

# The Shoulder of Orion

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***The Shoulder of Orion*** is a setting for the Traveller RPG. There are a number of small changes in rules nomenclature, otherwise the Traveller game as published by Games Designers' Workshop can be used as presented.

The remnants of the human race survives 250 light years away around the bright star Gamma Orionis, more commonly known as Bellatrix ("the Shoulder of Orion"). Earth is gone, lost to an intelligent machine holocaust, its surface burned clean of life, the rainforests, birds, insects, life within the oceans, plants of all kinds, every kind of animal and the humans that were still living there. Everything is gone. All that survives, survives in a handful of star systems 250 light years away, humans have faced oblivion, but hang on by their fingernails.

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# Chronology

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## Why Did Humans Travel To Bellatrix?

In 2090 humans discovered a fossil on Mars. It was a very close relative of the troodont, a species of semi-intelligent dinosaur living at the end of the Cretaceous. This new species, discovered at Terra Sirenum, was named Sirenosaur, and seemed to confirm the outlandish theories of intelligent dinosaurs surviving the end of the Cretaceous-Tertiary asteroid strike.

Humans became a global species in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, wired, networked and inter-married to create a 'global culture' by 2100. Their sentient systems became a deadly rival, rather than an asset, and in 2133, space-based autonomous artificial intelligences (AIs) began to wipe out human colonies. Earth fought back, but the AIs had immense space-based resources, and were able to manufacture their own spacecraft, weapons and drones. The war raged throughout the Solar System for five years, humanity pushed to the brink of existence until a team of engineers discovered the secret of the Sirenosaur on Iapetus, a moon of Jupiter.

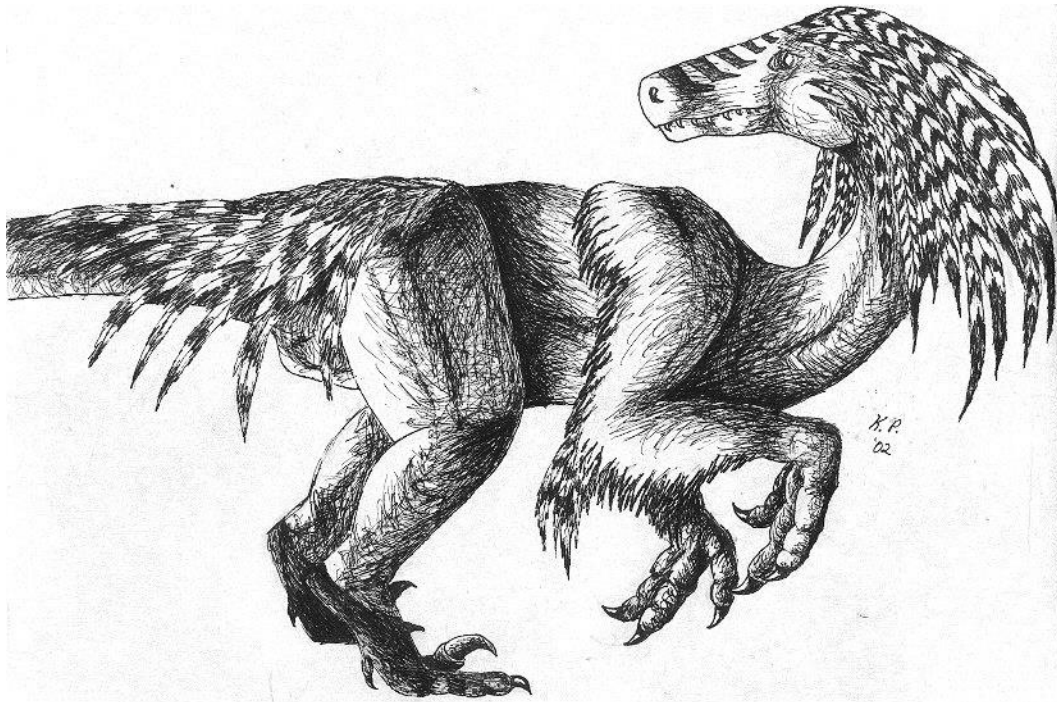
Iapetus was artificial, a jump-gate. Perhaps the Sirenosaur had fled through this gate. Now humans would have to use it as an escape hatch. The engineers retro-engineered the technology of the jump-gate and the remnants of humanity fled the AIs in 2138, destroying the technology behind them. They emerged, to their surprise, in the Bellatrix star system. Life had to begin anew.

