Signal GK

9

A DISTRESS SIGNAL A CRY FOR HELP ..... A CALL TO ADVENTURE

Signal GK

9

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Starship Design/Poster. . . . . By Tim Osborne
Language Notes . . . . . By Adie Stewart

ARTISTS IN ISSUE 9

Cover:

Ziadds By Tim Osborne

Interior Art:

Pg's 2, 4, 5, 7, 9, 32, 34 & 42 by Tim Osborne, Library Cover by Nik Piper, Pg's 19, 23, 24 & 28 by Len Robinson, Pg's 7, 21, 26, & 40 by Jae Campbell, Pg. 5 by Duncan Law-Green.

Subsector Maps - Andrew Pickford

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HIWG Membership details can be obtained from Nick Walker, Bankside, Reddisher Rd, Marsden, Huddersfield, HD7 6NF.

Signal-GK is produced and distributed by:

A. Jae Campbell,
The Sanctuary, 45 Fairfield,
Hebden Bridge, West Yorkshire,
HX7 6JD, UK

Please send all subs to the above address...

Signal-GK is editted by:

Leighton Piper,
11 Skeffington Road,
Preston, Lancs,
PR1 5UP, UK

Please send all contributions to the above address

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Editorial

NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

Welcome to issue 9! Judging by some of your recent comments you wish us to refocus on Dagudashaag. Last issue saw a wide range of material - in an astrographical sense - which was not to everyones' liking. To restate that much used cliche, "You can't please all the people all of the time". So this 'SGK' sees more items on Dag than either numbers 7 or 8 boasted. Although we will be taking articles and adventures, etc., from all space and time we will concentrate on the sector that many of you have contributed towards, Dagudashaag.

Competition Winners

The winner of the competition asking for material based upon information that has appeared in previous editions of Signal-GK has gone to ***Lee Richardson*** with his excellent adventure "Nine Day Wonder" which appears in this issue. The inspiration for his adventure was Jae's article on the world of Silk that appeared in issue 7.

Winner of the Feedback Competition was ***Nick Walker***. Congratulations to both of you, while we can't guarantee a prize every time let's have more contributions please!

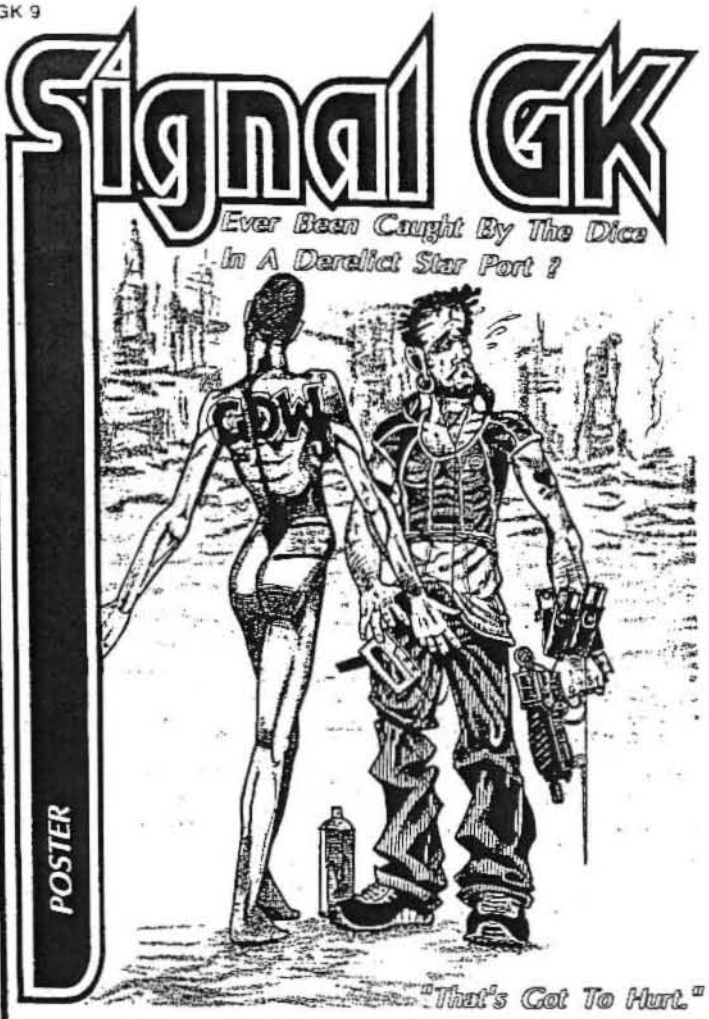
Having said that, we are offering issues 1 - 4 of Traveller Challenge (the original American copies) for the best, most original piece of Non-planetary Library Data to be sent in before December 18th 1994, so get thinking. DDT members are not exempt - If, after detailing over 50% of the Dag' they can still come up with new and exciting additional library data, they deserve to win!

For the future

Jae and I have been planning the possible production of one or more 'Best of....'s. These would include the original articles and adventures with re-editing and new artwork where appropriate. Also we have been toying with an idea of producing some T-shirts with some of the best art work from the fanzine to be emblazoned over the front and/or back. Anyone interested? Any comments on both ideas? Let us know which articles or covers you think we should include.

Please keep me informed about what you think of Signal-Gk and what you want to see.

All the best Leighton.



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- would all interested parties please contact Cyrano O. Jones on 8379-9765.

CONTACT : ZIADD

A Minor Human Race for MegaTraveller.

Acknowledgements:

J. Duncan Law-Green and Jae Campbell for their thoughts and ideas.

Scene.

'People throng through the arches and fill the great courtyard. All are tall and heavily built, with great manes of dark hair. Their rounded faces are crossed by fine brown and white stripes, and their arms end in three fingered hands. They are all clad in brightly coloured bodysuits over which they wear loose robes. Most hurry past or stand talking in small groups, but under a banner-draped portico you glimpse a man surrounded by a ring of heavily armed guards.

The day is bright and the air is filled with the din of animated conversation. You catch the rich scent of Davizi, a local delicacy, and hear the vendor's call in the distance. The hum of a gee-carrier catches your attention and looking up you see it wheeling out across the sea. A flock of birds, disturbed by the vehicle, spiral up into the pastel blue sky.

The plaza is surrounded by solid structures covered in intricate carvings and adorned with fluttering banners. Plants trail from ornamental terraces, softening the hard lines of the masonry. Looking down through an open arch you can see the sprawling metropolis of Hiaqq far below. The random patchwork of buildings and roads, dotted with domes and towers that mark demi-fortresses, fades into the horizon. Moving to a vantage point you are able to see the fortress of Riach'arr, overlooking the harbour from it's rocky crag '.

General Introduction.

The Ziadd are a minor human race taken from prehistoric Terra by the Ancients and transplanted to Zeda, in Daguadshaag sector. This document is a complete analysis of the Ziadd, and consists of three distinct parts. The first is a Port of Call, which details the Zeda system. The second is an examination of Ziadd psyiology, psychology and attitudes. And the third part details their development and history. Appendices include role-playing notes and some minor rules changes specific to the Ziadd.

THE ZIADD HOMEWORLD

Introduction.

Zeda is a pleasant world orbiting a hot orange star in Dagudashaag sector. It is the homeworld of a minor human race, and has lent its name to the subsector that it dominates. Zeda has been inhabited for hundreds of thousands of years; all the planets in the system have been thoroughly explored, and many are heavily populated.

Primary Star.

Name: I'Shia Iaqq. Stellar Classification: K4 III, Stellar Mass: 4.803 Sol, Stellar Radii: 36.802 Std, Stellar Luminosity: 275.118 Std. I'Shia Iaqq is an orange giant star visible from most of the systems across Zeda and Shallows subsectors.

System Details.

The Zeda system contains two planetoid belts and eight major planets, including four gas giant worlds. There are a total of twenty-eight large satellites present within the system, as well as numerous smaller bodies and captured asteroids. A few of the larger satellites have complex atmospheres, and two support life. Zeda itself has two small airless moons, both little more than balls of rock.

Zeda.

Mean Orbital Distance: 5.804 Billion Km (38.8 AU), Orbital Period: 110 Years, 101 Days, 18 Hours, 17 Minutes, Rotation Period: 33 Hours, 7 Minutes, Axial Tilt 13 Degrees 4' 13''. Diameter: 12,786 Km, Density: 1.376 Std. Mass: 1.372 Std, Surface Gravity: 1.375 Gees Std. Atmosphere rated as Standard, Tainted, Surface Atmosphe ric Pressure: 1.344 Atm. Composition: Nitrogen 77%, Oxygen 22%, Carbon Dioxide, Argon, Neon, Water Vapour and Other Trace Gases 1%. WARNING: The atmosphere contai ns large amounts of fine dust. A filter mask must be worn at all times. Hydrographic Coverage: 28%, Composition: Liquid Water and Water Ice. Mean Surface Temp: -3 Degrees C, Maximum Equatorial Temp: 25 Degrees C, Minimum Equatorial Temp: 2 Degrees C. Minimum Polar Temp: -83 Degrees C. Native Life Present.

Physical Details.

Zeda lies far beyond what would normally be defined as the habitable zone of a K-type giant star, but it's high albedo pushes the temperatures down to levels that are ideal for humans. The warm equatorial regions are dominated by large lakes and seas, which are separated by a series low mountain ranges. The seas are rimmed by tropical jungles that gradually give way to huge temperate forests in the north and rolling grasslands in the south. Beyond the equator and its rich variety of life are belts of semi-arid scrubland, and beyond them are the frigid, windswept dust deserts that give the atmosphere its taint.

There are thousands of species of plants native to the world, most with green or bluish-green foliage. They range from immensely tall trees to shrubs and grasses. Flowering species are common, and during

Sample HOMO ZIADD; average male & female with comparative male HomoSapien

MECANORMA

the summer the landscape become a riot of exotic fragrances and colours. Most animal life on Zeda follows a bilateral symmetry. Quadrapeds are the most common forms of herbivores, and bipeds are the most common forms of omnivores and carnivores. Almost all animals are homeothermic, and have thick scaly pelts to protect them from the dust. The seas and skies teem with life. Many of the native plants and animals can be safely eaten by humans, and likewise humans can be eaten by the native species.

Social Details.

The world has a population of 5.669 billion sophonts, approximately divided into 99.9% Ziadd, 0.09% other Humans, including Solomani, Vilani, and Scanians, and 0.01% other races, including S'mrii and Aslan. There are eight major cities dotted across the equator, each containing hundreds of millions of people. Surrounding these great metropolises are smaller cities, which serve as agricultural and industrial centres, and around them are the provincial towns. All of the cities are connected by efficient maglev routes and wide roads, and are served by good quality starports. Beyond the cities are great expanses of wilderness.

Ziadd society is quite structured. At the lowest levels there are the working classes, usually organised into family clans. Above these are community leaders, often backed up by a large paramilitary force of bodyguards. These leaders usually control a specific local interest, such as food production or industry. They are subservient to the City Senators and the Corporations, part of the government. Policing is carried out by the army; each city maintains its own forces. Social level is fluid, and even the lowest born individual has the chance of becoming the Lord High Senator.

Zeda is ruled by the Lord High Senator, a position that carries a vast range of executive powers. He heads the High Senate, which advises him and controls the bureaucracy. Legislation is carried out by the Outer and Inner Chambers. The Outer Chamber is made up of elected representatives who debate and draft new laws, while the Inner Chamber advises the High Senate and can also be used as brake on the Outer Chamber. The judiciary is headed by the Apical Court, which is controlled by the High Senate. It heads the High Courts, which in turn control the City Courts.

Since the Dynastic Crisis of 874 (qv) the government of Zeda has been directly answerable to the IISS, which holds the power of veto over any decision it makes. Until the beginning of the Rebellion the Imperial representative on the world was Duke Georg Innes, a racially pure Solomani. He was replaced early in the Rebellion by Marquis Colonel Marc Ideraan, another individual of pure Solomani extraction, but this time one specially selected for the role by Sector Duchess Karyn Viisarikaa.

The overall law level is moderate, with few restrictions. Weapons of an overt military nature are banned, but otherwise carrying armaments is commonplace. Personal freedom is greatly prized, and other than restrictions on private property people can do much as they please. Trade of all kinds is strictly controlled, and merchants must have a variety of licences and permits. Criminal and civil law are rigidly enforced, and anyone who commits a crime is strictly dealt with.

Other Details.

Buildings on Zeda tend to be built in clusters centered on fortresses. Most ordinary structures are wide and low, with occasional domes, minarets and towers. The fortresses are huge keeps in the centre of an enormous plaza, itself surrounded by administrative centres and defense works. Large cities are made up of a patchwork of fortress communities dominated by an imposing inner city, generally built on a natural feature such as an outcrop of rock. All buildings are beautifully decorated, covered with ornate carvings and some would say gaudy paintwork.

Dress tends to consist of a plain jumpsuit worn under loose robes. A long cloak is common, as are belts and bandoliers. Goggles, gloves and a cap are regular features, and most people carry a discreet weapon such as a knife or a pistol. The decoration, styling and quality of clothing define a person's rank and status. Members of the Senate wear ceremonial jewellery that declares their home city and their position within the government.

Zeda is a pleasant world with a long history and a rich culture. The care that the Ziadd have taken to preserve their home's natural beauty and vast wildernesses can cause people to forget that it is a heavily populated industrial world. The Ziadd are a unique, fascinating and complex race, a magnet for tourists and scientists from all across the sector.

'Hiikuragh hiaqia si dryash ballich'ka Ziadd slichudd'.

We are the Ziadd and we are proud.

THE ZIADD

Introduction.

The Ziadd are unusual among minor human races in that they were extensively modified by the Ancients. When they were first encountered by the Vilani the contact teams refused to believe that they were human at all. It wasn't until the Rule of Man that comprehensive details of their history emerged, but even today that information is still fragmentary.

Physiology.

The Ziadd were genetically engineered from *Homo Sapiens Neanderthalensis* by the Ancients for reasons unknown. It has been suggested that their physique was better suited to a high gee environment than ordinary Humans. The average male is around 2.1 meters in height, while the average female is slightly shorter, measuring a round 1.9 meters. Males mass around 100 kilograms while females mass around 80 kilograms. Other than the changes caused by the Ancients there are some skeletal differences from the Solomani norm. The race have a body shape described as mesomorphic: they are heavy and muscular.

There are some notable internal difference between ordinary Humans and Ziadd. One of the most important is the size of their brain. Overall it is slightly smaller and lighter than those of other Humans and both the cerebrum and the cerebellum are less well developed. On average Ziadd are just as intelligent as other humans , but they are unable to attain the highest levels of intelligence. Psionic potential among the Ziadd has never been thoroughly studied, but there have been very few recorded cases of Ziadd psionics.

The face is heavy, with thick ridges of bone above the eyes and a pronounced jaw containing large teeth. The eyelids have an epicanthic fold, typical of Solomani of oriental descent. A transparent membrane covers the eye, offering protection from airborne particles. Inside the nose is a membrane permeable to gases but not to dust, allowing them to breathe Zeda's tainted air. A similar membrane protects the ear. The head, shoulders and back are covered in a thick mane, and both males and females grow extensive body hair. Hair colour ranges from red through to black.

The limbs of the Ziadd have been entirely restructured. The arms are longer and more heavily muscled than those of normal humans. Both the shoulder and elbow bend to greater angles, allowing more movement. The arm ends in a powerful three fingered hand. The fingers are mutually opposable, and are both dexterous and strong. The feet end in two prehensile toes that have a powerful grasp.

But the most noticeable difference between Ziadd and other humans is their skin. The surface is coarse and hard, and helps to protect against windborne dust. Whereas most Humans display an even skin colour over the whole of the body the Ziadd display stripes. Like all Humans their skin produces the pigment melanin, but unlike other Humans it is concentrated into bands running across the body. A variation are individuals who have a mottled colouration. Some Imperial geneticists have proposed that the Ziadd striped colouring was a recessive trait already present in Terran Neanderthals, similar to albinism, but the issue is undecided.

Psychology.

Ziadd psychology is similar to that of Solomani humans. As a race they tend to be individualistic, but bonded to a particular area. Most are motivated by personal or family honour. They see the Community as an ideal that has to be protected. This can be a deceptive term: it includes such things as the family, a town, a nat ion, or even a world.

The Ziadd are by nature aggressive. They tend to launch into an attack, either physically or verbally, rather than looking for a peaceful solution to a problem. Tact is necessary in many situations, but force is preferred. Social status is affected by physical strength. Ziadd tend to act in a haughty manner towards those who are weaker, and deferentially to those who are stronger. They are aloof towards strangers, and treat them as inferiors until they have proven their worth.

Generally the Ziadd dislike change. Things such as fashion or research will remain static for long periods of time. Once an idea is accepted it is quickly taken into everyday life. The Ziadd are not afraid of taking radical steps, such as changing the balance of power, but would rather leave a bad but familiar man in control than be faced with the uncertainty of a new ruler. The Ziadd are not static: individuals have a lot of drive, but a passionate interest in preserving the status quo.

Attitudes.

Alongside their general psychology most Ziadd have deeply ingrained feelings, most of which are rooted in their history. Admittedly the majority of the population are well balanced, but even so they are still affected by public opinion.

Mentioning that the Ziadd were genetically engineered can provoke a variety of reactions. Most people have few opinions on the subject: it seems to have been for the best, and there is nothing they can do about it anyway. Some Ziadd display feelings of inferiority, of somehow being unnatural. They tend to be touchy when their origins are referred to and can react violently. On the other hand some Ziadd feel

'Ektsurr-a'th raimrukl sura'kr kaqqir.'

A man is what he believes.

that they are superior and have been specially chosen for some purpose. They tend to be haughty and aloof, talking down to other 'inferior' humans.

The Ziadd were poorly treated by the Vilani during the Ziru Sirka, and almost all Ziadd admit to finding the Vilani distasteful. Most Vilani will find that they are coolly received, and will be politely but firmly asked to leave public buildings. They have difficulty being served in shops, bars and restaurants, and Vilani ships are often delayed in port and in orbit. On the other hand individuals of Solomani descent are welcomed. The Solomani are held in high regard because they did away with the Ziru Sirka and gave the Ziadd access to space travel. They are seen as powerful, probably as a result of Terran officers being placed in high positions within Ziadd society.

The S'mrii, another race who suffered because of the short sighted attitudes of the Vilani, acted as mediators between the Terrans and the Ziadd at the end of the Interstellar Wars. Because of their shared suffering, their relative astrographical closeness and their mutual dislike for the Vilani the Ziadd consider the S'mrii almost as brothers, a sentiment that is notable because it is NOT shared. The S'mrii distain for the Ziadd is based on their brashness and taste for overt viol ence. They regard the Ziadd as 'useful' in the coming battles against the common enemy, the Vilani, but nothing more.

In Summary.

Overall the Ziadd present something of a mystery. There are no obvious reasons for their genetic modifications, nor for their being transported to Zeda. They seem to be ideally suited to the world, which in turn bears no evidence of terraforming. They are a fascinating, wholly alien race, though closely enough related to other Humans to be accessible.

A CONCISE HISTORY OF THE ZIADD

Introduction.

History is important because it allows us to assess the present using past events as a guide. In seeing the way the Ziadd have developed, and also the reasons and circumstances behind their development, we gain an insight into the way they are today. This article is necessarily short, speeding past millenia in order to detail the most important facts, but presents events up to the present day.

'Gaelm'ach siiq haarik oaqqha'drerr ats'all.'

If the lessons of history are ignored they are relearned.

Early History.

The Ziadd were genetically engineered from *Homo Sapiens Neanderthalensis* by the Ancients. The original human stock were transplanted to Zeda from Terra around the year -400,000, but why the Ancients geneered the race into their present form remains as a puzzle. Zeda itself also presents a mystery. There are no Ancients sites on the world, nor are there any traces of damage from the Final War.

The ancestors of the Ziadd were drawn from a stone age society, and stayed at that level of advancement on their new world. The tiny population lived as nomadic hunter-gatherers following migrating herds. Diseases, changes in climate and natural disasters periodically thinned the population, but by -100,000 there were pockets of Ziadd all across the planet.

Artistic expression flourished, religions formed, and the tribes slowly grew. Technology remained firmly in the stone-age, although complicated weapons such as the bow were developed. Agriculture came with the domestication of animals, and freed from the need to follow the herds some tribes settled permanently. In order to counter the danger from nomadic raiders they fortified their settlements, and soon the villages expanded into cities.

Civilization and War.

By -50,000 metalworking had begun. The settled Ziadd, who had discovered the processes, underwent a revolution. Armour became stronger, and new weapons like the sword were developed. The settled Ziadd gained a huge edge over the barbarians and captured the lands around their settlements. With a stable food supply and safe from danger people began to learn new skills. Reading and writing developed, and stable governments formed.

The city states developed independently of each other. They began to expand, and where there was good land or abundant resources colonies were founded. By -15,000 all the fertile land was settled and people were forced into less productive areas. The food supply was barely adequate, and starvation was a constant threat. Finally a series of famines decimated the population, and plague followed in its wake.

Only the strong survived. Wars were fought where the only victory was enough to eat. Any city that could feed itself became a target for hungry warriors, and what they couldn't carry off they burned. Those states that were able to defend themselves became centres of learning, and gradually rose to dominance. By -10,000 adv ances in agriculture had secured a steady food supply, and the danger of starvation had passed.

The Ishaar Wars.

By -8000 the Empires of Kh'Khish and Acrizeer dominated Zeda, surrounded by a number of smaller states owing allegiance to them. Each followed a different religion, and each claimed the Plain of Ishaar, a huge river delta containing some of the most fertile land on the world. Skirmishes were common, but both sides knew that to win a war they needed a big advantage. Acrizeer's discovery of gunpowder gave it that edge. In -7758 it invaded Kh'Khish. The war degenerated into centuries of conflict.

The wars dragged on. After decades of bloodshed a peace would be signed. It held for as long as it took the sides to build up their strength, and then a new war w ould break out. As generations passed the origins of the war were forgotten. The last war staggered to a bloody close in -6538 when Acrizeer's harvests failed. Revolutions swept through its starving cities, and Kh'Khish moved huge numbers of troops in to occupy what land it could. As the Kh'Khishi warlords scrambled for land they began to fight amongst themselves, and soon the whole empire disintegrated into civil war.

Industrialisation.

Kh'Khish and Acrizeer collapsed, bled white by centuries of conflict. But the fringe states were only brushed by the wars, and released from the shadow of the large empires began to thrive. Perhaps as a reaction against hundreds of years of conflict they coexisted peacefully. Although national disputes did occur competition was mainly limited to science and medicine. An age of reason flowered, and by around -6300 the industrial revolution had begun.

With a firm agricultural base advances in production occurred. New machines were designed to make textiles and consumables. They required large factories to house them, and these in turn required new power sources. Steam engines were the answer. A transportation net developed to provide fuel and to carry goods to the markets, and communications, vital to commerce, improved with the introduction of a reliable postal service.

Social Change.

A transformation of Ziadd society took place. Because the new factories needed skilled workers education became a necessity, and education allowed people to question their position in life. They demanded better living and working conditions. Alongside the traditional warlords who ruled through the authority of the sword and the gun a new form of leader appeared. The wealthy merchant, rich from his commercial interests.

The changes weren't an easy process. The rulers fought to keep their power using force and coercion. Civil unrest was common, and troops were used to put down peaceful demonstrations. After a series of uprisings and escalating violence changes did occur, with the nucleus of representative governments emerging in many states. In an effort to curb the growing power of the industrialists the rulers brought trade under direct government control.

Over time memories of the Ishaar Wars dimmed and new political blocs sprang up. As each nation sought

to better its neighbours an arms race began. Research was largely funded by the military and many new inventions, such as internal combustion engine, had military applications. Matters finally came to a head: between -6133 and -5979 four vast wars engulfed Zeda. The third resulted in the development and use of a number of nuclear devices, while the fourth threatened to escalate into genocide.

Contact!

Vilani scout vessels first entered the Zeda system around -8800. Interested by the fascinating culture but unwilling to contact such a primitive and warlike society they placed the world in quarantine. Every few centuries ships were sent to monitor developments and report their findings.

The last of these visits took place in -5993. The Vilani were surprised by the speed of the Ziadd advancement and disturbed by their development of nuclear weapons. Since the last visit they had grown from a primitive TL3 culture to a thriving TL6. The decision to make contact was made.

In -5979 the first contact took place. At the time the Ziaddi Fourth World War blazed across the world, a conflict that threatened to become a nuclear holocaust. The appearance of the Vilani stopped the war in short order. Contact teams were sent and cautiously examined the new race. In the light of advanced technology and far superior weapons the Ziadd were receptive, even enthusiastic, towards the Vilani.

Competition.

Before contact the Ziadd had little interest in space travel: the sum of their achievements were a number of unmanned spy satellites and two planetary probes. But with the prospect of new technology (and who knew what else) space suddenly became very attractive. The Ziadd believed that the Vilani would reward the most advanced nation with gifts of high technology. Nations competed to be the first to put men on the two moons and to explore the other worlds of their system.

But in -5974 the Vilani left: in their view contact had generated totally the wrong effect. Instead of pacifying the Ziadd it had caused intense competition and more divisions. Experts said that the Ziadd would destroy themselves anyway, and that it was better to leave them to their own devices. Observers would be sent, after a suitable length of time, to reassess the situation.

Isolation.

By -5800 all the major nations on Zeda had sizable fleets of warships, and many had colonies on other worlds in the system. In just two centuries the Ziadd had leapt to a high common TL of ten. They still believed that they were being tested, and were proud of their achievements. Patiently they waited for the Vilani to return.

In -5770 the Vilani finally sent another mission. They were horrified by what they found. The Ziadd had exceeded all of their expectations, and in some areas they were more advanced. If they gained jump technology they could pose a serious threat to Vilani supremacy. But the Ziadd had worked hard for their reward and were not about to be deprived. They demanded technological secrets, information and a place in Vilani society. The Vilani refused.

Matters rapidly turned sour. The Ziadd threatened to use force to get what they wanted, and true to their word they attacked the Vilani ships. They fired nuclear missiles and two lightly armed scout cruisers were destroyed. The Vilani ships stood no chance, but they did manage to launch a jump-capable courier to notify Vland. The capital responded by detaching warships to close the system. Once again Zeda was in quarantine.

Consolidation.

The Ziadd started building jump drives, copying and redesigning those that had been recovered from the wrecked scouts. In -5583 a ship performed the first successful in-system microjump, and huge scale production of starships began. In -5572 a force of Ziadd warships jumped into the Derla system and destroyed the Vilani ships stationed there. The Ziadd had made the first move, leaving the Vilani one option. Their forces were ordered to subdue the race.

From the start the Vilani had a vast superiority in forces but despite this the Ziadd began to take ground. They managed to push ships into other systems, landed troops and ambushed the assembling Vilani warships, Then they fled back towards Zeda. The Vilani commanders had been complacent but the Ziadd woke them up. In the enormous space battles that followed both sides took heavy damage, but ultimately the Vilani were victorious.

The Vilani set about destroying the facilities within the Zeda system. They blew up many of the outposts and extensively bombed Zeda. Cities were all but leveled and millions of people were killed. They stationed scoutships in the system fringe to observe the world and monitor developments. The Vilani returned in -5400, at the start of the Consolidation Wars. They bombed Zeda again to made sure that the Ziadd would not threaten them. For over three thousand years the race remained isolated.

The Terrans.

In -2219 the Ziru Sirka collapsed and the victorious Terran forces took over the Vilani territories. The Terrans recontacted the Ziadd in -2176. After an initial period of mistrust the Ziadd were offered jump technology, but at a price. The Terrans demanded that a world government should be formed, and that their officers should hold key positions within that government. When they agreed the Ziadd were welcomed into the interstellar community.

The Ziadd spread out and began to settle worlds within Zeda subsector. They displaced Vilani

colonies already present on those worlds and founded a loose trading association. Over time they became a strong voice within Dagudashaag, sending troops and resources to peacekeeping actions across the sector. When the Rule of Man finally collapsed the Ziadd worlds remained as a co-prosperity sphere centered on Zeda.

The Long Night.

The Ziadd worlds provided each other with goods, food and protection at the start of the Long Night. As the marauders and pirates faded away the worlds slipped in to an almost feudal system, with the descendants of the Terran officers ruling the masses. Slowly the Ziadd expanded to cover almost all of Zeda subsector, as well as parts of Shallows, Ushra and The Remnants subsectors.

Ziadd diplomats and trade missions had often visited Ushra but had refused to assist the government, mainly due to its belief in racial purity. The Ushrans resented the Ziadd and made no secret of the fact. Around -750 Ushra regained jump technology and began to expand, conquering many of the neutral worlds in the subsector. The Ziadd responded by forming their worlds into a defense league. Although the peace held for over a century war finally broke out in -642.

