thirteen worlds in the Glorious Empire, but the sheer amount of jump traffic at Syoakh suggests there are thirteen hundred. The city and starport of Syoakh are truly beautiful, one of the best examples of high-Aslan art outside the Hierate, and the Grand Golden Palace itself is testament to what you can do with a few genius artists and architects, an unlimited budget and an army of slaves. Aslan weep at its beauty; humans may weep at the hundreds of thousands who died making it.

The military camps on the outer islands and in orbit are far more important to the running of the Glorious Empire. The military junta rule from a deeply buried fortress under the ocean, cloaked against orbital attacks or meson weapons. The junta know the Empire is in a precarious position, and frantically plot ways to deflect the Hierate. Strategies under review include sparking a conflict between Ya'soisthea clans, forcing a war between the Imperium and the Hierate, and an overwhelming assault on Vadada in Nora'a subsector to turn the Florian warships on the Hierate. A junior faction of officers is agitating for the Glorious Empire to open relations with the Hierate so they can negotiate for limited wars; others are plotting what they will do when the Empire falls.

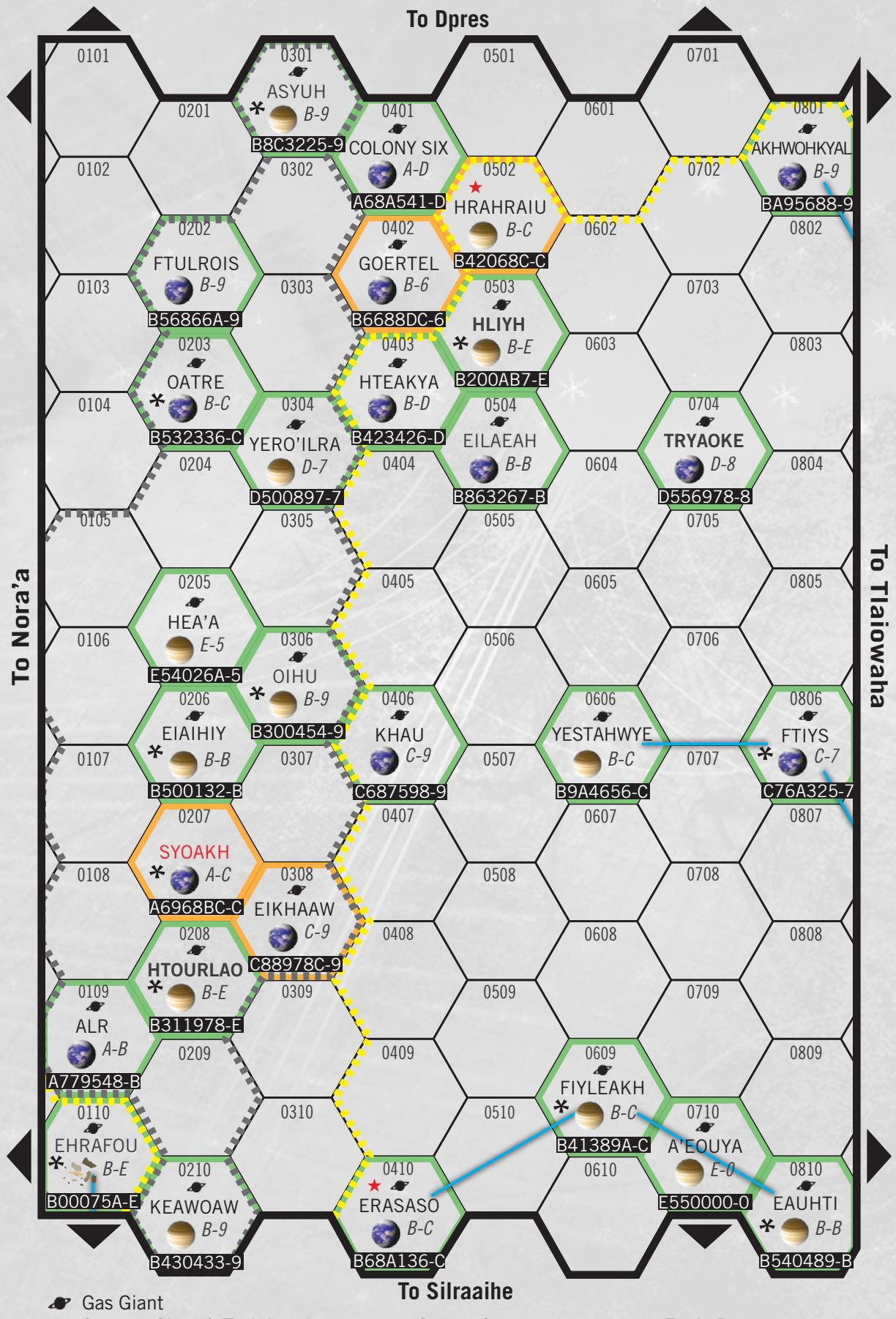
Tryaoke

The ultimate disposition of the Tryaokean populace will determine overall Hierate policy towards the human minority of the Glorious Empire. For hundreds of years, the population of Tryaoke was used as a breeding world for slaves. The Aslan administrators, perhaps inspired by the example of the Florian League's Feskals, tried to produce a large pool of strong, healthy, tractable humans. These efforts were less than successful, although they did succeed in increasing the population of the world to more than eight billion. The Glorious Empire also succeeded in crushing the spirit of the people of Tryaoke – any scientific talent or curiosity was squashed, and any dissent or rebellion resulted in instant death.

The Hierate captured Tryaoke thirty years ago, and is still debating what to do with it. It is psychologically impossible for an Aslan's spirit to be broken – the desire for territory and conquest is too strong – and now they have a world of eight billion broken humans. Other humans have been integrated into Aslan society, but they were willing to fight for a place and could be treated as equals or almost-equals. The folk of Tryaoke are primitive, superstitious, and conditioned to obey the orders of any Aslan.

Some advocate putting the humans to use as slaves or at least cheap labour. Others believe the Aslan should shepherd Tryaoke towards independence, or else wipe the planet clean and divide it up into territories.

GOERTAL SUBSECTOR



TLAIOWAHA SUBSECTOR

This subsector was explored by the *Tlaiwaha* clan, who then ceded most of the worlds here to their vassals, the *Ahroay'if*. The *Ahroay'if* control or strongly influence more than a third of the worlds in this subsector. Their power is based on trade, and the *Ahroay'if* have a vested interest in preserving the peace. They strongly support ihat ei expeditions to settle or conquer worlds along the Hierate/Imperium trade route, as long as such expansions do not interfere with trade.

In the last fifty years, the *Ahroay'if* have come under increasing pressure from rimward clans, especially the *Hkaaiheir*. These clans claim that the *Ahroay'if* have become fat and weak, more concerned with protecting the trade links than winning new territory. So far, they have shied away from actually attacking the *Ahroay'if*, preferring to claim territory on disputed worlds in Aslan space, or to raid beyond the borders of the Hierate, but pressure is building to conquer the neutral worlds in this subsector.

Subsector Worlds

Name	Location	Bases	Statistics	Trade Codes	Travel Code	Allegiance	Gas Giants
Akoافت	0610		E898000-0	Ba		Hierate	G
Asim	0503		B867564-6	Ag Ni		Kingdom of Drinax	G
Asoieteal	0108	ACS	B697688-A	Ag Ni		Hierate	G
Blue	0801		B543487-B	Po Ni Ht			G
Camoran	0203		A55167A-B	Ni Po		Hierate	G
Clarke	0702		B899753-8				
Drinax	0603		A43645A-E	Ni Ht		Kingdom of Drinax	G
Fantasy	0808		E788400-3	Ni Lt			G
Hilfer	0804		B55077A-6	De Po			
Hleakhayes	0609		E54348B-7	Po Ni		Hierate	G
Iroioah	0607		B530113-C	De Po Ni Lo Ht		Hierate	G
Keaih	0210		CAA5887-9	FI		Hierate	G
Khusai	0403	ACS	A576655-C	Ag Ni Ht		Hierate	G
Kteiroa	0505	AIC	C560164-8	De Lo Ni		Hierate	
Ohualr	0307	ACS	B422388-B	Po Ni Lo		Hierate	G
Oiwoiiaw	0103		B787897-A	Ri Ht		Hierate	G
Paal	0805		B564679-6	Ag Ni Ri			G
Pourne	0704		A9B2887-A	FI			G
Sink	0806		D665220-5	Ni Lo Lt			G
Staha	0409	ACS	B755486-B	Ni Ht		Hierate	G
The World	0707		E100551-7	In Ni Va			G
Tlaiowaha	0308	ACS	B420954-E	De Hi In Na Po Ht		Hierate	G
Tropol	0601		B55A77A-B	Wa			G
Tyokh	0606	ACF	B566A77-E	Hi Ht		Hierate	G
Vorito	0709		E595ABB-A	In Hi	A	Imperium Client State	G

Solomani scouts also explored this sector, and left several small colonies. Many of these worlds were named by a famous explorer, Jona Rhas, a devotee of ancient Terran science-fiction. Most of these colonies were subsumed into the Sindalian Empire, and survived comparatively well when that Empire collapsed. There have been conflicts between the human colonies in the past, but the arrival of the Aslan Hierate has unified them somewhat, following the loss of Khusai (formerly Banks) and Kterioa (Stross) to the Hierate. Drinax's king advocates forming an alliance against the Hierate, while the worlds of Pourne, Hilfter and Paal are hoping to either negotiate entry into the Imperium or the Hierate as equal trading partners.

There are two Imperial client states in this sector. Vorito is the local headquarters of the General Development Company (see page 130), and was able to obtain Imperial protection from Deneb. Camoran, by contrast, applied for help from Tobia when the Aslan began attacking it. Camoran's cloak of Imperial protection is a thin one, and it is likely that the Imperium will refuse to extend its thirty-year guarantee of Mutual Defence when the treaty comes up for renewal in 1108.

The main trade route from the Imperium runs through this subsector, entering from the Borderlands at Pohl or Herbert and from there onto Tyokh.

Akoft

Famed for its toxic atmosphere, lethal plant life and general hostility, Akoft has found its niche as an arena for wargames and limited conflicts. From orbit, the planet is strangely beautiful, as orange and pink algae blooms cover whole continents. Up close, it is a slime swamp.

Akoft is the site of an ongoing struggle between the *Ahroay'if* and the *Hkaaiheir* clans. The world itself is a low-resource cesspit with an ecology best described as 'more breeds of slime and mould that you ever dreamed existed', and was never settled by any species. The war here is not for control of Akoft – instead, it is a proxy war for the nearby Keah system, currently held by the *Htyowao*, vassals of the *Ahroay'if*. The conflict on Akoft has ground on for four years, with the *Hkaaiheir* currently holding the upper hand. The *Htyowao* believe that the war will be lost within another four years, and plan to move en masse to another world.

Blue

Blue was once a rich world, one of the jewels of the Old Empire. Over the course of several centuries, the planet was systematically denuded of all its accessible resources. Today, it is a quiet backwater. The people of Blue are insular and rarely travel, preferring to spend their times in contemplation of religion and art.

Rumours insist that there is a secret Psionic Institute somewhere on Blue.

Clarke

Formerly a garden world, Clarke was bombed by the Star Guard during the last years of the Kingdom of Drinax. Hundreds of thousands died when the old capital, Hiewad, was destroyed, and millions more starved in the years that followed as the dust clouds caused several years without a summer. Clarke's technology base was similarly crippled; the planet was at TL14, but virtually all the high-technology facilities and services were concentrated at Hieward. Deprived of the high-tech medical facilities that could heal the sick and dying, the people of Clarke chose to preserve their mortally wounded in the hopes that when they rebuilt, they could be healed. This practice of freezing the dead quickly evolved into a religion that worshipped the dead. Today, everyone who dies on Clarke is immediately placed into a carbon-weave monolith and stored until the day of healing that will one day arrive. The Psychopomp priests who control the preservation technology rule the planet. The reconstruction of Clarke's technological base has slowed to a crawl; the priests know that if they recover the technology to heal those who were preserved in the monoliths, they would lose their position of authority in Clarke society. Therefore, the planet becomes ever more insular, ever more death-obsessed. Today, the frozen dead on Clarke massively outnumber the living. The dead are everywhere, as the black monoliths are used as building materials in the dark, oppressive cities.

Drinax

Two hundred years ago, Drinax was the great power in this subsector, second only to the Hierate. The Kings of Drinax ruled over every world from Khusai to Paal, and also claimed Torpol, Clarke and Blue. A war between Drinax and the Aslan Hierate put an end to the Kingdom of Drinax. The Drinaxians had marginally higher technology, but the Aslan fleet outnumbered them three to one. The war was sparked by an *iHatei* invasion of Asimov, but conflict had been brewing for years as the Drinaxians tried to muscle in on the Imperium/Hierate trade.

The war shattered the Kingdom of Drinax. The other worlds had chafed under Drinax rule for years, and the Drinaxians had resorted to the tactics of the Sindalian Empire of old, bombing planets to keep them in line. The Hierate returned the favour tenfold – Drinax was nearly glassed by the *Ahroay'if*.

The only surviving settlement on Drinax was the Royal Palace, which floats above the blasted, lifeless surface on a huge gravity platform. The only survivors were the Royal Family and their servants, courtesans, guards, jesters, technicians, beauticians and other hangers-



on. Fortunately, the fabled Hanging Gardens of Drinax could be quickly repurposed to provide food. The Kings of Drinax are much humbler now, although Drinax did launch a successful invasion of the nearby planet of Asim ten years ago, mainly to obtain better food supplies. (Invasion is perhaps a grandiose term for 'jump over, blast the Asimen from orbit, and keep shooting until they give you stuff' – apparently, old habits die hard for Sindalian descendants).

The current King of Drinax is Oleb XVI, an accomplished boxer and swordsman, infamous for his taste in wine (strong reds), women (ditto) and song (shouted lustily through a megaphone).

Fantasy

The inhabitants of Fantasy are the descendants of a slave ship from the Glorious Empire. The human slaves were the product of an experiment in genetic engineering by the Aslan; traits like strength, endurance and physical attractiveness were enhanced, while intellect and the capacity for independent thought were diminished. The sex ratio was also changed, so on average ten females are born for every male.

The planet was named by an Imperial Scout who spent several years monitoring the planet.