## Who Were the Sirenosaur?

When humans arrived in the Bellatrix system they encountered a living species not unlike the Sirenosaur, that human scientists quickly labelled as Exoraptors. Sirenosaur and Exoraptor were virtually identical, however. The Exoraptors/Sirenosaur, who eventually became known as the Gukamatz, were violent and also technologically superior. The humans were able to piece together the history of these aliens. They were not aliens, but the intelligent descendants of the dinosaurs, and like humans, were refugees from Earth. The Gukamatz had lived prosperously on



Earth and throughout the Solar System in the late Cretaceous. A split had developed between the Black Gukamatz and the Blue Gukamatz, the schism turned to war. Many Blue Gukamatz survived the catastrophic asteroid impact directed on Earth by the enemy, and they devised a virus named the Tinari plague, that would wipe out their rivals on Mars. The virus worked, but mutated and infected the Blue Gukamatz colonies around Jupiter and Saturn. The plague threatened to extinguish the Blue Gukamatz just as it had wiped out the Black Gukamatz on Mars.



In desperation the species put its efforts into perfecting an interstellar transport system that its engineers had been working on for the past two decades. It was based on Saturn's moon, Iapetus, and even as the virus began to wipe out colonies on Rhea and Titan, the engineers managed to activate their new machine and transport the remnants of their species to a new star system – to Bellatrix.

### **What Are Relations Between Humans and Gukamatz?**

The jump-gate created by Gukamatz scientists worked perfectly, but inherent in its design was a delay. And the fleeing raptors arrived in the Bellatrix system 65 million years *later*. It had proved to also be a time machine of sorts....



The humans had retro-engineered the Iapetus technology to create a jump machine that took them directly to Bellatrix in only 6 months. They found that the Gukamatz had in real terms arrived 40,000 years earlier, and had created a vast empire of one-hundred worlds that had fallen to more schisms and factional infighting and a second outbreak of the Tinari plague that had again been deployed as a viral weapon. Today the proud aliens inhabit only a single system, yet they are populous, industrious and incredibly technological. A series of skirmishes, incidents and other violent encounters beginning in 2170, escalated into Mankind's first interstellar war. It was a war without a victory. It was a war where metal was tested, and borders defined.

The war forged humanity into a single interstellar force, defensive and outmatched, but vigorous and aggressive, with a dictatorial political organization to match. The Human Republic was born ... but at a price. Coronis was a high tech world of the humans who had brought with them much AI technology. They master-minded the creation of a robotic deep space force with which to defeat the Gukamatz. Much of it was composed of Von Neumann machines, able to self-replicate upon discovery of the proper

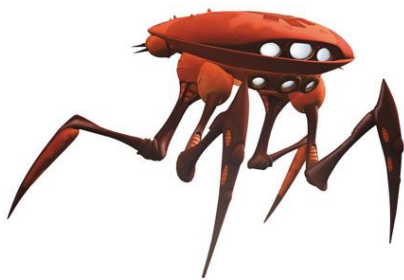
raw materials. At war's end this force turned on the humans and a second war was fought, AI squadrons of attack craft hunted down and attempted to destroy all human life in 2250. Yet the war, miraculously, was won. The war with the AI force lasted for 9 years, and the Human Republic survived. Yet the Von Neumann capabilities and the vehicle's intelligent autonomy meant that there were hundreds of rogue AI starcraft out there within the Bellatrix cluster. Today the pathetic remnants of the great AI cores still operate automated starships far away from the main routes, isolated from the humans, and seemingly oblivious and disinterested in them. AI ships are scavengers and miners, fuelling, resourcing and tending their nascent civilization with an almost slow and ponderous routine. Sometimes the 'Assemblers', as they are called, do attack human ships, but their motives are rarely understood and very difficult to predict.

It is 2310.

## Sophontology

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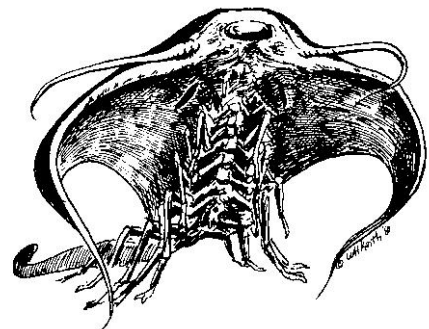
The Human Republic defines itself in relation to its alien neighbours, at once separating itself from them and comparing itself to them. There are 5 major races within the Bellatrix quadrant, the gukamatz, morlocks, assemblers, eshaar and gorgons.



**Assemblers:** Machine intelligences, the assemblers leave humans alone, individual robotic craft gather resources, mine, salvage wrecks and maintain an elusive and apparently innocuous existence amongst oort clouds, asteroid belts and star systems unattractive for colonization. Surviving AI cores ('Kohonen Cores') seem to run the civilization, but it operates on a subsistence level as separate subnets. There is evidence of an overnet, but it seems to have little overall direction.