In a disastrous series of battles the Ziadd military forces were destroyed. The Ushrans advanced on Zeda, and they captured the system in a bloody campaign that lasted until -639. By -600 the Ushrans held all of the Zeda Cluster, although a small pocket of Ziadd worlds held out to rimward. The Ushran empire continued to expand, and by -400 had reached its maximum size. Resistance to the Ushrans increased within the captured territories, and soon most of the Empire's forces were tied down pacifying rebellious areas.

The Rise of the Corsairs.

The remnants of the Ziadd forces retreated to the free Ziadd worlds and began to reorganise. They realised that they could not hope to beat the Ushrans in a fair fight. Instead, they decided to act as raiders. If they could defend the systems still under their control and inflict some damage perhaps they could one day pay back their earlier defeats. Because the scattered Ziadd systems had no central government, and because the remains of the naval forces acted independently they were regarded more as a well organised band of corsairs. They named themselves the **Saqqari Ziaddishi**, or the **Zeda Alignment**.

Between -500 and -400 the Ziadd forces staved off most of the Ushran attacks, losing only a few fringe worlds. After a reasonably stable border had been established they began to launch expeditions deep into Ushran territory. Troops landed to destroy important facilities, and raiders ambushed Ushran warships and merchant vessels alike. Trade within the spinward edge of the Ushran Empire became extremely hazardous.

After two centuries of reaving the Ziadd had become masters of the art. They began to capture worlds in Zeda subsector, and in -88 they defeated an large Ushran fleet. By the founding of the Third Imperium they had their eyes firmly on Zeda. In 46 a series of uprisings on the world gave them an opportunity. The corsairs covertly supported a terrorist war and in 65 they attacked with regular troops. By the end of the year the system was in Ziadd hands. By 66 they had recreated the state destroyed by the Ushrans.

The Imperium.

The Zeda Alignment was the last independent state in Dagudashaag sector. Faced with isolation, war and eventual forced membership it voluntarily joined the Imperium in 96. It disbanded as a state, although Zeda retained cultural ties with the worlds around it. The area remained as a stable, fairly prosperous backwater, of interest to archaeologists and tourists. It was undisturbed by events such as the Ilelish Revolts or the Civil War, although the system defense forces were periodically upgraded.

The government tightly controlled trade, and those who could edge into Zeda's closed markets found themselves a private gold mine. Megacorporations and other large mercantile organisations were never admitted: in order to make a profit they had to control the market. But independent merchants only imported small quantities of goods. The starport was never expanded beyond a B-class facility in order to dissuade large offworld commercial interests.

The Beginnings of Unrest.

The 600s and early 700s proved to be a boom time for the core of the Imperium. Following the Civil War large scale military, social and economic changes took place, beginning with rebuilding war damaged property and culminating in the establishment of an Imperium-wide express-boat service. During this period the Ziadd continued their policy of isolationism, and many (not unreasonably) felt that they were being denied many opportunities by their government's short sighted policies.

After prolonged campaigning and argument, as well as occasional violence and terrorism to draw attention to the cause, the anti-isolationist lobby gained a working majority in the Senate and forced through a series of reforms. Gradually more offworld trade interests were allowed access to Zeda's markets, and in 843 an express-boat link was finally run through the system. Certain groups (particularly those with strong interests in business and industry) began to feel threatened. They lacked the flexibility and technological know-how to compete with offworlders.

Instability.

The late 850s saw escalating protests and violence as each side jockeyed for position and gained governmental influence. Each side forced through revisions and amendments to existing laws in order to suit their own causes, resulting in a fiendish web of

trade regulations that mainly served to disrupt local business. By 869 both sides had begun arming themselves and skirmishes between the two became common. In 870 the government finally collapsed, leaving an ineffective rump headed by the Lord High Senator. The rump was bullied and coerced into sanctifying the wishes of warlords and their lackeys, and eventually became despised by everyone as a symbol of corruption.

The Dynastic Crisis.

In 872 Zeda suffered a tragedy that brought matters to a head. An explosion in the Senatorial Palace killed the Lord High Senator and many members of the Rump. The cause of the explosion has never been revealed, but it left Zeda without a functioning high level government. To prevent the total collapse of the central government each city elected new representatives to the Senate. The leadership of many of the cities disagreed about the Senatorial choices of the others, and many officials refused to work together. Accusations flew, and the situation threatened to escalate into a full blown civil war. In 874 the Sector Duke ordered Imperial troops and hardware to Zeda to act as a peacekeeping force.

The scout service stepped in, temporarily replacing the upper echelons of the government with the staff of the scout base until new elections were held. Although a Senate was duly elected the IISS retained an executive veto power on any decision. It never had call to use it. The Scout Service mediated over discussions between each of the factions, and by the 900s compromises acceptable to most sides in the dispute had been worked out.

The Diaspora.

Those clans that disagreed with the scout service began to plot in secret, and decided that the only way out of their predicament was to attempt an armed coup. With more than a hint of paradox they gained the support of various offworld groups, mainly from among the Ziadd colonies within Zeda and Shallows subsectors. More through bad luck than anything the plot was uncovered and the central government started rounding up the leaders. By 904 the tension finally sparked into conflict .

The Clan homelands declared for their fallen leaders and across over the world there were armed uprisings. The rebels were ill prepared for a fight, lacking weapons and heavy equipment, but they were fortunate in that the military were as unprepared as them. On the whole the armed forces remained loyal to the government, although a few units changed sides. By 905 the uprisings had been contained and by 907 the last few pockets of resistance had been eliminated.

Those few leaders who managed to escape before the loyalist retributions found safe havens on the planets that had supported them. Their close associates began to find life progressively more difficult on Zeda, and soon followed the example of their peers. In the wave of inter-clan hostility and violence that followed the collapse of the uprising clan members felt increasingly isolated. The majority fled offworld to join their compatriots. What started as a trickle of individuals seeking asylum became a confused and anarchic flood, with millions moving offworld between 910 and 1000 to escape persecution.

The Rebellion.

The Ziadd were horrified by the assassination of the Emperor. Dulinor, in a single blow, had destroyed the Imperium. Suddenly their community was gone and in its wake came warfare and destruction. The choice of leaders resolved itself quickly. As a close relative of Strephon, and also because he controlled the most powerful faction, the Ziadd declared for Lucan.

One of the first examples of the disintegration of Imperial units occurred in the Sagan system (0425 B877212 C) as the 75th Fleet fragmented. The Ziadd commanding officer, Fleet Admiral Rathgla'eollzoe Di'aades, declared his ships for Lucan without consulting his senior officers. The commanders of the six cruiser squadrons demanded an audience on the flagship and began to argue the issue.

The two Ziadd CruRons, the 671st and the 690th, followed their Admiral's lead in supporting Lucan. Three of the Human CruRons (the 776th, the 561st and the 120th) declared for Dulinor. The commander of the sixth squadron (the 414th) remained neutral and left the meeting. The discussions collapsed into a gunfight, during which three of the squadron commanders, many of the senior officers and Admiral Di'aades were killed. Although they held a numerical advantage the pro-Dulinor squadrons jumped outsystem before the conflict intensified.

The Ziadd had provided warships, troops and equipment to the Imperium since the mid 900s and had controlled their own system defense forces since the first Civil War. After deciding their allegiance warships and troops were duly dispatched to fight the traitor Dulinor. Their main theatre of operations was around Argi, where they gave a particularly good account of themselves. But problems arose when Strephon appeared in Gushemege sector in 1117.

Old loyalties arose within the Ziadd, and once more they were forced to choose between Strephon and Lucan. Should they support the Old Emperor, apparently alive and well and with a reasonably convincing story, or should they continue to support Lucan in his efforts to oust Dulinor? Argument amongst the Ziadd systems gave way to open conflict. The situation worsened when the scout personnel based at Zeda, who acted as a steadying influence, declared for Strephon and departed to Spin ward.

By the end of 1117 the Ziadd-dominated systems within Zeda, Ushra and Shallows subsectors had decided on a pro-Lucan or a pro-Strephon stance and set about violently convincing each other that their points of view were right. The squadrons fighting

Dulinor were recalled and the conflict intensified. But in 1118 their private war was stopped dead when the Vilani declared independence. Now the Ziadd had the chance to settle some old scores.

ROLE-PLAYING NOTES FOR THE ZIADD

Introduction.

What follows are some additional notes on the Ziadd. It includes notes on character generation and psionics, and has a brief section on role-playing the race. It is recommended that both players and referees are familiar with the Ziadd before they are introduced into a campaign.

Character Generation.

Homeworld.

It is not necessary for a Ziadd character to originate on Zeda, but most do. Zeda has homeworld generation stats of: Starport B, Large World, Standard Atmosphere, Wet World, High Population, Moderate Laws, and High Stellar Technology. Characters who receive all the default skills as normal, but if they come from Zeda they also gain High-G Environ at level 0. This differs from the skill as presented in the Players Manual: it is a natural ability, and does not confer knowledge of laser or energy weapons.

Characteristics.

The Ziadd are different to ordinary humans, and this is reflected in their UPP. The high strength and endurance are both a result of genetic engineering by the Ancients and adaptations over thousands of generations to the high gravity of their planet. Their lower intelligence and education stem from differences in the brain. Characteristics are generated as follows:

Strength : 2D6+2 Average 9, Maximum 17.

Dexterity : 2D6 Average 7, Maximum 15.

Endurance : 2D6+1 Average 8, Maximum 16.

Intelligence : 2D6 Average 7, Maximum 13.

Education : 2D6 Average 7, Maximum 13.

Social Status : 2D6 Average 7, Maximum 15.

Values such as lifeforce are determined exactly as normal. It is possible for a Ziadd to achieve a life force of 48, which gives a Hits Value of 7/10. All Ziadd have another natural bonus: their tough skin acts as jack armour, and has an armour value of one in hand-to-hand combat.

Careers and Skills.

All careers are open to the Ziadd. Due to their 'act first and think later' attitude they perform particularly well in the military. Any Ziadd applying to join the Marines, Army, Air Force or Wet Navy receives an additional DM of +1 on their enlistment roll. Careers that require a little more forethought and tact are less suited to the race. A Ziadd who applies to become a Diplomat, a Doctor or a Scientist has a DM of -1 on their enlistment roll. There are no changes to any other careers.

A Timeline for the Ziadd.

- **ca.-400,000** Ziadd are transplanted to Zeda by the Ancients.
- **ca.-300,000** The Final War destroys the Ancients.
- **-50,000** Ziadd discover metalworking.
- **-15,000** Most of the fertile land on Zeda is settled. Crop failures lead to wars for food.
- **-10,000** Agricultural advances lead to a stable food supply.
- **ca.-8000** Vilani scouts discover the Ziadd but don't make contact.
- **-7758** The discovery of gunpowder. Wars over the Ishaar Delta begin.
- **-6538** Ishaar Wars end. Empires of Acrizeer and Kh'Khish collapse. The resulting era of peace begins large scale social changes.
- **ca.-6300** Industrial Revolution begins.
- **-6133** Nationalism causes the First World War.
- **-5979** Vilani contact the Ziadd: the Fourth World War ends.
- **-5974** Beginning of the First Isolation.
- **-5770** Vilani recontact Ziadd: beginning of the Second Isolation.
- **-2219** Ziru Sirka collapses. Terrans establish the Second Imperium.
- **-2176** Ziadd contacted by the Terrans. The Terrans demand that the Ziadd form a world government, and place their officers in charge.
- **-1776** Rule of Man collapses and the Long Night begins.
- **-1000** Ziadd traders range across Dagudashaag and Gushemege sectors.
- **-750** Ziadd form a defense league in response to the founding of the Ushran Empire.
- **-642** War starts between the Ziadd systems and the Ushran Empire.
- **-639** Ushran Empire captures Zeda.
- **ca.-600** All of Zedan Cluster occupied by the Ushran Empire.
- **ca.-400** Ushran Empire reaches maximum size.
- **ca.-200** Ziadd corsairs reach their height.
- **0** Third Imperium founded.
- **65** Ziadd corsairs recapture Zeda.
- **66** Zeda Alignment created as a state.
- **96** Zeda Alignment voluntarily joins the Third Imperium.
- **604 to 622** First Civil War: Ziadd isolationism takes hold.
- **850** Growing instability: the rise of minor warlords.
- **874** Dynastic Crisis: Imperium sends peace-keeping troops to the world. The IISS forms an interim government.
- **904** Continuing retributions lead to Clan uprisings.
- **907** Uprisings are put down by the military.
- **910 to 1000** Ziadd Diaspora: Clan members flee from retribution.
- **1116** onwards The Rebellion: the Ziadd side with Lucan.

Aging is identical to that of normal humans. Ziadd characters begin their careers at eighteen standard years, and begin suffering from the effects of aging at thirty-four standard years. Anagathics work as per the Players Manual and have the same affects on cash rolls and retirement pay. All other skills, ranks and mustering out benefits are received normally.

Psionics

All Ziadd have one natural psionic ability: they maintain a psionic shield that prevents their minds from being read. It is best described as a constant stream of nonsense thoughts, background static if you will, that covers their more normal thoughts. All individuals produce it, though very few are aware that they do. It is identical to the shield described on **page 98** of the **Players Handbook**.

Other psionic talents are rare among the Ziadd. In order to have any sort of psionic ability a character must roll 12 or more on 2D6. If the character's starting intelligence was 10 or better they receive a DM of +1. If the roll failed they have no psionic potential at all, other than their natural shield. If the roll was successful generate psionic potential as normal, applying modifiers for age, and then determine which (if any) of the six talents the character possesses.

Little research has been done into Ziadd psionics. Their lack of ability seems to stem from genetic modifications performed by the Ancients. Some radical groups have used this as continuing anti-psionic propaganda, pointing out that the Ancients are unlikely to have removed any good or useful traits.

Playing Tips.

The Ziadd are human, and have a lot of human values, but they are also very alien. The most noticeable difference is their willingness to get stuck in straight away, to act on instinct and gut feeling rather than pondering the intricacies of a situation. They are NOT foolhardy. They won't risk their lives, their future, or even their money on something that is obviously hazardous. They simply prefer to get things over and done with quickly.

Most Ziadd have something that acts as an anchor, something that they know is always going to be there. Until very recently it was the Imperium, but the Rebellion changed all that. Now their anchor is their homeworld, and their ancient hatred for the Vilani has given them an objective. The Ziadd are devoting all of their energy to destroying the Ziru Sirkaa, much to Lucan's delight.

Characters will probably have different values but it is important to decide what they are. A starship, Sector Duchess Karyn dea Viisarikaa, their homeworld, all are legitimate. But remember that they are fiercely local, and once a decision has been made they stick with it doggedly. Ziadd dislike change, and won't adjust the status quo unless they can see direct benefits.

Social status is important. They respect physical strength above all else, and a warrior has a greatly increased charisma. Officials surround themselves with armed guards, which has a similar effect. A high ranking Ziadd will talk down to inferiors. Some won't talk directly to those who rank below them, instead addressing remarks to a third party and expecting them to pass on the message.

In summary. Play the Ziadd as loud, brash, husky types and you can't really go too far wrong. Trowel on the loyalty and honour, and make sure that the character h as somewhere they can call home. Don't hesitate about decisions unless it looks really risky, and be prepared to explain your reasoning later. Lord it over those below you, and respect those in authority. And never be without your sidearm.

NINE DAY WONDER

BY LEE RICHARDSON

Many thanks to Jae and Moragh for giving us "Silk".
Referees will find Signal-GK no. 7 very useful.

PART 1: "Welcome to Silk"

While the PC's ship is in parking orbit awaiting its approach vector, STAS transmits all the necessary data about Silk's regulations, as well as 'Rough Guide' to the world and its customs (basically as much of ''Port of call: Silk'' as referees want their players to know). The PC's are told that they must wait for fifty minutes before they can land in any case so they have time to digest this information.

During this time STAS will be checking up on the PC's transponder data. If the PC's have earned themselves a name (good or bad) with MMSL in the past, then STAS will know about it. This could affect the PC's visit to Silk at the referees discretion.

PART 2: "Job Offer"

After the PC's have been processed by STAS they are approached by a slightly built, immaculately dressed man who introduces himself as Jodan Atansa. He only speaks to one member of the party - the oldest male present. If there are any females present he will ignore them. If he must speak to a female he will do so through a male. Any reply addressed to him from a female must likewise go through a male.

He has a job which he wants doing, but is loathe to speak of it out in the open. If the PC's are interested he will arrange to meet them at the ''Silken Rose'' at noon that day. How long that is is up to the referee, depending on how much sight-seeing he wants his/her players to do. Although Jodan won't say so, the PC's will be expected to arrive on time. If they don't it will be frowned upon but nothing will be said.

PART 3: "Lunch at the Silken Rose"

The PC's will be met in the hotel foyer by a young man who introduces himself as Mawashi Geri. He leads the party upstairs to an empty conference room where Jodan Atansa is waiting for them. Once they are seated Jodan tells his story.

Referees note: Jodan will watch the PC's enter the room - taking note of the order in which they enter. After this he will address the person who entered first only. If this was a female he will call in a Silkian female to act as 'translator'.

Jodan explains that he has been given an impossible task - to hire an independent media team to cover a story. He wants the party to act as the media team for him. He will supply whatever equipment the party needs, holorecorder, mikes, etc., on a loan basis. He offers Cr.300 per day per party member for up to three days. The party can stay at the hotel 'gratis' during the time. The story they are to cover is this: a youth of the Han Wu clan was involved in an accident recently.

He was to become an adult in a matter of weeks. The other clans have been pushing the story that he is dead and that the Han Wu clan are trying to cover it up somehow. Jodan wants the party to visit the medical facility where the youth is and take footage of the patient being cared for, to vouch for Han Wu's version - that although the youth suffered terrible injuries, Han Wu's excellent medical service has restored him to full health. The fact that the party are off-worlders can only give credence to their independent status.

Jodan arranges to meet the party at the hotel foyer at noon the next day to escort them to the medical facility. In the meantime they can order their equipment. Jodan asks that they do not leave the hotel unescorted. He explains to the PC's that the Han Wu PR people will be pushing the story of the independent media team heavily over the next twenty-nine and a half hours (a local day) and that other clans may attempt to silence the team.

PART 4: "Time to Kill"

The PC's can do some research. By a combination of scanning the hotel news broadcasts and quizzing the hotel staff. The following can be learned:

- The youth in question is called Sempai
- There were many witnesses to his 'accident' but no-one is saying anything about it. The consensus of opinion is that it's best not to probe too deeply into clan affairs.
- The whole incident is further complicated by the fact that the current clan elder has publicly announced his attentions to commit ritual suicide in order to allow Sempai to take his place as one of 'The Hundred' unchallenged.
- The current Han Wu clan elder (Li Ch'ung-Yun) has survived many attempts to usurp him from his position - both from up and coming Han Wu initiates and rival clans. His 'throwing in of the towel' is seen as odd, but not deeply questioned - he is clan elder after all!

If the party do leave the hotel they will be escorted by Mawashi Geri at all times.

PART 5: "Moonlighting"

The party is contacted either at the Silken Rose by a servant carrying a written message (in galanglic) or, if they have left the hotel, by a veiled woman who passes the party the note. The note is a warning that the party are walking into a trap and an invitation to find out more by meeting someone at "Redecai's Mouth" that evening at 25:00 (mid-evening local time).

The mystery woman who meets them there introduces herself as Gyaku Zuki. She says she knows for a fact that Sempai is dead because she witnessed the 'accident'. She says he was shot - once in the head and three times in the chest. She says it would be in the interest of her employers to prove this and will pay the PC's for any information that they can dig up which might prove it. Gyaku believes she knows where 'Sempai' is being kept (although this is supposed to be a secret). She thinks he is being kept in a low berth at the Han Wu Genetix facility. Gyaku suggests that, as Han Wu are likely to show the PC's only what they want to be reported, she could organise a little 'diversion' whilst the party is inside the facility. During the ensuing chaos, the PC's can dig a little deeper into the story - perhaps by accessing the computers there - although this will be hard to pull off. Gyaku, if the PC's agree, arranges to meet them at the same time and place the next day (after the day's 'shooting') to report on their findings and to collect their reward, if any.

PART 6: " A Guided (Guarded?) Tour"

Jodan Atansa meets the PC's at noon the next day and escorts them to the secret location of the youth. It is the Han Wu Genetix facility. Once there they are quickly ushered through lots of bare corridors until they arrive at a

Referee's Only

Traffic Control in the Silk System has been contracted out to MMSL who maintain an effective if somewhat limited startport facility. It must be noted that there is **no** extrality and local laws apply as soon as you enter Silk airspace.

Galanglic is only spoken on Silk by Port staff. Primary languages are Cantonese and Galaach tradespeak. Though Aakhri is a major language spoken amongst the poorer people there are **no** translation facilities or translator programs provided on-planet for this particular language. Lao have a tendency to speak their own family tongue in public in an attempt to prevent others understanding their private conversations.

The local population is divided into two separate and distinct classes; the **Lao** (Venerated One's) who rule and the **Xiao** (Guided One's) who are ruled over. The Lao are all descended from either members of the original Aakhri crew (now known as the Lui Ch'en) who first 'colonised' Silk, or the four Tai'pan families that emigrated to Silk, the Han Wu, Jin Qi, Qui'ndao and Hualiu Si clans.

The 100; The Lao have a culture steeped in tradition. In addition to customs derived from their Aakhri/ Tai'pan heritage, several traditions have evolved that are unique to Silk. Perhaps the most important is that there must never be more than 100 adult Lao males on the planet at any one time. It is believed that this law evolved because of the shortage of females of appropriate caste. When the

Tai'pan first emigrated to Silk, the Aakhri did not realise that some of the males had a genetic tendency to breed only male offspring. This, coupled with Aakhri polygamous marriage practices and the falling birthrate due to excessive inbreeding meant that there would never be enough females of high birth for an ever-expanding male population. The Clan Council had two choices, accept offspring born to lower caste females or restrict the number of male Lao. They chose the latter.

Under Clan law, a male becomes an adult at 16 when they are scarred with Clan markings to prove to the populace that they are indeed Lao. If there are already 100 Lao at this point the oldest (regardless of clan) is expected to either exile himself or commit suicide. However the would-be Lao has to prove their worth to the clans is greater than the person they would unsurp. To this end, the week before the youth's birthday is considered open season for assassination of the youth. If he is killed or flees the planet then he has proved he wasn't worthy. A system of surrogates has also evolved whereby members of the youth's clan may voluntarily commit suicide so that the youth's ascendancy will not be viewed as a threat by any member of the opposing clans. In the same way, should a youth survive, a member of the same clan as the oldest Lao may volunteer to commit suicide and thereby preserve their clan elder. In this enlightened age most Clan elders will pay the youth to go off-planet rather than stay and risk death by assassination.

room labelled "Dr. A.L.Gennie - Project Shi". Inside is a single guard (apparently unarmed) and a bed. On the bed is a young man who is wired-up to a complex-looking machine. A man who introduces himself as Dr. Gennie stands next to the bed making notes on a clipboard. He presses a button on the machine and two (male) nurses enter the room with towels and a bowl of hot water and food. Dr. Gennie asks the PC's if they are ready to start filming. If they are he prompts the nurses to start 'caring' for the patient.

Dr. Gennie is not a 'people person' and will not attempt to make conversation if the PC's ask about Han Wu Genetix. He will however launched into an obviously pre-prepared speech singing the praises of HWG and the Han Wu clan in general.

PART 7: "Who Turned Out the Lights?"

While the PC's are filming there is a muffled 'crump' and all the lights go out. NB: even though it is midday it is very dark this deep in the building - there are no windows or skylights, only electrical lighting. A moment or two a backup generator kicks in and emergency lighting flickers on. The room is bathed in an eerie red glow which is only strong enough to prevent people from walking into things.

The guard confiscates the holorecorder. Han Wu wouldn't want it generally known that someone had been able to penetrate HWG's security to plant an explosive device. Dr. Gennie rushes over to the patient, checking the machine (which is still operating thanks to its internal power supply). His 'bleeper' goes off and he leaves the room to answer it. The PC's now have an opportunity to explore. There is a computer terminal in the room, but the PC's will have to be very good to access any decent data. Even then the most that they can find out is Dr. Gennie's home address. There is no reference to "Project Shi" in the data files. Dr. Gennie's address is given as "Non Omnis Moriar", Hedi'ja Precinct, Doar.

Dr. Gennie returns and escorts the PC's from the building, arranging for them to return the same time the next when the 'difficulties' have been overcome. "Off course. None of this can be made public" he says. The holorecorder will be returned at the exit, less the holocrystal.

PART 8: "Anything to Report?"

Gyaku will be waiting at the Redecai's Mouth at 25.00 as arranged. If the PC's aren't there on time she will leave and make plans to find them - in this case she will assume she has been double-crossed and will not be in a good mood when she catches up with them. If they do meet her on time she will quiz them endlessly about the HWG facility, particularly its security. She will also want to know about Sempai. Was he actually alive? Was his body scarred? What sort of machine was he hooked up to? if the PC's thought to look at the body, and know what to look for, they would have noted the following:

- Yes, he was alive, technically speaking. the monitor showed no signs of brain activity however.
- No, there was no scarring. But the body was completely bald and had no finger or toe nails.
- The machine was a full life support system, even though Sempai appeared in perfect health.

Gyaku will be very interested in all this, although a little surprised. She asks the PC's if they want to earn some serious money - by getting into Dr. Gennie's house and accessing his home computer (she won't tell them what she intends to do unless they agree to do some more 'work' for her, obviously).

PART 9: "Night Shift"

Gyaku only wants one of the PC's to actually go in with her, the rest can be posted as guards. Gyaku slips into Dr. Gennie's house with practised ease (it is empty - Dr. Gennie himself won't leave HWG until the fault has been repaired, and that might take some time).

Dr. Gennie's data reveals all sorts of things about him. If the PC's take time they can learn the following:

- He is not a doctor of medicine. He is a doctor in genetics, specialising in algeny (the science of cloning).
- The Han Wu clan elder has paid several visits to him at HWG recently. The file doesn't say why but it mentions a file called "Mens sanan in corpore sano". Accessing the file gives details of the clan elder's visits, mentioning preparation for RNA transference, overlay recording of his mind onto a pseudo-reality storage bank and cloning. It would appear that the clan elder was planning to donate his mind after suicide. The RNA extracted from it was to be implanted into "Project Shi" prior to the mind transferral.
- Sempai is medically dead - his body is in low berth.
- "Project Shi" is a clone of Sempai. It is fully eighteen days old - it must have been started before the 'accident'. What the PC's make of this is up to them.

The PC's ought to be able to figure out that Dr. Gennie planned to transplant the clan elder's mind into the clone. Gyaku will eagerly download all this onto her hand computer - she has the goods she wanted and will pay the PC's well (if they get out of this in one piece, that is!).

PART 10: "Is There a Back Door Out of This Place"

If the PC's intend to carry on as normal and go back to HWG as agreed then they will need to arrange with Gyaku to delay the dropping of her 'bombshell' until the PC's have left Han Wu's employ. If they plan to make a run for it, they will collect no money from Han Wu, but Gyaku's pay will soften the blow (about Cr.1000 each might be in order). Gyaku will not explain her involvement in this affair, but the PC's should be able to work out that she is the assassin who shot Sempai and is in the pay of one of the rival clans (actually Jin Qi).

PART 11: "Did I Miss Something?"

- Referees Background

Li Ch'ung-Yun (the Han Wu clan elder) has a dream - he wants to live forever. He contacted Sempai several weeks ago and arranged for the youth to go into exile a week before his sixteenth birthday. Sempai was promised a lot of money and a comfortable 'retirement' fund to be paid monthly, on the understanding that he never returned. Sempai agreed.

The clan elder had no intention of fulfilling this promise - he arranged for samples to be taken of Sempai (during routine hospital visits) and charged Dr. Gennie with the job of secretly cloning Sempai. He then publicly declared his intention to commit suicide after arranging with Gennie to record his mind and for the doctor to extract RNA from his brain after the suicide so he could be transplanted into the clone. He would then 'start again', as it were, in clan politics with a massive advantage of his many years of experience.

Sempai was to be transported off world and "vacced", deposited in deep space.

Clan Jin Qi had other ideas (they knew nothing of Li's real intent). They hired an assassin (Gyaku Zuki) to kill Sempai weeks before his birthday. It was to look like the job of off-worlders, and cause chaos for the Han Wu for Li Ch'ung-Yun had already made his announcement and could hardly change his mind.

When Sempai was shot his body was rushed to hospital and (on the Elder's orders) transfered to HWG. Jin Qi immediatly began pushing the story of Sempai's death - Han Wu needed to squash this story fast! Li Ch'ung-Yun could hardly appear as a dead man. So HAn Wu needed someone to counter the rumour - the PC's.

When Gyaku went to collect her pay the Jin Qi refused - until she could prove that Sempai was really dead.

Simple eh?