Hilfer

A hot desert world, Hilfer was once part of the Kingdom of Drinax. The rebellion cost Hilfer dearly, as the planet lost the technology to maintain the water reclamation technology that kept the desert at bay.

Iroioah

Iroioah is a dying world. Some ancient calamity stripped away more than two-thirds of its atmosphere, and now the planet's seas are dry and its continents are graveyards. The howling winds carry blue sandstorms across the copper sulphide-tinged deserts. Iroioah was once home to an advanced spacefaring civilisation that flourished in the interval between the last war of the Ancients and the rise of the Vilani. Some of their ruins still survive.

The Hierate has little interest in the deeds of dead races, but a small team continues to search the ruins for still-functioning technological devices.

Keaih

The cities of Keaih are invisible from orbit. Each city is built on an artificial island, and at the edge of these islands are cyclopean barriers heated by fusion reactors. These barriers heat the sea into steam, so every city is

at the centre of a gigantic ring of super-heated steam. Every year, the barriers are pushed out a little further, and the atmosphere grows a little thicker.

Khusai

Home to the naval base of the belligerent Hrakoea, Khusai is a pleasant world of blue fields and purple forests. Aslan legend claims that giant rock monsters dwell in underground caverns on this planet, but others say these rumours were started deliberately to conceal weapons testing. The orbiting base is a major Aslan fortification and is commonly used by pirate hunters.

Kteiroa

Kteiroa is a cold world, a land of frozen tundra and carbon dioxide glaciers. There are valuable phosphorous deposits in the western wilderness known as Ulkaodhianeak, the Land of White Bones, but neither the Terran scouts who first mapped this world nor the Sindilians who built the starport nor the Aslan that now hold it bothered to exploit this resource. Today, the port is maintained by a small family of Outcasts, and is a haunt of pirates, smugglers and free traders looking for a back door into Hierate space.

In recent years, Kteiroa has seen more traffic from *ihatei* scouts, who use this last Aslan world as a refuelling post before jumping to the human worlds along the border. Five years ago, the world saw a dozen *ihatei* at most; three years ago, a hundred. At high summer this year (when, on a good, sunny day, the temperature crawls to freezing at the equator), more than five hundred *ihatei* and two thousand prospective retainers and mercenaries gathered at Kteiroa. If this trend continues, there will soon be enough militant, landless Aslan at Kteiroa to launch an invasion... Asim is their most likely target, but the rulers of Drinax and Pourne should not rest easy.

Paal

Paal's association with Drinax is an old one – this rich world once supplied Drinax with its produce. Many of the dukes and kings of Paal still covet the technology of Drinax.

Pourne

Named for the ancient writer Pournelle, this world is ruled by a calcified, paranoid bureaucratic caste who assume that all offworlds are probably saboteurs sent to destroy the planet. Pourne customs officials are notoriously aggressive and heavily armed, and the planet is protected by a bristling array of SDI satellites. Despite this attitude, its stability and technology level make Pourne is one of the most important trade hubs in the subsector.

Sink

The only settlement on Sink is a small monastery, established by an obscure religious sect from Earth. They spend much of their time sinking things in the deep swampy lakes around their fortress.

The World

Most of the population of The World have no idea that anything exists outside their space station. They do not even know they are on a space station – they assume that the entire universe is a crumbling ring of corridors and hydroponics bays and overcrowded habitat modules. Only the command staff – the gods and rulers of The World – know the truth.

Tlaiowaha

The world of Tlaiowaha is owned by the *Tlaiowaha* clan. It is not their clan seat, which is hundreds of parsecs away across the Great Rift, but it is one of the pillars on which their power rests. Tlaiowaha Anchorage is the largest Aslan military base in the sector, and is well positioned to respond to incursions anywhere along the subsector border. There are enough warriors and warships at Tlaiowaha to conquer every world from Vorito to Pax Rulin, and the fleets stationed here outnumber those stationed at Pax Rulin and Tobia *combined* (the Imperial fleet's total displacement is larger than the *Tlaiowaha* fleet's total displacement, but that is cold comfort to Imperial strategic analysts who wake in a cold sweat from a nightmare of an Aslan tide). The system is heavily fortified; in addition to the hundreds of warships and the mighty fortress world of Tlaiowaha itself, the system's asteroid belt has been mined to produce a host of system defence boats and gun satellites. Any vessels arriving in Tlaiowaha without permission are targeted for destruction immediately.

While Tlaiowaha is primarily a military fortress, it is also used for state functions by the Aslan. The inner chambers of Tlaiowaha Anchorage are a zone of sybaritic luxury, a labyrinthine palace where holographic projectors make every room appear to be a vast wilderness, where beautiful consorts wait on scented pillows, where gold and iridium and precious stones decorate every surface, where the full grandeur and power of the Aslan Hierate are displayed for all to see. Imperial visitors that the *Tlaiowaha* wish to impress are invited to the Anchorage.

Tropol

Tropol is a water world, with no surface land. The limited population lives on the ice caps at the north and south poles of the planet, or on huge stilt-supported platforms built in shallow water. The planet's primary industry

is, unsurprisingly, fishing and producing hydrogen fuel for the trade convoys that dock here. Despite Torpol's lack of natural resources, the provosts who rule the planet have proved themselves canny merchants, buying and selling goods along the Florian trade route. The eccentric Florian League is a difficult trading partner, as guessing what the Floriani will decide to invest in next is something of an art, and the provosts have studied the demands of the distant League in order to predict which goods will sell in coming years.

Torpol has also made its name as a planet for shore leave, by establishing a string of 'pleasure ports' along the tropics. Torpol's high Law Level is a reflection of the provosts' need to keep the planet's reputation as a safe place to relax. The pleasure ports may feel wild, erotic and untamed, but they are actually the safest place on the planet.

Tyokh

Tyokh is the counterpart of Imisaa in Tobia subsector. Here is where the Imperial ships come in, having made the perilous crossing of the Borderlands. Tyokh's starport was rated Class A, but it is so overburdened by traffic that it has been dropped by TAS to Class B. The shipyards there have been refitted into extra freighter berths. Unusually for Aslan colonies, the area around the starport is heavily urbanised, and the cityscape could be any world from Deneb to the core worlds. Those expecting an exotic, alien city when they land on their first Aslan world will be disappointed. Once a traveller gets away from the human-dominated starport district, the beauty of Tyokh becomes evident. It is a hot, steamy jungle world for the most part, where the organic curves of Aslan buildings rise lazily above the treeline.

Tyokh is dominated by the *Ahroay'if* clan, who control roughly sixty percent of the trade. The planet is also shared with half-a-dozen other clans, and hundreds of corporations have offices and outposts here. To the Hierate's shame, a criminal organisation called the *Rea'a Hrillkhir*, an 'Aslan Mafia' of outcasts, also run black markets on Tyokh, and are rumoured to have ties to the pirate bands elsewhere in the Reach, especially in Borderlands subsector. The *Rea'a Hrillkhir* also control the lucrative market in guides and interpreters to Aslan culture; merchants who hire a guide on Tyokh are warned that there is every chance the guide is spying on them.

Tyokh is a shipping hub for the Hierate, especially for ships coming in along the trade route from the Imperium. Thousands of ships crowd the skies above the port – merchants, escorts, tenders, scouts, system defence boats, and sometimes even brave pirates. Tyokh is perhaps the most 'human' world in the Hierate. It

could almost be part of the Imperium, if you close your eyes and ignore the distant roars of the jungle beasts.

The alleyways of Tyokh are home to the *Rea'a Hrillkhir* criminal syndicate, a mysterious and influential band of criminal outcasts. The *Rea'a Hrillkhir* controls pirate bands, black markets and other illicit activity across the subsector.

Vorito

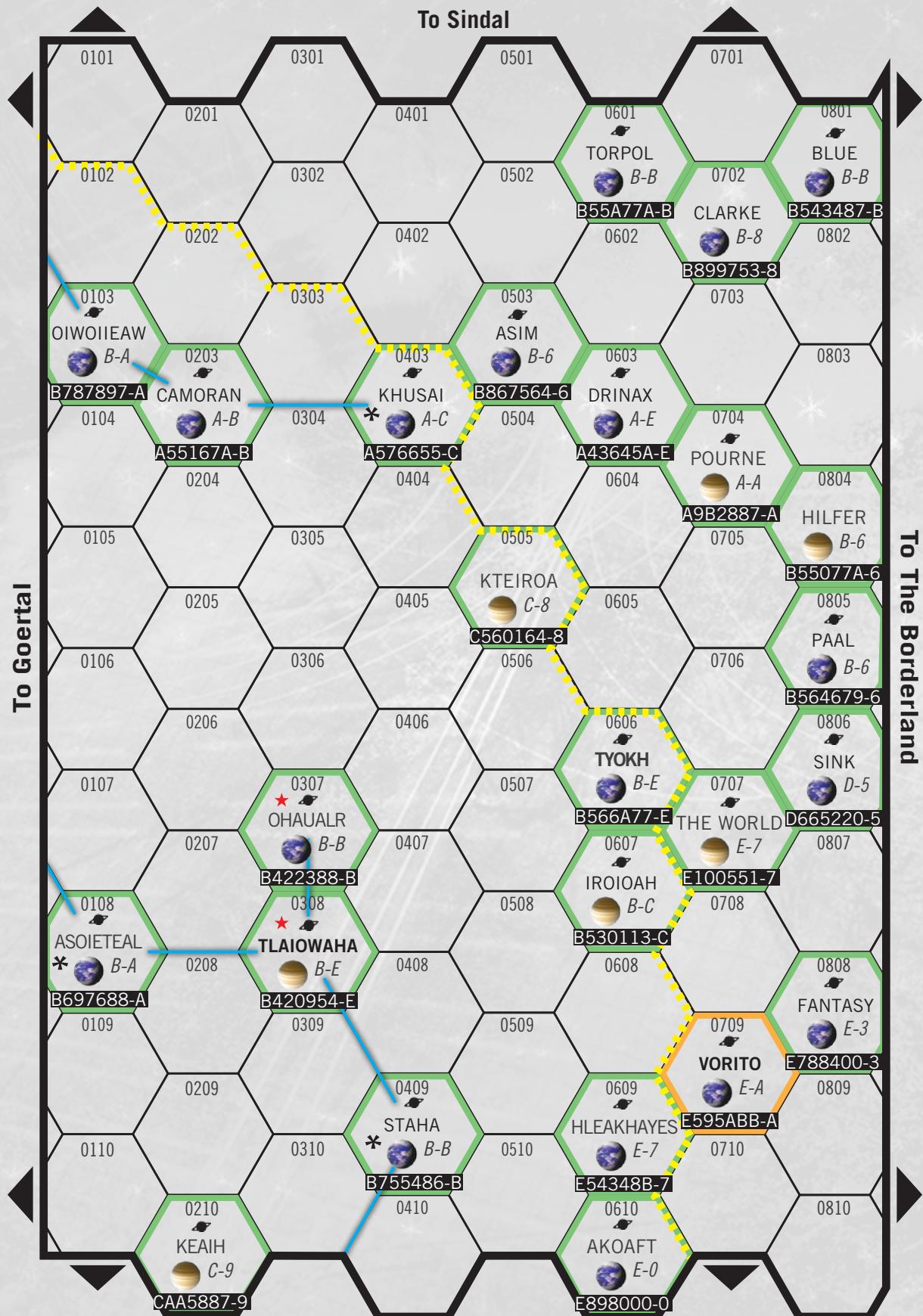
Vorito was originally established as a forward base by the Third Imperium around 500; back then, it was two hundred marines and technicians sitting in a dome, half of them listening for radiation bursts from Aslan scoutships and the other half listening to the winds howling outside in the wilderness. A small colony grew up to service the base, and then the General Development Corporation set up an office here. The protection and stability offered by the corporate presence attracted more settlers from the war-torn Kingdom of Drinax and from other worlds in the Borderlands. Vorito rapidly expanded into a financial centre, a place for human traders to gather on the edge of Aslan space. The Corporation invested in the planet's infrastructure, and today thousands of domed cities dot the planet's surface. Increasingly, the government of Vorito and the executives of GeDeCo became intertwined, until the world became a corporate asset. The Governor-General of Vorito is appointed by the GeDeCo board.

Vorito Highport was completed in 991, signalling a new and bold period in the world's participation in Imperium/Hierate trade and in the development of the whole subsector. The Highport was a cutting-edge class A, a Technology Level 15 starport and shipyard capable of building new megafreighters and escorts for the Corporation.

In 1098, terrorists attacked and destroyed Vorito Highport. At the same time, assassins killed sixteen GeDeCo executives, including the Governor-General. Short of the Aslan landing marines on Vorito, there could not have been a clearer declaration of war from the Hierate on GeDeCo. (Experts on Aslan culture point out that while the use of assassins and bombs are permissible in a war of assassins, it would be dishonourable to do so without first declaring such a war. Therefore, either GeDeCo received such a declaration and ignored it, or the Aslan do not consider GeDeCo worthy of respect, or the attackers were not Aslan.)

The current starport and Tech Level ratings of Vorito reflect the damage done by these surprise assaults – GeDeCo estimates that by 1111, Vorito should be back up to Starport A and TL13.

TLAIOWAH SUBSECTOR



Gas Giant

B-6 Starport Class & Tech Level

Red star: Other Naval Base

*

Corsair/Clan/Embassy

Secure System

Amber Zone

Aslan Hierate

Trade Route

Planet (dry)

Planet (water present)

THE BORDERLAND SUBSECTOR

The Borderland subsector has grown vastly in importance in the last five hundred years. Once a backwater in a backwater, Borderland was virtually ignored by the old empires. The Vilani bypassed it entirely; the Terrans dropped a few colonies along the way, but never really developed it, and while the Sindalian Empire claimed the whole subsector as part of their domain, they never explored further than Byrni.

The Borderland was left, in the words of one scout, to fester. All sorts of bizarre rumours swirled around this sector during the Long Night and the early days of the Imperium. Some claimed that the proximity of the Great Rift, of parsec upon parsec of empty space drives Travellers insane. Others insisted that a great pirate king had his base in the Borderland, or that a mysterious alien race held sway over a number of worlds here, or that jump travel was especially unreliable and hazardous here (this last one may have some truth to it – there is a noticeably higher rate of misjumps in the Borderland than elsewhere, though Imperium scouts put this down to poor-quality fuel, and the establishment of a chain of Class A starports with first-rate refineries should put an end to the phenomenon).