Individual craft are autonomous, some larger craft are manned by robots. AIs direct work from remote stations. Most seem oblivious to Mankind. In Traveller, the assembler subnets are an oddity, sometimes rivals, occasionally opponents. Researchers study them. They are common encounters in the lonely parts of the star systems.

**Eshaar:** On a forbidding corrosive world live the eshaar, silicon-based life-forms that resemble the marine rays of Earth's long-gone oceans. They maintain a stone-age technology, and a rich, complex society and belief system. Their world is the source of affas, an extremely rare and valuable industrial chemical used in the regulation of fusion reactors. In Traveller, the eshaar are a wise and powerful species that play political games whilst offering mining rites for affas. No-one dare offend the eshaar. They rarely travel off-world, but when they do they are powerful and hold court, often as ambassadors or trade ministers. Obviously such individuals require sealed gravitic environment pods.





**Gukamatz:** Intelligent bipedal dinosaurs, the gukamatz are from Earth's Cretaceous period, and resemble upright utahraptors or troodonts. They are feathered, with binocular vision and opposable claw thumbs. The race is organized according to rigid castes, and individual gukamatz 'grow' into the caste into which it was determined they belonged. The castes are: Leader, Sport, Worker, Technician, Warrior and Drone. Gukamatz were once prevalent throughout the interstellar region, but are now restricted to a single homeworld, yet they still lay claim to a great empire and maintain an elaborate imperial court with many titles as if that vast empire still existed. In Traveller the gukamatz provide a constant thorn in the side of the Human Republic, raiders attack human ships and traders cannot be trusted. The emperor plays a delicate game of wanting to recapture the glory of the Million Suns by conquering all, while not antagonizing the Human Republic too much. He denies knowledge of the gukamatz pirates and raiders, and claims to punish the gukamatz responsible. Yet he and his government secretly sponsor the warriors.



**Morlocks** Two centuries ago the highly advanced morlocks created a weapon called the Star Trigger and with it accidentally destroyed their own star. The homeworld was devastated, and worlds throughout the system affected. Today the morlocks are dedicated to restoring morlock culture and technological supremacy. They build vast starships that cruise the region for months, finally returning home to pour the resources and wealth back into reconstruction and research. These large ships, Genesis ships, have many biogenic internal components making them semi-alive; the drives wheeze and groan like a living creature. The arrival of a Genesis ship at a star system is cause for great interest. They are well armed travelling trade emporiums.



Morlocks are octopus-like humanoids, with short tentacles at the snout. They favour long gowns and robes. In Traveller the morlocks act as traders, sources of information, resources, rumours and jobs. They make great patrons. Imagine each Genesis ship as a floating megacorporation. Some morlocks have settled on other worlds as local brokers, their loyalty to the homeworld is never in doubt.

**Gorgons:** Gorgons are a species of gas giant dwellers, preferring those worlds with small size, liquid ammonia and low radiation. They are balloon-like spheres, roughly 3m in diameter, with three multi-spectral eyes and three long manipulators. They have developed an advanced crystal technology and expanded into metallurgy to create vehicles and starships. Gorgons are organised into 'hunts' traditional food-gathering groups, but now used for



many types of tasks. They have an obsession with balanced exchanges. Gorgon starships are of a crystalline construction. A lucrative industry for the gorgons is the production of hydrogen and helium-3 as fuel for spacecraft. In Traveller the gorgons act as a deep-space encounter in many systems, and as suppliers of refined fuel in several key star systems. They also produce the best quality lasers in the region.

## Astrography

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The Shoulder of Orion is home to the remnants of the human race, stranded 250 light years from its devastated home world. Fourteen worlds are controlled by the Human Republic, while three are controlled by the Morlock Trade Federation, an alien community desperately trying to rebuild its own homeworld. The implacable enemy of the Human Republic is the Million Sun Empire, once a magnificent stellar empire of space-age velociraptors, now reduced to a single royal world that still claims fealty over one hundred worlds. A number of gas giants within the Shoulder of Orion are inhabited by the gorgons, floating ammonia-breathing aliens that engage in fuel trading. On the edge of the inhabited systems, or in remote unexplored star systems, roam the robotic assemblers, cybernetic craft left over from an earlier war that eke out a living as scavengers and miners. Humans leave these autonomous units well alone.