Note: Background Data on all locations may be found in PoC: Silk. Referee's are strongly advised to read this article thoroughly prior to running this adventure.

Personality Overlay

In 1107 Professor C.R. Riket developed the Personality Overlay Unit which allowed the temporary overlay of a pseudo-personality onto a human mind but this device could not transfer skills or abilities. In 1112 Dr. Emil Zinan, working at the Ha'arn Xeno-Medical Facility took the initial device and created multi-tasking personality Overlay complete with the skill transferral.

Rumours have surfaced over the last few years that illegal Mind Transfer devices, based on the work of Riket & Zinan, have been used to **permanently** transfer an adult mind and personality into a newly grown clone thereby allowing a type of immortality. Theoretically such a device could not work except into the person's own clone though it has been rumoured that injection of the donor's RNA into another's clone may enable a smooth transition. Obviously such a device could not work across species and its use on an already established mind would lead to instant, incurable schizophrenia.

'Non omnis morair'" means: "I shall not wholly die", and *"Mens sans in corpore sano"* translated is "A sound mind in a sound body".

PORT of CALL

OEWNI

With thanks to *Anthony Baggeley* for his assistance and help.

OEWNI 0216 B464466-9 S Ni 422 IMP K5 VI M5 D M2 D

PRIMARY: Michael, Spectral class K5 VI, mass 0.330, luminosity 0.40.

Oewni: Mean orbital radius 0.20 AU. Period 56.8 Std Days. Diameter 6,160 Km. Mass 0.126 terra. Rocky core, Density 0.76. Mean surface gravity 0.42g. Rotation period 30h 18m 13s. Axial inclination 4°11'05''. Energy absorption 0.90.

Surface atmospheric pressure 0.81. Composition oxygen-nitrogen mix. Hydrographic percentage 41.1% in a single shallow sea and extensive lakes and marshes. Mean surface temperature 11.81°c. Native life present - classified non-intelligent. Total system Population 43,230.

Primary cities: single orbital; Enoch, 600, Starport C (Unrestricted Freeport). Ground; Abram's Pride/Samaritan, 12,300, Universal Church Starport Facilities only (UCSF) Starport B. Port Hades, (Imperial extrality enforced) 1,250, Starport B. Babylon, 21,000, No starport. Gomorrah, no permanent population or port. 6,000 classified as without city allegiance.

Satellites: One. Raphael, Size 812 km, orbit 67,116 km. **City:** Raphael Port, 1,500, Spaceport G.

World Government is classified as Captive World/Colony. The system was originally landgranted to The Universal Church by Makhidkarun during the Vilani Passification Campaign. The planet has been the subject of a long legal battle between the Church and the current Lancian/Ziadd-led interim Government - Until the matter is settled planetary Government is overseen by a Director-Governor seconded from the IISS.

Law Enforcement primarily relates to acts of theft, violence, blasphemy or criminal damage and varies according to location. The law is enforced by either Church (House of Inquisition representatives) or private security.

Population Breakdown: 17% Humaniti, mixed (Universalists). 8% Humaniti, Vilani. 31% Humaniti, Lancian. 37% Humaniti, Ziadd. 5% S'mrii. 0.25% Hamaran. 1.75% Other.

Social Outlook: Conservative, stagnant, passive, peaceful, discordant, friendly.

Technology Profile: 99-899A9-9989-A9-A.

HISTORY

Oewni was initially colonised by humans sometime prior to -6,000. It was always assumed that this had been a lost Vilani colony but, in 877, this view was brought into question. Archaeologists working on one of the few surviving ruins found, preserved under the lava, a carved wooden statue and a series of intricate stone carvings that appeared to be Loeskalth in origin. The Loeskalth were an aggressive and warlike, minor human race that originated on Sagal/Vipach (0339) deep within Gushemege. The race became extinct about -4,300 as the result of Vilani 'intervention'. The carving, believed to be a representation of the Goddess Xtahl (the healer), has only ever been found previously in Gushemege.

Most scientists still hold to the theory that the carving and stone patterns were probably brought to Oewni by 'conquering' Vilani. However, there are an ever-growing number of people who believe this had to have been a Loeskalth colony established by survivors fleeing the Vilani. To date, no-one has been able to unearth any additional evidence that would clarify the matter, one way or another. What is certain, is the idea that Oewni may have been a lost Loeskalth colony, has captured the public imagination and traders throughout the subsector have begun to cash in on the 'legend'.

Whatever race they may have been, the colony was completely wiped out in -3,900 when Oewni was hit by fragments from a shattered comet. One fragment hit the continent of Brimstone, while another crashed into the sea off Chalcedony. Volcanoes were stirred into life all over Brimstone which began a chain of eruptions that buried several main cities and flung millions of tonnes of dust into the atmosphere. The strike at sea probably followed within hours and resulted in a massive tsunami that smashed through the low-lying areas. Within weeks the atmosphere became choked with dust and water vapour. A new ice age had began. The few surviving colonists were ill-prepared for the dramatic change to the weather and it is believed that the colony probably became extinct within a generation.

Lancian Colonisation Phase

The glaciers had began to retreat by -2,500 and in -1,921 the planet was once more colonised. This time by Kukhunen fundamentalists. The colony was never very large, primarily due to certain mutigenic compounds in the soil and native food crops that caused a 68% miscarriage rate. Despite this, the settlement was extremely vibrant in its worship of the goddess Lancia and work began on a city that was in ecological harmony with the planet, the hillside city of Bòidhaach. The colony learned how to farm the aquatic Carra which, eventually, became a major part of their diet.

The Ziadd

200 years later the neo-Lancian colony was joined on Oewni by two, of what would eventually become several, exiled Ziadd Chaiklin Zhi (minor clans) that were to make this their homeland. The Ziadd were expert in metalwork and the making of weapons, and formed small communes in the marshy plains around Bòidhaach. Although both colonies maintained their own identities for centuries there was a great deal of cultural cross-fertilisation of ideas and philosophy. Slowly, unique planetary traditions evolved from both mother cultures; traditions accepted and practised by both races. The Oewni Ziadd began to integrate together and in -961 all the clans

collaborated to build a trading settlement common to all, the market place of Ghaemaurl, just outside Bòidhaach. Disaster struck in -636 when the Ziadd settlements were almost completely decimated by an unidentified plague which struck down over 60% of the population overnight. Although the Lancian colony at Bòidhaach (better known today by its Universalist name, Babylon) tried to help, they were unable to prevent the spread of the disease. They were eventually forced to completely quarantine the Ziadd settlements to protect themselves. The Oewni Ziadd seemed doomed to extinction.

'The Goddess'

The Innocentines

Help came in -633 when the Universal Church offered to send a medical mission to work amongst the Ziadd survivors. The Church responded with a fully equipped medical facility and 70 Cenobites, belonging to the Order of Pope Innocent, who had been trained as Infirmarians. The Innocentine Monks and Nuns, despite the risk of catching the disease, worked unceasingly amidst the afflicted and, within three years, had successfully eradicated the plague. In return the Father Abbot asked permission to build a small Universalist colony on the Chalcedony Peninsula and the freedom to preach the word of God. Both colonies willingly gave permission. The settlement contained less than two hundred people initially. The colony consisted of the original 48 monks and 22 nuns who had established the hospital, three priests and 40 young families who would work the land and help support the monks. They built an Innocentine Monastery and church on the fertile coastland, east of the peninsula, which they named Samaritan.

There was a period of initial distrust and misunderstanding. All three cultures were forced to overcome ignorant bigotry from amidst their populations. The hardest of all to eradicate was the Universalist fear of the native Lancians and their 'pagan' beliefs; the Ziadd culture, while more warlike, was more understandable and therefore more 'acceptable' to the Universalist point of view. However, over the next 700 years, the three cultures settled down and, began to amalgamate together to form a very diverse yet harmonious culture which took the best from all. Some Universalists however, refused to integrate and eventually formed their own settlement on the outskirts of Samaritan which they named Abram's Pride.

The Dominican's

Then, in 12, The Pope elected to unify the practice of the faith. Oewni was unfortunate in that Cardinal D'Macio, of the order of St. Dominic, was given the task of bringing the Innocentine settlement back into line. He was appalled to discover inter-marriage between the Universalist families and the other faiths. Worse, the Monastery was not preaching death and damnation to all the unbelievers! Instead, it insisted on practising religious tolerance towards its 'pagan' neighbours. The current Father Abbot had even gone as far as to hold joint services of worship. The Monks had even commissioned a 'pagan' Lancian architect to work on the new Monastery which had been built according to native, rather than orthodox, design. The Cardinal immediately excommunicated the Father Abbot and all who dared challenge him. A Dominican Priest was placed in charge of the Monastery with orders to cleanse the souls of the faithful. This he did with great vigour. The Cardinal quickly established a House of Correction amidst the zealot colony at Abram's Pride, with orders to stamp out heresy.

Filled with apostolic fervour, Cardinal D'Macio set out to baptise the whole population, willingly or unwillingly. Those who refused were excommunicated and forbidden, on pain of death, to ever enter the Universalist settlements. Husbands were separated from wives, daughters from mothers. The final straw came when the Cardinal decided to openly preach in the streets of Bòidhaach. His preaching was filled with damnation and hate; hate for 'artificial' races (such as the Ziadd) who were an abomination of the devil; for Lancians who, daring to challenge the purity of God's design, defiled their bodies with electronic cybernetics. He went on to preach that all 'artificial monstrosities' and 'techo-witches' must be burnt immediately in order to purify the city. As for the rest, they could only be saved through baptism. Several outraged warriors from Chaiklin *Bhaedl Dryailm* attacked the Cardinal and his Inquisition bodyguards. While the Cardinal escaped unharmed, several of his guards were seriously hurt. Public opinion, even amidst the Universalist settlements, had turned against him and he was ordered off-world along with his Dominican 'bullies'. The citizens offered the Father Abbot his position as spiritual leader back but he refused. He eventually became a hermit living in the foot hills round Mount Revelations.

Vilani Pacification Campaign

The Church had a long memory and was determined to regain the souls it had lost. The Ushran's were now too decadent to be useful. New blood was needed and the Church was quick to spot the power that the Third Imperium could offer willing allies. Secret alliances were formed and treaties signed. By the time of the Vilani Pacification Campaign the Church had established an extensive 'spy' network through out the spinward regions of the Sector. Many worlds fell primarily because of betrayal. The churches' *Opus Dei* operatives (spies furthering God's Work) from the *Societas Jesu* (Jesuits) appeared to have infiltrated everywhere. In return for services rendered, the Church asked for the control of several specific worlds; Oewni was one of those that Makhidkarun agreed to hand over.

The world they 'inherited' was in ruins. The port at Bòidhaach had been completely destroyed. The Church, backed up by Imperial troops, set up house. A Cathedral and spaceport were built at Abram's Pride. Several new monasteries were built. Houses of Correction were erected in the central squares of both Samaritan and Bòidhaach (now renamed Babylon as a permanent reminder that its inhabitants were amidst the damned). Oewni was now officially a Universalist colony and so a Cardinal was elected to guide the faithful. So began the dark years. Over the next five centuries the Church tightened its stranglehold on the planet. Babylon was walled in to prevent 'accidental' contamination of the faithful. Thousands were crowded into a town capable of handling perhaps a third that number. The Ziadd settlements were systematically destroyed. Only the Market site of Ghaemaurl (later renamed Gomorrah by the Universalists) was allowed to remain, though no-one was allowed to stay there after dark. A strict curfew was imposed and any unbeliever found outside the walls of Babylon was instantly executed. The clans were forced to live within the cramped walls of Babylon. The once beautiful city became a slum. Choleria claimed hundreds each year primarily due to the almost non-existent sanitation. Tensions ran high. Inquisition priests raided the settlement regularly in search of children to baptise. Once baptised these children were forbidden, on pain of death, from ever talking to their 'pagan' family ever again. 'Witch' hunters stalked the streets of Babylon looking for the cybernetically enhanced. The few they found were burnt to death as a warning to others. All non-Universalists were forced to wear the Lancian symbol for 'inferior' tattooed on their arms so that the faithful would know they were 'unclean'. The Ziadd rebelled several times but, without modern weapons, they were easily defeated. The Cardinal's seemed to delight in finding ways to destroy Babylon's morale; The Lancian's were ordered to destroy their sacred Darac trees and refused permission to have running water flowing through their homes. The Ziadd were commanded to remove all Oewni serpents from their dwellings and to shave their hair. Often the commands had only one purpose, to demoralise the inhabitants.

Imperial Civil War

Oewni was ripe for rebellion. Even the once peaceful Lancian population had suffered enough. Several uprising attempts were made over the centuries but the Governmental troops always managed to put the rebel forces down. Often with a great deal of bloodshed. Then, in 606 Grand Admiral Hault-Plankwell assassinated Empress Jacqueline I. Within two years the whole of Dagudashaag was in turmoil, as various factions fought for control of the Empire. Troops were pulled away from Oewni so as to protect the papal throne on Bolivar. The supply lines were destroyed, as Admiral fought Admiral for control of the fleets. Oewni could no longer rely on the Churches own fleet of transports to supply all of Oewni's needs and independent traders were allowed on world for the first time in centuries. Some of them were willing to run guns for the Lancian/Ziadd quarter. By 619 they were ready. The uprising was short but bloody. Only Imperial intervention in the form of IISS negotiators and Innocentines finally stopped the bloodshed before every Universalist was wiped off the face of the world.

While the Church made appeals to the Imperial court, the victors formed an Interim government and, to the surprise of many, allowed the Universalists to stay. This was on the provision that the Church was to remain contained within their own settlements at Chalcedony. They were also no longer allowed to proselyte amidst the other cultures. In order to ensure that their own Government never became as bigoted as the Cardinal's had been, the Government allowed the IISS to set up a Director-Governor to act as an independent arbitrator and final judge in all multi-cultural disputes.

In 621 the walls around Babylon were knocked down and completely removed except for the Outer Western Gate of Redemption which was left standing as a permanent reminder of the people's earlier slavery and persecution. Most of the Ziadd moved out of Babylon to re-establish their fortresses in the surrounding foothills. Gomorrah however, remained only a market place, a town forever devoid of population. The only exception to the restrictions on the Church was in 877 when the City Elders invited the Innocentine Monks to build an abbey and infirmary in Babylon itself. It was about this time that several 'syndicates' from Ardlhi moved into the Liberty Hall area of Babylon and began to build it up as a 'recreation' facility to rival Ardlhi itself.

Despite the good intentions of the current government, over the last four centuries both sides have carried out terrorist attacks on each other and religious/cultural persecution is still extremely common. It is estimated that in excess of fifty people will die every year on Oewni as a result of a terrorist attack.

In 905 the IISS decided that it was too restrictive to, either have all independent traffic dealt with through Enoch Orbital or else, have to put up with the petty restrictions of the Church who still commanded the only proper starport on the surface. They petitioned the local Government to have Abrim's Pride handed over to the scouts to administer. The Government initially declined because they wished a Freeport. Eventually they agreed to 'ask' the current Cardinal to hand the port over so that it could be jointly run by both the Lancian's and the Scout Service. Cardinal Z'yn refused but offered a compromise. The Church would build another port, to the same Imperial standard, in Lancian territory provided Abram's Pride could remain in Universalist hands. The Government agreed. The Church elected to build amidst the marshes of Penitent plains. The Port was built with eight supporting runways radiating out so that it would be completely stable. The local guilds quickly named the port Hades because of the sulphuric stench the marsh gave out. The name stuck. While the port was not as well equipped as Abrim's Pride it was a Class B port. In 928 Hades Port was opened and all non-Church traffic was transferred to it. Today the IISS enforce extrality at the Port while allowing the rest of the planet to be governed by the Council of Babylon.

STARPORT PROCEDURE

Landing Pattern

Ship's are generally contacted within 45 minutes of entering high orbit by the Oewni Close Orbit Administration. The majority of shipping is dealt with through either Enoch orbital (now operated by the local government as a freeport) or Hades Downport, even though the Abram's Pride has undoubtedly the best facilities in the system. At this time only Church-sponsored shipping is handled through the 'Pride. Private ship's should note that priority is always given to Government and Church sponsored shipping. (Note: Landing procedure for Abram's Pride is currently outside the scope of this guide and therefore only the procedure relating to Hades Port is given.) Once a window has been allocated, the ship may land. Wherever possible ship's will be requested to use one of the eight stabilising runways that radiate out from the central port. This is as much to save on fuel as to prevent overuse of the limited resources. Once landed the ship should receive clearance within 15 minutes of arrival. The party will normally consist of the Port Warden, Port Engineer and a health officer. Oewni enforces a statutory 36 hour quarantine period for all livestock. Customs and immigration requirements have been handled separately by the IISS since 1098 when the current Oewni Government declared the planet a freeport and refused to enforce Imperial immigration laws.

Starport Facilities

Only Hades Port has extrality. The Port has 20 berths but relies mainly on runways for take-off and landing. Each runway has a hard shoulder on which starships may be berthed at a lower cost but, since all such ships are exposed to the elements and lack external security, this can prove to be more expensive in the long term. Hades port claims to be able to accommodate a further 25 ships in this way. Traffic in the system is currently at 75% with 15% of planetary traffic handled through the 'Pride. Starship construction and repairs are available to Tech 10 capability. There are extremely limited independent Search and Rescue facilities in-system although the Church has its own salvage facilities which are available for hire. INDISS has rated Hades a 2 star rating (The 'Pride is rated at 3.5) All other amenities are available, for a price.

Port Costs

Refined Fuel Cr. 300. Unrefined Fuel Cr. 100 Berthing Costs Cr.75 for the first 8 days, Cr.100 per additional day. Hardshoulder berthing is Cr.50 for the first 8 days, extended visits require hiring a berth. Warehousing Costs Cr.10 per tonne per week. Security Costs Cr.10 per week. Abram's Pride has a city tithe of 3% on all goods imported and a one-off, visitors tax of Cr.20. Shuttle fees - charter only. Transport costs vary. Transport to Babylon or the 'Pride from the port is generally by mag-lev link

which costs Cr.36 per person. Air-conditioned grav-limousines offer a night and day charter service and costs about Cr.300 per vehicle (each holds six passengers in extreme comfort).

Regulations

As with most worlds, Oewni prohibits visitors bringing in illicit drugs, explicit pornography or food stuffs. This is a particular bone of contention between the local government and the Director-General. The IISS imposes standard restrictions which the local government (possibly to spite the Universalist population) refuses to enforce. As a result, any drug or vice may be purchased openly in the corridors of Babylon. Grav vehicles cannot be imported. Pet animals can usually be cleared through customs provided the statutory 36 hour quarantine has been observed though veterinary vaccination certificates are vital. Droid owners are also warned not to take droids outside the port's extrality zone as Oewni is one of only two worlds in Dagudashaag that has signed the League for the Abolition of Robotic Slavery (LARS) Treaty which grants automatic emancipation to all robots, class 2 and above, that have been in 'servitude' for a period of 12 years or more.

Currency

Visitors are allowed to bring in or out any amount of Imperial credits for personal use. In addition Oewni has its own local Credit exchange stabilised by the First Bank of Dagudashaag. Hard currency, known locally as scrip', is also in wide circulation.

Languages

Galanglic is widely spoken in Hades Port, the Pride and the city of Samaritan. Inhabitants of Enoch and Babylon generally speak either Galanglic, Galaach or Kehuu. In addition, many of the Universalists know vilani while the Ziadd population will generally only speak Klatha'sh to non-Ziadd in public.

Local Time

Given the mild axial tilt of the planet, seasonal variations are almost non-existent. A rotation period (local day) lasts 30.32 hours and a local year lasts 56.8 standard days or 45 local days long. The primary unit of time is a ***Monath*** or lunar month which is standardised at 15 local days. Over the centuries the local population has adapted their lifestyle to match the local day which they have divided into five periods; three periods of seven and a half hours duration for work, sleep and recreation and two 'half' periods of approximately four hours each for additional sleeping and working. These units are known locally as the five Psalms beginning with ***Dawn Psalm*** (½ period), ***Mid-light*** (full period), ***Cloister*** (full period), ***Even-Psalm*** (½ period) & ***Lucifer*** (full period).

Hero's Rising

Eyes of steel, grip of iron,
twisting, straining in the fight.
Zhee'ac of war, biting,
snarling, silenced by a burning light.

Deadly quiet on the water, in
the jungle, hanged on the air.
From our stillness comes the
question, within ourselves we
have to stare.

In our stillness comes new
learning, elevated from beasts
we stand.
With clear vision, amazed we
see a millennia of waste, a
ravaged land.

Armed with answers comes
our honour, a light which
points the way to take.
Knowledge of that light's a
banner, calling us within its
wake.

Marching onwards to our
glory, with only honour to
lead the way.
Knowing if we stray our path,
with that honour we must pay.

A Ziaddic Poem about Oewni
Author Unknown*

Portside Facilities

Various independent hotels have sprung up round the Hades, most of which rate a minimum of 2 star comfort. If you want true comfort, then you need to stay in Samaritan where there is both a Makhiir-Hilton and TAS facilities. Due to the theological dispute between the Universal faith and the Brethren, there are no Traveller's Mission's in the system. Most abbey's do have a Pilgrim's Rest which provides the basics at extremely cheap rates, though participation in the Monk's daily services of worship is mandatory.

Most independent traders elect to stay either at one of the local bars in Babylon or at MacKhan's. Policing on Oewni is dependent on where you are; Hades is policed by IISS, Samaratan and the Pride are protected by Officers from the House of Inquisition. Babylon depends utterly on private security. It is highly recommended that all visitors to Babylon carry Idex and/ or medilink identification - just in case. Food varies dramatically according to price and location. Seafoods are extremely common and cheap, though most meat dishes (which must be imported) are expensive they are generally well prepared. Local alcoholic drinks are primarily beers and meads. Seafood costs between Cr.5 - Cr.10 a meal and the local beer Cr.3 per glass. General transport between the various settlements is handled by an underground mag-lev link which charges Cr. 12 per kilometre travelled.

A VISITOR'S GUIDE TO OEWNI

ECOLOGY

Geology:

Oewni is renowned as a planet of great majestic beauty, forever covered in mist and constant rain. What most visitors never discover is that this only really describes the Great Valley regions of Bountiful and Brimstone. The majority of the planet is wild scrublands, tropical swamps or dry and arid desert. The reason this myth is perpetuated is due to the fact that less than 70% of the planetary surface has been properly explored. Much of what has been explored has remained untouched since the end of the last ice age. Only the Northern continent has been settled by man and, even there, the majority of habitations are to be found in Bountiful around the inland sea. For the above reasons this guide will primarily centre its attention on Bountiful.

Bountiful contains some of the most majestic scenery on Oewni. It is a landscape of harsh character; high, steep, rocky hills, intersected by narrow valleys and long, thin deep freshwater lakes. The coastline around the inner sea is jagged and deeply indented (particularly to the south) by long sea-lakes that reach deep into the interior.

The rocks which form this extravagant landscape are primarily igneous or metamorphic: granite and bassalt formed by volcanic activity over the millenia and carved into their present shape by the glaciers of the last ice age. The ice had a profound effect upon the nature of the area. The high plateaux of volcanic rock was gradually eroded by successive layers of ice. Any weak sections of the rock were ground out of the matrix to form valleys and corries.

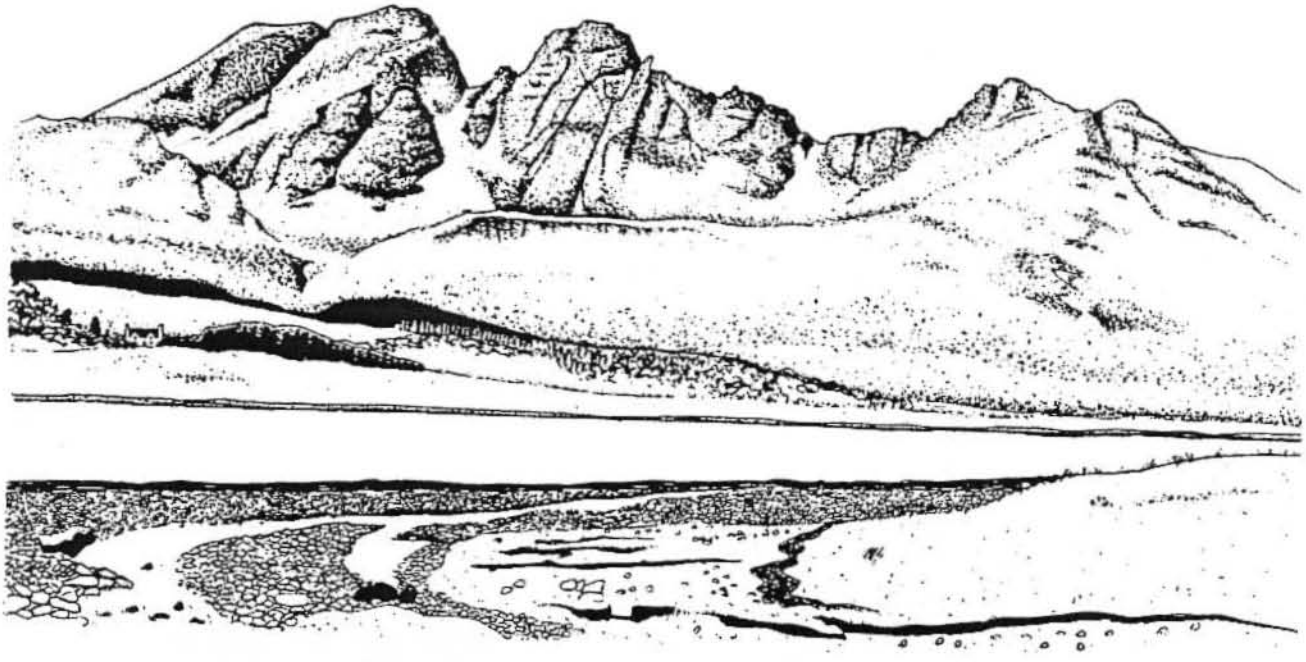
The main gathering place for the ice in Bountiful was the marshy plains around Penitent: a wide undulating basin of damp moorland, still littered with the debris deposited when the ice melted. Pitted with shallow freshwater lakes of irregular shape and scarred with the open peat banks of the streams which meander across the moors.

The ice which collected on the plains dispersed in all directions in the form of glaciers, slowly grinding down the valleys which radiate from the moor like the spokes of a wheel: Lake Penitent, Lake Wormwood, The Babylon Cradle, The Eden Valley, The Angelic Highway. During the period of glaciation they were ground into broad, U-shaped valleys with steep, rocky sides. The steep mountain ranges that surround Bountiful trap the moisture rising from the sea, resulting in all of Oewni's major rainfalls being located in this region. In fact the majority of the land is waterlogged. (A major exception is Eden Valley which benefits from elevation and good, natural drainage.)

Fauna & Flora:

The native flora of the Bountiful and Brimstone regions primarily consist of hardy alpine plants, varieties of grasses, reeds, heather and thick gorse bushes. Forests of native trees such as Albi and Darac exist in the better drained valleys located half way up the mountains. The swamps around the great sea are mostly covered in flowering mosses and carpets of lichen.

Oewni has evolved several thousand independent species of native fauna; most of which are insect or reptilian lifeforms. The majority of animal life in the Bountiful region is at least semi-aquatic and mammals are very much in the minority.



The Myg is one of 900 species of *Culicoides Diptera-Oewni* to be found distributed around the inner sea. The Myg is the smallest of the native 'mosquitoes' with a wingspan of less than 2mm. Like all of the species, it is blood-sucking but, unlike the rest of the genus, the diminutive insect has evolved a specialised niche and lives only on human blood. Swarms will descend on an unsuspecting victim and proceed to slice deep under the skin with their finely-toothed mandibles to release blood. At the same time the insect pumps its saliva into the wound to prevent the blood from clotting. The wound is rarely felt, however, the body's reaction caused by the saliva induces a severe allergic response. The human body automatically responds with a rush of histamine. This, reacts with enzymes in the myg's saliva to create an even more powerful, allergic reaction that can even stop the human heart. It has been estimated that the saliva of less than 25 bites can cause death in a healthy human. IISS research estimate that in excess of 30 deaths a year are as a result of Myg allergy making this diminutive insect the most deadly creature, bar man, on the planet.

Aquatic Carra are the primary food supply on Oewni, an extremely nutritious, shrimp-like creature farmed in the shallow artificial mudflats of Bountiful. After six months of intensive feeding, the Carra are fully-grown and can be sold for a 300% profit. Unfortunately, over the last few centuries, the number of Carra have began to drop away due to excessive overfishing. Carra will only spawn far out at sea. The exhausted Queen Carra, as well as the millions of larvae she released, are then washed into the coastal shallows where they are captured by youth with special nets. The larvae are transported to the artificial pools. The problem lie in the fact that Queen Carra cannot survive for more than a few seconds out of water (unlike the larvae). This has resulted in the coast being decimated. As Carra become rarer and the farms become desperate for new stock, the price of healthy larvae has risen astronomically. At the moment demand far exceeds supply. Greed has meant that, if anything, fishing for larvae has now increased to a level where total extinction of the species is possible within the next decade.