The opening of trade between the Aslan Hierate and the Third Imperium transformed the Borderland. The chain of worlds between Tobia and Tlaiowaha subsectors became instantly of great strategic and commercial value. The ‘Borderlands rush’ of the 500s brought free traders, con artists, miners, developers and pirates flocking to the subsector. Ironically, raids on shipping by both Aslan and human rogues nearly put an end to the good times, but increased Imperial escorts and Aslan punitive raids helped lend confidence to the megacorporations once more.

Chief among these megacorporations is the General Development Corporation. While GeDeCo has interests across the Trojan Reach, in Borderland it is a player on par with the Imperium or the Hierate, and GeDeCo executives are treated as lords here. GeDeCo established many of the new colonies here, and drove the pirates into the wilderness once more. GeDeCo’s headquarters is on Vorito, in Tlaiowaha subsector and perilously close to the Hierate, but they have major facilities on Tech-World, Tanith, Acrid, Argona, Byrni and Falkenberg.

Subsector Worlds

Name	Location	Bases	Statistics	Trade Codes	Travel Code	Allegiance	Gas Giants
Acrid	0302		AAC1388-D	Fl Lo Ni Ht			G
Argona	0503		B612586-9	Ic Ni			G
Arunisiir	0201		B776530-6	Ag Ni			G
Browne	0610		B550A96-9	De Hi In Po			G
Byrni	0107		B955699-6	Ag Ni			G
Cordan	0401		A895347-9	Ni Lo			G
Ergo	0205		X767500-3	Ag Ni Lt	R		G
Exe	0403		B300101-A	Ni Va Lo			G
Falcon	0305		A558448-D	Ni Ht			G
Inurin	0304		E668776-5	Ag Ri Lt			G
Sperle	0404		BA8A78A-7	Ri Wa			
Tanith	0301		A589342-B	Ni Lo			G
Tech-World	0204		A555154-E	Ni Lo Ht			
Umemii	0501		C521877-7	Na Po			G
Villane	0609		B100634-8	Na Ni Va			G

The Imperial/Hierate trade route runs from Tobia subsector through Cordan or Acrid, to Tech-World, and then onto Byrni. Jump-2 vessels must detour through Argon and Sperle before making a perilous stop-over at Ergo and harvesting fuel from the local gas giant.

Acrid

Life on Acrid makes the surface of Venus look like a balmy resort. The few thousand permanent residents of this world are primarily miners and industrial chemists working for the PRQ megacorporation, which also runs the nearby mining colony of Argona. Most of the planet is unexplored, and the miners recently discovered signs of bacterial life in caverns underground.

Argona

Argona is a mining colony established by the PRQ corporation. More than three-quarters of the planet is covered in thick glaciers, so the miners bore down through the ice using hot-drill vehicles or orbital mirrors to reach the mineral deposits. In addition to zuchai crystals and other gemstones, Argona has significant copper, tungsten, uranium and platinum deposits. A whole colony has grown up in the tunnel networks under the glaciers, administered by a board of trustees nominated by both the miners' union and the corporations. Argona has a strong tradition of industrial

action; during the infamous Strike of '38, miners using hot-drillers collapsed part of a glacier on top of an executive transport ship, trapping the corporate executives there until they agreed to negotiate.

The approach to Argona's starport is a harrowing one. The port is located in a huge artificial ice cavern some two hundred metres below the surface. Approaching ships must fight their way through the near-constant hurricanes and blizzards, then navigate down the right chasm in the ice, and finally fly down a narrow borehole barely wider than the ship's beam.

At the starport, visitors can hire a hot-borer and go prospecting. The glaciers block conventional prospecting methods such as satellite scans, so the only way to find new mineral deposits is to bore through the ice and collect samples. A lucky borer might make his fortune by finding a vein of uranium or platinum-bearing rock beneath the ice. There are stories of strange monsters living under the glaciers, of ruined structures from some primordial civilisation, and of zuchai crystal deposits of incredible size and value, but most of these stories are just fables spun by drunken miners to impress greenhorns at the starport. There are no ice worms, and certainly tales of a giant crystal called the Eye of Argona must be purest fantasy.



Arunisiir

Arunisiir was seized by an ambitious *ihatei* and his band of followers in 809. The Aslan stormed the capital city, easily defeating the planet's poorly-equipped armed forces and executing the government from the Prefect of Amalgo (the planet's original name) on down to the police captains. However, as the Aslan began pacifying the outer towns, a lucky shot from a revolutionary killed the *ihatei* leader of the invasion.

Without a unifying leader, the invading Aslan began to squabble among themselves. The invading force broke up into two dozen factions, each of which was forced to ally themselves with the defeated humans in order to maintain their strength. The Aslan warriors recruited humans as both foot soldiers and aides, and after a generation, the aides were effectively running the Aslan domains, with the Aslan relegated to the roles of figureheads and technicians.

Today, the ruling caste of Arunisiir are the human adjuncts to the Aslan. There are less than a dozen Aslan families left on Arunisiir, and they are kept for the most part as pampered pets and symbolic rulers. The Aslan have retained some of their technological sophistication, and Arunisiir is capable of producing a very limited amount of TL12 equipment. In addition to the Aslan figureheads and their oligarch servants, the other major political faction on Arunisiir is the People's League, a revolutionary group dedicated to driving the invaders offworld. The League are opposed more strenuously by the oligarchs than by the Aslan.

Browne

Its isolated position on the edge of the Great Rift makes Browne a singularly unlikely place for a colony, especially a colony of some thirty billion people. A heavy scout from the First Imperium misjumped, stranding it here thousands of years ago. The scout could not be repaired, so its crew decided to land and settle the desert world. Fortunately, the commander of the scout ship was a singularly intelligent and far-sighted woman who realised that they would have to immediately plan for the long term. She set up a policy of information transfer, ensuring that the scientific knowledge of the group would not be lost even though they had no industrial base to work from, and make water rationing part of the new civilisation from the moment of landing (the scout ship's fuel purifiers were adapted to produce potable water). They also began broadcasting a distress call, knowing that it would take decades for the signal to be detected.

No rescue ever came. The colony was left alone throughout the entirety of the Second Imperium and the Long Night. They did manage to settle the neighbouring system of Villag using sublight ships, but other attempts to colonise worlds or reach civilised space all failed. Browne was re-contacted only in 354, by which time the descendants of those fifteen scouts numbered more than fifteen billion. The system is too far away for most trade ships to reach it, but jump-5 couriers do bring vitally needed items to the teeming masses of Browne.

Byrni

Byrni was established by the Sindilians as a watch-post and naval depot. At that time, the Empire was threatened by raiders and barbarians from the trailing stars, so Byrni was a major strategic assignment. A strong tradition of military service was established, and the Knights of Byrni were considered the most loyal and honourable soldiers in the service of Noricum. As the Sindilian Empire decayed, the warships at Byrni were called home one by one, leaving only a small garrison without the capacity to maintain its technology or build new ships. Nonetheless, the Byrni endured, keeping their system defence boats flying with increasingly elaborate patches and jury-rigged electronics.

When the Imperium re-contacted Byrni in 329, their scout ships were challenged to stand down 'in the name of the Emperor of Sindal'. Byrni's garrison had stayed loyal for more than 800 years. Once the Byrni were appraised of the state of the rest of the sector and the fall of Noricum, they declared independence from an Empire that no longer existed and set about finding a new place for themselves in the galaxy.

Over a third of the Byrni population today are Aslan – elements of the *Hkaaiheir* clan settled there with the permission of the Byrni, and the Byrni are considered honourable humans by the Aslan. The Hierate's military culture of duty and honour appeals to the dutiful Byrni, and having a human world as a trading post on the made Imperium/Hierate convoy route helps the *Hkaaiheir* undercut the *Ahroay'if*'s trade monopoly.

In modern times, one of the chief Byrni occupations has been pirate hunting. The world is one of those heavily invested in by GeDeCo, and the corporation has provided a small squadron of jump-capable pirate hunter vessels to the Byrni. After two thousand years of service, the Byrni are once more defending civilisation in the Trojan Reach.

Cordan

Cordan is a prize by the standards of the Trojan Reach – a pristine garden world, with a breathable atmosphere, rich ecology and thriving farmlands. It was a vassal world of Arunisiir until that planet was conquered by Aslan. Now, the ruling barons of Cordan stand alone (where ‘alone’ means they have an arrangement with the Imperium, and tacit Imperial backing so long as they keep the starport operating).

The relationship between the barons and their people is also slightly peculiar. The official world population is just two thousand people, but this takes into only account members of the baronial households. They are known as citizens, whereas the much larger population outside the households are referred to as subjects and have a distinctly lower status.

Ergo

Ergo is a great failure of the General Development Company. In 800, Ergo was a relatively prosperous TL7 world; primitive, feudal and insular, certainly, but much more stable than many of the other worlds in this sector. The Council of Barons had even successfully driven off bands of raiders from Sindal subsector using primitive atomic missiles, and was experimenting with redeveloping jump technology.

GeDeCo contacted the world in 802, offering to help fund the construction of a starport. The Council of Barons agreed to the proposal, and construction started immediately on a new Class-A port. As the new structure neared completion, the Barons began to squabble over trade and tax revenues. The dispute escalated until it turned into open war. The Council of Barons dissolved into a handful of warring feudal states. One of the earliest attacks destroyed the starport, forcing GeDeCo to look elsewhere for a transit port (they eventually established Tech-World).

The Ergo war lasted more than a century, and ended when a famine swept over the planet. The population dropped by more than nine-tenths in a combination of starvation and nuclear winter. The civilised area of Ergo is now a small region surrounding the ruins of the starport, ruled by a largely ineffectual Council of Barons who still dream of vast wealth from space traffic, and plot to somehow rebuild the port. The rest of the planet is a hostile mix of radioactive wasteland, cannibal tribes and pirate bases.

Exe

Exe station is a lonely little refuelling post in the middle of the Borderlands, owned and operated by the General Development Corporation. The station is mostly automated, so the crew have little to do other than haul liquid hydrogen back from the local gas giant for fuel. As this, too, is mostly automated, they are very, very bored.

Falcon

Falcon is a hollowed-out asteroid, dating back to the Solomani wave of colonisation. The natives of Falcon practise strict population-control to avoid overtaxing the capacity of their world. Over many generations, they have become dependent on Falcon's precise mix of bacteria and germs, and must wear encounter suits when travelling beyond their home. Visitors are not allowed to interact directly with the Falcon environment – a small section of the asteroid is set aside for them.

Inurin

Inurin is a prize world, nearly Earth-like, with considerable mineral deposits and rich farmland. It is heavily balkanised, with a population of about 40 million divided into several largish nations and many smaller groups. There is no officially designated main starport on Inurin; any ship approaching will be bombarded with offers, inducements and threats to try to get it to land at one port or another. A few settlements are aggressively isolationist and will shoot at anyone trying to land unless they are a well-established friend.

Sperle

This planet is best known for the practise of hunting titanic amoeba colonies called Sperle Whales, which can be processed into valuable biochemicals. The General Development Corporation invested in Sperle Whale processing factories, and now exert almost total control over the government.

Tanith

Tanith has had a rather troubled history since it was settled during the Rule of Man. Recolonisation took place in the 500s, co-opting the survivors of previous colonies that had collapsed into barbarism. The current ‘world government’ in fact only controls a small enclave around the starport, with the rest of the world inhabited by scattered enclaves ranging from TL0-3.

Tech-World

The first colony here – a Solomani outpost – was destroyed by the Sindalian Empire's Punitive Armada. The world lay empty for hundreds of years, until the GeDeCo funded the construction of a starport here to encourage Imperium-Hierate trade through the Borderlands. To reduce the costs of constructing the starport, they contracted with renegades from the technologically advanced world of Neumann in Gazulin subsector. While the world of Neumann has the highest level of technology of any world in the whole sector, its use is heavily restricted by the Shield Church. The heretics were eager to take GeDeCo's offer of a world of their own and funding to develop their science.

The human population of Tech-World is around four thousand. The robot population is around a million and rising, depending on how one tallies distributed-intelligence computer with numerous slave bodies. Experiments in using nanotechnology, cloning and other technologies of questionable legality are ongoing, and Tech-world is attracting increasing numbers of researchers who wish to pursue lines of inquiry not permitted in the

Imperium. GeDeCo refuses to put pressure on the Tech-World rulers to rein in their scientific experimentation, claiming that its contract with the Tech-World government begins and ends with the starport.