<i>Name</i>		<i>Statistics</i>	<i>Remarks</i>	
Pi Orionis	0103	X20A000-0 ^		G
Chi Orionis	0104	X532000-0 ^		G
Ross 406	0201	X430000-0		
ZAHAK	0204	A967ACA-F Z+		G
Gamma Gemini	0205	X9F0000-0 ^		G
Tezzera	0209	A630699-E ^	Non-Agricultural, Non-Industrial	G
CORONIS	0403	A875993-E *+	Industrial	G
Ubar	0406	D330556-9	Desert, Poor, Non-Industrial	
Yalatora	0408	B000798-D ^	Non-Agricultural	G
Axaya	0409	C755897-C	Non-Industrial	
Mu Orionis	0410	X674000-0		G
Quandry	0502	E588542-8	Agricultural, Non-Industrial	G
Bellatrix	0504	C300414-C ^	Non-Industrial, Vacuum	G
Thera	0505	C779648-B +	Non-Industrial	G
Ixion	0508	E6C4314-A ^+		G
Alexandria	0606	B000622-C *+	Non-Industrial, Non-Agricultural	G
122 Tauri	0701	X3A2000-0		G
Enmerkar	0705	C6586B8-8	Agricultural, Non-Industrial	G
Mazandaran	0706	D578577-6	Agricultural, Non-Industrial	G
Persepolis	0707	B486685-B	Rich	G
THALASSA	0709	C66A9C8-A	Waterworld	
Rho Tauri	0802	D000414-9	Asteroid Belt, Non-Industrial	G
Beta Tauri	0803	D767625-9	Agricultural, Non-Industrial, Rich	

Base Codes: ^ = Gorgon presence, Z= Gakamutz military base, + = Morlock trade station,  
 \* = Human Republic military base



## Alexandria B000622-C Non-Industrial, Non-Agricultural G

**Planetology:** The Alexandrian system is dominated by a asteroid field of great size. There are various rocky bodies and several gas giants also in the system. Ulysses is a large cold world within the system with a hydrogen atmosphere. Barbarossa is another rocky planet, frozen in the depths around the a binary star system, Barbarossa is home to 70 humans, This vacuum world is a rogue Oort Cloud body with an orbital period of 304 years. Two groups live here, a station of belt miners (extracting rare minerals and gases from the Oort Cloud) and scientists manning the Sabina 6 Observatory. This deep space observatory is focussed on the Sea Horse Nebula that dominates this part of the interstellar region. Neutrino, visible light, radio and other sensors are pointed toward this volatile nebula. There are 24 scientists and staff, all from the University of Alexandria, assisted by a dozen robots. A posting here is lonely and boring.



The huge belt is close in to the main star (actually a binary) and it is full of rare minerals. Comets are regularly herded in from the Oort cloud to provide water for the human habitats in the belt. Likewise, high quality asteroids are moved in closer to the processing stations. The belt is nicknamed 'the Big Bend'.



**Sociology:** There are three main cylindrical habitats in the belt, Alexandria, Phoenix and Red River. Each contains hundreds of thousands of inhabitants in landscaped environments with lakes, fields and mountains. In addition there are six habitats dug out of asteroids, with the inhabitants enjoying very low gravity environments; Boulder, Big Rock, Pebble, Doughnut, Grand Canyon and Quarry.

One B class starport serves Alexandria, other cylindrical

habitats have C class ports. Four million people live within the system, and it many are involved in mining, processing or manufacturing. There is a thriving high-tech space-craft construction and servicing industry. The government is an electronic participatory democracy, people are very tolerant, the law level is low. Honour is valued along with

honesty. Word is bond, and lying is both rare and despised by the Alexandrians. It is a can-do culture of determination and hard-work, harking back to a mythical ideal of life on America's great prairies.

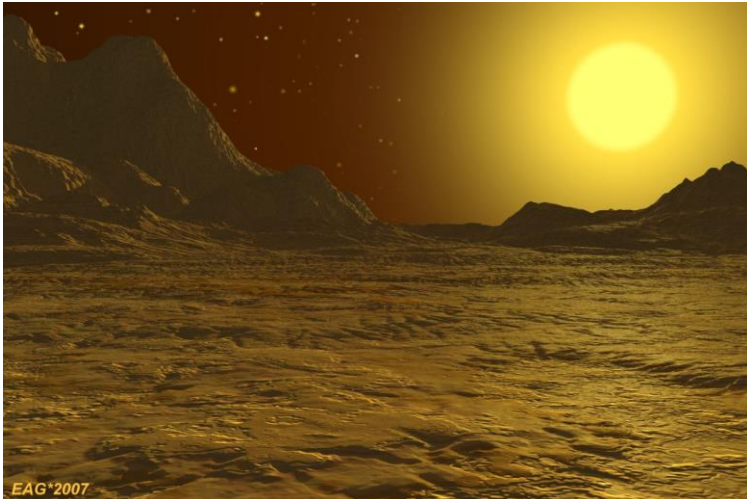
Rogue groups live in the belt, and The Union is a communist movement, a communal society with an established government organized by people best suited to the job. The Union tries to infiltrate other habitats and spread its doctrine and message.