The Sevt or 'Little thief' is an example of one of the larger aquatic mammals. It is similar in appearance and size to a Terran Otter but is a solitary creature with extremely dexterous front paws and an irresistible attraction to 'shiny' objects. In recent years some Sevt have adapted to urban life and exist as scavengers within the human settlements. There have even been attempts in recent years to domesticate the rather attractive creature; attempts that have met with only partial success. While they proved extremely friendly and intelligent pets they could not resist 'acquiring' attractive baubles. Unfortunately, Sevt hide their prizes in a variety of nests and generally forget where they hide them.

The Sevt or 'Little thief

Oewni Serpents are similar in biology to Terran snakes. They are aquatic and live off insects and small mammals. Most are highly poisonous and are brightly patterned. They have the remarkable ability to enter a type of 'suspended animation' after eating, which can last for several hours yet, can instantly awake - alert and ready - should they feel threatened. This ability to 'freeze' is what makes them so useful to the Oewni as living 'jewellery'.

CULTURE

The Lancians of Oewni

The main reason the Oewni 'Lancians' differ from their cultural cousins is that their planetary society was established before the Lancian movement was formed. The confusion arises because the initial settlement consisted of Kukhunen religious fundamentalists; Lancia worshippers with a similar ethos to present-day Lancians. This meant that while sharing a common creative and artistic nature, Oewni are generally more militant and do not share the pacifistic beliefs common to others of their race. Since the Restitution, it has primarily been the Lancians who have tried to establish an end to the hostilities between the Universalists and 'pagan' cultures.

One aspect of the persecution period that continues to this day is that number of Oewni with permanent facial and body tattoos. Under Universalist rule all Lancian unbelievers were required to wear a tattoo of the Kehuu symbol for 'inferior' on their arm so that they could be instantly recognised. Some Lancians began to use Kehuu tattoos on their face and body, both to hide their input plugs and corymbic implants from the *Societas Jesu* witch-finders and, as a method of identifying fellow-rebels. Today this tradition has taken on a cultural significance and many Oewni youth, both Lancian and Ziadd, wear tattoos, not so much as to hide their cyberware, as to enhance it.

Darac Trees hold a special place in the local Lancian culture. They are extremely difficult to grow, and require a great deal of attention. Whenever a child is expected, a Darac seed is planted by the parents. It is believed that the seedling is somehow linked to the new life. Should the plant thrive, the

parents 'know' that they can look forward to a healthy child. A sickly plant is believed to signify that the child will either miscarry or be born weak. Should the baby (and tree) survive to the child's first birthday then, at a special private ceremony, the seedling is grafted onto the family tree. Legend has it that the new 'branch' will only react to those who mean no harm to the child.

For Further Information See *Contact: The Lancians* in Issue 4.

The Ziadd of Oewni

While most Ziadd can be considered individualistic in nature, they feel strong bonds towards family and land. Over the centuries such family bonds, intermingled with the need for territory,has resulted in the formation of Clans to whom they give allegiance first and foremost.

These clans or *Chaiklin* developed from the ancient warrior tribes that roamed the plains of Zeda millenia before. Chaiklin is Klatha'sh for 'children'. The chief was the father and the people his children. The chief led the clan in war (which was engaged in only with the consent of the whole clan.) He governed the territory for the benefit of the whole clan and ensured that everyone got sufficient for their needs. As far as possible, all the people of the clan were equal. Each was made up of *D'skom'r* - native men and *Laem'r* - broken men. the native men were related to the chief and each other by blood. The broken men were individuals who, for one reason or another, took the protection of the clan and became part of it. There were also *Zhi* (septs or branches of the clan) which were made up of clansmen who had become sufficiently powerful to found their own, smaller clans within the main.

Ever since the Ushran Empire's capture of the Zeda Cluster in -600, there have been Chaiklin that have lived their entire lives in space. These *Chaiklin Khu'ch* (clans of the stars) have no territory, save their fleet of ships. Their ancient vessels have been continually upgraded, expanded and enhanced over the centuries. These clans are all that remain today of the Zeda Corsairs. Oewni is homeport to two such clans; *Chaiklin D'uvri* and *Chaiklin Khisaeq'avr.*

Ziadd are generally very aggressive and short-tempered and have a tendency to attack first and negotiate later. Physical strength is a prime factor in determining social status amongst them. The strong are honoured, the weak bullied. Unlike other Ziadd the Clans of Oewni do not automatically treat strangers as inferiors, rather they view them as challengers.

Most worship the Goddess Kh'ish, represented by an eternal flame. On Zeda the Priestesses of Kh'ish have managed to keep a permanent flame burning in the Temple since -15,000. They see it as their sacred duty to ensure that all colonies have access to the divine spark and a flaming branch is sent out to all Ziadd worlds. On Oewni, although each household has its own hearth altar, a civic flame is kept burning in the Temple of Kh'ish, in Gomorrah. Six females, representing the six local Chaiklin are chosen to tend the flame. If the flame goes out (such as occurred in 455 by command of the Church) all business must stop until another divine spark can be fetched from Zeda. In addition to the altar, most Ziadd families cultivate Oewni Serpents as a sign of Kh'ish which they drape around themselves as living jewellery.

The Ziadd Assassins

The Ziadd culture believes that physical strength and cunning are an important part of cultural, as well as racial evolution. To this end, they allow promotion and career advancement to be achieved through 'superiority' over the current holder of the desired post. In ancient times this meant physical duels between the two involved. This eventually developed into proving their superior cunning through assassination. If the victim can survive from dawn to sunset on the appointed day then they have won, and the challenger must acknowledge him/her as their superior for one more year. The use of professional assassins, by the challenger, is allowed. Initially the Imperium attempted, over the centuries, to remove this particular tradition from the Ziadd culture. Today, although they still disapprove of its use, they will not interfere, provided the full rule of ***Zhiavr'ka*** is fulfilled and only Ziadd are involved.

Most Ziadd assassins are trained from birth in the twin arts of stealth and murder. They are experts in all forms of weapon and hand-to-hand fighting. While each clan train up their own Zhiavr the best assassins are acknowledged to be the independents who recognise no clan.

Zhiavr (Assassins), while contracted, wear their hair in a waxed topknot and openly proclaim the crest of the *Zhiavr* on their clothing. This allows them to be easily identified by their victim. The ***Zhiavr'ka*** demands that the victim be warned as to their intention by the arrival, several days before the 'hunt', of a blue ***Suvae*** - a native flower which symbolises death. Most *Zhiavr* will

The Law of Zhiavr'ka

Only the challenger may use an assassin. The hunted must prove his/her 'superiority' by finding out and personally challenging the hirer or by surviving until sunset on the appointed day.

Once hired, a Zhiavr must send the hunted a Suvae and notification of the appointed day. Should the hunted run it will be seen as a sign of inferiority and they will be outcast by society.

If the hunted can identify the hirer correctly, and challenge him/her face-to-face, then the Zhiavr must step down. Such challenges are generally to the death. Should the hunted challenge the wrong person, however, they will lose face and must declare the (unknown) challenger the victor. Under ***Zhiavr'ka*** no Ziadd dare lie.

During the hunt, the intended victim must wear a biomonitor, which will register the moment of brain death by emitting a piercing scream to inform all that ***Zhiavr'ka*** is over.

On the day of the challenge the hunted is allowed to protect him/herself with bodyguards, or use any form of cunning to avoid confronting the Zhiavr. The hunted or their representatives are forbidden, by tradition, from seeking out the assassin. Should the Zhiavr find his/her victim, before sunset, then every attempt will be made to kill him/her. If the assassin succeeds, from the very second of the victim's death, he/she will be immune from any retribution.

The challenger proves their worthiness for the new position by having used their cunning to either mask their ambition or by avoiding direct confrontation. Should the hunted survive until sunset, then the Zhiavr is dutybound to inform him/her of the challenger's identity.

Neither party may physically challenge the other or call *Zhiavr'ka* for a period of one year.

Zhiavr'ka forbids the use, by anyone concerned, of any long range weapons. All combat must be hand-to-hand.

only kill according to their code. (See sidebar) However there are *Zhiavr Laem'r* on Oewni who do not honour the code and will attack even non-Ziadd and, have even been known to forego the traditional warning.

The Universal Church

"Every Ziadd who fails to acknowledge the faith is damned by God for all eternity; they will be like a heated oven, blazing hot on the outside, their filthy blood boiling in their veins.."

Father Abbasi of The Jesuits

The Universal Church is descended from the ancient Catholic faith of Terra and retains a great deal of its theology. In many ways the Universalist faith emulates medieval Catholic traditions and practices which various of its Popes have reintroduced over the centuries since it split from the mother Church.

The Innocentine Interpretation

The Innocentines are the spiritual descendants of the ancient monks and nuns of Benedictine and Franciscan monastries. They are true believers in the love of God towards all; even unbelievers, aliens and 'artificial' races. While they believe that baptism is necessary to salvation, they do not believe that unbelievers should be forced into heaven. Theirs is a religion of example and kindness. They live simple lives of meditation and good works. Over the centuries their peaceful and loving philosophy has encouraged families, who wished a life of tolerance, to establish colonies around the monastries. While they do not live the rules of the monastic life they practice the tenets of tolerance, love and hard work. On Oewni, Innocentines have become an intricate part of the culture and are the main reason that the Church has not been forcibly expelled from the planet. During the eons of racial intolerance, many Innocentines found themselves permanent 'guests' at the local House of Correction because they refused to ill-treat their fellow-man just because they did not worship God in the way the Church demanded.

The Dominican Interpretation

The Dominicans are the zealots of the Church. They believe in the importance of their rituals and in the infallibility and absolute rule of the Popes. For them the intention behind the act is less important, in the eyes of God, than the frequent re-enactment of the proper rituals of worship. Traditionalist, conservative and puritanical they punish all who dare question the doctrines of the Church. It has been said that it is fear that controls the congregation; fear of the House of Correction, fear of damnation, fear of excommunication. Dominican's are brought up to accept, without questioning, the absolute 'truth' of the Church. To doubt is to sin, to sin is to suffer spiritual death. Resurrection back into the light of truth is worth any price even torture and physical death. Many will sin, even priests, but as long as they acknowledge the Church and follow the rituals they will be safe in heaven. Members of the faith know that repentance, whether through the purchase of indulgences or confession and regular payment of tithe, always results in absolute redemption and heavenly reward.

Faithful members have small plaques on their doors, known locally as the 'Eyes of the Innocent', which are supposed to represent the eyes of Pope innocent as he looks after his flock. These plaques are carved from local slate and exported throughout the Spinward Subsectors.

ENTERTAINMENT

For most, the main reason for visiting Oewni is to explore the Liberty Hall area of Babylon. Liberty Hall got its name from an ancient Terran saying; *"Come in gentlemen. This is Liberty Hall: you can spit on the mat and call the cat a bastard"*. Liberty has in recent years began to challenge Ardlhi as the subsector gambling and debauchery capital. What it lacks in technology, grandeur and size it makes up for in the quality of its 'entertainment'. When the current government decided to open Oewni up as a Freeport, Liberty Hall was flooded by what what the IISS have described as 'a hive of villainous activity'. Favourite trader bars are 'The Staff of Life' and the 'Rest & Be Thankful'. The 'Staff' is home to the longest running Sabaac game in the Sector; the game has been running, with only minor interruptions, for twenty-three years and has a Cr. 500,000 minimum entry limit.

Babylon is also home to one of the most successful V'actor studio's in the Quadrant. Darac Studios has authored several of the best known computer-generated personalities ever to enhance an entertainment console. The Studio is equally at home

in designing cartoon 'hosts' for shows as well as composite creations for chatshows and teledidonic bordellos. In fact, MacKhan Entertainment's Quadrant-famous *Virtual Valerie* and *Cyber Crystina* were first generated here.

[1] **V'Actor - Virtual Reality, Computer-Generated Actors**

Drinks and food are divided into two distinct categories depending on quality: The best is often described as an '*Abbot's Portion*' meaning that it is of superior quality. Others, which makes up for lack of quality with quantity, are generally referred to locally as a '*Monk's portion*'. Thus Monk's Beer will mean a strong local brew while something described as Abbot's Brandy would be a quality blend.

Entertainment in Samaritan or Abram's Pride is best described as ''of the Church social'' variety. There are no commercial entertainments to be found within the settlements and the unmarried are forbidden from mingling with others of the opposite sex unless chaperoned. Their art primarily consists of either religious icons or geometrical art which has developed in the last three hundred years as a cultural backlash against the New Union debauchery.

PLACES TO VISIT ON OEWNI

Oewni Architecture: The Lancian ghettoes of Babylon are virtually unique in that, originally, each dwelling was built of several circular rooms connected together to form a ecological partnership with the environment. All houses were built in such a way as to be able to be self-sufficient. Heating is supplied by both solar panels and by methane generators working off organic waste. In the centre of the dwelling is a pool with a waterfall flowing down the North wall. This is constantly recycled. Planted in the centre of the pool is a Darac tree. These are native to Oewni and have a bronze bark with slender branches tipped with thousands of silver, blue veined leaves. The Darac is one of the few trees that react to sound; the tree will turn its branches towards the source of the sound and the bark changes colour, going from light bronze through to deep gold according to the level of sonic vibration. The poorer Lancians built their dwellings on top of the house, to a height of four or five stories. These generally lack the indoor waterfall but all will contain a Darac even if only in miniature. To the rear of the dwellings the building will have been covered in moss and grass and will resemble nothing more than a hillside. Even in the fleshpots of Liberty Hall the buildings have been designed to blend into the environment rather than overwhelm it.

Ziadd dwellings of Babylon consist of stone, tower-like fortresses with the private chambers located around the outer walls. Such buildings can be up to a height of 3 levels leaving a large central hall in the middle which is protected from the elements by transparent plastisteel to allow natural light through. Most sleep entire extended families.

Liberty Hall: An area of Babylon consisting of a maze of buildings which, in contrast to the rest of Babylon, seems to have been thrown together to form a separate covered city.

The area begins at the Eastern Gate, which is always carefully guarded by private security. They ensure that everyone entering has their retina scanned and checked. Between the outer and the inner gates, and protected by guards on all sides, is Babylon's Platinum market. Actually very little platinum is traded here though the area is thick in independent moneylenders. Instead the market trades in every form of portable wealth known. Jewels, gold, silver, platinum, databases, libraries, rare manuscripts, antiques, deeds of property, wills, certificates of stock, outstanding loans: all are openly and freely available.

Within the inner gate lies Liberty Hall - initially the area consisted of thousands of ramshackle shacks built by displaced Lancians who had been forced by law to move within the walls of Babylon. Today the shacks have been replaced by a mixture of residential and commercial buildings with little separation between the two. In this maze of crowded alleyways merchants offer every known vice. The hundreds of tiny squares are filled with storytellers, performers, beggars and soothsayers. The two entrances to the area were intended to provide a moral lesson; that the only two possible outcomes to sin are salvation and death. The eastern Gate leads to the now deserted Cathedral (representing repentance and salvation) while the Western Gate leads to the cemetery (Death). Within the walls all motor traffic (except emergency vehicles) are forbidden. The narrow streets are overflowing with street hustlers trying to sell you every kind of pleasure imaginable. Guides will offer to take you to the best bars, gambling houses or drug dens. The principle walkway is called the Street and houses the more 'respectable' clubs and gambling casinos. Strangers to the 'Hall' are generally safe as long as they don't stray off the main routes and keep away from the thousands of twisting side streets and dark alleys. It is here that the hotels advertise by the hour and the clubs are little more than a room or two serving alcohol and drugs.

Despite the small planetary population, Liberty Hall is extremely overcrowded. Over the centuries builders had erected new buildings actually in the streets. When a builder erects a structure that blocks a street or thoroughfare several things can happen. If the street is a backroad, only a few people object, possibly even attacking the builders. In those circumstances the building is generally completed and people would be forced to find new routes. The people that owned shops or houses that used to front the now blocked street suffer most. Either they negotiate with neighbours for access or abandon their property. These then might be knocked through to form a throughfare to bypass the new building. The City Council refused to interfere within the 'Hall'.

Problems arose however, when main thoroughfares, such as the Street, were blocked by construction. Then the resistance is so much stronger and the builder dare not risk a public riot (under Babylon law building in a street is considered legal justification for assault). To prevent this from occurring builders generally built on top of arches. Over the centuries most of the 'Hall' became roofed over in this manner. The streets became a twisting warren of thoroughfares and inevitably even the arches themselves became crowded with streetsellers and stalls.

Mount Innocent: In 322 the Universalists began work on a giant monument to their first Pope, Innocent XV. The scheme was to carve from the side of the mountain the image of his Holyness. The site chosen was the face of Mount Misery directly above the Ziadd colony of Gomorrah. Within five years the monument was completed, an effigy of the Pope over 650m in height stared down at the Ziadds as they went about their chores. A permanent reminder of the power the Church had over their lives. A miniature of the carving, only 65m high, was later erected in the town square. This statue was damaged during the revolution and has now been moved to Samaritan where it has been repaired. Mount Innocent still remains, a silent reminder to all the Ziadd of the power the Church had over them for centuries.

End Note: Referee's who wish to expand on the Universalist Church information, will find a great deal of useful reference material in the Library under Medieval European History, particularly The Spanish Inquisition, The Dark Ages, and Early Roman Catholic History.

I can personally recommend *"Vicars of Christ"* by **Peter De Rosa.**

*** The Ziaddic Poem on p.22 was penned by Tim Osborne**

Gomorrah: Gomorrah is a trading town without a resident population. All the shopkeepers either live in Babylon or in the surrounding Ziadd estates.

The Weapon Shops of Gomorrah: The Ziadd of Oewni are famous for their metalwork. Their shops hold some of the best low tech weaponry in the Sector. Rather than try and compete with more advanced worlds, the local Ziadd clans have, instead concentrated on using the most advanced techniques possible to improve on blade weapon design. This is the place to buy the best quality blade weapons, whether it is *Katana's* made from the finest Duristeel, blades formed from Memory plastic or Vibro-blades and mono-filiment enhanced blades. There is also another side to the weaponshops of Gomorrah; specialist torture equipment as perfected by House of Correction personnel over the centuries. Pain Collars, Inhibitors, Zingers - all can be openly bought on the streets.

The Temple of Kh'ish: Though the Temple itself is perfectly round, the inner rooms were designed in imitation of the inner workings of the human heart: the four main chambers designed to resemble the Auricles and ventricles with twisting rooms and corridors built in imitation of the veins and arteries. These all led into the central courtyard which was open to the sky. In the Centre is the sacred flame of Kh'ish. Worshippers must give thanks with their blood. Non-participants give only a spot of blood which is spread on the heartstone. Participants in the ceremonies wear barbed rings which they use to slap and tear at their skin causing them to bleed with thousands of small surface wounds. The Ziadd believe that it is not the suffering and bloodletting that is the sacrifice but the strength and virtue of self-discipline and restraint as the worshippers refuse to acknowledge the pain they suffer.

The All-Saints Mountain Range: Overshadowing the Lucifer plains of Brimstone stands a magnificent range of still active volcanoes known as the All-Saints. So-called because each mountain is named after one of the Saints. Many rumours circulate amongst all of the local cultures regarding the inherent evil of the Lucifer plains and local legend has it that God raised up the volcanoes of All-Saints to intimidate the power of the devil into submission. Whether or not you are superstitious Lucifer Plains is a depressing area; nothing but brown moss and quagmire. Of Oewni's extensive wildlife only serpents seem to inhabit the plain, living a cannibalistic existence. Sports include Magma-sliding, mountain climbing and abseiling.

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Cr. 3 SECTOR-WIDE NEWS

Smuggler Burnt at Stake - Gwi

Earlier today a Smuggler was publically executed in a most barbaric manner for attempting to illegally transport over half a tonne of contraceptives onto Gwi. Tobias Esteban (58), Captain and owner of the 400 tonne free merchantman "A Hard days Night" was arrested 9 months ago after Gwi customs officers discovered a hidden compartment onboard his ship stuffed with contraceptives. Esteban was immediately handed over for questioning by House of Inquisition representatives from the Universal Church. Under planetary and church law the illegal importation of such drugs is considered second degree 'infanticide'. Despite pleas from the Sector Government for clemency in this matter, Esteban was sentenced to death last week. This morning Esteban, visibly shaken and withdrawn, was led forth from prison to the nearby Zion Cathedral where several representatives forcibly baptised him into the Universal Faith so that the last rites could be administered. He was then led to Redemption Square in the heart of Gehenna District where he was tied to a stake and administered a pain killer though, as dictated by Church law, he was still fully conscious when they lit the fire.

Thousands had gathered to witness the execution, including children who cantered around the burning and screaming man singing nursery songs. Never had this reporter witnessed such a barbaric display; the pain killers had apparently deadened the pain to such an extent that Esteban remained awake for several minutes after he caught fire. One priest commented afterwards that his screams were not at the horror of being burnt alive but at the knowledge that, for his sins, he was about to enter the domain of hell. The Universal Church insists on using this form of execution so that it could remain true to the biblical demand that the Church spills no man's blood. A protest has been lodged by Amnesty Intergalactic regarding both the form of execution and the fact that Esteban was forcibly baptised into a faith of which he was not a believer. The planetary government has so far refused to comment on the incident.

Antique Sword Goes Missing.

Station One 0517 C668843-8 041-1113

Station One Planetary Police are investigating the disappearance of a historic sword from the museum in Talsorngon House, outside the capital city here on Station One. The Sylean Estoc, which dates from 450 and was known locally as the "Voltan Sword", has long been associated with Sir Francis Voltan, the fifth Marquis of Osha, who died in 499. The sword is presumed stolen, but the actual date of the theft is uncertain. Its disappearance was not noticed for several days, owing to confusion on the part of museum staff, who were under the impression that the weapon had been removed from its case for cleaning. The sword is valued at approximately Cr.10,000. A reward is offered for information leading to its recovery.

Bank Collapse Sparks Panic.

The Bank of Niirkhi today collapsed when it was discovered that Brolk Kavorn, head of the investment section has disappeared along with an estimated seventy five percent of the banks assets.

Kavorn was last seen two days ago when, security cameras recorded him entering his apartment. Which was destroyed that night in a gas main explosion. However forensic examination of the flat revealed no trace of a body.

A spokesperson for the government has stated that all investors will be repaid, it may take some time, but all the banks debts will be met.

meanwhile the police have notified the IMJ that Kavorn is wanted for questioning in this affair.

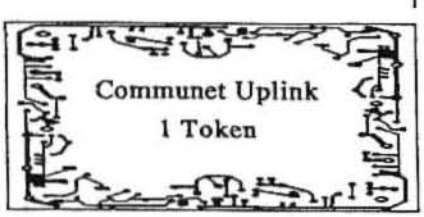
Crew Rescued - Ziamr

Earlier today the seven surviving crew of the Subsidised Merchant "Paradise of Nandini" were released from prison and taken under Imperial escort to the Ia'mruk SIA ship "K*ia'Kjel". The whole affair began last year when the "Paradise of Nandini" limped into Ziamr downport claiming to have been attacked and boarded by Ziadd pirates. The eight surviving crew members were immediately arrested by the local Ziadd government who claimed that the whole story was a fraud to cover up for a mutiny. The crew were kept in horrifying conditions and, despite serious wounds, without any medical attention. They were apparently told that they would remain imprisoned until each and everyone of them had signed a confession stating that the whole incident was an insurance fraud. While five of the crew eventually signed the confession, under duress, two crew refused to sign.

Cont. Page 2

Cont. from Page 1

The situation remained undiscovered until last month when a visitor to Ziamr accidently learnt of the crews predicament and informed the Imperial Navy immediately she was off-world. Initially the Ziamr Government refused to acknowledge the existence of the prisoners, though INDISS has since learnt that they were moved no less than twelve times during this period. Eventually, after the Imperial Navy threatened to carry out sanctions, the local Government agreed to release the surviving crew - Tes Kirsch having died two months before from untreated wounds. Last night the local government issued a statement that the whole affair had been blown completely out of proportion. Since pirates no longer existed within any part of Dagudashaag, the government had been faced with the task of a) bringing the true perpetrators to justice and b) preventing the spread of such malicious and blatant, racially motivated lies. They refused to comment on the report issued by the Imperial Navy that over the last ten years there had been over 120 known attacks on small shipping within Shallows and Zeda subsectors primarily by Ziadd mauraders and that examination of the "Paradise of Nandini" revealed severe fire damage consistant with the crew's story. Commander Brett Mane said later that it was time that local Ziadd-led authorities stopped trying to pretend that Ziadd marauders did not exist and worked with the Navy to put a stop to it once and for all. While the surviving crew members have yet to issue a statement, a representative from Sk*akia, Muisk'mii & Kkaskuama did confirm that they will be acting on behalf of the families and crew in this matter.



Paedagog Rediscovered - Cablu

Earlier today, authorities on Cablu finally admitted that the famous holovid "The Paedagog" had been recovered from a deserted basement in Cain almost 224 years after it was originally stolen. As yet the public has not been allowed to see the famous work which was apparently rescued mere hours before the site was due to be demolished. The original holovid was created by Kir Bolton in 544 and depicted his now famous animation showing thousands of young from all the known races within the Imperium creating paradise from clay. It was originally stolen during a daring daytime raid from the Carter Museum and, at the time, the authorities assumed that they would be contacted with the robber's demands. When nothing further was heard, it was then assumed that the work had to have been sold to a private collector and that it was unlikely ever to resurface. It therefore came as quite a shock to discover the piece in such humble circumstances after all these years. The Carter Museum stated that, while the piece needed some restoration work, it was wonderful to see it again and hoped to have it on display within the week.

Newsflash - The Carter Museum has just released a statement that "The Paedagog" has been restolen, only hours after it had been handed back to the Museum. Police believe this may have been a student prank and are requesting the safe return of the vid "no questions asked".

Daring Rescue - Khilaeg

At a news conference held by the Imperial Navy, a press spokeperson admitted that the Navy had authorised a Beta-7 Covert Action Team (CAT) to carry out a rescue of a female prisoner from Khilaeg last year. The action was carried out without loss of life on either side and was in response to Khilaeg's refusal to release an unnamed Naval Officer into the custody of the Navy after she had been imprisoned on a charge of unlawfully seducing a member of the Universal Church into committing an act of adultery.

The Navy spokesperson stated that the prisoner was being held at the time in a House of Inquisition and was being systematically tortured in the hope that she would confess her 'sins'. The rescued officer, a Scanian, was accused of being an 'Ursimgan Aphrodite', apparently because of her race, and had been imprisoned after the man with whom she had had the affair claimed that she had forced him to have sex with her against his will. Church representatives on Khilaeg have refused to comment.

Joshua Captured - Piileir

Lazarus Joshua, the 'popsicle' escapee from Saven prison authority, was finally interned earlier today after spending several months on the run. His corpse was found during a riot, earlier this month, at the Mirror Nightclub, on Piileir. Police paramedics maintained CPR until a trauma team arrived. Joshua was eventually resusitated but had severe brain damage. His injuries, which required intensive surgery and Slow Drugs, have apparently left him a mental vegetable. Joshua was to face several charges of murder relating to his initial escape but these were dropped due to insufficient evidence. Joshua's lawyer, Sadiir Sinclair of Sinclair, Hamilton & Badushka, stated that despite a reputation as an incurable sociopath, Joshua had spent the last few months trying to make a new life for himself and pointed out that even the prosecution could find no evidence that he had been involved in any psychopathic behaviour since entering Sapphyre. Joshua was sentenced to life at the Bedlam Prison for the criminally insane.

Gateway

SET UP

The first scenario is initially set on the world of **Niirkhi** (Dagudashaag 0613). The characters are down on their luck with little in the way of paying work (or cargos and if they have their own ship). Yet respite comes in the way of a well paying contract to deliver frozen plant embryos to the Durmaash University of Niirkhi Botanical Research Institute test site on **Hourara** (Dagudashaag 0716).

Read the following to the players: *"...so things have been tough of late. The tension on the border with Lucan, Strephon and Dulinor has really slowed up business. People are staying away from the area and the regular freight/ cargo is being shipped by a more circuitous around the Shallows to avoid being caught up in any possible military action. Some shippers and brokerage firms have ceased operations on Niirkhi altogether until the situation stabilises.*

"Yet you had a lucky break: while touring the Durmaash University of Niirkhi (well you had nothing else to do that day) you sneaked away from you guide and found yourself outside the staff room of the Botany department. You could hear a heated discussion between two senior researchers arguing over the cancellation of a research grant if the plant embryos were not delivered to the University botanical test site on Hourara within fifteen weeks. With a disabled university ship (no available engineers) and no willing crew their grant was as good as gone. At this point you knock on the door, introduce yourself and offer your services"

[if the characters have their own vessel ignore the dialogue on the safari ship below or arrange their vessel to be impounded/ commandeered by the navy].