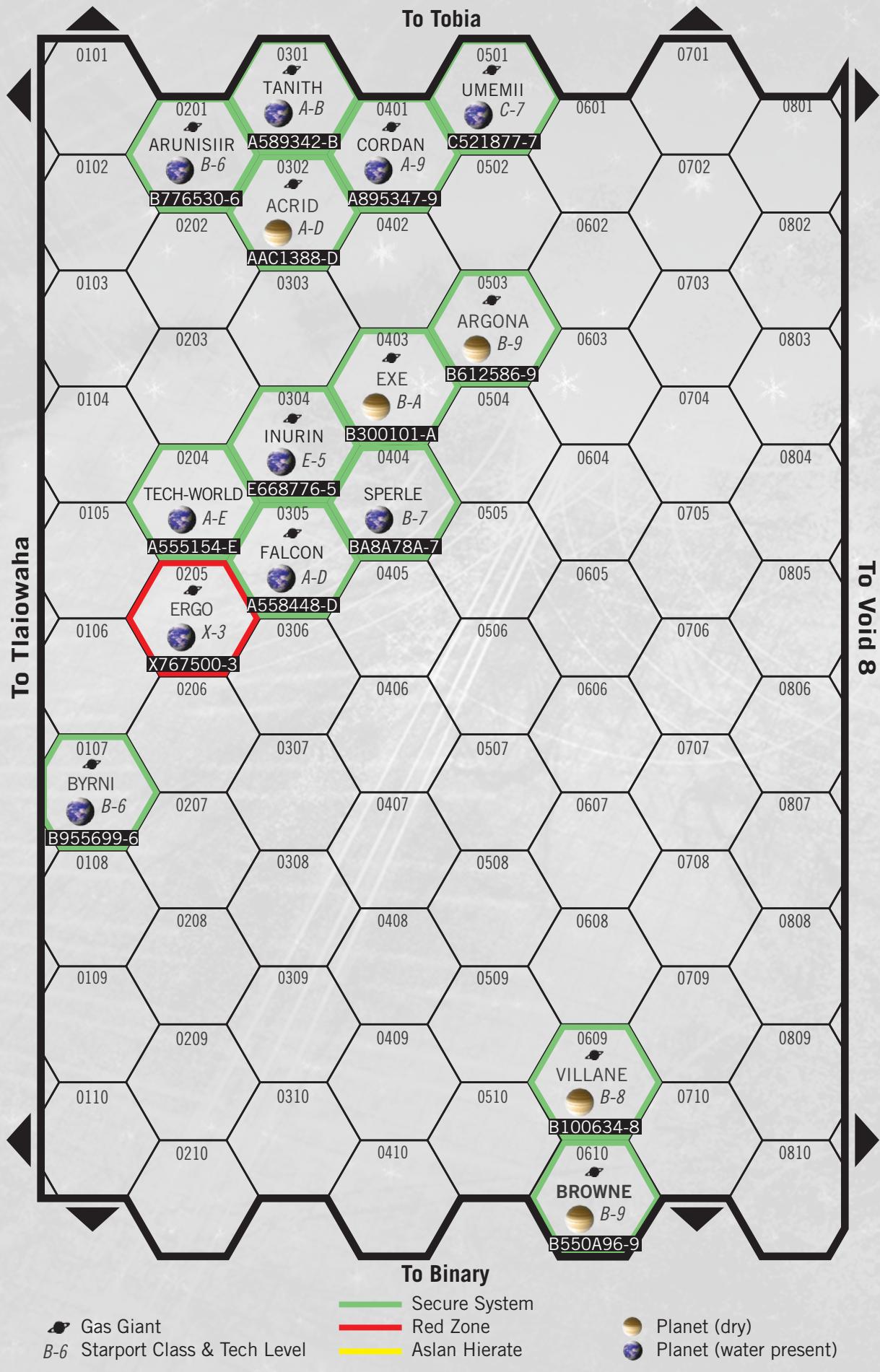
The Tech-World starport is a minor wonder of the subsector – the starport is a huge black ovoid that reconfigures itself dynamically to cope with rising or falling traffic. The interior walls are actually curtains of a smart bioplastic that can move and reshape themselves to create larger or smaller landing bays and warehousing. Every visitor is assigned a guide robot programmed to their needs, and security is assured by keying everything to the user's genetic code.

Umemii

Umemii is an almost-barren rockball whose population are divided among several balkanised states. Most notable among these is the Grand Duchy of Requille, a small starfaring nation with holdings throughout the Borderlands region. The city-state of Essfaiyer is the largest Vargr homeland in the Borderlands region.



THE BORDERLAND SUBSECTOR



ranib subsector



Ranib subsector is entirely controlled by the Aslan Hierate. The subsector can be divided broadly into two regions. The spinward area is dominated by tsekho clans, those whose practices are at odds with the orthodox culture of the *tlaukuh*. Many of these lesser clans were caught between the second wave of settlers from the Hierate (backed by the victorious *Tlaukuh*) and the expanding Florian League. The spinward section of Ranib is dangerous territory for the unwary Traveller, as both cultural differences and frequent minor wars can pose a threat.

The trailing zone worlds from Isysewekh to Stohys are more closely associated with the nearby sector of Silraaihe, and are ruled by traditionalist Aslan. Many of the worlds here have strong ties back to the old Hierate; Ranib subsector is known as a hotbed of political intrigue and clan manoeuvring.

Between the two areas is a dangerous no-clans-land, where territories regularly change hands.

Subsector Worlds

Name	Location	Bases	Statistics	Trade Codes	Travel Code	Allegiance	Gas Giants
Aehahr	0204	ARS	B100449-C	Va Ni		Hierate	G
Aiyostea	0308		B20068B-9	Va Ni Na		Hierate	G
Aohfeau	0210		B998784-A	Ag		Hierate	
Awo	0306		C530366-A	Lo De Ni Po		Hierate	G
Ealea	0109		B576587-9	Ag Ni		Hierate	
Eaweiya	0305	ACS	A5406B7-A	De Ni Po		Hierate	
Ehearye	0603	ACS	A588779-C	Ag Ri		Hierate	
Eiwakh	0708		D200777-8	Va Na		Hierate	
Elahkoi	0104		C568587-9	Ag Ni		Hierate	G
Ftoakh	0206		E673A8C-A	In Hi	A	Hierate	
Ftyewirl	0102	ACS	B55648A-B	Ni		Hierate	
Hfa'yuweas	0401		B555388-B	Lo Ni		Hierate	G
Hkakh	0807	ACS	A424546-E	Ni		Hierate	G
Hkeleiakh	0709	ACS	E310000-0	Ba Lo Ni		Hierate	G
Hkesuh	0302	ACS	B9A4758-B	De		Hierate	G
Isysewekh	0600	ACS	A52058A-E	De Ni Po		Hierate	G
Ohtae	0809		B665168-9	Lo Ni		Hierate	G
Oseweheal	0501	ACS	B79A647-C	Wa Ni		Hierate	G
Stohys	0805	ACS	A567866-C	Ri		Hierate	G
Teharl	0506		C654453-A	Ni		Hierate	
Uaeakhea	0504	ACS	B530389-8	Lo De Ni Po An		Hierate	G
Uitasoayaw	0810	ACS	B579687-9	Ni		Hierate	G
Uiwuar	0105		B101115-E	Lo Ic Ni Va		Hierate	G
Yekhtia	0202		B423376-B	Lo Ni Po		Hierate	G

The oldest Aslan colonies in the Trojan Reach are here in Ranib. The subsector is only seven parsecs from the world of Aulryakh, where the jump-5 route across the Great Rift ends.

Aehahr

This world is owned by a vassal clan of the *Khaukhearl*, the *Khtiatyeea*. The starport is located on the airless moon of a gas giant named *Hlaifieayaher* (the Eye That Watches Over Deeds of Glory) by the Aslan, and is a minor port used mainly by ships travelling to Nora'a subsector.

Aehahr is best known for the neutral research facility established by the *Khtiatyeea* in 704. The facility consists of a cluster of structures on the moon as well as several orbital factories and research stations, and has a population of some thirty thousand scientists drawn from all over the Hirate. The best Aslan students compete for the prize of a place at Aehahr. Its main focus is on medicine, computing, environmental engineering and other topics without direct military applications.

Deep beneath the surface of Aehahr is a second research facility, this one run solely by the *Khaukhearl* and their vassals. While relics of the fabled Ancients were found in Aslan space, the centre of Ancient activity is believed to be somewhere in the Spinward Marches, and the Aslan have found far more traces of the Ancients on worlds coreward of the Great Rift. This second research facility is dedicated to studying relics in a long-term project to locate more intact Ancient sites. The *Khaukhearl* fear that Humaniti's greater access to Ancient artefacts will give the Third Imperium an insurmountable technological edge – they have seen the black globe loom large in their future, and shudder.

Ftoakh

This highly populated world is a source of tremendous shame to the Aslan. Ftoakh was settled by several clans, initially the *Wahtoi* and *Aroaye'l*. As more Travellers came across the Great Rift, Ftoakh welcomed them. It was a world shared by a dozen clans – old and new, progressives and traditionalists, *tsekho* and *khiraokhaor'ya* alike. Territorial disputes and challenges were resolved honourably by challenges, assassinations and limited wars. The nobility of Ftoakh were honoured by the Hirate for adhering to the best practises of the Aslan, proving it was possible to have a civilisation of warriors without constant destructive warfare and offering hope for reconciliation after the excesses of the Cultural Purge.

The war that engulfed Ftoakh was not started by any territory-hungry noble or clan invasion. For hundreds of years, the world had been shared by Aslan of radically different cultural groups and clans. *Wahtoi*, whose ancestors settled Ftoakh in the first place, rankled at having to share the planet with every newcomer who just crossed the Great Rift. Traditionalist *Yerlyaruiwo*, defenders of Aslan purity, were forced to share a world with deviants like the *Taukhaotuar*. *Ahroay'if* traders looked suspiciously at *Hrakoea* pirates. The planet was a powder keg that smouldered even as the nobles congratulated themselves on their civility.

The war began with rioting and claw mobs, and escalated to organised ethnic cleansing. When the clan militaries stepped in to defend their civilians, full-scale open war broke out. Fortunately, the *Ya'soisthea* were able to negotiate a truce between the fighting clans relatively quickly, and a neutral police force – the *Eukhter* – was formed to keep the peace. Three years of war took its toll on Ftoakh – the starport was destroyed and has yet to be rebuilt, and the planet's industrial regions were heavily damaged. Over twenty million Aslan died.

The *Eukhter* is an experiment in many ways – the Aslan do not normally have a police force, and so the *Eukhter* is based on human models. Travellers with law enforcement experience can find lucrative employment on Ftoakh, if they are willing to deal with a planet divided by a dozen distinct cultures and a billion unresolved grudges.

Ftyewirl

Arriving at Ftyewirl is a confusing experience for pilots who do not know the system. Jump in, and you can clearly see the dot of the main world on your screen – but the beacon from the starport is located millions of kilometres out. Ftyewirl Port orbits the fourth planet in the system, an uninhabited ocean world rich in hydrogen. Most ships dock at the port, refuel and jump out again without ever visiting the inhabited third planet.

Approaching Ftyewirl itself is perilous. The planet is located in the middle of an asteroid belt (technically, it is passing through an asteroid belt that formed hundreds of thousands of years ago in a cataclysmic collision between two larger moonlets; most of the larger rocks have long since fallen to Ftyewirl, but there are still plenty of smaller objects that present a hazard to navigation), so pilots must be extremely cautious. There are approach lanes that are mostly clear, but pilots are still advised to approach Ftyewirl at low speed.



The planet bears the scars of millennia of pummelling. Huge craters scar all three continents; life within a kilometre of the seashore is rare and fragile because of repeated tsunami, and the atmosphere is thick with dust. At night, the sky lights up as millions of meteorites streak through the upper atmosphere. The colony of some fifty thousand Aslan dwell in sheltered valleys, underground bunkers or in a city protected by computer-controlled repulsors. The colony is owned by the *Syoisuis* clan, who value their privacy. Other clans suspect Ftyewirl as being a secret training camp for *Syoisuis* spies. Visitors are discouraged.

The planet has several mines, where the Aslan excavate deeply buried iridium-rich meteors. The settlers also practise limited agriculture and light industry.

Hkesuh

Hkesuh is a tremendous world, hot and heavy. It is almost entirely dry – the only surface water are a few patches of ice at the poles, and some scattered lakes. 99% of Hkesuh's water is either underground in vast aquifers, or locked in the colonies of single-cell

organisms that make up the entirety of the planet's native biosphere. These *hkesuhoates* form reefs in the desert that stretch for thousands of kilometres.

The world is ruled by the *Taukhaotuar* clan, who arrived here in the wake of the Cultural Purge. The *Taukhaotuar* were driven out of the Hierate for practising an extreme form of ancestor worship – the ruling caste of the *Taukhaotuar* are clones of past male heroes and ancestors. The firstborn male in each family is always a clone of the father, and will inherit the father's estate. Natural-born second sons may never inherit their sire's domain, but instead go off and conquer other worlds (and, if they are lucky, win enough honour and renown to be considered for the immortality of cloning into the next generation).

This continuity of leadership makes the *Taukhaotuar* stable and conservative compared to other Aslan clans, and so their primary business is banking. They are strong allies of the *Tlaiwaha*, but feud with the ultra-traditionalist *Yerlyaruwiwo*.

They have adapted well to their adopted desert homeworld. They are nomadic, criss-crossing the desert on motorised caravans and sailing on sandships. There is a small asteroid belt containing mostly chunks of water-ice in the Hkesuh system, and a band of Taukhaotuar ice miners supply the world with most of its drinking water. Some of the ice is mined and shipped home in tankers, but most is dispatched in the form of atmosphere-grazing comets. Thrusters are attached to a chunk of ice, which is then flown on a course that grazes Hkesuh's atmosphere. The asteroid burns up, releasing a cloud of water vapour that falls as rain across the desert. The nomads follow these sudden rain belts, and their animal herds feed on the explosions of greenery that follow an asteroid pass.

Stohyus

Stohyus is the homeworld of the *Ahroay'if*, a vassal clan of the *Tlaiovaha* and one of the richest worlds in all the *Ya'soisthea*. The Aslan call it the Golden World; ice particles in the upper atmosphere reflect the yellow light of Stohyus' sun, causing the world to shimmer in the light. Territories on Stohyus are almost as highly sought after as land on Kusyu.

For all its prestige, Stohyus is located uncomfortably far from the clan's main focus, over in *Tlaiovaha* subsector. The clan's corporations and younger, ambitious members have moved away from Stohyus, leaving the world to aging males and hereditary *htahei*. If this trend continues, then Stohyus will be rendered irrelevant to the clan's fortunes and a drag on its military forces – the planet is attacked regularly by other clans trying to capture some of the rich territories. Many of those who remain on Stohyus are part of the so-called Ascendancy faction, who believe the *Ahroay'if*'s wealth should be parleyed into greater standing back in the Hierate and eventual promotion into the *Tlaukuh*. The New Horizon faction, made up mostly of younger members and corporate executives, hold that the *Tlaukuh* and old Hierate are irrelevant to the clan's future. Many of the New Horizon have begun, scandalously, to ape human behaviour. They dress as humans, speak Anglic, and are said by some to even eat vegetable matter willingly.

The leader of the clan, the *Ahroay'ifko*, is the only member of the clan whose support can tip the balance between the two factions, but he is restricted to his palace on the Golden World. He suffers from a rare and currently incurable genetic disorder which causes extreme fatigue and fur loss. Doctors from all over the Hierate have tried to find a treatment, but none have been successful. The *Ahroay'ifko* is considering seeking out medical treatment from the Imperium (the technologically advanced Darrians might have the

necessary skills to save him), but doing so would be tacit support for the New Horzoners and might tear the clan in two.

Yekhtia

This small world was originally settled as a transit point for jump-2 ships moving from Aehahr to the 'renegade worlds' of the coreward cluster; an underground starport was built around year 0 of the Imperium, with access via the south polar region. The planet circles around its star remarkably quickly, with a year of just fifty-two days. The surface temperature on Yekhtia exceeds 400° K during the day, making the surface almost uninhabitable.