## Bellatrix

C300414-C

Non-Industrial, Vacuum

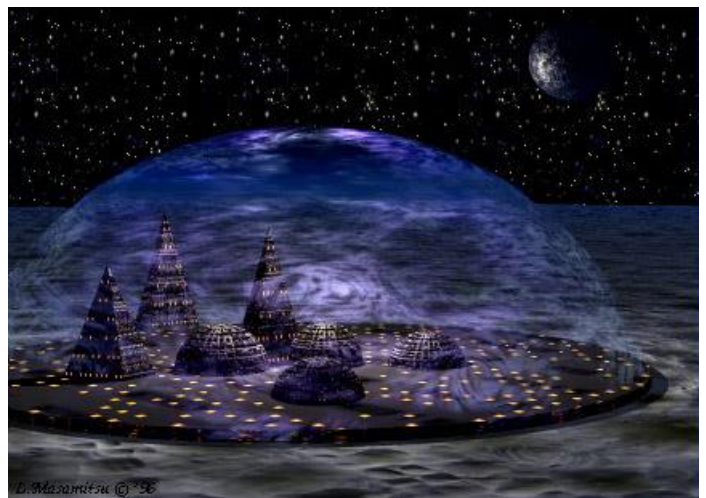
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**Planetology:** Bellatrix is a small (3200 kilometer diameter) airless world in far orbit around the central star of its system. The planet's polar axis extends toward the central star (and will for another 200 years); the northern hemisphere is in constant light, while the southern hemisphere is in constant night. The equator is a zone of constant twilight and moderate temperatures. Gravity is about 0.20 gravities. Bellatrix star is a very large, very bright B-type blue giant visible throughout the subsector, and would

not normally have planets. Bellatrix itself is a rogue planet originally a satellite of the system's gas giant. It is now trapped in the trojan position of that gas giant, and trails the giant in its orbit around the star.

The revolution of Bellatrix around its central star means that the polar axis will not always face toward the star. The 1600 year orbit of Bellatrix advances the pole about one degree in four years; in 200 years, it will advance 45 degrees. Ultimately, the world will have ordinary days and nights and the frozen gas of the Cold Face will sublimate to give Bellatrix an atmosphere. In 800 years, the Cold Face will have become the new Bright Face. Settlement of this world took place only 200 years ago, just as the world was settling into a Bright Face period. The cities were established in the predicted twilight zones to take advantage of the temperate climates. Nestled within the abysses (which fill with gas during the gentler periods of Bellatrix) are the spores of life for the world. In the long changes of temperature, the spores come out and flourish when the time is right. This life is primarily plant forms.



**Sociology:** Bellatrix population of 78,200 is concentrated in three large cities (names: Rhylan, Medianne, and Napan) which house ore-processing centers. Each city is governed by a board of directors answering to the shareholder-owners (who number about 10 per city) of the ore-processing centers. Token representation for nonshareholders is also provided. The three cities send representatives to Rhylan for the World Board, which also has



representation (about 10%) for the non-city dwellers. The Board is responsible for interstellar relations, system defense, industrial production, and republican contact.

## **Beta Tauri**    D767625-9       Agricultural, Non-Industrial, Rich

**Planetology:** Beta Tauri is famous for its World River, rising in the Shield Mountains and virtually circling the planet on the main continent. Beta Tauri is 70% water, with wide oceans, and four continents. Most land is covered with tanglemat, an incredibly resilient and dense vegetation forming impenetrable mats up to 5m thick. The tanglemat appears black and purple beneath Beta Tauri starlight – a red giant.

On Beta Tauri there are no island arcs. No vulcanism, no magnetism - no compasses! But ancient meteor impacts have left craters and since the seas have eroded away as much as they can over time not much is left? Answer: a strange ring of islands sticking up out of the sea, the visible remains of the crater rims. These island hoops are universally found in rough circular patterns. The



Bertollini Hoop is the largest, followed by the Gable Hoop and the smaller (but taller) Gojo Hoop. The Gable Hoop is unusual in that the crater had a central peak which is now a prominent central island within the hoop. The inhabitants of the hoops can't help but feel both isolated and also united with other islanders in their hoop. The Bertollini Hoop is some 1,800 km from the main continent, and is a circle of large islands which serves as a sort of analog to Indonesia and the assorted Pacific and Caribbean islands. The Gable Hoop is situated 2000 km north east of the Bertollini Hoop, and the Gojo Hoop 3,320 km east of that. These three hoops form the planet's second "continent." Between the hoops and Hub are sea-lanes traversed mainly by small boats, no super-tankers, but vessels no large than 100 meters, and most significantly smaller.