1. TAKE MY RHODODENDRONS PLEASE.

Summary of nuggets; 1: The characters volunteer their services, negotiate their renumeration and detail their contract. 2: The characters set about repairing the safari ship. 3: When the vessel is ready the PCs depart for Hourara.

1. The Contract. The PCs are offered a contract to deliver plant specimens to Hourara. Location: Staff room of the Botany department of the University of Niirkhi.

Scene: The two scientists sit with open mouths as you burst into the room all trying to speak at the same time. After what seems like minutes, but in reality is only a few seconds, the elder-looking gentleman stands up and demands to know the party's business .

OVERVIEW

This adventure revolves around the discovery of a pair of linked Ancient matter transport terminals found on Gishi (Dagudashaag 0513) and Kimarla (Dagudashaag 0819). The player characters (PCs) arrive at the former site following a misjump into the inner regions of the Gishi system where the unstable primary flares and disables their ship. The PCs use the matter transporter to travel to the other terminus on Kimarla where the group are confronted by cannibalistic locals who inhabit the vast series of tunnels. To escape the PCs stumble on an abandoned merchant whose crew has been engaged in the smuggling of anagathic into Dagudashaag.

Using the courier to escape Kimarla the PCs run into further trouble by way of a Privateer's corsair that makes an attempt to detain the group. Once free of the Kimarla system the PCs must decide whether they uncover further evidence of the smuggling and notify the Imperial authorities and/or complete their original mission.

This adventure is set in the 'Rebellion Era', circa early 1121, where Dagudashaag has been fragmented by the numerous claims by factions for control of the region

This adventure is split into two parts; this issue contains scenario's 1 to 6, with issue 10 to complete the story with scenarios 7 to 9. The second part is not needed to play out the first; indeed the adventure can be played satisfactorily using part one only. The adventure has been written using the MegaTraveller rules system, but should be easily adapted to fit with all the Traveller rules editions.

SYNOPSIS OF SCENARIOS - REFEREES ONLY

- **Scenario 1. Take My Rhododendrons Please:** The characters are contracted to deliver frozen plant embryos to a botanical test site on Hourara. They start on Niirkhi and if they do not have their own ship they will be supplied with a type K safari ship.
- **Scenario 2. We Have a Flare Up:** The PC's vessel misjumps into the inner regions of the Gishi system where an untimely (!) stellar flare disables the ship. The characters have little choice but to head for the surface of Gishi.
- **Scenario 3. Looking Around:** Exploring their new home the PCs discover an Ancient base.
- **Scenario 4. The Grey Wall:** Inside the Ancient complex the characters find the matter transporter and use it to 'walk' to Kimarla.
- **Scenario 5. The Dark Ways:** The Kimarla site is near identical to the Gishi site but connects to vast labyrinth of natural tunnels. The characters are pursued by the troglodytic Kimarlians who hide a grim secret. While running from the natives the - PC's stumble into an abandoned starship.
- **Scenario 6. Up, Up and Away (or 'From the Frying Pan...'):** Using the abandoned ship the characters leave Kimarla but are apprehended by an Privateer's corsair. The PCs must either flee or fight. While in jumpspace the PCs discover the secrets of the ship, its missing crew, its cargo and the Kimarlaians.
- **Scenario 7. Gathering the Evidence:** Here the characters must decide whether to collect further evidence on the smuggling operation and its financiers and notify the Sector authorities, or run with what they've got. This scenario covers these two main choices.
- **Scenario 8. Just Desserts:** This scenario allows the resolution of the conflict with the financiers of the smuggling operation and their arrest by Imperial authorities.
- **Scenario 9. A Job to Finish:** The PCs can honour their original contract, retrieve and deliver the frozen plant embryos. They could even possibly salvage the safari ship.

Action: One PC must elect to speak and explain their position;

To convince the scientists that the party has honest intentions:

Routine, Liason, soc, 1 min (absolute, confrontation, uncertain).

Referee: On any success the PCs will be invited into the room to discuss the job with the scientists. On failure the characters will be asked to wait outside for a moment; re-roll. On exceptional failure have the PCs escorted out of the University grounds. The characters will now have to make an appointment the next day. The scientists reception will be cool; re-roll the above task with the task level at difficult. Allow the group to finally succeed however.

The PCs will be asked to transport five tonnes of plant embryos and the five tons of cryocontainers (essentially low berths) to the university botanical test site on Hourara. The embryos are of the Howood tree which the Botany department on Niirkhi has managed to grow in tissue culture. The university in conjunction with Lakio BioIndustries are planning a reafforestation experiment on some barren mountain slopes on Hourara. The development of tissue culture for the howood tree has allowed the introduction of modifications which allow the young plants to adapt to differing environments. The triad of organisations plan to eventually exploit their research efforts.

The University of Niirkhi has its own starship, a type K safari ship, although it's in a state of disrepair. The party are to diagnose the repairs required and carry out the necessary work themselves where possible.

The party will be paid **Cr.10,000 per person** with a bonus of Cr.2,000 per week under the fifteen week deadline. All parts will be paid for by the university as will half of all reasonable, documented expenses accrued on the trip. To reduce overheads the party are to collect fuel from gas giants or oceans where possible. The PCs may take on cargo or freight if they wish as long as this does not interfere with their mission.

2. The Rust-Bucket "Venture" The PCs are given the task of repairing the safari ship which is in a terrible state through neglect. Location: On a long-term berth within the starport.

Scene: Your group is taken to the starport by one of the scientists, where the ship is stored within a section reserved for vessels which require long stay facilities. After a show of some identification to the security gaurd at the facility your group arrives in front of one of the most space-unworthy ships you've ever set your eyes upon. Muck, grime and dust cover the ship. Various surface features are damaged or coroded. No-one's been near this vessel for months and you begin to wonder what you've let yourselves in for.

"Here she is. We've named her 'Venture'. She's all yours to start on." With that the PCs are left alone to look over the ship.

To determine the extent of the work that needs doing:

Routine, Engineering, Mechanical, Electronic, Computer, Edu, 20 min (uncert'n)

Referee: For each section of the ship (drives/power plant, environmental, sensors, etc.) select the appropriate skills from the above list and roll for that particular section. On 'total truth' list the various problems which will be relatively minor, most equipment can easily be repaired. On 'some truth' suggest to the players that some components are beyond repair. On 'no truth' mislead the players into believing that the particular system is OK. As the problems are minor let them be of an inconvenient nature i.e. a fresher only supplies cold water or a warning light keeps coming on when in reality there is no fault.

To repair a starship system:

Routine, Engineering, Mechanical, Electronic, Computer, Edu, 1 hr (uncertain).

Referee: Roll for each section as for the above task. Without the appropriate tool kits make the task Difficult. A cautious attempt will reduce the level to Simple if the character can stay determined. On success of any kind the PCs are have solved the problem. If they fail they should be lead to believe that everything is fine but the system/component will fail at some future inconvenient time.

To locate a starship component:

[varies], Engineering, Jack-of-Trades, Int, 30 min (uncertain, unskilled OK).

Referee: The difficulty level depends on the starport quality of the system in which the player is looking: A=simple, B=routine, C=difficult, D=formidable E, X=impossible. On 'total truth' the character locates the required item. On 'some truth' the PC is unable to find the item but it is available (re-roll if character makes a determination roll), and on 'no truth' the part is unavailable.

Once the ship has been repaired and cleaned the characters can begin organising for their trip. The plant embryos will arrive the day after the PCs have sorted the ship out in their low berth-type pods.

If the players wish to obtain freight, cargo or passengers make only a limited amount of cargo available unless you wish to complicate the following story by having the players nurse-maid a bunch of frightened passengers.

3. The Journey Out The PCs pilot the vessel and jump for Hourara. Location: In the Niirkhi system.

Scene: The safari ship seems to be behaving fine (even if she is as agile as a drunken cow), you have moved her out of orbit and are now moving to jump point.

To move the ship to 100 diameters:

Simple, Pilot or Ship's Boat, [varies].

Referee: A failure results in a warning light for a major system common on. The group will need to stop and check it out. The warning will be false due to a faulty diagnosing system (can impose this on the PCs if they missed or failed to fix a fault). Re-roll but double journey time.

To compute jump coordinates:

Routine, Navigation, Pilot, 2 min.

Referee: This task also determines the point at which the starship will emerge from jumpspace.

To prepare jump drives for jump:

Difficult, Engineering, Edu, 2 min.

Referee: This task must succed or the jump drives cannot be engaged. The task has been increased one level as the ship has passed its annual maintainence. If the PCs have payed close attention to the jump drives when checking the ship, reduce the task level back to routine. If unrefined fuel is used without prior purification, the task is hazardous.

To engage the jump drives:

Routine, Engineering, Edu, 2 min.

Referee: The previous task above must succeed before this task can be attempted. If unrefined fuel is used the task is hazardous. Jumping from a point closer than 100 diameters of a mass increases the task level to difficult and hazardous. If the jump is within 10 diameters of a massive body the task becomes formidable and harzardous.

The PCs should eventually enter jumpspace after a few warning lights and failed rolls.

2. WE HAVE A FLARE UP!

Summary of nuggets; 1: The vessel delivers the PCs into the inner regions of the Gishi system. The PCs check over the ship and its systems. 2: While attempting to escape the dangerous inner system a solar flare disables the ship leaving the vessel inoperative in orbit around a small world. 3: The PCs have little option to take the safari ship's launch down to the surface of Gishi and seek refuge.

1. Arrival The PCs emerge out of jumpspace too deep insystem. Location: **Gishi** (The Shallows / Dagudashaag 0513).

Scene: You were all beginning to worry when after seven days you had not emerged from jumpspace. It wasn't until late on the eighth day that the violent nausea indicative of a misjump appeared. Focusing on the instruments, the navigator notes that you are not in the exact location that he/ she plotted to arrive. Suddenly the radio bursts into life, *"....ming! Depart this locale as quickly as possible. Repeat. Warning! IISS navigation satellite N873 Location Gishi system, Shallows subsector. The secondary is unstable and subject to large, unpredictable stellar flares. It is hazardous to travel within 40 au of the secondary. Warning!...."*. The message is repeated over and over. The satellite is located 80 au out from the secondary. Your first priority is to check the ship and all her systems before attempting any other operations.

Action: The PCs should be encouraged to undertake the system check on the ship by the illumination of several attention-grabbing warning lights.

To perform cross-checks on the ship's systems:

Routine, Computer, Sensor Op's, 10 min (uncertain).

Referee: Only 'total truth' will reveal the reason for the misjump; a faulty energy-sink phase-transmission switch which modulates the power transference to the hull grid.

When the crew have performed the aboved check and any others they deem necessary they will probably begin to head out for Gishi itself or a convenient ice-asteroid to refuel.

2. And the Sun Went Bang! The safari ship is disable by a massive solar flare. Location: In the **Gishi** system.

Scene: Just as you have put some distance between yourselves and the star at the centre of the secondary system all the ship's sensors scream warnings before suddenly going out en mass. The computer starts to behave erratically and the vessel suddenly becomes even more difficult to control than before. Lights and environmental controls keep going on and off. The ship is rocked on its axis.

Action: The secondary has just experienced another internal perturbation which has triggered a huge solar flare. The safari ship was hit at first by high energy particles which have virtually knocked-out all the sensors, damaged the computer and shorted-out many other electronic systems. The slower wavefront of larger particles is that which physically rocked the ship and escacerbated the electrical problems.

To perform a cross-check on the ship's electronic systems: Routine, Computer, Sensor Op's, Electronic, 10 min. Referee: The task will reveal a total systems failure will occur within the next hour. The environment will become untenable within two to three hours of that.

The only option available will be to use the launch to escape the stricken vessel. The ship could be piloted to be put in orbit around the nearest planet while the remaining crew ready the launch for departure. Gishi will be the only realistic destination as it is inhabited and offers tthe chance of a salvage operation to rescue the stricken safari ship. Its strong magnetic field will protect the PCs from the intense stream of high energy paticles that may arise from subsequent solar flares.

If the PCs try to salvage the safari ship by flying the vessel into orbit around the nearest planet (an hour at maximum manoeuvre thrust) construct an appropriate task.

The frozen plant embryos have their own auxillary power supply which will keep them intact and safe for three months.

3. Taking Her Down. The PCs prepare the launch and fly it to Gishi. Location: The **Gishi** system.

Scene: Things aren't looking too pretty. The safari ship is out. You were lucky you weren't all fried, the ship's hull kept out all the dangerous ionisating radiation. The ship's electrical systems weren't so lucky, the external sensors took the full force, fused and in effect overloaded the entire ship.

You've got little option but to leave the dead ship in orbit around the lifeless world below and take the launch to Gishi which offers safety and a chance of immediate rescue.

Action: The PCs may want to check the launch's system in case of electrical damage (a wise move in the circumstances but the vessel will be generally

fine). Construct an appropriate task if necessary.

The PCs will want to gather as much equipment as possible. The items available are easy to collect and comprise the following:

6 general purpose vacc suits (TL13), 6 PLSS type B (TL 14), pair image convertor binoculars (TL12), med scanner (TL12), bio-scanner (TL13), gyrocompass (TL13), 4 radios (100 km range), radiation detector, 2 combat medic field kits, 6 sleeping bags (cold weather), 2 strobe beacons, 2 IR beacons, 6 flashlights, 6 tubes water/snow dye, 6 smoke flares, 6 parachute flates, 2 presuure tents (4-man), comprehensive tool kit, 300m rope, 2 grav packs, 200 man-days food, 200 litres water, water filtration/purification kit.

To pilot the launch to the surface of Gishi:

Difficult, Pilot or Ship's Boat, Navigation, 16 hrs (absolute).

Referee: On failure have the launch hit some air turbulence on entry to the atmosphere which will shake the PCs up a bit. Make each player throw determination to avoid blacking-out (yes that does include the pilot!). As the climate on Gishi is generally harsh mishaps will likely lead to damage to the launch on landing. It is suggested that this eventuality is imposed and consequently the launch is unable to take off again.

3: LOOKING AROUND

Summary of nuggets: 1. The PCs find themselves on a barren coastal site without much hope of immediate rescue. 2. The PCs decide to explore for food, water, shelter and intelligent life. 3. While exploring the group come across an arteficially created cave.

1. We Are Down. The PCs set down on a rather beautiful but barren beach. Location: A small peninsula on the small equatorial continent.

Scene: Your landing site is rather an idyllic, but dramatic spot. The beach glows a wonderful golden yellow. Huge violent waves crash onto the shore. Further inland scrubland emerges and quickly develops into a fully fledged forest of rugged conifers that begins to climb up the gentle slopes of the low, snow-covered mountains that overlook the sea. The air temperature is around zero degrees, balmy for this time of year!

The sounds of the waves mingle with the whistle and roar of the high speed winds that lash the coastal zone. There appears to be no life immediatelly present (the nearest inhabited location is some 250 km away).

Action: There is no specific action to undertake at this point. If the players wish they may want to set up a base/camp outside the launch.

2. Investigation of the New Home. The PCs begin to investigate the environs around their landing site/camp. Location: A small peninsula on the small equatorial continent of Gishi.

Scene: Deciding to look for a more perminent shelter, food, drinking water and signs of possible intelligent life you pack your rucksacks and head on out. You decide to follow a thin trickle of a stream that runs down through the bush from the slopes above.

Action: The players will question the choice of direction if it is imposed on them but water is probably the most important necessity. The sea water in this location is unfortunately contaminated with certain heavy metals that requires a complex filtering process to render it safe. The water of the stream is almost pure but at this point, close to beach, the water is very muddy and contains higher levels of contaminants where it has collected some of the spray from the waves.

Following the stream will present no difficulties and within twenty minutes of gentle ascent the PCs will come across 50 metre wide pool into which a waterfall drops. The water is warm. The waterfall emerges from the rock face some 15 metres above the water surface. The stream you have been following is but one of many. The main stream running from this pool runs off to the characters right (and eventually reaches the sea a kilometre from the beach camp).

While filling containers with fresh, clean water there is a chance that one of the characters will notice a cave enterance behind the waterfall.

To spot the cave:

Difficult, Recon or Hunting, Int, instant.

Referee: If the characters decide to examine the perimeter of the pool then reduce the task level to routine. If the characters are examining the pool edge and decide to make a cautious attempt, then reduce the level to simple.

The enterance to the cave is marked with a cylinder 1.5 metres high and 30 cm in diameter. Etched upon it is a small, non-human hand print.

(the cylinder 'marker post' is immovable and will be unmarked by any weapons that the PCs have at their disposable, it is made of monadium.)

To identify the pillar as an Ancient marker:

Formidable, History, Edu, 5 min (uncetain).

Referee: Only reveal the fact as a degree of cetainty.

3. Into the Dark. The PCs explore the cave. Location: An Ancient cave in the mountains on the small equatorial continent on Gishi.

Scene: You have stumbled upon a cave that appears to have featured as a home or refuge or base either in the past or in the present. You are all itching to explore.

Action: The cave is totally dark behind the immediate enterance therefore some form of light will be necessary to explore the interior. The cave enterance is natural although the floor has been leveled to a fairly smooth surface. Beyond the enterance leads a hemispherical corridor 1.75 metres high and wide. This secondary corridor splits off at regular intevals leading to dome-shaped rooms (the exact details of the complex is left up to the individual referee to develope). At the end of this corridor is a large dome-shaped room with a flat wall on the far side.

The individual referee can draw out the exploration of the complex for as long as they feel necessary and should include various noises; rustlings, wails due to the wind, etc., although do not engineer encounters with any animals (there are no higher life-forms on Gishi beyond aquatic carnivores).

The complex is empty. There are no signs of life or activity. The site could have been abandoned a week ago or thousands of years ago as far as the PCs will be able to tell. The only hint of activity is on the far flat wall in the far room.

4: THE GREY WALL

Summary of nuggets. 1. The characters investigate the flat wall. 2. The PCs use the wall (matter transporter) and pass to Kimarla.

1. The Grey Wall. The PCs find the wall at the end of the room appears to be 'alive'. Location: Within the Ancient complex on the equatorial continent of Gishi.

Scene: You have explored this mysterious cave obviously a base for some race or another in the past. The final room of this base differs from the rest; it is larger and possesses a flat rear wall. This wall has a arch-like arrangement in the centre, the base is 5 metres wide and the apex of the arch is 5 metres above the floor level. Two pillars, similar to the one outside the base lie either side of the arch. The most striking feature of the wall is its appearance, it has a shimmering, grey, almost three-dimensional surface.

Action: The PCs may want to investigate the nature of the wall. Their investigations will be limited with the material they have in their possession. This wall is in fact a matter transport terminal linked to a similar site on Kimarla. Anything and anyone that touches the wall (initially there is some resistance) can not be withdrawn, it/they can only go further into the wall and thus be commited to using the matter transporter.

2. Into the Wall. The PCs walk into the wall to Kimarla. Location: Within the Ancient base on Gishi and then on Kimarla.

Scene: By accident or design you entered the wall. The strange sensation, a tingling all over the body is followed by a cooling feeling as you passed into and then out the wall.

Action: The PCs have passed into the wall (virtually instantaneously) and onto Kimarla. The PCs will find themselves in a complex identical to the one they have just left. The players have the choice of moving on or returning to the room they left.

5: THE DARK WAYS

Summary of nuggets. 1. The PCs begin to explore their new surroundings. 2. The characters stumble upon the Kimarlaians who find a culinary interest in the PCs. 3. The characters literally run into an abandoned starship.

1. "I Think We've Been Here Before" The PCs arrive at a complex that is nearly identical to the one left on Gishi. Location: An underground Ancient complex on **Kimarla** (Dagudashaag 1506).

Scene: You all felt a slight tingling sensation as you passed into the wall. The room you are in appears to be identical to the one you left - maybe it is? When everyone is back together again you decide to move on into the complex.

Action: The individual referee should this complex according to his or her design for the Gishi complex. The noticable difference should be that the Kimarla complex is strewn with rocks with all sizes and the main corridor is blocked a hundred metres from the 'transporter room' preventing exit via the original enterence. An exit can be made via a large split in the main corridor wall caused by shift in the rock strata. The 'crack' in the wall leads into a massive natural cavern system, extending for thousands of kilometres under the surface of Kimarla in the southern hemisphere. Again referees should design their own individual cavern systems.

As the characters wander down the tunnels they will become aware of small, dark scuttling shapes at the edge of their vision and scuffling noises, little screeches, scratches and snuffles. It will become apparent to them that they are not totaly alone. The shapes are those of the rodent-like creature indigenous to these tunnels. They keep out of the PCs reach. More is described later

Make the players describe the methods they will employ to keep track of their own movements in relation to their starting point.

2. 'We are not alone.....' The PCs stumble upon a lost human race. Location: Within the cavern system in the southern hemisphere of **Kimarla** (Dagudashaag 1506).

Scene: You are beginning to feel totally disorientated by the endless idential tunnels. The walls merge with the floors and ceilings. There is no relief from the monotony of the tunnels. But suddenly something shiny catches your eye to the left. You move to get a closer look, and bend down to pick up the small object. It is roughly rectangular with frayed edges, some 10 by 15 cm.

The Secret of the Smugglers and The Underworld Kimarlans - for referees only

The descendents of the farmers of the agri-domes are still living on Kimarla. Or rather under it. Once the life-support systems failed through lack of spare parts, the people began to move together which further put a strain on the resources of the remaining habitable domes. Many of the farmers died. But several small groups found the natural cavern systems that ran beneath their agri-domes were filled with breathable air, and there was food of sorts to be found. The underworld Kimarlans have regressed to a state of semi-cannibalist-ic barbarism, where their meagre food rations of local fungi and rodents is supplemented by the odd human victim.

But their is a price to pay for their survival beyond their cultural and moral regression. Most of the natural lifeforms that live under the surface of Kimarla are laced with anagathic-like compounds. From the bacteria and filamentous fungi that grow and synthesise the basic building blocks of the food chain in their sulpherous hot springs to the more complex animal forms that hunt in the dark, all are saturated with these chemicals. One animal of note is the Kimlat (as it is known to the locals) which although carnivorous feeds heavily on some of the fungi that have the highest concentrations of anagathic. For it feeds on them not for food but for the anagathic itself which it uses as a powerful poison, stored in sub-mandibular sacs and injected into its prey. The underground Kimarlans fed upon the Kimlat in turn but take care to remove the sacs before consumption. Despite this they still consume huge quantities of anagathic-like chemicals. The consequence of this is that they are very long-lived (some are nearly a thousand years old) and have now have reduced capacities to think intelligently, see and reproduce. Most have a sickly grey colour to their skin, have little hair and stooping gait. They look barely human.

A local prospector accidentaly discovered the caverns of the Kimarlans. During a brief exploration he was bit by one of the Kimlat he has unintentionally cornered. Rapidly succumbing the anagathic poisoning (equivalent to a massive overdose) he called over his ship's radio for assistance. The first on the scene was the captain of the 'Heyan Rose' who was able to obtain the facts before he lost sense (then conciousness). He died shortly after on the way to a medical centre at Kimarla's starport. The official cause of death was recorded as 'Total systemic shock and heart failure brought about through anagathic poisoning, probably due to incorrect self-administering of impure product'. The captain never contradicted the evidence. After a suitable time the capatain returned to Kimarla to investigate and came away with a couple of Kimlat bodies. Analysis by some 'friends' in home (drug) laboratories confirmed the captain's hypothesis that the creatures were a rich, natural source of raw anagathic. The two animals contained enough anagathic pre-cursor to make 40 standard doses! With further backing from the illegal trade the captain and his crew made a visit once every two months for the last year collecting about 60 to a hundred animals a go.

It was during the last visit that the crew were attacked and ambushed by the Kimarlans. The first ambush resulted in the death of Searlan, a chemist in the employ of one of the regional drug cartels (the 'Company') backing the project.

It is silvered on one side, white on the other. It is a multi-layered fabric into which is woven fine capillary tubes and ultra-thin wires. At the frayed edges to one side, on the white surface, is a red stain. Up ahead you can hear distinct, though faint, voices.

Action: This piece of fabric is from a vacc-suit. If the players do not realise this have them make a blind task.

To determine that the fabric comes from a vacc-suit:

Routine, Vacc Suit, Edu, Instant (uncertain)

Referee: The first character to be successful with the roll is the genius!

To determine the nature of the red stain:

Routine, Biology, Edu, Instant (uncertain)

Referee: The red stain is in fact blood from the vacc-suit owner. The absolute truth of the nature of the stain will not be possible without laboratory analysis, therefore the answers you give should of the type "You are n% sure that the stain is x". What you reveal 'n' and 'x' to be depend on the level of success. Include several possibilities i.e. dye from the suits water supply acidity/ alkalinity indicator, iron containing mineral from the tunnel walls, etc.

While continuing down a wide tunnel the characters will hear voices up ahead. They will not be able to make sense of the words but there is obviously a heated argument between two individuals with various other voices shouting encouragement. The shouts become more vociferous as the sounds of a struggle reach the characters' ears. There are screams calls as the fight intensifies. The voices belong to the Kimarlians, descendents of human colonists who had dome farms on the surface. Disease and failure of the domes led to the collapse of the agrarian society and forced the farmers into the natural air-filled caverns. They survived on the sparse flora and fauna - principally the various fungi and the rodents.

The dispute, like so many amongst the Kimarlians, is about food. The loser of these fights often becomes a source of food him-or herself due to the extreme food shortages faced by the community. Once the fight has been concluded the voices die away leaving an eerie silence ahead. An investigation will reveal a sand-filled oval cavern with several exits. Near the centre of the cavern lies a body. A closer inspection shows the figure to be a human male with a huge gash on the left temple. The body is covered in rags, failing to hide the sickly, dark grey hue of the skin and the lack of body hair. Around the neck is a white, rectangular card upon which there are galanglic digits. the card is held around the neck by a red, plastic spiral cord. The card is a door lock access key, the cord belongs a TL13 laser pistol.

To identify the card and the cord:

Routine, Int and Edu, instant (uncertain).

Referee: Reveal the true identities of each item (separate roll for each item) on 'total truth' only.

As the characters examine the body they are quietly observed by a small girl hiding in the shadows of the main tunnel ahead. However as she leans forward to get a better view of the PCs she displaces a rock thereby attracting the group. The PCs will see the small girl fleeing down the dark tunnel ahead as they turn towards the noise. She will be shouting for help as she runs (the more ruthless characters knowing that the girl's screams are likely to attract unwanted attention may want to take a shot at her back. Disuade those that have this idea. And for those who insist, drop on them like a ton of hot bricks at the first opportunity). The characters may want to follow the girl but the sound of tens of running feet and angry voices might just put them off this action. Indeed it will soon become apparent that the wisest course of action would be to run away in the opposite direction as even with high techer weapons the PCs could well be overwhelmed. Yet if the group insist on a pitched battle let them. They should beat off the first couple of attacks quite easily but the

Kimarlians will change their tactics and try to encircle the PCs. What the referee should try to engineer is a series of running skirmishes where there is little actual 'stand-and-fight' combat. The characters will be preoccupied with staying alive and not particularly concerned on specific directions. The escape should take the PCs through tunnels with more variation those seen up to now: hot sulphurous pools, fungi-filled tunnels and rodent-infested caverns. Ultimatelly the group will be forced down a wide tunnel at the far end of which a bright light can be seen. As the PCs approach they will be confronted by a 100 metre wide shaft leading to the surface of Kimarla. Framed in the harsh light of the secondary appears to be a starship of unorthodox design.

6: UP, UP AND AWAY!

(OR FROM THE FRYING PAN.....)

Summary of nuggets 1. The PCs break into and investigate the ship. 2. While collecting fuel from the nearest gas giant the PCs are hailed by an pirate cruiser which informs the group that they are to surrender and prepare to be boarded

1. Break-in! The PCs enter the abandoned starship. Location: Within the cavern system in the southern hemisphere of **Kimarla** (Dagudashaag 1506).

Scene: While searching the body of the slain Kimarlian you become aware that you were being observed. The watcher, a young girl, alerted her community and you were then chased deeper and deeper into the caverns finally stumbling into a starship. You now stand just ten metres from the forward landing leg of the vessel. Looking behind you at the Kimarlians you are astounded to see that the people are cowering in awe back in the tunnel. They back off obviously afraid of the monstrous apparition they see before them. Taking advantage of this breathing space you try to make a quick external of the ship, you can just see onto the bridge through the forward view-ports (there doesn't seem to be any movement), the lighting is dim and the almost inaudible hum from the rear of the ship suggests that the power plant, and hence the whole ship is on standby The ship is a compact, steamlined box design of imperial influence but of unfamiliar nature. It has small, stub wings and a small, dorsal fin at the rear. The ship has the following approximate dimensions: 42 metres in length, 20 metres wide and 10 metres in height. The port is facing you which shows two airlocks fore and aft.