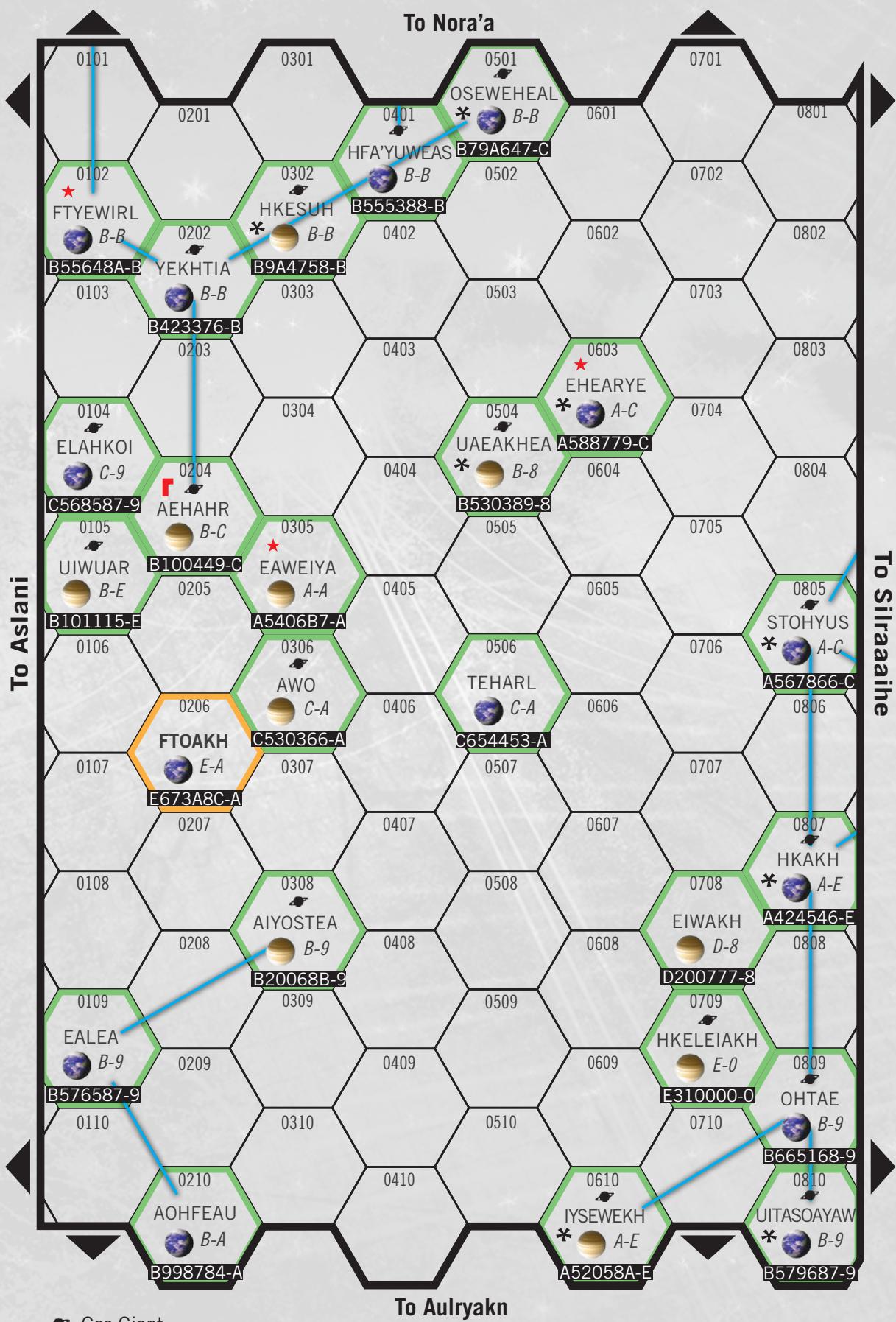
However, several hundred Aslan do live on the surface of this seared planet. Two centuries ago, an Aslan noble was driven off his territory by a young upstart. The noble, Ktolaihuihwouftairl, was stupendously wealthy thanks to trade, but had grown fat and lazy. Rather than attempt to reconquer his territory or find a new domain, he retreated to another of his holdings – Yekhtia.

The Aslan do not consider underground bases to be valuable territory. A warrior must be able to look over his domain, to run through it, to chase prey across a landscape that echoes the open plains of Kusyu where the Aslan evolved. Hostile worlds may force the Aslan to burrow underground like yoois (meat-worms, a reducer invertebrate common to Kusyu), but a lord does not live in a hole. He strides across open terrain, and knows that everything from where he stands to the far horizon is his and his alone. Therefore, Ktolaihuihwouftairl could not claim his old social standing based on the underground base at Yekhtia.

Fifty kilometres away from the starport, Ktolaihuihwouftairl discovered a wide crater left by some ancient asteroid impact. His engineers covered the crater with a tent of highly reflective foil and sealed the edges. The foil reflected most of the sunlight and insulated the valley. Over the course of a decade, the engineers made the environment within the crater viable for supporting Aslan life, and it was wide enough to count as surface terrain. Ktolaihuihwouftairl could once again stand tall beside his fellow nobles.

Since those days, another five thousand square kilometres of Yekhtia's surface has been tented. The material is strong enough to hold in a thin atmosphere and can seal small cuts and holes automatically, but the inhabitants are extremely paranoid about any damage to their home. Therefore, visitors to Yekhtia are asked not to take any knives or blades out of the starport, and Aslan are expected to bind their dewclaws down to ensure a hot-blooded argument does not result in a lethal tear.

RANIB SUBSECTOR



Gas Giant

B-6 Starport Class & Tech Level

Other Naval Base

*

Secure System

Trade Route

Research Station

Amber Zone

Planet (dry)

Planet (water present)

SILRAAIHE SUBSECTOR

Silraaihe subsector is also entirely claimed by the Aslan. The main trade route from the Imperium to the jump-5 route across the Rift runs through it, from Haealroiea to Aoiyras to Stehasu and then onto Hkea'as, and these worlds see a great deal of space traffic.

Much of the subsector is politically unstable; Silraaihe is full of ambitious ihat ei and Aslan lords looking to increase their holdings. Some say that Tlaiowaha with its emphasis on trade and corporate intrigue is a female sector, in which case Silraaihe is unashamedly male. Here is a wild region of space, where an Aslan warrior with a bloody sword in one hand and a smoking rifle in

the other can make a name for himself. Hither come the conquerors, to tread the rich worlds of Silraaihe beneath their clawed feet! Many of the worlds in Silraaihe were originally owned by the Glorious Empire; Eoiw, Erasaso, Earlyu and Ouiylo were all Glorious Empire worlds recently conquered by the Hierate or else abandoned by the Empire.

Silraaihe is known for having several extremely dangerous worlds. No less than six of the planets in the subsector harbour native predators dangerous to Aslan, ranging from the man-brutes of Ouiylo to the giant sharks of Teiseirle.

Subsector Worlds

Name	Location	Bases	Statistics	Trade Codes	Travel Code	Allegiance	Gas Giants
Aisaoawi	0108		EAC5000-0	Ba Fl		Hierate	G
Aiuiktiyr	0508		E797449-7	Ni		Hierate	G
Aiuite	0804	ACS	B645747-A	Ag Ht		Hierate	G
Aoiyras	0405		B54068C-9	De Ni Po	A	Hierate	G
Awawewaw	0807		E855859-7			Hierate	G
Earlyu	0113	ACS	B989859-C	Ri Ht		Hierate	G
Eateaw	0504		E423000-0	Ba		Hierate	G
Eiyehwehakhea	0204	ACS	B79A57B-B	Wa Ni		Hierate	G
Eoiw	0101	ACS	B430684-C	De Na Ni Ag Po Ht		Hierate	G
Ewyeyal	0106	ACS	B58457A-B	Ag Ni Ht		Hierate	
Haealroiea	0206	ACS	B554487-9	Ni		Hierate	
Hkuikhekh	0104		B532316-C	Lo Ni Po Ht		Hierate	G
Htoihfui	0509	ACS	A568873-C	Ri Ht		Hierate	G
Huaholr	0606	ACS	B42049C-9	De Ni Po	A	Hierate	G
Irlaiw	0406	ACF	C436A75-D	Hi Ht		Hierate	G
Kheiyyo	0707		C5257B7-9			Hierate	G
Ouiylo	0603		C574789-8	Ag Ht		Hierate	G
Rileakh	0503		C437855-A			Hierate	G
Sosuasaoh	0705	ACS	B100858-B	Va Na		Hierate	G
Stehasu	0704	ACS	A520677-C	De Na Ni Po Ht		Hierate	
Teiseirle	0608		BA9A377-8	Lo Wa Ni		Hierate	G
Wuaki	0208	ACS	A310545-C	Ni Ht		Hierate	G
Yai'ilrao	0801		B85836B-B	Lo Ni Ht		Hierate	G
Yu'eal	0505	ACS	B432686-C	Na Ni Po Ht		Hierate	G

Aisaoawi

Aisaoawi is a hellish world of volcanoes and boiling oceans of salt while the atmosphere is an acidic, sulphuric soup. Surveys have shown that Aisaoawi has considerable mineral deposits, although getting to them is virtually impossible.

There have been three attempts to settle Aisaoawi, and all ended in bloody slaughter. The first was by an unknown Aslan clan who crossed the Great Rift over a thousand years ago (historians believe it was most likely the *Rayur* clan, migrating along with their vassals following their elimination from the *Tlaukuh*). They built the original starport and a mining settlement high atop a plateau, where the atmosphere is much thinner and less dangerous.

At some point in the intervening centuries, the Glorious Empire discovered the world and reactivated the mines. They abandoned Aisaoawi within a year. At the time, it was believed the Empire left the world because it was too expensive to exploit the planet's mineral reserves using weak human labour.

Finally, the *Tlaiwaha* reopened the mines in 1080. Soon afterwards, colonists reported sightings of something moving out in the sulphur mists. When the next supply ship jumped into the system, the colony did not respond to hails. A landing party discovered the starport and mines were empty; there were signs of weapons fire and close combat everywhere, but no bodies. The environmental seals were breached, flooding the tunnels with the invidious atmosphere.

Something is living on this hostile world, some alien race capable of wiping out three separate Aslan colonies.

Awaweaw

Awaweaw is located at the fringe of Aslan space, and is newly colonised by the Aslan. The world has a lush biosphere, dominated by titanic saurians, floating gasbag-like 'sky jellyfish' and aerial rays who have a wingspan of more than twenty metres and glide on thermals. There is also a native sophont race, a species of scaled humanoids who had reached TL2 by the time the Aslan arrived. They call themselves the Yont, and their world Yonta. There are approximately two hundred million Yont on Awaweaw. The Yont tribes that have encountered the Aslan so far believe the aliens to be gods.

Today, Awaweaw is claimed by the *Ahroay'if* clan, and is ruled by a charismatic young noble who styles himself Prince Wauiatyakhiyw. He is a second son of the *Ahroay'ifko* himself, showing the importance the clan attributes to this new colony. While all of the planet's land has been divided up into Aslan territories, the

Aslan colony has not yet begun to impinge on the Yont settlements. The two races have very different goals; the Yont are slowly learning that the Aslan are not 'sky gods' and are in fact potential allies (or slavers), while the Aslan are busy building their colony (including a starport) and exploring their new world.

Both Yont and Aslan are threatened by the predatory saurians of Awaweaw. The Yont live in fear of hostile sky rays and great lizards called Haums (the sight of an Aslan warrior killing a haum with a fusion rifle was what convinced the Yont that the Aslan are gods). Prince Wauiatyakhiyw has grand plans to hunt these mighty predators and use the Yont as a source of cheap labour. The planet promises to make him and his clan even richer.

The *Ahroay'if* were not the first to discover Awaweaw. The world was explored by the Imperial Scout Service centuries ago, and there is a small GeDeCo outpost hidden in the jungle. The GeDeCo employees were investigating methods for bringing the Yont up to a higher level of technology without destabilising their primitive tribal society; now that the Aslan are here, the GeDeCo team have had to change their plans, and are currently exploring ways to turn the Yont against the Aslan.

Earlyu

Earlyu's loss was a bitter pill for the Glorious Empire to swallow – the planet is rich in valuable resources, especially petrochemicals and an anagathic moss. *Ihatei* warriors attacked the planet in 772, conquering over a third of its land area and establishing a new starport in the centre of the Great Swamp. The *Khaukheairl* clan saw the success of these *ihatei* and offered to support their war in exchange for vassalage. In 801, the *ihatei* were made nobles of the *Khaukheairl*, and *Khaukheairl* warriors flooded onto the planet.

Since its fall, Earlyu has become an integral part of Silraaihe's economy. The industrial complex of Siroal is a city-sized factory, producing everything from pharmaceuticals to clonemeat to synthetic fabrics. The human slave population, originally numbering some five million, was reduced to less than 500,000 by the wars



Yont Travellers

The following adjustments can be used to create Yont Travellers.