**Fauna of Note:** The smaetal swarm originates on Beta Tauri. This is found in JTAS 14, p40).

**Sociology:** The tanglemat expanses have forced the inhabitants to concentrate their farming settlements on the river banks which flood annually, bringing fertile soil down from the mountains. There are one million inhabitants, most based at the World River's huge delta, which empties out into an island studded bay. Houses float, and people move about by hovercraft and airboat. Ekranoplanes carry traffic out from the delta to the wealthy islands. The starport is situated in the delta, and is used to ship crops of-world, and industrial products on world. The government is by participatory democracy, the independent farmsteads all have a vote and a say, although the large migrant population of labourers do not.

A series of island hoops (rings of islands, the remains of old asteroid craters poking above the waves) are scattered along the equator. Their inhabitants have created an island nation,

governed by an online bureaucracy. Lush islands grow fruit and rice in terraced paddies, large trimaran cargo ships carry the crops to the starport. There is a great deal of marine piracy on Beta Tauri resulting in high security patrols, and a good deal of suspicion among the island hoops.

Some of the island hoops are housed by primitives - people who, for one reason or another, have forsaken technology in favor of a more primitive lifestyle. There are also islands that serve as resource outposts, atolls with tiny airstrips for landing and refueling of rotors or skimmers flying between the islands, resupply points for off-shore oil wells, and so forth.

Pirates have become a serious problem in the hoops. Traveling in small craft, mainly speed boats and converted fishing vessels, they attack container ships and steal what they can, typically killing the crew in the process. In one rare case an entire container ship was stolen and has since (supposedly) been converted into some kind of fortress from which the pirate group launches raids (think of it as a small carrier with a launching deck for rotors and boats strapped to the sides ... imagine the fun of infiltrating and destroying the thing!). The government of Beta Tauri maintains a small fleet of gunboats to traverse the waters and hunt down these pirates, but they have limited success, and there simply aren't enough vessels in this tiny navies to provide escort for most of the container ships.

With the situation as it is, the pirates are able to run wild, attacking as and when they please. The corporations and wealthy cargo company owners have taken to arming their crews and, rarely, providing teams of mercenaries to serve as marines (particularly for the more valuable cargoes).

## Coronis

A875993-E

Industrial

G

**Planetology:** Coronis is a medium-sized world that has suffered from considerable industrial pollution. Its seas are now lifeless and toxic, and much of its wilderness is a dead-zone, bare of vegetation and animal life, parts irradiated or polluted with toxic waste. The world is old and cool, and erosion over eons has levelled most mountains, only hills and desert badlands now exist. Acid rain falls in the wildlands, washing foaming poisonous rivers down into the toxic sea. The world has five small moons, believed to have been one moon that has since broken apart.



**Sociology:** Also known as Ringworld, Coronis is an industrial powerhouse run by the Barons who control the huge orbital shipyards. It produces much of the quadrant's manufactured goods. It is known as 'ringworld', because it has six orbital towers linked by an orbital ring – a massive industrial development. Coronis is the capital of the Human Republic, a medium-sized world with a choking atmosphere of sulphates and other toxic compounds, the

product of a massive industrialisation. Coronis is one vast integrated factory city with billions of workers crammed into tower blocks. Crime is rampant, the authorities allow everyone to arm themselves. The world's landscape outside of the cities is a wasteland of hills and badlands often shrouded in smog, and the cities and industrial centres are clustered around water boreholes drilled into the crust after initial colonisation. Life here is pretty tough, there are so many weapons floating around that the city-blocks sometimes make war on each other! There are still a lot of raw materials on Coronis and the highways allow it to be transported into the factory cities. Travel between the cities is frequent, and done by the huge road network, but there are many outcasts from the industrial society, and these Outlanders prey on traffic and on the smaller industrial plants and townships with armed cycles and trucks. In response the government allow civilians with a permit to arm their cars. Highway battles in the deadly deserts are common. Gladiatorial battles between armed cars are often televised, and have become a popular sport.