Action: The ship is deserted - the crew have fallen to the ever-hungry Kimarlians. The crew were on a mission to cull and collect the rodents prior to their reprocessing to extract valuable anagathics. This anagathic is refined outside the Sector before being smuggled over the border.

The airlocks allowing access to the ship are locked (two airlocks fore and aft). The airlock mechanism is linked to the ship's anti-hijack system. Tranq-gas is released into the airlock if there is unauthorised entry. Any attempt to gain entry into the ship must involve by-passing both the locking mechanism and the anti-hijack system. If the characters have taken the card from around the dead Kimarlians neck and realise that it is a lock access key card for the airlock inserted into a recessed, covered panel to thr right of the airlock hatch. The panel also has a key pad for entering the access code to bypass the anti-hijack system.

To bypass the lock mechanism:

Difficult, Electronic, Int, 1 min.

Referee: Without the proper tools increase task to 'formidable'. A hand computer will reduce the task level down one. On exceptional success the PC attempting the task has noticed the anti-hijack circuit.

KIMARLA

(Arnakhish/Dagudashaag 1809) D343210-5 Lo Ni Po 614 Im M2 IV M1 D M9 D

Primary: Kim A M2 IV

Orbit 0 empty 1 Kimarla D343210-5 Lo Ni Po 2 planetoid belt 3 Minarla (sgg) 4 satellites 4 Menarla (sgg) 5 satellites 5 empty 6 empty 7 Kim A-5 8 Secondary: Kim B 14 Tertiary: Kim C

Secondary: Kim B M1 D

Orbit 0 Kim B-1 (sgg) 3 satellites 1 Kim B-2 Y100000-0

Tertiary: Kim C M9 D

Orbit 0 Kim C-1 (sgg) 3 satellites 1 Kim C-2 (lgg) 9 satellites 2 planetoid YS00000-0

Notes: Marginally habitable colony since its exploration by the Vilani early in the First Imperium. The mainworld of Kimarla has seen settlements come and go; some have lasted only a few months, others several decades. The longest recorded settlement began towards the end of the Rule of Man when agri-domes were constructed to invest in new hydroponic techniques. Like many worlds during the Long Night, contact with the rest of space came to a standstill. It is believed that the Kimarlan farmers perished in the harsh environment once the technology to sustain their dome habitats became more and more scarce. Resurveys at the rise of the Sylean Federation failed to find any descendents of the farmers and the system was abandoned until recently when another colony was established.

To disable the anti-hijack circuit:

Formidable, Electronics, Int, 2 min (uncertain).

Referee: If the anti-hijack circuit has been identified then reduce the task level to difficult. If a hand computer is used the level can be reduce one level. If the correct tools are not available increase task one level.

If the anti-hijack system is not identified then any individual or group using the airlock will be subject to the effects of tranq gas. After the pressurisation and decontamination cycles have finished gas will be introduced, knocking out any unmasked individual for 2D6 rounds (damage will accumulate at 1 point per round until unconsciousness is reached).

Once on board the ship the characters will note that the ship does indeed seem abandoned. There will be plenty of evidence of recent habitation, but there will be little indication of the whereabouts or fate of the crew. Details of the vessel can be found on the ship's log.

To access the computer:

Difficult, Computer, Int, 2 min

Referee: Success will give the access codes to gain control of the power plant. No power, no manoeuvre drives. Failure will activate the anti-hijack system, flooding the ship with tranq gas. Any unmasked/ unsuited individuals will sustain one point of damage until they are unconscious. They will remain unconscious for 2D6 rounds. On exceptional success the investigating character have gained access to the captain's private log. An examination of the log will show that the ship has just jumped from Khalan (Dagudashaag 2007) along with the following entry:

".....the mission is nearly complete, here on

Kimarla. The last consignment of rodent bodies should be in the freezers by 2000 hours. Unfortunately we've lost Scarlen to those degenerate Kimarlians. On a hunt for the rodents we were ambushed by a large group of the natives. We managed to drive them off but not before we suffered some casualties. The company will need to fork out with a large sum to keep Scarlen's family quiet.''

The PCs may want to leave further investigations of the ship until after they have left Kimarla.

2. Break-out! The PCs leave the tunnels of Kimarla but run into corsairs. Location: The **Kimarla system** (0819).

Scene: Having entered the ship you begin to examine the ship's system prior to take off. Although of a non-standard design externally, you find that all the interior conforms to the Imperial School of Ship Architectural Design. You have no trouble in preparing the ship for launch. Powering up the ship should be straightforward with the access codes obtained from the computer. Fuel levels are low, there is insufficient for even a jump of one parsec. The location of the vessel, at the bottom of a natural shaft, will make departure hazardous [Referee: see following task]. The computer will identify their current location and display the local subsector (Arnakhish, Dagudashaag C).

(Further details of the ship and the Kimarla system can be found in the relevant side-bars).

Action: Once powered up the PCs will need to ascend the shaft to the surface to leave the planet.

To pilot the ship up through the shaft:

Difficult, Pilot, Dex, 1 min (hazardous)

Referee: The obvious danger is in clipping the shaft walls as the ship rises up the shaft. The referee should inflict damage to the ship in proportion to the level of mishap if the task is failed.

Once above the planet's surface, the PCs will need to obtain their bearings and head for a fuel source. There is a convenient gas giant located 0.9 AUs distant.

On final approach to the gas giant the sensor operator will pick up a faint signal indicative of another ship, towards the extreme of sensor range. All attempts at communication will be met with silence. It will soon become apparent that the ship is on an interception course with the gas giant, and that it will arrive in the region in approximatelly ten hours. Further successful sensor tasks will reveal the vessel to be a type P corsair. The PCs will need to make a rapid refueling pass of the gas giant as the pirates have a hostile intent. Depending on the time it takes for the PCs to about fuel for their needs they may be able to avoid contact with the corsair ship. As the PCs are about to reach the end of their refueling they are hailed by the corsair and instructed to surrender and prepare for boarding.

The PCs have three choices; surrender, stand and fight, or attempt to make an emergency jump. Their actions will very much depend upon the time they take to refuel, as indicated by the task roll. If the PCs complete the refueling with less than an hour before the pirates arrive then they will probably have to engage the pirates in a round or two of combat before they can make a jump from beyond the gas giants ten diameter limit. The PCs can jump before this of course but to keep things exciting the referee is urged to impose initial failures on those task rolls necessary prior to a jump.

The pirates will attempt to disable the ship if the PCs elected to fight or flee, going for the manoeuvre drives. If the pirates take damage or the PCs look like their are going to escape, then they become more ruthless and try to destroy the ship.

Once the Pcs have escaped from the clutches of the pirates they will need to move out system and head back home. The likely destinations for the PCs are (heading spinward towards Old Suns) are Rusadaa (1709 B555555-C A Ag Ni 504 Im M1 V) or Line's End (1710 D457353-A S Lo Ni 514 Im K5 IV), both of Arnakhish subsector. Here the PCs would have an opportunity for a complete refuel and a three parsec jump for Imgaa (1409 Old Suns). Exact details for the return trip have been left out as there are numerous possibile routes that the PCs might take. Referees are encouraged to play this section 'by ear'.

The final parts of this adventure will appear in the next issue of Signal GK and will detail the reason for the 'Heyan Rose' being on Kimarla, and the PCs responses to this knowledge. The revealing of this knowledge to the PCs should best be made during their return trip to Niirkhi.

CRAFT ID: 'Heyan Rose' freight tractor vessel, Type AN, TL14, MCr 173.4 HULL : 270/675, Disp = 300 (600 with cargo pod), Config = 4SL, Armour = 40G, Unloaded = 2624 tons, Loaded = 4072 tons (plus cargo pod). POWER : 18/36, Fusion = 2358 Mw, Duration = 15 (*). LOCO : 14/28, Manoeuvre = 2(1), 11/22, Jump = 3(2), Cruise = 750 kph, Top = 1000 kph, Agility = 0/1. COMMO : Radio = System, Maser = System SENSORS : Active EMS = Far Orbit, Passive EMS = Interstellar, ActObjScan = Routine, ActObjPin = Routine, PasEngScan = Routine OFF : Hardpoints = 3 Beam Laser = xx3 Batt 2 Bear 2 DEF : DefDM +5/+6 Sandcaster = xx4 Batt 1 Bear 1 CONTROL : Computer = 4 (x3), Panel = Holodynamic Link x6, Special = HeadsUp Holodisplay x3, Environ = BE, BLS, ELS, AGP, IC, Airlocks x2. ACCOMM : Crew = 11 (Bridge = 2, Engineer = 1, Gunners = 2, Flight = 3, Command = 1, Steward = 1, Medical = 1), Small Staterooms x11, Passenger Staterooms x4, SubCraft = 30 ton Ship's Boat. OTHER : Cargo = 80 tons, Fuel = 73 tons (60 tons jump fuel), Fuel Scoops, Purifiaction Plant (purifies full load in 12 hours), ObjSize = Average, EMlevel = Moderate.

NOTES : * the stated duration allows for up to 8 days in jump, 6 days at maximum manoeuvre drive thrust plus an additional day at maximum output to allow for combat.

A 73 ton collapsable fuel tank is usually installed in the cargo hold allowing two consecutive jumps and extending the ships duration to 30 days - this is especially useful when the ventral cargo pod is carried which reduces the vessels performance to jump-1 and 1G manoeuvre, and changes the ships configuration to an unstreamlined structure.

Price is for a single vessel and includes the Ship's Boat.

This vessel is based upon the design 'Heyan Rose' that appeared in the Games Workshop Traveller publication ''IISS Ship Files''. Deck plans for the ship appear in the book but may differ in small detail to the statistics presented above due to conversion to the megaTravellr design system.

When found, the ship will be without ventral cargo pod and will be low on approx. ten tons.

"LEGENDS AND LORE OF DAGUDASHAAG SECTOR"

The following extracts were taken from the Mem-Clip. "Legends and Lore of Dagudashaag Sector"

By Ishmaga Ersbuk.

Published by Sherver Press, Ushra (1115). Used with permission, all rights reserved.

SHALLOWS

1. The Tsaadl' Khu'ch Hoax

Oewni is a minor backwater of a planet caught between Universalist 'salvation' and the influence of its native Lancian and Ziadd cultures. In 347 a small team of students apparently uncovered a mummified alien body lying in the bog marshes at the foot of Mount Revelations. The main importance of the bog marshes of Oewni, in archaeological terms, is its potential for the preservation of organic materials such as wood, fabric and even bodies. These materials rarely survive the centuries but the damp conditions on Oewni are ideal for preserving remains for thousands of years in a near perfect state. The students stated that they had discovered a stone cairn near the base of the mountain with several empty cists (stone coffins) as well as a great store of wooden fittings, such as barrel stocks, widely scattered round the site. In the centre the small group of students (their identities failed to be recorded for history) found the mummified body of a creature; a winged horse-like creature with a reptilian head twisted round as though brutally murdered.. The students proceeded to exhibit their find (though they claimed at the time that it had to be fully encased, to prevent further deterioration). Scientists took samples from the head and legs and proclaimed the DNA structure unique belonging to no known race at that time. The body had been dead for 30,000 years at least. Over twenty books were written based on the find in the first year alone. Most agreed that the creature would have been too tall to be one of the Ancients though most disagreed on what exactly the creature was. Several records tried to link it in with the fabled Tsaadl' Khu'ch or "Song of (the) Stars" from early Ziadd legends - a warlike race that were reputed to have attacked the primitive Ziadd Chaiklin (clans) 'from the stars'. The Tsaadl' Khu'ch were described in these early legends as winged reptiles that walked on four legs and spat fire..' Early stone markings from as far back as -120,000 showed a creature not dissimilar from that displayed - the chest area was different and the arms shown in the drawing were more human-like though these differences could have been due to artistic interpretation. The public lapped it up.

Then, in 350, serious doubts began to be expressed by Diishalum University Department of Biology. Detailed observation of the specimen revealed that the head had obviously been detached from the rest of the body and reattached after both had been mummified. The discoverers were the obvious choice but why? If the body and head had been found near each other there was no reason to try and hide the fact. Further observation of the original DNA samples revealed that while the tissue of the head matched in type it clearly had not been cut from that particular body. The wings also appeared to be misplaced on the creatures anatomy; the further inconsistancy was the fore-claws; they appeared to be covered in fur unlike the rest of the body and were obviously designed for excavation; something that the rest of the body was obviously not designed for! The Department demanded that the body be released so that a serious examination could be carried out - the students refused and at this point public opinion began to turn against them. The final nail in their collective coffin occurred the following year when a Dr. Jhanki uncovered the preserved corpse of an extinct native mammal known as an earth devil. The creature had identical front paws to the Tsaadl' Khu'ch. There was no longer any doubt. The body was a fake, made up from several unrelated items bonded together. Within a week the student-discoverers vanished, presumably off-world, and the body now known as the Tsaadl' Khu'ch hoax vanished from public view forever.

While this author acknowledges that, in his mind, the composite creature **was** a fake, apparently engineered by the students, there are still a few unanswered questions.. All attempts to discover the site of the cairn where the students 'claimed' to have discovered the body have found nothing, yet why make that part up? Observation of the specimen proved that the body and legs was unmodified in any way, as was the head. Both were found to be in excess of 30,000 years old, belonged to the same unknown species and appeared to not be related to any species found on Oewni (or anywhere else for that matter). It or they had obviously died a savage death as the massive wounds to the chest and the severing of the head from the body bore witness. What then was this creature? Nothing like it has ever been found since **except** for the stone carvings of the **Tsaadl' Khu'ch**! Or has there? On Ziruushda (Old Suns 1204), can be found thousands of monoliths and statues of races from throughout Dagudashaag and Gushemege sectors apparently carved by an extinct race known only as the Gograhhah Reivers. On the western shore of the Tagäz continent can be found a monolith with a carving engraved on it - like a

The Tsaadl' Khu'ch Hoax?

K'kree with wings though the head and feet are very different. Different like that of the Tsaadl' Khu'ch hoax! True the wings sprout from the shoulders rather than the back, the arms are more dexterous looking and the neck and chest are much longer. Some have claimed that the creature was mythological like the myriad of giant scorpion-like creatures found scattered around the coastline. What if it wasn't? What if, like the majority of statues and carvings, it was a depiction of a very real, if now extinct, race? Perhaps even the real **'Tsaadl' Khu'ch'** of Ziadd legend. Perhaps, just perhaps, the youth found the mummified remains of several corpses preserved in the moss and decided that it would be more 'profitable' to have one complete corpse rather than several damaged ones? None of the students were apparently biologists or archaeologists. They took what the could find and tried to fit them together - once they had become famous it was too late to own up to what they had done without losing face.. We may never know the truth unless someone still has the Tsaadl' Khu'ch hoax or unless anyone else finds more corpses though, after all that has gone before who would believe them? I would for one.

2. The Glaniaw Mystery

The Glaniaw Space Station was built in -655 by the Ziadd merchantile Chaiklin (Clan), Khiasq'arr, to orbit the planet Drya as a navigation post. The station, though extremely primitive by modern day standards was, for the most part, completely automated and only required a regular crew of five. Then in -654 The trader 'Ariach' jumped into the Drya system and tried, unsuccessfully, to raise the Glaniaw. The station wasn't even beaming out its constant stream of navigational data - it was completely silent. Silent as the grave..

When the relief tender 'Khu'ch Dia'lk' pulled alongside two rotations later, they found the station deserted but undamaged. All the airlocks were fastened shut, only the hatchway between the dining area and the equipment store hung ajar. The table was set as if a meal was about to begin. Apart from a single overturned chair, everything seemed relatively normal though the room had obviously been deserted for... how long? The last log entry read ten days before, just as the solar storm was at its height. The rooms were as they must have left them that fateful morning; beds unmade. A Taaka game flashed on one of the computer terminals, awaiting a move that would never come. What happened? That has been, and remains, the question. The entire crew had simply vanished, leaving only the most minimal of clues as to their fate. They could not have left by ship as the station did not have one. The Lifeboat was still berthed and the transponder log failed to show any other ship having contacted the station until the 'Ariach'. There had been however a severe solar storm which had rendered communication with the planet impossible for the last fortnight.

Checks on the station's log revealed that, apparently, the airlocks had never been opened since the visit of the last ship, the regular monthly supply vessel. Nothing was amiss with the station which could have warrented crew having to go outside. Even if, somehow, the solar storm **had** blanked out part of the computer log, standard operating procedure meant that at no time would the station be left unmanned.

At least one crew member would have remained onboard. Also all of their space suits were accounted for. Theories of the time suggested that perhaps one of the crew had turned psychotic and murdered the others, somehow jettisoning their bodies into space. The problem with this theory is that the station exerted a small gravitational pull of its own which would have caused the bodies to enter an orbit about the station. Despite an extensive search nothing was ever found. Its as though the five crew members had somehow just vanished into thin air. A full investigation revealed that one of the crew had apparently been dictating a letter to the computer at the time of the incident. His mysterious last comments have only added to the mystery.. <..*Oh, and darling, give little Taali a kiss from me. Tell him I mi.. What the !?! Oh by the clan, what the hell is it? Dal'! Dal'!! Ahhh, its got me! I'm...**> at this point the record goes quiet. Internal telemetry however failed to show any other lifeform onboard. At 12:43:05 on the 112th day of -654, a full ten minutes after the message had been recorded, the five crew members apparently vanished. Their telemetry signs just blinked out. No-one has ever been able to successfully make any sense out of the final message. Had something invaded the station there would have been some sign of disturbance, some indication of the attack. There was none. The five crew just suddenly and mysteriously failed to exist.

* Translated from the original Klatha'sh (Ziadd).

3. The Chalice of St. Clair

During the -400's the Universal Church sent several ecclesiastical fleets through the Ushran-controlled Zeda cluster intending to establish missions in Shallows subsector. One such fleet, with its Ushran escort, successfully repelled an attack by Ziadd corsairs. During the battle the Ushran's destroyed several ships belonging to *Chaiklin Khu'ch* Z'usqaumr. Most of the clan's *D'skom'r* (Native Men) were wiped out in one fell swoop. Traditionally the survivors of such a catastrophe drifted away to become *Laem'r* (Broken Men) of some other clan; but history had not counted on the charisma of a Solomani *Laem'r* named Adim Davrey. How Davrey managed to persuade the survivors of clan Z'usqaumr to follow a non-Ziadd is not known. What is known is that within five years Captain Adim Davrey had gained a reputation as one of the cruelest and most feared corsairs in Zeda space. He was responsible for the distruction of over forty ships and, at the height of his career, led over 1,200 warriors. Davrey established several 'pitstops' on secondary worlds within Shallows where he maintained control over the other corsair Chaiklin through playing one chief off against another.

Davrey's downfall came in -433 when he attacked and looted the 'Chastity of St. Lucias' which was carrying holy relics intended for the new cathedral on Gwi. Davrey was captivated by one relic in particular; the Chalice of St. Clair, which apparently contained the right forefinger of the saint encased within the stem. The chalice was fashioned out of pure platinium with many unique and beautiful jewels. From the moment he took personal possession of the relic it was as though he was cursed. Six of his fleet of eight ships, including his own, misjumped as they left the system. One was never seen again. His two most trusted leutenants became afflicted with severe jumpsickness during the voyage and died. During refueling he was caught unawares by an Ushran Fleet and only just managed to escape though they destroyed two of his remaining ships and the rest were severely damaged. Limping into port at Reunion, Davrey went against corsair tradition, when he refused to give the chalice to the clan. Instead he declared that this was one prize that was his and his alone. This provoked such an outcry that Davrey was forced to flee in his ship 'Amity' which he always kept ready for such an eventuality. Homesick, and many say enchanted by the chalice which he still refused to allow out of his sight, he decided that he'd had enough of space and elected to return to his homeworld of Ushra. Here he was forced to 'sell' most of his treasure to Ushran merchants. Before he could be paid however they informed the authorities on him and he was forced to flee creditless into the night. Failure seemed to haunt him as he fled from one world to the next; he eventually died two years later on Fau. He was suffering from pneumonia, utterly destitute and alone. On his deathbed Davrey was reputed to have said that his life had been cursed from the very moment he'd laid eyes on the chalice. Its beauty had haunted his every second of life, teasing and tantalising him. Unable to part with it, at least he'd now made sure that no other mortal would ever be cursed by its presence. It was now '*where it belonged amidst the Angels.. Crucified on an eternal cross where it could forever chastise the fallen one.*'

It is assumed that Davery must have hidden the chalice before his death, but where? Its historical value is worth millions but no collector would have risked touching such an easily recognisable piece. Not and risk the wraith of the Universal Church. Melted down it would be worth only a tiny proportion of its true value. Yet when you consider all that Davrey risked to retain it that cannot be an option. Yet, to this day, it has never been found. Davrey's band of corsairs eventually became the foundation of the trader Chaiklin D'uvri. The Ushran's destroyed his pirate bases and established a naval base on Reunion (Oeth VI) to police the area. Davrey went down in legend as the only non-Ziadd ever to have led the mighty corsairs. As for the chalice, though many have searched none have found it. Perhaps Davrey was right and it had finally returned to 'the angels..' We will never know.

C.A.T.U.

Campaign Against Tight Uniforms

Would you trust this man with your life? He does look a bit greasy and overweight doesn't he?

However, you may be surprised to hear that this chunky little fella is a hero. He single handedly saved **3.7 billion lives.** He has, on separate occasions, saved the lives of nine crew members, with whom he serves aboard the Ashtabula. He is a crack shot, cool under fire and has an IQ of 197.

In loose clothes he looks just like you and me. In a RCES uniform he looks a prat.

For Charlie 'Fat Back' Johnston, and the hundreds like him; **SHOUT OUR MESSAGE LOUD AND CLEAR!**

TIGHT UNIFORMS CHAFE!!

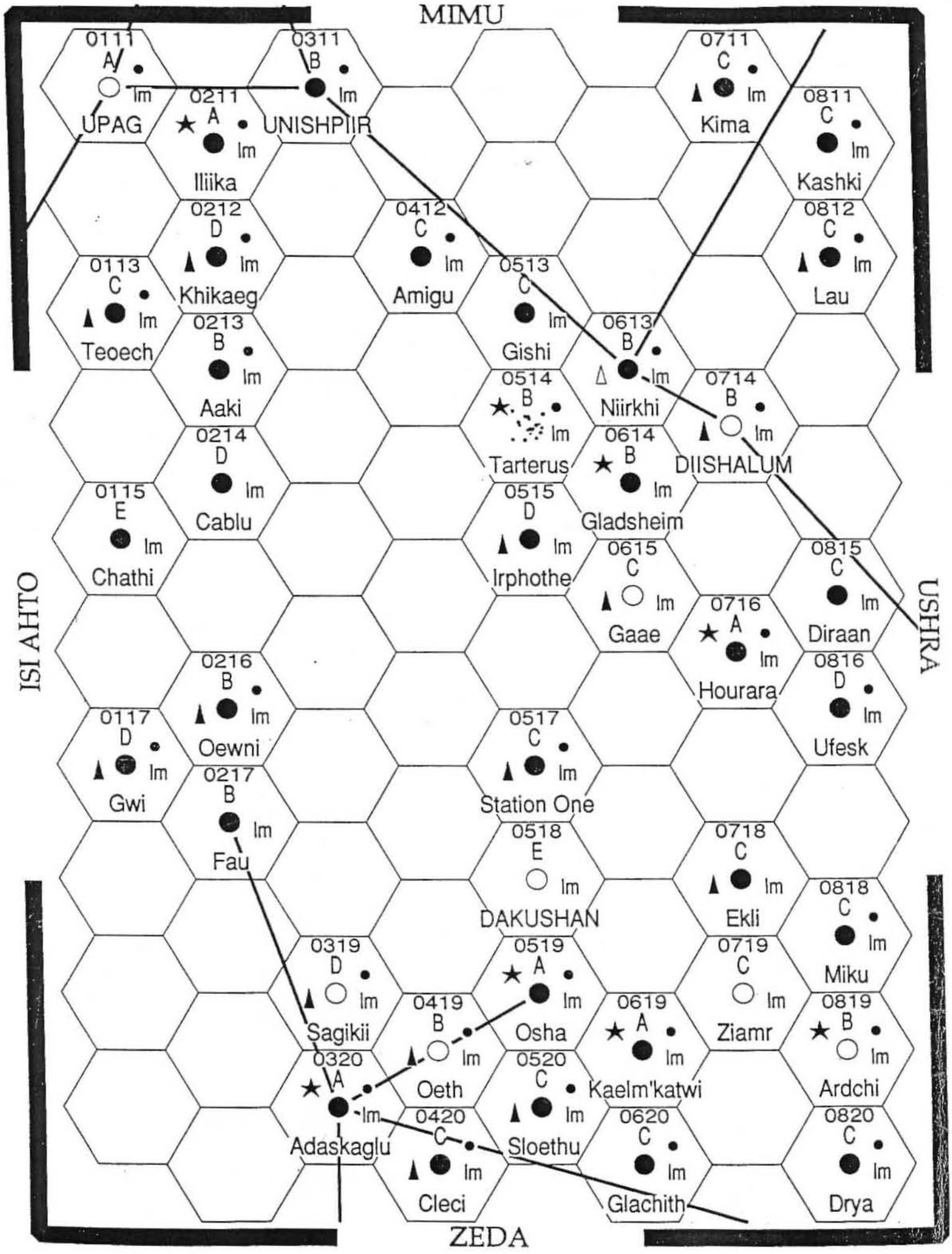
FEEDBACK

From Issue 8

■ ZineScene	5.7
■ What is sex?	4.2
■ Starport Authority	6.8
■ IronFist Freeport	7.7
■ When a Cold Wind Blows	4.5
■ Starport Freefax	5.6
■ INDISS News	6.9
■ Contact: M'Nengi	7.2
■ Wolfbane	5.7
■ Bug Hunt	5.8
■ Library Data	8.1
■ WarZone	6.3
■ Starship/Building Designs	6.2
---***---	
■ Overall quality of writing	6.3
■ Overall artwork	6.9
■ overall mark	6.3

Without quoting from specific comments the general opinion on issue 8 was: "More Dag' please!". Hopefully we will be able to follow your pleas.

Top artwork mentioned was split between pages 25, 27, 35 and the Library Data cover. The Library Data cover probably wins by a short head.