Characteristics: END+2, INT-2, EDU-2

Careers: Drifter

Traits: Armour (+1)



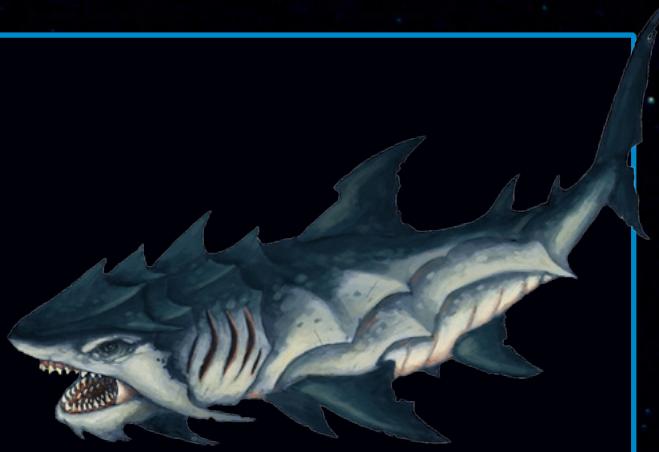
OUIYLOI MAN-BRUTE

ANIMAL	HITS	SPEED
Ouiyloi Man-Brute	32	7 m
SKILLS	Athletics (dexterity) 1, Athletics (strength) 2, Melee (unarmed) 3, Recon 1, Survival 2	
ATTACKS	Fists (3D)	
TRAITS	Heightened Senses	
BEHAVIOUR	Carnivore, Killer	



TEISERLE SHARK

ANIMAL	HITS	SPEED
Teiserle Shark	62	18 m
SKILLS	Athletics (endurance) 2, Melee (unarmed) 2, Survival 1	
ATTACKS	Jaw (6D)	
TRAITS	Armour (+6), Heightened Senses, Large (+3), Slow Metabolism (-2), UV Vision	
BEHAVIOUR	Carnivore, Killer	



HAUM

ANIMAL	HITS	SPEED
Haum	124	15 m
SKILLS	Athletics (endurance) 2, Athletics (strength) 2, Melee (unarmed) 2, Recon 1, Survival 1	
ATTACKS	Jaw (6D)	
TRAITS	Armour (+4), Slow Metabolism (-1)	
BEHAVIOUR	Carnivore, Killer	



and diseases from the swampy regions. The Khaukheairl have restricted the humans to a reservation in the swamps, where they have a cottage industry of making counterfeit Imperial goods the Khaukheairl sell as 'genuine' human-made items back in the Hierate.

Eoiw

This world lies right on the border of the Glorious Empire, and was conquered by the Hierate in 1103. Hulks of broken Glorious Empire warships still hang in orbit where they burned; broken domes litter the landscape. The Empire fought a last-ditch defence of this planet by sending their human slaves out with explosive collars and handguns, and there are still Glorious Empire Aslan camps in the transdome tunnels below the surface. The attackers – a mix of *i hatei* bands and *Hroakoea* clan troops – are still working to secure all the surviving domes.

The military base in orbit was originally a Glorious Empire facility and wrecked in the fighting. The conquerors are working to repair it; currently, an Aslan warship is stationed there at all times, providing power to the base. On its own, Eoiw has little value, but the *Hroakoea* clan intend to use it as a stepping stone towards further attacks on the Empire.

Irlaiw

Irlaiw was one of the first worlds settled in this subsector. What was a *Wahtoi* trading post has, over the course of two thousand years, grown into a major world and the effective sector capital. During the early days of Irlaiw, there were too few spacecraft to allow the population to settle other worlds, and the effort of taming the planet was too great to allow for open conflict. Land on Irlaiw is therefore given as a reward for successful entrepreneurs and highly ranked bureaucrats. Among the older inhabitants of Irlaiw, there is no distinction between male and female Aslan; females may hold territory and males are trained to handle technology and money.

The *Irlaiwi* had to veil their culture during the Cultural Purge, but this was a mere surface change. An *Irlaiwi* lord may pretend in public to defer to his female financial advisor, while a female landowner might employ a male agent when dealing with more traditional nobles. Other clans do not follow the *Irlaiwi* gender practices, but honour the planet's system of assigning territory based on merit, not conquest.

The planet is vastly overpopulated, and relies on regular shipments of food (especially meat) from offworld. The starport's class C rating reflects the sheer backlog of traffic; most ships will be kept waiting in orbit for three to six days before being assigned a docking berth, and

Irlaiwi traffic control is notorious for impounding vessels that dare land without permission. The lower classes on *Irlaiwi* are fed synthetic meat, and the planet's biotechnology industry is the most advanced of its kind in the *Ya'soisthea*.

Ouiyloi

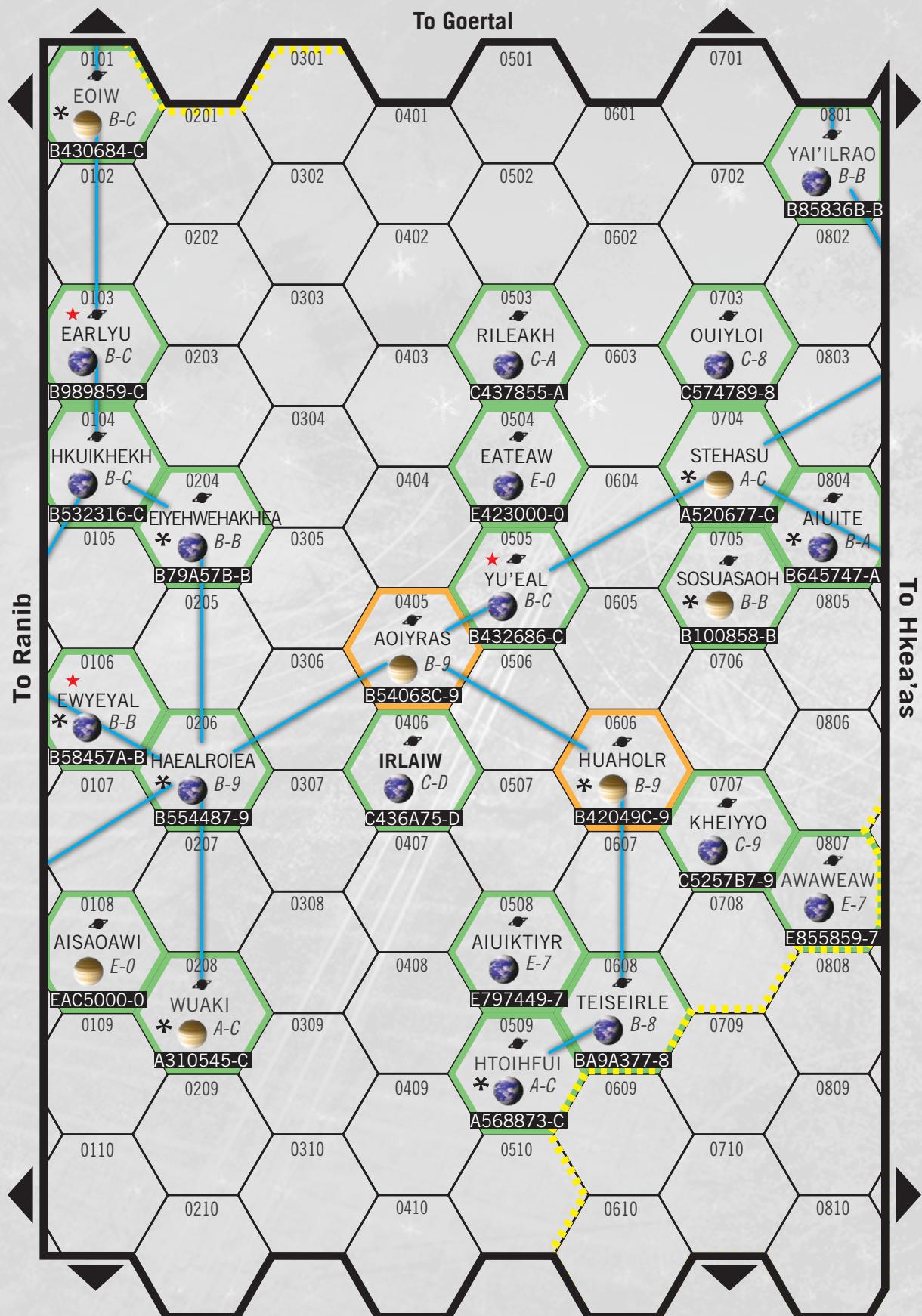
Ouiyloi is another world recently recaptured from the Glorious Empire. It was one of the Empire's most productive agricultural colonies; Ouiyloi's rolling farmlands were divided into thousands of small baronies and plantations. An Aslan manor house stood in the centre of each plantation. The slaver lords oversaw their human labourers using floating grav-platforms and skimmers. Produce from the farms was taken to the capital, Ouiy, using high-speed maglev trains. At least, that was before the war.

The war for Ouiyloi lasted less than a month. When the Hierate first attacked, the government at Ouiy sent word to each manor, ordering them to send warriors to the various mustering points by train, but the attacking Aslan were able to divide and conquer the Ouiyloian forces by bombing the rail lines. Defeating the planet's front-line warriors was a much easier and less costly job than mopping up the guerrilla forces left behind to defend the scattered manors.

The Glorious Empire Aslan of Ouiyloi were known for their slaver raids. They sent ships out across the Reach to purchase or capture human slaves. They also used slavery to punish political prisoners. The slaves were horribly mistreated, with malnutrition and disease being widespread among the manor slaves. While the burden of the human population has been partially lifted, the Aslan have not freed the slaves. Approximately 10% of the humans on Ouiyloi are first- or second-generation slaves, captured from human colonies along the border of the Glorious Empire or the children of such captives. The Aslan have agreed to repatriate these slaves, but the rest have nowhere else to go.

There are few dangerous predators on Ouiyloi, but the forests are still extremely hazardous. The Glorious Empire somehow captured a number of Feskal from the Florian League and tried to use them as slaves. Deprived of Barnai leadership, the Feskal reverted to savagery and escaped into the forests. These Feskal have grown especially large and strong, possibly due to meddling with their genetic code. They do not distinguish between Glorious Empire and Hierate Aslan, and are strong enough to break the neck of an adult male. In addition to the physical threat posed by the brutes, the Feskal are also a significant political problem for the Hierate – if the Florian League discovers the enslaved Feskal, they are likely to react with all-out war.

SILRAAIHE SUBSECTOR



Gas Giant

B-6 Starport Class & Tech Level

★ Other Naval Base

- ★ Other Naval Base
- * Corsair/Clan/Embassy

Secure System

Aslan Hierate

Asian Literacy
Amber Zone

Trade Route

● **Planet (dry)**

- Planet (dry)
- Planet (water present)

HKEA'AS SUBSECTOR

The Hkea'as subsector is the trailing edge of the Aslan empire in this region of Charted Space. A trade route into the commercial zone of Tlaiowaha runs from Ralaw to Ereh and then onto Aiweawkh. The *Ya'soisthea* base at Afeakter is also an important world in the subsector, but most of the worlds here are backwaters by Aslan standards – second-rate worlds where second-rate lords rule, or worlds that have not yet become important to the clans who own them.

The *Tiykhisto* clan are important in this subsector, holding the worlds of Heweko and Khtiyrl. The *Tiykhisto* are aggressive and ambitious, and the *Tiykhistoko* (the clan leader) has declared that the Aslan race have lost their way and become a ‘race of merchants and peddlers’ when they should be conquering the stars. He claims that ever since the Peace of Fthair, the Imperium has been placating the Aslan with trade and lulling them into weakness. Only by breaking off trade relations with the Imperium and beginning a new period of expansion can the

Aslan reclaim their honour. The *Tiykhistoko* has many supporters and followers in the *ihatei* community, and his sermons and speeches are avidly traded in the *ihatei* camps.

The trader clans, especially the *Ahroay'if*, are strongly opposed to the *Tiykhisto*. Following proof that the *Tiykhisto* were behind a series of pirate raids in Borderland subsector, the *Ahroah'if* and their Tlaiowaha backers attacked the *Tiykhisto* and conquered the world of Eaohfose. Adding insult to injury, the Tlaiowaha established a naval base at Eaohfose specifically to watch for *Tiykhisto* raiders.

Hkea'as is at the edge of the Great Rift. There is nothing beyond the border for dozens of parsecs (apart from the two motes of matter that make up the two stars of the Binary subsector). Perhaps it is some spiritual cold, leeching in from interstellar space, that makes this sector so unappealing to most visitors. Perhaps it is the lack of vitality – there are few worlds left to conquer

Subsector Worlds

Name	Location	Bases	Statistics	Trade Codes	Travel Code	Allegiance	Gas Giants
Afeakter	0205	ACS	A69A68A-B	Wa Ni		Hierate	G
Airliweiw	0504		D56767B-6	Ag Ni Ri		Hierate	G
Aiweawkh	0103		BA961G3-D	Lo Ni Ht		Hierate	G
Ayayo	0105	ARS	B000674-D	Ni As Na An Ht		Hierate	
Burgess	0702		B796633-6	Ni Ag			G
Eaohfose	0603	ACS	B6736A7-A	Ni		Hierate	G
Ereh	0303		B67A369-D	Wa Lo Ni Ht		Hierate	G
Feaheaha	0106		E301268-9	Ic Lo Ni Va		Hierate	
Gikarlum	0604		B310587-9	Ni			G
Hewekho	0503		E10079A-7	Va Na		Hierate	G
Khtiyrl	0602	ACS	DA887CA-6	Ag Ri	A	Hierate	G
Ohraihah	0104		E8B6787-8	Fl		Hierate	G
Ralaiw	0301		B420534-D	Ni Po De Ht		Hierate	G
Tisilli	0507		B78A945-A	Wa Hi			G
Wesiyeah	0101		D641259-8	Lo Ni Po		Hierate	G

here. Five hundred years ago, this was a wild frontier, an unexplored region brimming with new territories, but the waves of *ihatei* who once gathered in camps here are gone. Some have gone back to the wars of Silraaihe or to fight the Glorious Empire, others have migrated coreward to the Borderlands, Tlaiowaha and Goertel to find new worlds. Hkea'as's glories are past.

The Aslan hold roughly 40% of the subsector. Most of the rest is empty space, the beginning of the Great Rift, but there are three independent worlds in the subsector – Burgess, Tisilli and Gikarlung.

Afeakter

Afeakter is a water-world officially owned by the *Aroaye'i* clan, but has become the de facto base of the *Ya'soisthea*. The council of clans meets on a different world each year, but Afeakter is the home of the council's bureaucracy and support staff. There are several naval bases in orbit; it is here that combined clan task forces muster for assignments such as convoy escort, war games or joint offensives.

Most Aslan bases on the surface are on artificial islands of ice, cut from icebergs at the poles and chemically treated to resist melting. Some of these ice islands are hundreds of kilometres wide and have lasted for centuries. Other bases are built in shallow water or on floating platforms.

There are also approximately a hundred thousand Aslan living in underwater habitats, who consider themselves the real inhabitants of Afeakter and often feud with the bureaucrats and corporate cats attached to the *Ya'soisthea*. The city of Owiyktoih is the capital, located one hundred metres below the surface. There is a large surface platform floating above the city, linked by flexible elevator tubes. The city is accessible by spaceship; visitors may either land on the surface and a dock there, or fly down a larger tube. Owiyktoih is a beautiful city, dappled in blue light from the translucent dome.