The government of Coronis is run by the Barons, industrialists from years past who have become a defacto power bloc, controlling the economy, society and trying to hold everything together despite explosive social pressures and the continual attacks by Outlanders. Marshals are independantly-minded road-warriors who attempt to keep the highways open between cities.

**Enmerkar**      C6586B8-8      Agricultural, Non-Industrial      G

**Planetology:** Enmerkar is a tropical world, cut by two vast rivers (the Constance and Valens) that provide sustenance, as they flow from the equatorial mountains into two enormous deltas. The mountains are definably grouped into three major ranges: the Soruq Range in the north, the Central Highlands further south, and the South Range. One of the most unusual areas of the Enmerkar landscape is the Reshef - a vast root system covering 36,000 square km of marsh and swamp that is located east of the Valens delta. This dense wood cave system is like a super mangrove swamp and is used by local terrorists as a base camp and hiding place. Entire bases complexes are hidden in there. Nightmarish fighting conditions. Like climbing through a combination of living cavern systems and twisting cage bars. Everything is damp, alive with albino critters and pitch black.

**Sociology:** Enmerkar has a strong economy that is based on mining, oil drilling, logging and agriculture. Mining is a major activity in the Soruq mountains of the north-east, and focusses on the search for the valuable metals nickel, chromium and iron. There are lucrative oil reserves buried deep below the deltas and off-shore. The oil companies (led by the supergiant Transtellar) who have been given a free reign, command some of the mercenary forces in their





regions and are virtual feudal lords amid the delta. Pollution is bad - poorly maintained pipes and stations leak oil constantly and this kills the vegetation and occasionally catches fire, wiping out local villages and ruining crops.

Logging is carried out throughout the Enmerkar jungles, but it is concentrated in the dense spiral tree forests of the South Range. Rice is grown in vast quantities. Consequently rice is used in much of the cooking here, along with the fish which thrive in the river systems (those unpolluted with oil spills, that is). Enmerkar is a beautiful world of huge Borroffi plantations, 5m tall red and pink Borroffi plants sway in the breeze, each stalk produces a vast amount of edible foods. The broad river valleys and floodplains are perfect for crop cultivation, especially when fed by irrigation channels. Most farms are privately owned, others are strictly controlled by various agricorps invited in by the government president Johann-Ghuri.

The rivers make excellent highways, and the loggers, miners and grain exporters all ship their cargoes by river if possible. A number of small settlements have sprung up on the riverbanks to meet the needs of this bustling river traffic. The rivers thunder to the sound of hovercraft, oil tankers, freight barges, powerboats and military airboats.

The General Johann-Ghuri spaceport lies 96km west of Balat on an elevated and permanently dry region of the North Plain. It has seen a lot of action and hasn't recovered very well. Rusting hulks of transports lay on the perimeter tarmac, some of the older hangers are burnt out, and the main control tower has been abandoned due to structural damage from all the shell-holes in it. Yet enough remains to launch fifty year-old helicopter gunships up into the hills for counter-insurgency airstrikes against the rebels as well as cargo transports up to orbit. Rebuilding work goes on constantly and on the surface JG spaceport is a bustling and successful landing field.

Having so much settled flatland, Enmerkar boasts an extensive monorail network. Hydrogen hovercraft is the most common form of transport in the country, but many of these versatile vehicles are switching to petrol engines, a move the Enmerkaran government is keen to facilitate. Gas stations are springing up everywhere. The road network is fairly extensive and well maintained, often running on raised causeways to facilitate travel even when the region is flooded. Hovercraft could happily operate without roads, but the vehicles would damage crops. They come into their own on uncultivated lands, swamps, marsh and the deltas, and access roads regularly lead down from the roads and onto the water giving hovercraft much freedom of movement.

The capital city of Enmerkar is Balat, a sprawling, dirty, shanty-choked metropolis on the banks of the River Constance. Balat has a wonderfully-kept old centre, the first settlers built their hydroponics greenhouse and elegant hydropower station on an island in midstream and these have been preserved. Festooned with wonderful gardens this island is now connected to each shore by busy road and rail bridges. The island is also home to the upmarket end of Balat and the president's mansion.

Enmerkaran settlements typically follow a grid-pattern enforced by the network of irrigation ditches that criss-cross the landscape with regularity. In addition, many settlements, from small isolated farms to towns, are elevated on ferroconcrete piles, a precaution against flooding. Everywhere 'bunds' or raised earth banks provide additional protection, and help channel water to desired locations. Bridges of all kinds - drawbridges, swingbridges, swivel bridges, dot the landscape. Many of Enmerkar's buildings face onto a road and a waterway simultaneously, and there are plenty of families who own a locally produced Abdartech Mystique utility hovercraft. Of course every settlement, large or small, has its mosque each

with the minaret outfitted with loudspeakers to call worshippers to prayer five times daily. This ancient hold-over was really superceeded long ago by a simultaneous e-phone call to prayer.