MIMU
ISI AHTO
USHRA
ZEDA
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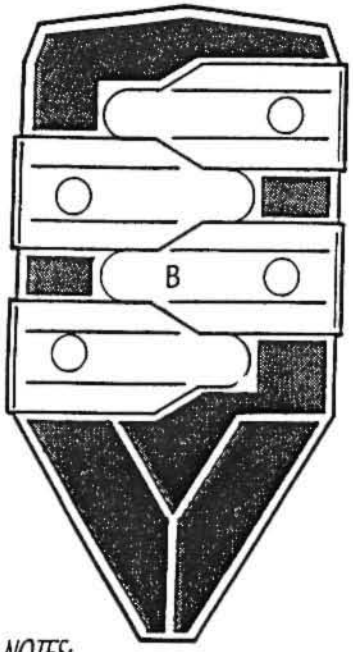
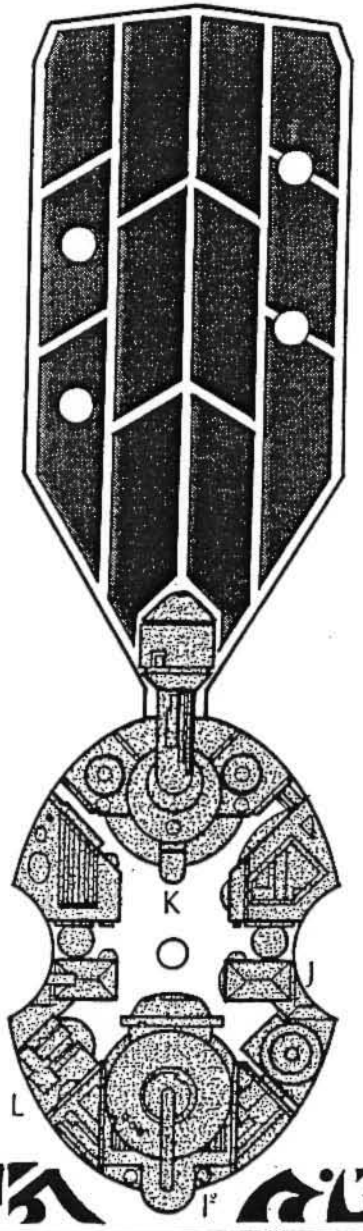
0211 A Im Iliika
0311 B Im UNISHPIIR
0711 C Im Kima
0811 C Im Kashki
0212 D Im Khikaeg
0412 C Im Amigu
0812 C Im Lau
0113 C Im Teoech
0513 C Im Gishi
0613 B Im Niirkhi
0213 B Im Aaki
0514 B Im Tarterus
0714 B Im DIISHALUM
0214 D Im Cablu
0614 B Im Gladsheim
0115 E Im Chathi
0515 D Im Irphothe
0615 C Im Gaae
0815 C Im Diraan
0716 A Im Hourara
0216 B Im Oewni
0816 D Im Ufesk
0117 D Im Gwi
0517 C Im Station One
0217 B Im Fau
0518 E Im DAKUSHAN
0718 C Im Ekli
0818 C Im Miku
0319 D Im Sagikii
0519 A Im Osha
0719 C Im Ziamr
0419 B Im Oeth
0619 A Im Kaelm'katwi
0819 B Im Ardchi
0320 A Im Adaskaglu
0520 C Im Sloethu
0420 C Im Cleci
0620 C Im Glachith
0820 C Im Drya

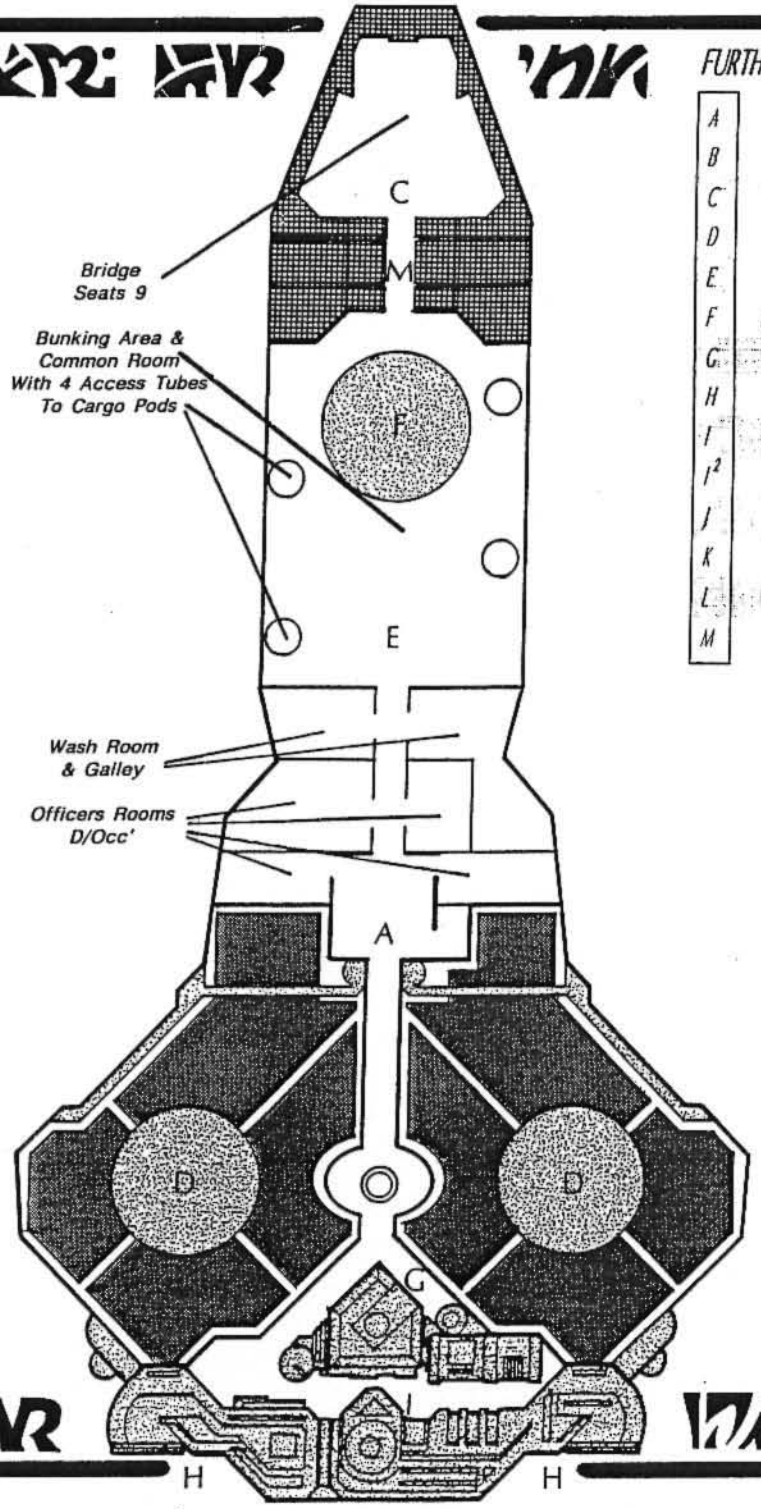
SETH'REGM VIC'.

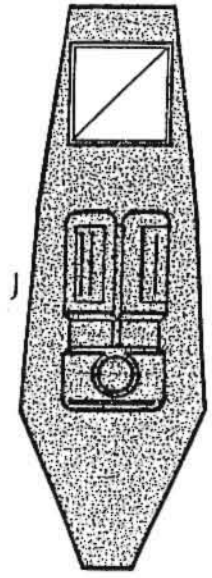
ORBITAL ASSAULT LEAD SHIP TYPE SV-65.

ASSAULT FORCE: 1N° SV-65; 2N° A.R.-16
NOTE: A.R.-16 IS OSTENSIBLY SIMILAR TO THE IYLVIR ACTI. ISS SHIP FILE 27A. THE AR.-16 HAS THE EXCEPTION OF HAVING ONLY 1G ACCELERATION. FOR COMBAT PURPOSES TREAT IT AS AN A2 FAR-TRADER IN A FREE TRADER CHASSIS.









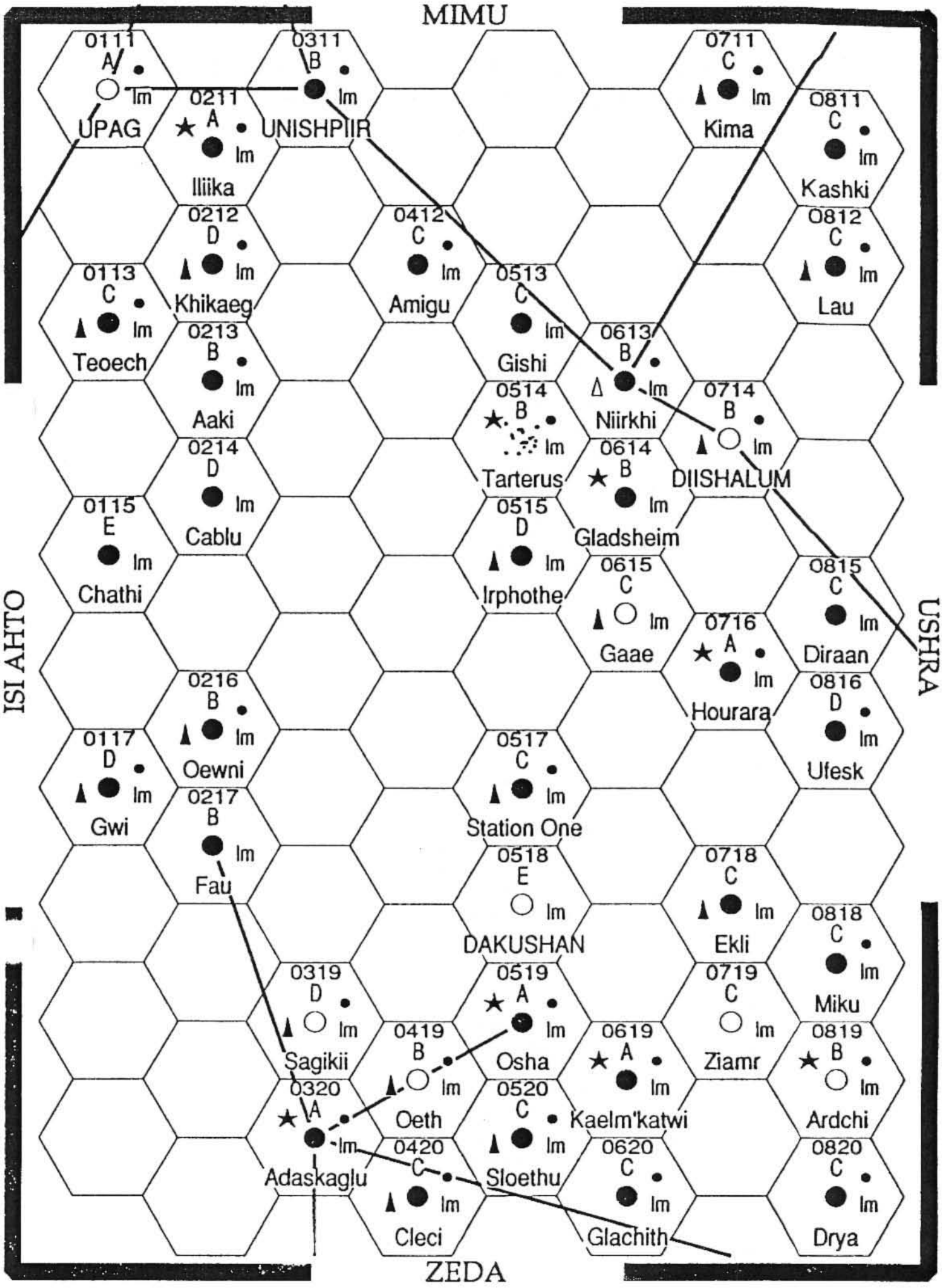
NOTES:

- MODULAR FUEL TANKAGE
- ELECTRONICS, LIGHT MACHINERY
- ENGINEERING, WEAPONS
- FREE AREA, STATE ROOMS, CARGO

FURTHER NOTES:

A	Cargo Bay & Locker (4 tons)
B	Cargo Pods
C	Bridge
D	Rear Laser Barbettes
E	Crews Bunking & Recce' Area
F	Forward Sandcaster & Missile Barbette
G	Jump Drive
H	Heplar Drive
I	Fusion Power Plant (Upper)
I²	Fusion Power Plant (Lower)
J	E.M.M.
K	C.C. Lifters, Fuel Purification Plant
L	Electrostatic Armour & H.P.G.
M	Sensors, Jammers, Comp' & Comm'

SHALLOWS LIBRARY DATA [E]


MIMU
ISI AHTO
USHRA
ZEDA
0111 A Im UPAG
0211 A Im Iliika
0311 B Im UNISHPIIR
0711 C Im Kima
0811 C Im Kashki
0212 D Im Khikaeg
0412 C Im Amigu
0812 C Im Lau
0113 C Im Teoech
0213 B Im Aaki
0513 C Im Gishi
0613 B Im Niirkhi
0514 B Im Tarterus
0714 B Im DIISHALUM
0214 D Im Cablu
0614 B Im Gladsheim
0115 E Im Chathi
0515 D Im Irphothe
0615 C Im Gaae
0815 C Im Diraan
0716 A Im Hourara
0216 B Im Oewni
0816 D Im Ufesk
0117 D Im Gwi
0517 C Im Station One
0217 B Im Fau
0518 E Im DAKUSHAN
0718 C Im Ekli
0818 C Im Miku
0319 D Im Sagikii
0519 A Im Osha
0719 C Im Ziamr
0419 B Im Oeth
0619 A Im Kaelm'katwi
0819 B Im Ardchi
0320 A Im Adaskaglu
0520 C Im Sloethu
0420 C Im Cleci
0620 C Im Glachith
0820 C Im Drya

SUBSECTOR DATA

SHALLOWS SUBSECTOR

(Subsector E of Dagudashaag Sector).

Shallows subsector is important from the point of view of communications, as the most direct link between the Vland Main and the Medurma Main is the jump-two bridge between Amigu and Unishpiir. The Diishalum system has relatively little influence within the subsector, as it is effectively overshadowed by more powerful areas such as Mimu and Ushra. In recent years the subsector's economic centre of gravity has shifted to the Unishpiir-Upag region, as these worlds have prospered under increased trade with the ComSentiency.

- UPAG 0111 A210A76-F Hi In Na 914 Im M0 V
- Teoech 0113 C977559-7 S Ag Ni 102 Im M1 V
- Chathi 0115 E8C1215-8 Fl Lo Ni 710 Im K4 VI
- Gwi 0117 D463430-7 S Ni 612 Im A0 V M7 D
- Iliika 0211 A236665-D N Ni 824 Im M0 V M7 D
- Khikaeg 0212 D565643-7 S Ag Ni Ri 504 Im M1 V
- Aaki 0213 B234553-B Ni 123 Im G7 VI
- Cablu 0214 D348543-9 Ag Ni 100 Im K1 V
- Oewni 0216 B464466-9 S Ni 422 Im K5 VI M6 D M2 D
- Fau 0217 B423766-A Na Po 300 Im K5 IV M7 D
- UNISHPIIR 0311 B86A961-C Hi Wa 704 Im G1 V M4 D
- Sagikli 0319 D 10088A-B S Na Va 702 Im K4 V M5 D
- Adaskaglu 0320 A5448AE-C N 923 Im K9 IV M3 D
- Amigu 0412 C336530-D Ni 814 Im K0 V M9 D
- Oeth 0419 B110320-B S Lo Ni 622 Im K0 IV
- Cleci 0420 C361554-9 S Ni 214 Im K0 V
- Gishi 0513 C455677-9 Ag Ni 500 Im M3 V M4 D
- Tarterus 0514 B000431-E N Ni As 101 Im A2 V K3 D
- Irphothe 0515 D67989A-4 S 400 Im M0 V
- Station One 0517 C668843-8 S Ri 702 Im K5 III
- DAKUSHAN 0518 E2009A8-C Hi In Na Va 900 Im K5 D
- Osha 0519 A625441-D N Ni 204 Im M2 V
- Sloethu 0520 C69A552-D S Ni Wa 713 Im M8 IV
- Niirkhi 0613 B657794-B W Ag 205 Im G1 V M2 D
- Gladsheim 0614 B9D5102-E N Fl Lo Ni 100 Im M9 II
- Gaae 0615 C340538-7 S De Ni Po 100 Im M1 V K4 D
- Kaelm'katwi 0619 A453500-D N Ni Po 125 Im G1 V
- Glachith 0620 C6A4855-9 Fl 503 Im M3 V M3 D
- Kima 0711 C522873-A S Na Po 903 Im M3 V M5 D
- DIISHALUM 0714 B120988-F S De Hi In Na Po 913 Im M3 V
- Hourara 0716 A578335-C N Lo Ni 703 Im M0 V M8 D M1 D
- Ekli 0718 C2437A9-9 S Po 820 Im M1 V M5 D
- Ziamr 0719 C210888-B Na 900 Im K2 V
- Kashki 0811 541336-A Lo Ni Po 314 Im G9 D
- Lau 0812 C24179A-A S Na Po 424 Im K3 V
- Diraan 0815 C676114-A Lo Ni 100 Im M4 V
- Ufesk 0816 D9AA301-C Lo Ni Fl Wa 501 Im K3 III
- Miku 0818 C666543-7 Ag Ni 404 Im G0 V
- Ardchi 0819 B100541-B N Ni Va 304 Im M9 VI
- Drya 0820 C99A522-9 Ni Wa 202 Im G2 V

The Shallows subsector contains 40 star systems, and has a population of 120.192 billion sophonts. The highest population is ninety billion, at Upag, and the highest tech level is E, at Diishalum and Upag.

LIBRARY DATA

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Aaki

0213 B234553-B Ni 123 Im G7 VI

The original Lanclan colony on Aaki was almost completely decimated in 78 during the Vilani pacification Campaign and thousands of Makhidkarun colonists were resettled on the world. Aaki however, failed to make an impact as an industrial base and, rather than pull out, it was finally decided by Makhidkarun to use the planet as their local financial and administrative debt collecting capital. Today Aaki-Makhidkarun Financial Services is the primary financial factoring agency in Dagudashaag. AMF offers consumer data analysis, finance checks and debt collection to all the major agencies throughout the sector. While AMF maintains offices at all A & B ports within Dagudashaag, Aaki is still their main data processing centre and the port is maintained primarily for servicing AMF's own jump-6 courier network.

Adaskaglu

0320 A5448AE-C N 923 Im K9 IV M3 D

Adaskaglu is the most important link for the trailing edge of the subsector, via the "Xboat" route to Zeda, where a large proportion of the population of this end of the subsector comes from. Despite the wealth that this trade nexus has attracted, the planetary government and its head, Disklai Trova, rules the citizens with a rod of iron.

Amigu

0412 C336530-D Ni 814 Im K0V M9D

Although bypassed by the larger corporate freighters and liners, Amigu serves as the closest departure point for the minor trader wishing to bridge the two parsec gap between the Medurma and Vland Mains. Thus the starport has a modest 'C' classification but it is more than adequate for the small vessels that make extensive use of the facilities.

Ardlhi

0819 B100541-B S Ni Va 304 Im M9 VI

Ardlhi is the second satellite of Klathzu, a small gas giant. It is the site of Dlak, a mining base that produces high grade ferrous ores. Most of the population are ethnic Ziadd, although there are small numbers of Imperial humans, a few Lancians, and a small S'mrii phylum engaged in secretive research. Ardlhi has gained a reputation as a 'vile den of villainy, sin and debauchery'. The entertainment on offer is reputed to be 'the very best within ten parsecs', and just about everything (from quality alcohol, Lancian StimSim, sexual liaisons, guided tours through the mining tunnels, sports facilities, drugs, and even the latest holomovie releases) are available, for a price. Ardlhi recognises Imperial laws, and a set of 'basic principles concerning personal conduct' have been issued by the government. Other than that there are no laws , and no restrictions of any kind on trade. If a commodity isn't banned by Imperial law, its probably available. If it is banned, its probably available anyway, but at an inflated price. Enforcement of Imperial laws is difficult, and in the past security troops from the Scout base have acted as a police force. During one raid in 1103 a team recovered three ex-Imperial Navy starship nuclear missiles and a large quantity of nerve-gas, apparently destined for the Rebels on Ziamr.

(see Ziamr)

Cablu

0214 D348543-9 Ag Ni 100 Im K1 V

Cablu was initially part of Makhidkarun's landgrant to the Universal Church but, over the centuries, there has been a peaceful blending of cultures so that today many of the Churches great artisan's originate from the Lanclan colonies on Cablu. Beyond its many marvellous cathedrals and monuments to the saints, Cablu is perhaps best known for its magnificent Tkighir; a native mammal carnivore which can measure up to 4 metres long from nose to tail and can weigh up to 320 kilogrammes. Armed with sharp, raking claws and canines as long as a man's forefinger, it is Cablu's ultimate predator. Until the early 900's the man- eating Tkighir was freely hunted by trigger-happy sportsmen and by smugglers who sold various parts of the creature to off- worlders as folk medicine. In 905 the number of Tkighir's still roaming free had fallen to less than 500 and the local government established sanctuaries to protect the creature from extinction. Within a couple of decades the Tkighir's numbers had once more multiplied. Unfortunately this also meant that it had outgrown some of the smaller sanctuaries and was once more attacking and killing people from the surrounding settlements. The government is currently examining ways that man and Tkighir can co-exist peacefully. One protection that visitors can take if they wish to enter the jungle regions is to wear masks on the back of their heads. Natives claim that because the Tkighir prefers to attack from behind the masks confuse the animal sufficiently so that it will issue a challenge before attacking, allowing the guides sufficient time to prepare for any eventuality.

Chathi

0115 E8C1215-8 Lo Ni Fl 710 Im K4 VI

Chathi is a world with an atmosphere primarily composed of Carbon dioxide which has resulted in a runaway greenhouse effect, with base temperatures in excess of 350°C. Despite the excessive heat Chathi has an extensive, though utterly alien, flora which primarily draws its sustenance from traces of fluorine in the atmosphere and soil. The S'mrii biomedical services phylum Zia'zak have bought the extraction and agricultural rights and currently harvest several important medicines, including a wide spectrum antiseptic pad which they sell under the trade name of 'Medi-Plast' and 'Procreanil' Patches, a widely used Male contraceptive. Recently the BUI (Brethren Uplift Institute) sent representatives to Chathi to study the mobile plantlife known locally as 'Starspins'. Their initial reports would seem to suggest that there is a 53% chance that this species could be uplifted towards true sentiency if it were no longer 'exploited' in order to milk ODA^2 extract from its root systems. This viewpoint however, has been rejected by Zia'zak SIA who have publicly stated that the reports lacks concrete proof as to the plant's potential for gaining even a limited level of sentiency.

Cleci

0420 C361554-9 S Ni 214 Im k0 V

Cleci, means 'Large Dry', in Klatha'sh. The world lives up to its name with the only free standing water been found in a scattered band of lakes in the southern hemisphere of the world. A sect of Innocentine monks is reputed to wander the vast deserts of this world. However, when they leave the monastic enclave at the starport, they take vows of silence, isolation and poverty prior to walking into the desert and out of contact with everyone. It is assumed that they die but local legends proclaim otherwise.

The rumours are also heightened by the fact that the Scout base has never allowed their planetary NAS Sensor scans to be viewed by the public, or even the planetary government. This has evoked a feeling of low grade paranoia in regard to what the monks and scouts may be involved in out in the desert. Due to the hostility, most scouts spend very little time on this world.

DAKUSHAN

0518 E2009A8-C Hi Na In Va 900 Im K5 D

Dakushan was originally colonised by the passengers and crew of a jump 1 Vilani starship attempting to travel to Station One, however the lack of readily available fuel in the system prevented the ship from going any further and the shortage of native life on the main world caused the stranded colonists to die off in short order. Later, several small outposts were established but none prospered.

By the Rule of Man the planet was again all but uninhabited, with small ruined bases dotting the surface and a small base established to rescue any stranded wayfarers, however the base personnel were very badly hit by the plague of Duskir which depopulated the world. During the Rule of Man this world was left empty as it seemed to be of no value to any one. This barren condition was maintained until the time of the first survey when exploitable deposits of Thorium and Platinum were found by the scouts. After the initial rush, a colony was established with the current population consisting of 70% Ziadd and 30% other human races. The culture of Dakushan has reached tech level 12 in all respects apart from the use of Fusion generators. In place of these the Dakushan's use Fision power and solar cells to provide all the energy requirements of what is now a thriving industrial society.

The planet has very stringent rules on the export or import of anything that could harm the fragile balance that allows the world to survive with no source of water or free hydrogen (which would allow water to be made by cracking oxygen bearing rocks), and a population of more than nine billion. All the money raised by the sale of the naturally occurring resources is used to import the bare essentials for life on this world.

Davizi Maize

A common grain crop grown primarily within the Ziadd sphere of influence. It is extremely adaptable and can cope with a wide variety of climates and planetary temperatures. The seed pods of the Davizi are generally either boiled and eaten whole or ground into a flour. The seeds can also be used in the manufacture of a local beer brewed throughout the Zeda Alignment. The bitter-sweet taste is thoroughly enjoyed by Ziadd but few other races can bear to put up with its smell for long enough to actually try it.

DIISHALUM

0715 B120988-F S Hi Na In Po De 913 Im M3V

Although no longer the vast producer of important raw materials, Diishalum is still the industrial centre of the shallows. The system now concentrates on the production of manufactured goods, to be found constructed in the huge underground warehouse-factories of the mainworld. The main industrial players of Shallows, Dagudashaag and the Imperium have a presence here (including Sternmetal, Naasirka and Dagmet). The companies board (a committee representing the industrial interests of Diishalum) are currently investigating ways of stalling the trade deals on the Niirkhi harvest which look like taking their agricultural needs away to Irphothe.

(see Niirkhi)

Diraan

0815 C676114-A Lo Ni 100 Im M4V

Diraan is another minor stopping-off point for the independent trader moving core and spinward. Its semi-automatic starport offers basic ship necessities with little in the way of extras - there is a single local 'general' store and cafe bar. The starport has only recently been upgraded, ahead of Ufesk. Diraan itself is only a marginally habitable cool, world, but with high levels of ammonia in the atmosphere a filter mask is a necessity at sea level (the seas are markedly alkaline).

Drya

0820 C99A557-9 Ni Wa 202 Im G2 V

Drya is a large waterworld orbiting a pleasant yellow star. Temperatures are uniformly low, averaging around -10 degrees C. Although there is very little dry land the world has large, semi-permanent icecaps. During the warmer summers these begin to break up, giving a constant danger of icebergs. The oceans average over three kilometres deep, although some areas are far shallower and others are much deeper. The weather on Drya tends to be violent, as there are no large landmasses to stop the high-speed winds or huge tsunami. The main colonies on Drya are located around the Excellence and the Temperance Islands, close to the equator. Aquaculture and fishing are the principle sources of income, and Drya provides many of the Ziamr system's foodstuffs. The strong winds make air travel dangerous: the main forms of transport are boats and submersibles.

(see Zaraduk)

(Ekei) Glachith

0620 C6A4855-9 Fl 503 Im M3 V M3 D

The Ekei Glachith system is home to Theimr Aeki, the largest university in the subsector. Although subjects as diverse as Droyne medicine, xenobotany, and astronomy are taught, T-Aeki is most highly regarded for its history department. It is regarded as the foremost authority on Ziadd pre-history and archaeology, and has one of the largest collection of Vilani, Ziadd and Rule of Man writings outside Capital. Popular rumour has it that the university holds a massive collection of uncatalogued Ancients artefacts. Ekei Glachith is also the site of the only licensed timers club within Shallows subsector. The facility itself is luxurious, and is fully equipped with state-of-the-art tech fifteen medical and cryogenic equipment imported from offworld. Membership is reputed to cost in excess of ten million credits. Your money guarantees the very best medical attention, and provides a 'once a century' or an 'important event' wake-up service.

Ekli

0718 C3437A9-9 S Po 820 Im M1 V M5 D

Although Ekli has little to offer from a commercial point of view, the world has some breathtaking views and a wide range of exotic local lifeforms. Ekli is actually a double planet: it and its large, close moon (Ekaliam, UWP H201000-0) spiral around a common centre of gravity as they orbit the close binary stars. Ekli also retains a highly reflective ring made up from the fragments of a shattered second moon. Important tourist attractions include the whispering jungles, the sunset seas, and any of the vast chasms in the Fracture Valley. One of the best sights is said to be a double sunset with Ekaliam rising, and the ring system glittering overhead. Local citizens and officials may not welcome offworlders, and dangerous animals are found in many unsettled areas: visitors are advised to travel with a professional guide.

Access to the outer reaches of the Ekli system is prohibited: the two narrow planetoid belts, four planets and three large satellites that make up the outer system are strictly off-limits to casual travellers, by authority of the Scout service. No official reasons have been given, but speculation is rife. Icarbus, the system's outermost world, is a well-known 'Ancients' site, and local rumour has it that a major find of some kind has taken place. Other stories maintain that there has been a strike of lanthanum ore, and still others hold that a deadly Ancients disease has been released. In truth no-one really knows what the scout service are up to.

(see Icarbus, Three Moons of)

Fau

0217 B423766-A Na Po 300 Im K5 IV M7 D

Fau was initially colonised by Ziadd during the Rule of Man and remained a stable if small colony until -692. Then, during the period of Ushran expansion, missionaries from the Universal Church arrived and started to try and convert the colonists. Unfortunately under Canon law Ziadd are not considered 'true' humans but 'artificial' and therefore are not considered to possess a soul. When informed by the missionaries that they would have to reconcile themselves to being second-class citizens in the kingdom of God the Ziadd colonists grew extremely angry and apparently killed them. In response the Universal Church retaliated by forming what Pope Innocent XXI was, centuries later, to describe as an 'unholy' alliance with the Ushran's to attack Ziadd colonies. Within months the Ziadd colony at Fau was crushed under the military heel of the Ushran Empire. The few surviving Ziadd colonists were enslaved. A Dominican mission was established on Fau to enforce the will of God upon the savages. A task the order of warrior priests accepted with relish. Twenty years later the Ushran's gave orders to pull out. The full horror of the occupation will probably never be known but a S'mrii ship visiting the planet a mere six months after discovered the streets filled with decaying and mutilated corpses. Less than twenty-one colonists survived out of an initial population of one hundred and twenty thousand. Unfortunately the survivors were so badly traumatised by their experiences that they were never able to give a full account of what happened. The Church blamed the incident on the Ushran troops and the Empire blamed the 'missionary' zeal of the Universal Churches' House of Inquisition. Today Fau is once more a viable Ziadd colony thanks primarily to the support and assistance given by S'mrii during the initial recolonisation. As a result most Ziadd consider the S'mrii close allies and friends, a feeling that is not returned. Today Fau is primarily known for its war memorials, Seafood delicacies and very active anti-universalist press.