The lack of solid land on Afeakter is why the *Aroaye'i* were willing to effectively cede the planet to the *Ya'soisthea* several centuries ago. Today, Afeakter is a much more important and valuable world, and the Aslan lords of the planet grumble that their clan gave too much to the bureaucrats. The 'Free Afeakter' movement is growing in strength, sponsored by the leading noble, Ulryalehuasiy.

Ayayo

The Ayayo Transit Point was established as a jump-2 link from the crossroads at Stehasu to the *Ya'soisthea* base at Afeakter. Ayayo is a system without any planets

or gas giants, just a large number of asteroids and comets. The hydrogen for the transit point is shipped in by automated tanker from Ohraihah or gathered from the Oort cloud by ramscoop probes. There are a number of belt miner communities in the system, operating out of a large asteroid port called Tealrealia. Up until fifty years ago, Ayayo was a brief, dull stop on a jump-2 crossing, and the permanent population at Transit Point was less than a hundred Aslan.

In 1081, a miner on the fringes of the Lesser Ayayo Belt surveyed asteroid A563-221-9439G. She detected an unusual concentration of heavy metals, suggesting the rock was unusually rich, and deployed a swarm of mining drones to chew up the rock and extract any usable ore. When the lead drone activated its laser, the asteroid responded with a pulse of energy that destroyed the drone, crippled the miner and crashed computers across the system.

Aslan scientists ended up stripping away the rock by hand, as any directed energy discharge near the asteroid caused a lesser but still highly dangerous pulse. Beneath the rock, they found a pyramidal object roughly thirty metres on each axis. The object is made out of a superdense substance that resists all attempts to damage or analyse it. There are 256 movable panels on each surface; each panel is marked with a glyph. Researchers suspect that the object can be 'unlocked' with the right configuration of glyphs, but the number of potential combinations is astronomical. The researchers are looking for more clues before they attempt to manipulate the device, which is believed to be of Ancient origin.

Since the pyramid's discovery, several other smaller items have been found in the asteroids of the lesser belt. Researchers suspect these are tools or other debris left over from the assembly of the pyramid. Access to the lesser belt is restricted, and the system is patrolled by *Ya'soisthea* ships to ensure no Ancient artefacts go missing.

Burgess

Burgess colony was settled by exiles from the Kingdom of Drinax. The bizarre world is dominated by species of fungi – there are mushroom-like plants hundreds of metres tall in the fungal forests of Burgess while the plains are covered in a thick carpet of mould. The atmosphere is tainted with quadrillions of spores that can infest the lungs of a human; 'bursting' was the most common form of death among the first settlers. Burgess scientists managed to tame their world, establishing sealed cities and developing anti-fungal sprays and filter masks. Edible mushrooms were cultivated, allowing the population to grow swiftly.

Burgess has always been at war. Initially, the Burgess Emergency Committee was at war with the Kingdom of Drinax; today, they are at war with the Aslan Hierate. The population of Burgess are kept in a constant state of paranoia, and invasion drills are held every day. Every adult citizen of Burgess is required to practise weapons drills and is considered part of the army reserve.

Gikarlum

No-one would willingly settle Gikarlum – it is a lifeless rock without any notable resources. The unfortunate settlers here are descendants of a Drinaxian colony ship that was en route to Tisilli. The ship's drives failed and it ended up making a soft landing on Gikarlum (the world means Opportunity in the Drinax dialect). The colony has spread out from the wreck of that ship, the King Hurg V. The system of ranks and positions on the colony ship has become a hereditary caste system, so the ruler of Gikarlum is the Captain, and there are castes of Engineers, Stewards, Astrogators and so forth. The lowest caste, Passengers, are labour in the hydroponic caves.

A brilliant young engineer managed to rebuild the King Hurg V's jump drive and install it in a smaller ship, allowing Gikarlum to re-establish contact with the rest of the galaxy. Gikarlum once traded extensively with Burgess (well, as extensively as you can trade with a merchant navy of ten ships), but the recent expansion of the *Tiykhisto* clan into the area has blocked this trade route.

Khtiyrl

This world is home to the *Tiykhisto* clan, who also control the nearby Heweko system. They recently migrated to the world, and are still taming the jungles of their new home (the old *Tiykhisto* homeworld was in the Riftspan Reaches). The world is rapidly being transformed into a fortress, with buried meson gun emplacements and cities that are half military base. The world is a rich one, and the *Tiykhisto* have attracted millions of settlers. It is estimated that up to half a billion *Tiykhisto* warriors and vassals will migrate to Khtiyrl in the next decade.

A War of Assassins has been declared between the *Tiykhisto* and their *Ahroah'if* rivals. To defend against attacks, all ships visiting the world are searched for assassins, and all *Tiykhisto* nobles wear full armour at all times. All armour is painted identically in clan colours, and HUD systems in the armour allow the nobles to

recognise one another. The *Tiykhisto* walks unseen among his nobles, and in this fashion he has avoided a dozen assassination attempts.

As the War of Assassins has yet to produce any results, the *Ahroah'if* have begun a trade embargo against the *Tiykhisto*, cutting them off from the Aslan industrial planets of the Riftspan Reaches. GeDeCo is one of the few human corporations *permitted* to trade with the *Tiykhisto*, and has found the world a ready market for high-tech and industrial goods. The *Tiykhisto ihatei* are gathering for another invasion as territory on Khtiyrl is already growing scarce. The worlds of Burgess and Gikarlum are both easy prey and well within range; Burgess is likely to be the first target.

Tisilli

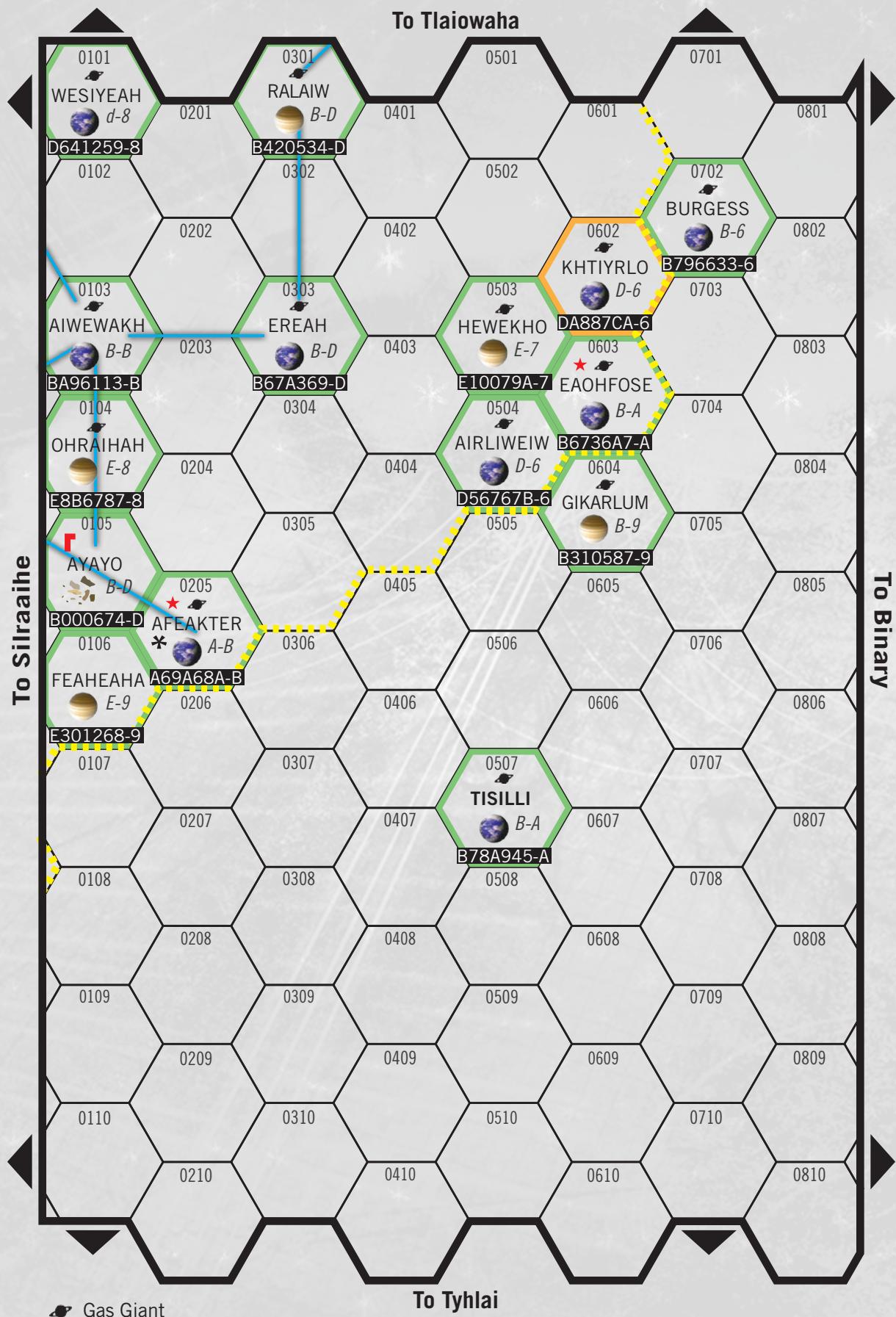
Tisilli is a neutral world two parsecs outside Aslan space. The population is a mix of Aslan colonists (75%) and human natives (25%). The humans are descendants of explorers from Drinax, and had fallen into Dark Ages barbarism by the time the Aslan arrived.

The Aslan population are all clanless Outcasts and low-standing *awkhea* who settled Tisilli two centuries ago. Most are descended from the followers of an Aslan prophet named Tarelriylr, who preached a more egalitarian social structure and claimed the souls of the ancestors were reborn not in their direct descendants, but in those Aslan who faced the greatest challenges. In other words, the poor and the oppressed were the most likely to be the reincarnations of ancient heroes.

Tarelriylr's followers were joined by more Outcasts and *ihatei*. The human natives of Tisilli were integrated into Aslan society and are counted as equals, especially as they taught the Aslan how to cultivate the fast-growing reef polyps used for construction. The world's status as an independent free port proved attractive to several Aslan corporations, and the economy grew quickly.

The government of Tisilli is made up of landholding Aslan males and human elders, as well as elected council of females from both races. The two houses of government are deadlocked on the question of clanhood – the male landholders believe Tisilli's population should apply for clan status from the *Tlauku*, becoming the *Tarelriylr* clan. The females fear entry into Hierate politics would make their world a target and upset Tisilli's relationship with the megacorporations who drive the economy.

HIKEA:AS SUBSECTOR



BINARY SUBSECTOR

And then, there is Binary.

This is a starless waste, with only two inhabited systems. The Aslan have utterly ignored Binary, as it is out of range of even their best jump drives. Only races with TL15 jump-6 vessels can make the hazardous crossing from world to world required to reach Binary subsector.

In the 700s, a long-range Imperial scout vessel discovered the world of Auitawry. Such a world could not be hospitable – Auitawry orbits so close to its sun that the daytime heat should have caused the oceans to boil, and the radiation is much too intense for any life to survive. Nonetheless, the scout ship detected liquid water on Auitawry's surface. Some of the crew suggested it could be a sensor error, but the captain ordered the ship to investigate.

Six months later, the scout ship arrived back in the Imperium, and the captain immediately demanded an audience with the Archduke of Deneb. The Sarage naval base was established as soon as possible to guard

Auitawry and conduct research. Sarage is considered Imperial property and is one of the most secure planets behind the Claw.

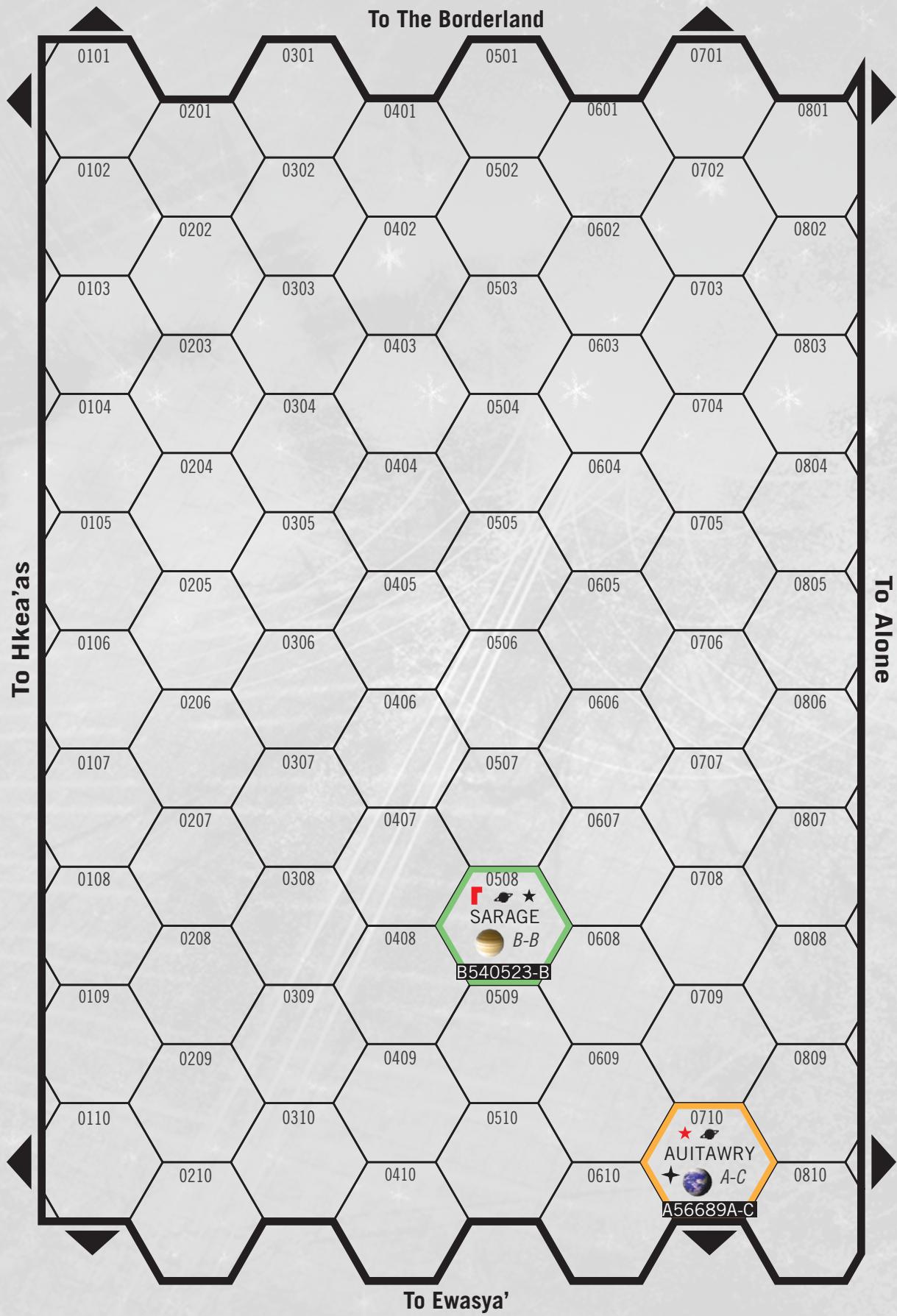
Auitawry is one of the best-preserved Ancient sites ever discovered. The Droyne population dwell in a city of wonders. Everything is controlled by psionic impulses, from basic facilities in every nest to huge automated factories capable of assembling starships. After four centuries of work, researchers have learned comparatively little about Auitawry's purpose – the Droyne city appears to be nothing more than an adjunct or possibly a control system for the vast Ancient machinery buried deep beneath the surface.

Assignment to Sarage base is seen as punishment by naval personnel. The base is much too far away from any civilisation for there to be any action, on or off duty, and the base is so secret that personnel can never discuss their duties with anyone. The only excitement comes when one of the scientists gets into trouble with an Ancient defence mechanism, and that is the sort of 'excitement' normally associated with disintegration.

Subsector Worlds

Name	Location	Bases	Statistics	Trade Codes	Travel Code	Allegiance	Gas Giants
Auitawry	0710	IRS, N	A56689A-C	Ri Na	A		G
Sarage	0508	N, R	B540523-B	De Ni Po		Imperium Client State	G

BINARY SUBSECTOR



Gas Giant

B-6 Starport Class & Tech Level

Imperial Naval Base

Secure System

Amber Zone

Research Station

Planet (dry)

Planet (water present)

Military base/Garrison

ASLAN GLOSSARY

A

Ahfa: Personal relics and talismans kept to honour the ancestors

Ahriy: Pride; a group of related Aslan families

Aisai: An Aslan's dewclaw, a 10-cm razor-sharp blade that folds like a jack-knife into a horny sheath in the base of the palm. From ai sai, 'blade claw'.

Aisailaokhe: A duel of honour over beliefs or grievances so deep that the fight must be to the death.

Akhuaeuhrekhyeh: The Rite of Passage

Akyafteirleao: A threat to Aslan culture; heresy or degeneration.

Ao: Immortal spirit, generally used as a metaphor instead of a statement of belief in such things.

Aohkho: Priest or sage.

Aokhaor: Honour, strength of spirit.

Aokhol: A moment of clarity and perfect balance, where eaia, action and universe are in perfect accord; a stepping stone towards khoafteirleao

Aoshi: (1) Kusyu's inner moon (2) An elusive concept or thought

Areiaao: A sprint, a period of approximately 16 seconds

Awkhea: Landless, lower-class Aslan; peasants.

E

Eaia: Inner self

-eakh: Suffix meaning 'world'.

Eakhau: An Aslan day.

Eal: Gun

Earleatrais: Referee or arbiter in a court case, war or duel.

Eikhoi: Dusk

Eikhoifiruah: Chant of praise for a defeated but worthy foe.

Ekho: Family

Ekhoao: Spiritual family; one's friends and blood brothers

Ekhtoawetyu: Rite of asking permission to enter another's territory

F

Fahr: (1) Beginning (2) Key

Firuah: A song, especially a warrior's challenge song

Firukhte: Ritualised insults or satire designed to provoke a challenge

Fiy: Vassal of

Fiya': 'I am your vassal'.

Fiyafiyair: The Imperium

Ftahea: An Aslan year

Fteirle: The Aslan people.

H

Hasoi: Landhold (literally 'place under a claw')

Hahea: Landowners, upper-class Aslan.

Helu: Plains or fields

Helua: Hunting ground

Hisol'i: Solomani

Hoaawli: Warrior school or cult

Htahyu: Important place; capital or centre. Usually used to describe the seat of a clan or a family homestead.

Htatei: First son

Htoi: Green

Huiha: Clan

Hyufteirlerye: (1) A great gathering of people (2) A city (3) The market

I

Ihatei: Second son

Iyarl: Agent or company

K

Ka'ah: Slow

Khailifikht: (1) The outback on Kusyu, the hunting grounds of great lords (2) Wilderness

Khaofiy: Ritual submission in a duel

Khaulear: One hundred in base 8; equivalent to 64 in base 10

Khir: Warrior

Khoafteirleao: Spiritual perfection attained by acting in perfect accord with one's nature.

Khoiaya: Armour

Khtauaao: Aslan time period lasting just under eighteen minutes

Khyeiryo: (1) A trickster (2) A legendary creature, known for its shrewd and deceitful nature (3) Humans

Khtyei: Holding or possession

Ko: (1) Himself (2) suffix added to the name of a clan to create the title of the head of that clan. The clan Hwriayro is ruled by an Aslan called Hwriayroko, who is THE Hwriayro.

Ka'tai: 'It is fitting', ritual response to many formal requests.

L

Layeau: Valley
Lu'uifakte: Computer information centre or library

R

Rao: Food
Rukta: Dishonourable deeds, such as treachery, assassination without first declaring a war of assassins, running from a challenge.
Rukt'hao: Private investigator
Rukhiywe: Committing rukta; acting in a non-Aslan way.
Ruktaha: District inhabited by Outcasts

S

Shi: Swift
Shifaowoi: Popular cooking spice
Si'aiktae: (1) Gift of hospitality by a landowner after one enters his domain (2) The meal traditionally given as a gift (3) being under the protection of a landowner
Si'khiraokhaor: A warrior's code of honour; what must be done.
Siya: Unmarried
Siyajkhoara: A female who takes an oath to remain unmarried, who dedicates her life to her clan
Sihouweililyiuahryi: 'Your pride calls to you'; a cry for help
Siyreakhaotoior: Classic Aslan literature
Soistsea: Unknown lands; the frontier
Su'ikh: Shield

T

Tahwihtekhau: Barbarians; non-Aslan
Tai'ao: Air demon from ancient Aslan mythology; guardians of heaven
Tala: Books (sing. Talat). Traditionally, a scroll.
Taleryu: Aslan personal weapon; a crescent-shaped blade
Tao: Aslan glyph
Tekhaao: An Aslan period of time similar to an hour; 135.7 standard minutes.
Tlasoistsea: (1) 'The bounty of new lands' (2) Lands awarded to a triumphant warrior (2) Being remembered as a great ancestor, Heaven

Tlaufhtahea: 'Thirty years', the time in which the Tlalkhu was organised.

Tlalkhu: The Twenty-Nine; the great clans who form the main deliberative council of the Hierate

Trokh: The Aslan language

Tye: 'Tiny sun', star

Tyeao: 'Star-spirits', the ancestors

U

Uealao: Aslan second
Ukhtai: Hero, honourable warrior

Y

Yae: Door or entry
Yaeatyeao: 'The gateway to Heaven'; deeds that will live forever
Yaeyekh: Airlock
Ya'uiya: Dishonour so great that the Aslan is stricken from the rolls of his clan; becoming Outcast
Ya'uiyekh: Emptiness, void, vacuum
Yerlik: Battle, especially a formal contest overseen by an earleatrais
Yerlikhelu: Battlefield
Yorl: Messenger or Courier

Numbers

Khte: Zero
Air: One
Hlai: Two
Kheh: Three
Hryeh: Four
Khu: Five
Hyro: Six
Koih: Seven
Tea: Ten; equals 8, base 8
Iyrl: Twenty base 8, equals 16 base 10.
Tlau: Thirty base 8, equals 24 base 10
Starl: Forty base 8, equals 32 base 10.

LIBRARY DATA



Admiral Darokyn

Infamous pirate captain; formerly an Imperial officer, he was found to be involved in a smuggling ring. He fled the naval base at Tobia with several other members of this ring, and set himself up as a pirate. The Imperium has not, to date, placed a bounty on his head; the Duke of Tobia said that the matter was one to be resolved by the Imperial Navy and they would punish their own traitors.

Chamax Plague

The alien Chamax overran their home world when the native sophonts eradicated the only predator that kept the Chamax in check. The swarm's population exploded and the Chamax devoured the entire biosphere in a matter of months.

The Claw

This term stems from the saying 'behind the Claw', used by inhabitants of the Trojan Reach, Spinward Marches and Deneb sector to describe regions of space beyond the Great Rift. This comes from the Great Rift looking similar to a claw on standard sector maps.

Deep Space Refuelling

It is possible, albeit extremely costly and time-consuming, to build up a cache of hydrogen fuel in interstellar space. A ship jumps in with its cargo holds full of hydrogen, adds most of its hydrogen to the cache, then refuels and jumps out again. These caches are used primarily by the military. Finding a cache without knowing its exact location is almost impossible.

Everglass

A synthetic coating to preserve objects. Everglass is extremely resilient (Armour 15), but heavy and brittle. A particular sonic frequency causes molecular bonds to break, turning the solid glass into a semi-solid or a liquid depending on the intensity of the sound.

The Great Rift

This is a very broad expanse of space lying spinward of the Third Imperium. It is characterised as having a very low star density, making traversing this region of space difficult. The easiest crossing is using the jump-

5 Trans-rift Hierate Route which links the two sides of the Aslan Hierate.

Imperial Culture in the Trojan Reach

There are two distinct 'poles' of Imperial culture within the Reach. Worlds in Tobia and Gazulin profit greatly from trade with the Aslan; citizens of those systems tend to be cosmopolitan, mercantile, status-obsessed and consider themselves closer to Deneb, Corridor and the core worlds than to the backward Spinward Marches. On the other side, there is the naval base at Pax Rulin and the world around it; those citizens see themselves as being right on the frontier and surrounded by enemies like the Aslan, Vargr and Zhodani. They prize martial discipline, frugality and strength. To those of Tobia, Pax Rulinites are xenophobic, militaristic martinet who jump at every shadow, and do not appreciate the importance of commerce or social standing. To those of Pax Rulin, Tobians are pretentious, shallow fops who think that the Trojan Reach is as safe and secure as Capital.

Lords of Blacksand

The mysterious rulers of Theev. It is generally believed that the 'pirate planet' is ruled by a consortium of pirate gang leaders, possibly together with representatives of the corporations who profit from the planet's illegal activities. There is no known way to contact the lords; they contact you.

Nanotech Swarms

Nanotechnology is technology that operates on the molecular scale. Some forms of nanotech become available as early as TL7 in the form of smart fabrics and coatings, but later Tech Levels allow the construction of microscopic robots, small enough to manipulate individual cells or even individual molecules. Individually, these robots are exceedingly simple, but can communicate and coordinate their efforts. Examples of such robot swarms include the 'utility fog,' a cloud of robots that can assume any shape and density desired, assembler/disassemblers who build objects up or tear them apart, from the nano-scale upwards. Like any technology, nanotechnology can be dangerous, especially when nanotech swarms can operate outside a controlled environment.





Outrim Void

The Outrim Void is an area of space rimward of the Spinward Marches, bordering the Trojan Reach. It is a group of frontier subsectors, whose planets are ruled by independent states and empires. The average Imperial citizen regards the Outrim Void with suspicion, considering it a place of pirates, corsairs and fugitives from the justice of the Imperium, a reputation that tends to cover the Trojan Reach as a whole.

Punitive Flotillas

The first punitive flotilla was launched in Year 115 of the Third Imperium, to put down a pirate king in Gazulin subsector. In the intervening years, a Flotilla has been dispatched roughly every four years. These flotillas vary in size and composition, but normally consist of a mix of Imperial Navy and subsector ships. They usually follow the trade routes between the Imperium, the Aslan Hirate and the Florian League; they sweep through those systems and neighbouring ones, looking for pirates and other threats. Sometimes, a flotilla is formed with a specific target like a pirate stronghold as its target, but more often they just go 'cruising for trouble'.

Many in the navy, especially those of Pax Rulin, consider the flotillas to be a useful training exercise. An Aslan naval officer may engage live-fire combat in a clan war every year or so; with the Imperium at peace, a human officer is much less likely to have a similar opportunity.

Punitive Plagues

The infamous Punitive Plagues of Sindal were developed in the laboratories at Noricum in the last years of the empire. The old standby of orbital bombardment was no longer enough to keep the outer provinces in line, so the Emperor ordered the development of weapons so deadly that a single bomb would be enough to devastate a planet. The plagues rely on the victim's own immune system, hijacking it and altering it to create new viral antibodies. Every infection therefore creates hundreds of new, entirely different plagues.

Red Flag Zone

A region protected by the mysterious Widows of Blacksand.

Rule of Man (Second Imperium)

The Rule of Man, or Second Imperium, was a short-lived episode in interstellar history when the Solomani conquered the Vilani Imperium, between -2219 and -2204. Large numbers of Solomani emigrated throughout the Imperium, taking positions of power on most worlds. Their ancestry and culture can still be felt in the Third Imperium.

Third Imperium (Ziru Sirkaa)

The hyperpower of Charted Space, the Vilani-ruled Third Imperium is the dominant power of the known galaxy. It maintains a very high level of interstellar trade and protects trade routes with a massive Imperial military.

Twilight

Starting in -1776 and ending in -1526, Twilight is the failure of the Rule of Man that triggered the collapse of most interstellar civilisation. Many of the worlds of the Imperium turned in upon themselves and while travel and trade continued, it was at a vastly reduced rate.

Types of Navy

There are several types of naval force in the Imperium. The Imperial Navy is the most powerful and prestigious. Its role is to defend the Imperium as a whole, and to deal with internal dissent or other major threats. They are the Emperor's sword amid the stars. Subsector navies, under the command of the capital world of each subsector, are local defence forces and law enforcement. They also serve as auxiliaries to the Imperial Navy. Finally, planetary navies are effectively private forces in the employ of a planetary ruler or government. Their size, skill, equipment and prestige varies wildly from world to world. In general, an officer of the Imperial Navy outranks a subsector officer, and a subsector officer outranks a planetary naval officer.

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