Future Promise Enterprises

<F.P.E.>

Future promise were a small company operating a small number of Timer clubs on the Dagudashaag- Gushemege border. Founded in 794 by a local entrepreneur, Mitta Holt, the company did fairly good business until the early 900's. Changes in local law on some worlds prohibited the practice, describing it as unethical. The loss of business and a number of highly publicised deaths of three 'sleepers' sent the company into terminal decline. Shortly after this point FPE was bought out by DagMet (who were looking to diversify their interests following bad trading figures themselves in the preceding five years). As a consequence of the severe drop in profits DagMet were in need of major restructuring which involved large numbers of lay-offs especially amongst their senior management. DagMet could ill-afford to make the large redundancy payouts that was required by them under local and Imperial commercial regulations and thus thought their way around the problem by buying out FPE. DagMet offered a large number of their middle-ranking executives the opportunity of 'sleeping-out' the recession in the FPE facilities, guaranteeing them a resumption of their careers at the end of the period as well as nice bonuses for the time they were in hibernation.

Gaae

0615 C340538-7 S Ni Po De 100 Im M1V K4D

The cool, dry, desert world of Gaae is the home of the Ka Keleree, native sophonts that live in vast caverns in the polar regions. The Ka Keleree city-tunnels are usually found excavated around large underground water lakes. They have evolved out of scavenger stock that still have many living representatives on the world. The race appear to be a curious hybrid of animal and plant (fungi to be exact). They are predominantly carbon-based but have silicon as a significant component of their make-up, most notably their tough outer shell.

The related lifeforms create their habitats by exuding large quantities of powerful acids (complex mixtures of sulphuric, chromic and hydrofluoric acids with numerous catalytic components) which can rapidly etch away the rock through which they tunnel. Ka Keleree have evolved to the point where tool use has superseded their natural abilities to bore their new underground works and although their acid-production has diminished considerably with time, all their bodily secretions are highly corrosive. This has caused problems when the Ka Keleree have interacted with humanity.

Galaach

<Meduu-Galaach>

Ushran trade language widely spoken throughout the Shallows, Zeda and Ushra subsectors, Galaach is considered a sub-language of Anglic. Although, never spoken on Ushra itself, Galaach is an artificial language created by Ushran traders during the Long Night to aid interracial communication. Galaach is descended from a number of Terran tongues but has evolved a complex grammar a wide range of tonal expressions and today contains an unusually large number of new, Lancian, Ziadd and Vilani words. Galaach is considered by most native Ushran's an 'inferior' language and only fit to be used to speak to off- worlders.

Gishi

0513 C455677-9 Ag Ni 500 Im M3V M4D

The close binary pairing of this system just provides a habitable biosphere for the agricultural community of the main world. Temperatures only move above 0°C on the warmest of days, usually the thermometer oscillates between -118°C and -10°C. Despite these hardships the world is virtually self-sufficient in all its needs, indeed it is a net exporter of foodstuffs. The Gishians cultivate the native plant life which is fortunately both very edible and nutritious. The vegetation is composed of thick expanses of moss and lichen-like plants which thrive in the seemingly harsh environment. Their simple low-life appearance belie their sophisticated structure, biochemistry and reproductive methods.

The Gishians live in sheltered dwellings, mostly carved out of the many hills and mountain ranges. Their energy needs are provided by geothermal activity tapped by extensive bore holes that riddle the inhabited areas. Although the Gishians have to import most of their high-tech items they are able to export much of their knowledge (and some equipment) in the exploitation of geo- thermal power.

Gladsheim

0614 B9D5102-E N Lo Ni Fl 100 Im M9II

Gladsheim is home to a small naval research facility reportedly investigating and developing novel hull materials and configurations. The high gravity, dense atmosphere and extreme temperatures provide a tough testing ground for any man-made device or structure. Rumours currently circulating surround the development of new ground attack/support craft based upon the standard naval 30-ton gig.

Gwi

0117 D463430-7 S Ni 612 Im A0 V M7 D

Until 994 Gwi was a planet with a booming industrial base in disposable fashions and a severe population problem. Today Gwi is virtually a ghost planet. It is governed by a Council of Archbishops of the Universal Church and as such has a strict moral code which prohibited the use of contraceptives. In 991 several planets in Shallows were affected by a mutated sexually transmitted disease known as Artificial Chromosome Deterioration Complaint (ACDC). The cure was simple, ODA^2 administered over a period of six months rendered humans immune to its effects. The problem for the Universal Church was that ODA^2 is a natural

contraceptive rendering the user temporarily infertile. On Gwi the Council refused to relax its prohibition on the importation and use of any contraceptives (including ODA[2]) even on medical grounds. Instead they quoted Pope Innocent's address on morality; In cases where sexual relations could possibly result in danger to one or other partner then total abstinence is the only acceptable solution in the eyes of the Church. Millions who found it impossible to live to such a restrictive lifestyle died slow and painful deaths before an acceptable alternative cure was discovered in 1065.

In 1077 Pope Emmanuel II opened a new cathedral on Gwi to commemorate the 'courage' of the Council in not allowing immense political and media pressure to stop them from guiding their flock in the one true path of God. Their sacrifice had prevented the people of Gwi from sinning so badly that they would have become unredeemable in the eyes of God. Indeed, he stated, their actions had ensured that the millions who had died a sure and certain place in the kingdom of their father.

Hourara

0716 A578335-C N Lo Ni 703 Im M0V M8D M1D

The Hourara system houses the small naval construction-repair base and resupply depot within the orbital starport, Ulaani. The base only constructs the lower end of naval requirements, generally vessels under a thousand tons. These include the common patrol cruisers, close escorts, naval couriers and non-jump ships such as ship's boats, SDB's etc. The base does serve larger, capital ships in need of significant repairs and/or overhauls. The naval administration has contracts to serve and supply the local planetary, subsector and reserve forces. There is a close link with the naval research station on Gladsheim.

Icarbus, Three Moons of

Icarbus is a large exotic atmosphere world occupying the last orbital position around the two stars in the Ekli system (0718 Shallows). The planet retains a family of three moons (all with UWP codes of Y100000-0). Each moon has been carved to resemble an enormous skull. The innermost clearly represents a human cranium, and is remarkable for its detail. The second probably represents a droyne, but is much more crude. The third depicts an as yet unidentified (but presumably sophont) species. Some xenobiologists hold that it represents the skull of a mature Ael Yael, a minor sophont race found within Gushemege sector, but if it is, the likeness is only passing.

For centuries Icarbus has been an important archaeological site, and is maintained by staff from both the University of Ushra and the Thelmr Aeki. Popular opinion holds that the Ancients were the constructors of the site, although geophysical evidence seems to suggest that the skulls were fashioned more recently: as yet no-one has made a definitive statement. Extensive densitometer scans have revealed the presence a number of sealed chambers far below the surface of each moon. All of the chambers that have been excavated to date have been empty, but there is still the possibility of a find that will solve the mystery.

(see Ekli)

Iliika

0211 A236665-D N Ni 824 Im M0 V M7 D

Iliika was initially a S'mrii colony world but, during the Vilani Pacification Campaign, it was captured and used as a military base. Since then the Vilani megacorporation, Naasirka, has maintained a tight stranglehold on the planetary government and has continued to exploit the planet's extensive natural resources to this day. In 866 the S'mrii of Iliika managed, through a loophole in the local government constitution, to hold a free referendum in which over 89% of the population voted to throw Naasirka off-planet. Since then the local people have been attempting, through legal means, to win back their freedom. A move that has been vigorously opposed through the courts by the Naasirka legal department.

Irphothe

0515 D67989A-4 S 400 Im M0V

Irphothe has become the low tech retreat for the discontented in the subsector. Originally colonised by the Vilani in the early years of the Ziru Sirka, Irphothe attracted those who had their fill of the hurly-burly of the growing empire. The world was only marginally habitable even at the time of the first explorations but now the fragile biosphere is beginning to collapse under the steady population increase. The vast seas have become the low-cost dumping grounds for many of the large corporations of the region. The pollution is now reaching critical levels.

Irphothe is now home to a significant population of Dolphins, one of the furthest known coreward enclaves. Backed by wealthy concerns rimward (it is even rumoured that solomani money is involved) the Dolphins have bought the commercial exploitation rights to the seas in an attempt to halt the environmental damage. This has involved restricting access to many areas and banning dumping. This has led to a number of clashes between Irphothe residents (who on the whole support the Dolphins) and some starship captains who have attempted to circumvent the new pro-active environmental laws and discharge their illegal cargoes.

Kaelm'Katwi

0619 A453500-D N Ni Po 125 Im G1 V

Kaelm'Katwi is one of the larger Imperial naval bases in the subsector. The military facilities in the system are massive, and serve as a kind of mini-depot. Their purpose is to provide an ongoing show of military power to the Zladd of the region, who tend to respect displays of strength. For some periods the starport is closed to all but military traffic. All civilian craft are directed to the small class F spaceport located on Shelwa, the world's moon. The facilities there are bearable, being equivalent to an average quality class D port. Large commercial transports generally get priority, and smaller vessels may find themselves in holding orbits for days at a time. Surplus military equipment is occasionally sold off by the military.

Kashki

0811 C541336-A Lo Ni Po 314 Im G9D

Kashki is another marginally habitable world with only a small number of people engaged in subsistence farming. Currently Makhidarun and DagMet are sponsoring a joint investigation at a number of sites on the mainworld which have potential valuable mineral deposits.

Kima

0711 C522873-A S Na Po 903 Im M3V M5D

Kima was once a thriving agricultural community. Kima's primary went through a period of increased stellar activity in the 320's, raising the normally cool world to temperatures that led to loss of significant proportions of the atmosphere and surface liquid. Consequently it is a constant struggle to survive on the world. The IISS is now involved in two separate operations on Kima - monitoring the primary's activity and introducing a resettlement programme, to other worlds.

Khikaeg

0212 D565643-7 S Ag Ni Ri 504 Im M1 V

Khikaeg is the home of Carlsbrew Distillers - voted No. 1 in Dagudashaag Sector by the Imperial Brewers Guild for the last 20 years. The Khikaeg population is primarily composed of Carlsbrew employees and independent farmers who cultivate a wide range of mutated hops, malts and barleys used in brewing some of the many alcoholic beverages sold by the Company. Carlsbrew also owns several other Breweries throughout Dagudashaag and release their produce under several trade names. Khikaeglan's are, for the most part, members of the Universal Church though they interpret their religion more liberally than is generally found elsewhere in the sector; a fact that has caused the local Church hierarchy a great deal of concern.

Klatha'sh

Primary spoken language of the Ziadd. Most Klatha'sh speakers are to be found within Ziadd colonies in Shallows, Ushra, Zeda and Remnants subsectors.

Lau

0812 C42179A-A S Na Po 424 Im K3V

Lau is famous for its spectacular sunrises and sunsets. The combination of a rich orange sun, ammonia-ice crystals in the mid-atmosphere layers and dust clouds that surround the planet make for beautiful, iridescent displays. Tourists flock in their tens of thousands to just sit and watch these impressive and memorable events. Otherwise this world would be just another uninteresting and barren backwater.

Miku

0818 C666543-7 Ag Ni 404 Im G0 V

Miku is a pleasant agricultural world with a temperate climate and a flourishing ecosystem. It has grown in importance since the 900s, when it was declared an open world. Prior to that it had been maintained as a red zone in order to 'preserve it for future exploitation': Miku was in fact used as an exclusive hunting resort by Imperial nobles. Today the population is close to half a million, and Mikunian agroproducts make up the bulk of the foodstuffs eaten on Ziamr. There is an expanding tourist industry as wealthy citizens travel to the world to enjoy the healthy climate and engage in some hunting themselves.

Niirkhi

0613 B657794-B W Ag 205 Im G1V M2D

The agricultural outpost of Niirkhi is geared towards the feeding of Diishalum. Although virtually all its foodstuffs are sold to its industrial neighbour, it is still does not supply enough of Diishalum's needs to have any significant economic clout. Diishalum controls the prices of its imports from Niirkhi, and by extension, the wages of the local agricultural workforce. Through overt (and covert) pressure the industrial concerns of Diishalum have an exploitative trade agreement which sees the imports from Niirkhi purchased at prices well below the market rate and exports to Niirkhi (manufactured and processed goods) sold at a premium. The seething resentment that this fosters has led to a number of protracted and costly strike-actions, which in turn has further eroded Niirkhi's finances and bargaining position. A possible resolution is in sight as the government of Irphothe has recently entered into negotiations for the Niirkhi harvest, and offer 10% above the price Diishalum currently pays.

Oeth

0419 B110320-B S Lo Ni 622 Im K0 IV

"Freedom by the sword" or "living on a knife edge" are the meanings of the Ziadd word Oeth, and the population of this world have taken the right to bear arms to new heights. All persons living on this world must carry at least one weapon at all times and all government posts are held until the incumbent is assassinated. The killing of a member of the government is considered "every citizens right of free speech" and not a crime.

Oewni

0216 B464466-9 S Ni 422 Im K5 VI M5 D M2 D

Oewni was one of several worlds in Shallows to be landgranted by Makhidkarun to the Universal Church of God in order to ensure that the existing colonists would be prevented in the future from 'further' rebellion against the Imperium. The system's inhabitants, primarily Lancians and Ziadd, were forcibly 'converted' to Universalism against their will and so began a dark age of religious and cultural repression that was to last for Centuries.

Then, during the period known as the Civil War, many of the native Lancian/Ziadd descendants took the opportunity to rebel against the Church and eventually, after a long and bloody uprising, successfully overthrew the existing church-led government. Despite partial recognition by the Imperium, Oewni is still the subject of fierce legal debate as the Universal Church (as the Government in exile) and the current Lanclan-led government make claim and counter claim as to which of them is the legally appointed government. The argument is made even more awkward by the fact that even today nearly 50% of the population are practising Universalists.

Ohinoh-Jai Trade Consortium

<ONO-J>

A quick growing firm of independent traders who seem to have the inside edge when it comes to trading with the Ziadd and with the S'mrii. The apparent head of operations in shallows is Cyrano Obediah Jones.

Osha

0519 A625441-D N Ni 204 Im M2 V

Osha's total population is made up of starport employees and navy base personnel. The navy base was established to help keep an eye on the Ziadd to rimward and the Ushran's to trailing, as were the other bases around this subsector. Osha is on the main supply route to Dakushan and currently has a contract to build a fleet of multi-mega-tonne tanker ships to carry hydrogen to Dakushan and bring back the exports of that world.

Sagikii

0319 D10088A-B S Na Va 702 Im k4 V M5 D

Sagikii, unlike its near neighbour Oeth, has banned the possession of weapons by any but the police, and weapons are defined as a knife longer than the shortest finger of the owners hand. The world is also famous for the production of Yamok sauce. The recipe has been handed down from mother to daughter in just one family and they now employ most people on this world.

Sloethu

0520 C69A552-D S Ni Wa 713 Im M8 V

Sloethu is the inner satellite of a Denerta, a large gas giant. The planet is covered by an ocean of ice tens of kilometres deep. Below the ice a combination of pressure, salinity, and heat from geothermal activity create liquid water. The glaciers and ice floes are constantly moving, buckling and folding into ridges. In places chains of volcanic peaks protrude above the ice, and on the largest is Pelisad, the world's starport-city. The colony has a long history of scientific research, specialising in life support systems. The life support systems in Pelisad uses a combination of mechanical and bioengineered organic technology.

The Sloethu system contains unusually high concentrations of meteoric and cometary debris, and many of the bodies pass through Denerta's orbit. As yet there have been no major impacts on the world, although scientists are monitoring a massive body, Icarus, and predict an eighty percent chance that it will hit the gas giant or one of its moons sometime in the early 1130s.

Station One

0517 C668843-8 S Ri 702 Im K5III

Station One was one of a chain of ten stations established on desolate planets throughout the sector at the time of the Third Imperium's entry (infiltration) into Dagudashaag. The station was closed down in 342.

Even by that time it had become apparent that the world was an uninhabited paradise, so that most of those who had been posted there moved in with their families and settled the world. the original families have continued to dominate the government. 86% of the population of this world are of Sylean descent and the primary language of the world is that of the Sylean League. It has been said that this world is more Sylean than Sylea ever was.

Tarterus

0514 B000431-E N NI As 101 Im A2V K3D

The Tarterus belt was once an exporter of valuable ores but now, most of the deposits have been worked out. The starport is the only reason that the system is still inhabited. Virtually all the permanent population of twelve-hundred are involved in the running of the facility. The starport is based on (and within) the asteroid Styx, and can hold a population of over twenty times the present level. Most of the excess areas have been closed off, the majority over two hundred years ago. Rumoured to exist within the depths of the starport base is a 'Timer' club, once operated by a defunct company, Future Promise Enterprises. The facility is known to have been operating in 903, prior to the closure of large sections of the base. Records indicate that the 'inhabitants' were meant to be transferred to the neighbouring system of Niirkhi (0613) but there is no indication that this was ever carried out.

The overall collapse in the economy of the system which had come with the loss of its industrial base saw the system's population fall off dramatically over the last two centuries (as noted above). This led to a fall in the law level but has consequently encouraged the arrival of large numbers of black marketeers (local law enforcement is virtually absent). Most items restricted by local and Imperial law are to found on sale somewhere in the system - if you know the right contacts. Thus the economy has made a recent, if only slight, improvement much welcomed by the remaining business and administration in the remaining asteroid colonies. The activities have come at the expense of business in neighbouring systems, who resent the loss of trade and increase in criminal dealings in the region. Repeated representation to the subsector and sector authorities has failed to address the problem. The subsector government cite the reduction in the naval presence in the system which does not have the resources to deal with the influx of black marketeers.

Teoech

01113 C977559-7 S AG NI 102 IM M1 V

Teoech, on first sight appears idyllic. Beautiful scenery, magnificent mountain ranges and spectacular coast lines surround massive fields of Davizi Maize overseen by independent homesteads linked together only by communet. However, Teoech is a world haunted by an undefinable spirit of death. Teoech has the unwanted distinction of having the highest suicide rate of any world in Dagudashaag and even S'mrii have been known to fall prey. Psychiatrists from all over the Imperium have visited the planet in the hope of understanding the source of this problem. Beyond the stress of isolation brought on by the immense physical distances between the homesteads they have, as yet, been unable to understand the cause of the problem. In the past some potential suicide victims have been known to kill themselves in spectacular and reckless ways which have resulted in thousands of innocent deaths. To protect against this, Teoech has imposed a curfew and weapon control laws and the people are governed by a committee composed primarily of law officers, religious leaders and psychiatrists.

Thal-Tlei Entertainers

<aka Face Dancers>

The term Thal-Tlei Entertainer or Face Dancer is used to describe anyone who has undergone cybernetic alteration of their face, and body to enable them to change their appearance apparently at will. The effect was first created by Doctors Thalim and Tleilaz in 1005 and, to date, it is believed that up to 200 people within the Imperium have undergone the treatment. The surgery required is quite dramatic and utterly irreversible. Dermaplast is injected into the muscles of the face and hand and then an artificial elasticated cartilage is used to replace certain parts of the facial bones, including the nose and ears. These 'bones' are filled with Neyfakh (a malleable silicon of a putty-like consistency). The bone structure could be altered by exposing the Neyfakh to certain artificial compounds which softened the material allowing it to be molded. The Dermaplast also becomes malleable and is capable of being shaped using a full face mould or through manipulating the dermaplast by hand. The hair is replaced with fine fibre optic tubes made to resemble natural hair. A thin layer of heatmat implanted beneath the scalp allows the fibre optics to alter temperature and thus undergo a change of colour. The hair length rely on thousands of small spools glued to the skull lengthening or shortening the hair. Eye colour is changed by permanently inserted chameleon lens covering the iris. Expandable sacs inserted just beneath the surface of the skin around the body, eyes and cheeks create the illusion of fat. When inflated they cause an apparent increase in weight though obviously the weight never actually changes. Skin colour is achieved by small artificial glands containing a variety of dyes which are distributed through the blood directly to the surface of the skin. Voice is altered by a miniature voicebox inserted within the throat. A complete duplication of another person could take several hours to achieve but Face Dancers boast that they can alter their appearance so they are no longer recognisable in under 3 minutes.

Perhaps the best known Face Dancer is the Tri-Vee star, Thommi Bullett, who uses face moulds to redesign his face into caricatures of the rich and famous in a matter of minutes (though time lapse photography is used in the studio to give the effect that it is instantaneous). All face dancers, by law, have identichips inserted at the time of operation to ensure that they do not use their unique skills to get involved in criminal activity. Most travel in troupes and are believed by many to be amongst the best entertainment known in the Imperium.

Ufesk

0816 D9AA301-C Lo Ni Fl Wa 501 Im K3III

In -691 the small resident community were slaughtered; every man, woman and child were found hacked to death. All evidence pointed to the involvement of Ziadd pirates. The victims were fundamentalist members of the Universal Church of God, and were probably attacked in retaliation for the decimation on Fau the previous year (see entry for Fau). Since then the world has been recolonized by Universalists who maintain a monastic-like settlement, dedicated to deep theological contemplation. The inhabitants are now protected by a cadre of 'warrior'-monks.

UNISHPIIR

0311 B86A961-C Hi Wa 704 Im G1 V M4 D

Unishpiir was first mentioned in -7,710 in connection with a newly established Vilani company called Da'Gu'Dushaage which manufactured life support equipment. The company apparently went into liquidation sometime prior to the Rule of Man but the Vilani colony on Unishpiir has remained. Today Unishpiir is the primary Dagudashaag distribution point for most Makhidarun entertainment programmes designed in Gushemege. It also manufactures several models of hand computer and tri-vee consoles. Despite a high proportion of Ziadd and Lancian's in the population the entire planet is run along Vilani lines by representatives from Makhidarun. Racial tension runs high and military intervention into the Ziadd ghetto's is a regular event.

Universal Church of God, The

The Universal Church is a break away sect of Terran Roman Catholicism. After the Vatican V Council failed to agree on the status of genetically altered races, several Cardinals declared the then Pope, Joan-Paul II, an anti-pope and fled to the stars in order to re-establish the See of Peter on 'unpolluted' ground. During the Rule of Man several Universalist colonies were established throughout Dagudashaag; primarily in Bolivar, Zeda and Shallows subsectors. Legend has it that the Dominican Friar Kendric Melatino of Bolivar managed to re-establish communication between the various colonies during the Long Night. Using his fellow Dominican's to rid the colonies of 'heresy' he re-elected Cardinals and called a Council to elect a Pope. Friar Melatino was quite unsurprisingly elected as Pope Innocent XV. His first act was to excommunicate Pope Joan-Paul II and all subsequent successors. Since that time the Church has amassed a great following in the Spinward regions of Dagudashaag, in some part added by political treaties both with the Ushran Empire and later with Makhidkarun during the Pacification Campaign which placed entire worlds into their control. The Universal Church is extremely fundamentalist in its teachings and protects its doctrine with an iron hand and the threat of a visit to its ever-present House of Inquisition.

UPAG

0111 A210A76-F Hi Na In 914 Im M0 V

Upag is a major manufacturing centre for the design and production of advanced computer processing chips. The planet has received wide renown for its ability to successfully combine S'mrii and Lancian innovation and technical flair with Imperial manufacturing know-how. Several competing mega-corporations have been established on Upag for centuries and each have their own independent cities and manufacturing sites under the surface of the planet. Each enclave considers itself a separate 'nation' and governs its territory accordingly. This has resulted over the years in a great deal of tension existing between the various city-states and, as a result, industrial espionage between the various companies is rife.

Upag has a secondary claim to fame; as the retirement capital of Dagudashaag. Over 76% of the population are geriatrics that have retired to Upag and now 'live' a life of virtual reality-maintained 'youth', while their physical requirements are sustained by computerised life support systems. Such retirement is not cheap but several of the mega-corporations now include retirement to Upag as part of their corporate pension package.

Voltan; Sir Francis

Fifth Marquis of Osha, 396 - 499. Commonly known as the 'Wizard' Marquis, for his lifelong belief in the supernatural and his reputed ability to effect the world through the use of rituals and "Magic". A patron of the arts and quite brilliant scholar, Sir Francis was a confident of the Duke's of Dagudashaag and Emperor's Martin III, Martin V, and Cleon IV. He retired to Station One in 490 where he spent the final years of his life writing what he described as the ultimate grimoire.

Sir Francis disappeared in 499 along with his book and is presumed to have died whilst wandering the outback of Station One.

Zaraduk

Drya is home to the Zaraduk, an ocean-dwelling predator that lives in hunting packs. Zaraduk bear a passing resemblance to an ancient Terran species, the plesiosaur. They have a small head at the end of a long sinewy neck, a large streamlined body with three pairs of huge flippers, and a long tapering tail ending in a huge rudder. The mouth contains rows of razor-sharp teeth. On average Zaraduk mass five thousand kilograms and measure fifty meters in length, although specimens of twice this size and weight have been reported. They eat almost anything, and regularly attack boats or submersibles that stray out of shallow water.

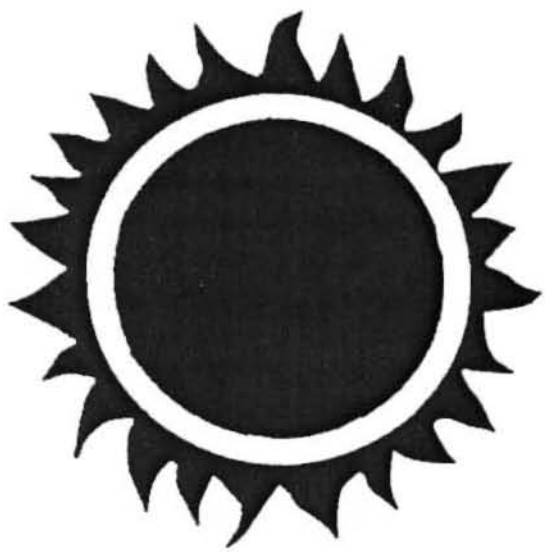
Ziamr

0719 C210888-B Na 900 Im K2 V

Ziamr has a population of almost nine hundred million sophonts. Seven hundred million are ethnic Ziadd, the descendants of miners who first colonised the world during the heyday of the Ziadd Alliance: the remainder are humans descended from wealthy Solomani who settled on Ziamr at the start of the Third Imperium. The Solomani generally have money, and in many cases they have controlling interests in large on-world businesses. Ziamr's present government is a bureaucracy, and is entirely controlled by Solomani interests. Ziadd are actively discriminated against, and are regarded as second class citizens.

The government's restrictions against Ziadd are harsh. Some public amenities are segregated, and in the tunnel cities there are Solomani Only facilities and districts. It is fairly easy for non-Ziadd to travel to the world, but those of Ziadd descent must wait for several years and pass through endless checks and red tape. Even after this they have few rights, and can be expelled if the government deems them to be 'undesirable'. Those who express sympathy for the Ziadd can also be deported as 'disruptive elements'. The Ziamri police force is clinically efficient and has a bad reputation with regard to sophont rights.

The Ziadd do not take this lying down. There are legal campaigns against the government's policies, and protest movements of varying size and effectiveness. A Ziadd terrorist movement, the Khurum, has gained a massive following in the squalid slum districts, and there is an escalating cycle of repression and violence. The Solomani themselves have found little sympathy amongst the governments of neighbouring systems, and have become increasingly isolated. The Red Eagles, the pro-Solomani terrorist group, has found a small but powerful following on the world.



FOR YOUR EYES ONLY

Referee's Information

Future Promise Enterprises

Following the scaling down of the asteroid colony on Styx, in the Tarterus system, the cold berth ('Timer') facility was due to be transferred to Diishalum (Shallows 0714). Unfortunately the freighter that chartered to ship the berths was attacked by a privateer on the outer edges of the system. The ship was lost when the power plant core detonated. In the resulting confusion and panic all thoughts of the ship's original purpose was lost as investigations about the incident got underway. Important files on the transfer were destroyed accidentally when the starport's ships' cargo tracking system was taken off-line to allow the maximum computer capacity in monitoring the above incident. The zone the Timer centre was located was shut down, leaving twenty-four people in cold sleep.

DagMet have details of the planned transfer on an archive file (miscellaneous business section 904) at their regional headquarters on Diishalum. Locals on Styx will be unable to elaborate on the rumour of the Timer club, but it will be easy to find out about FPE and DagMet's connection.

Niirkhi

Agents in the pay of Diishalum conglomerates are actively involve in the sabotaging of the trade negotiations. There has been one incident of attempted kidnapping of a Irphothe trade delegate. In response to this extreme Niirkhian farmers hijacked and destroyed an empty Diishalum transporter (there has been no conclusive proof discovered by police as to the perpetrators of either crime but most parties are certain they now who is responsible). The situation has reached such tense levels that mercenaries are now being employed by Diishalum traders, and armed customs officials are now routinely boarding and searching all ships entering or leaving the starport. Armed conflict is a dangerous possibility.

Tarterus

There is indeed an abandoned 'Timer' facility 'buried' within the closed sections of the asteroid starport. There are two dozen individuals in cold berths who have been forgotten. The cold berths are powered by a small integral fusion plant that has fuel to last another two centuries.