## Ixion

E6C4314-A

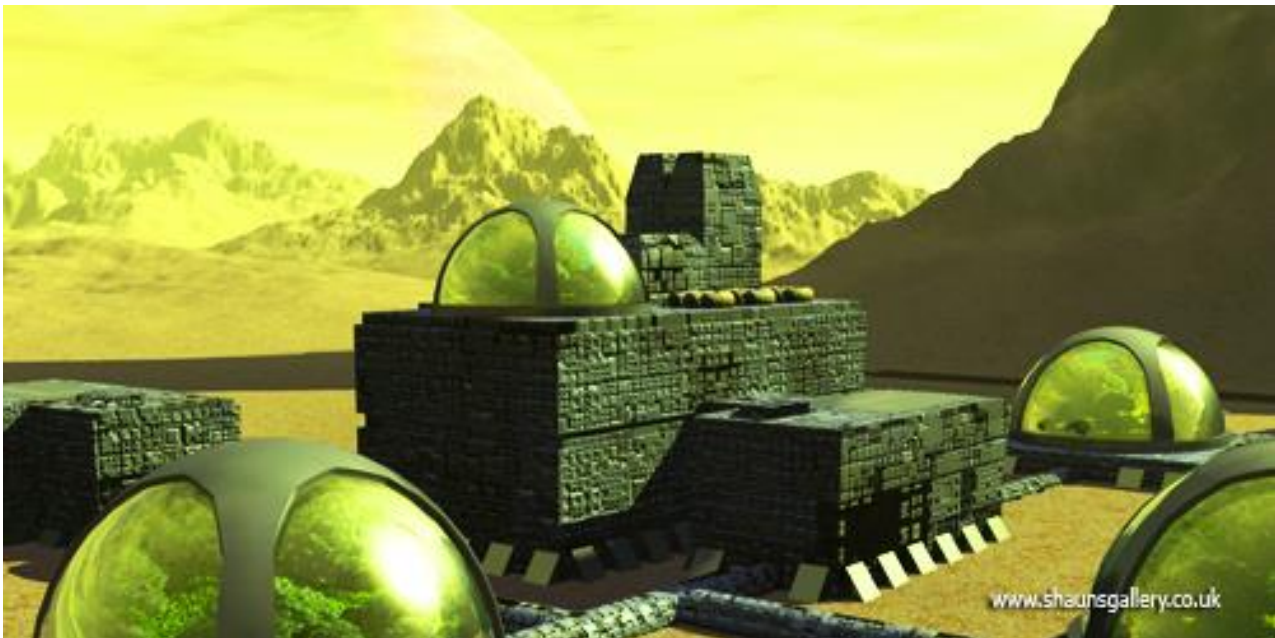
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**Planetology:** A world with a deadly environment and thick yellow-brown clouds that are choking and corrosive. Ixion is home to a race of aliens resembling trilobites or manta-rays, with gliding wings and a series of jointed legs. Clouds of acidic hydrogen sulphide make Ixion a terrifying place, water exists only as steam due to the mean temperature of 150°, and its place is taken by liquid sulphur sulphuric acid. The surface is divided between the highlands, sliced by acid-carved canyons, and the lowlands where rock has been dissolved and carried off to the liquid sulphur sea.

**Fauna of Note:** Native life is silicone-based, drawing energy from the environment for electro-chemical reactions, they have been referred to as 'living batteries'.

**Sociology:** The human population lives within an artificial dome built up against natural cave and this facilitates contact between the Ixion and humans. A substance called affas has been discovered on Ixion which has become crucial in the running of modern fusion reactors. Only tiny amounts are needed, but the demand is high and the humans on Ixion are miners and surveyors, shipping affas up to orbit for processing. The Ixion are not happy with the violation of their living planet and have split into two factions, the highland Efah'f and the lowland Eshaarh'f. The lowlanders try to sabotage and disrupt the mining and surveying.



Some of the caves in the highlands are filled with an edible light-producing fungi called pachek, which taps exotic mineral nutrients from the cave walls. Pachek is processed and exported by some of the human settlers, and it forms a key component of light fittings, survival lanterns and any technology requiring bioluminescence. Pachek is also turned into all manner of foodstuffs.

The miners on Ixion are employees of Trans-Stellar Mining, the pachek processors are free-holders who nominally come under Trans-Stellar law and government, but who are independent.

## Mazandaran

D578577-6

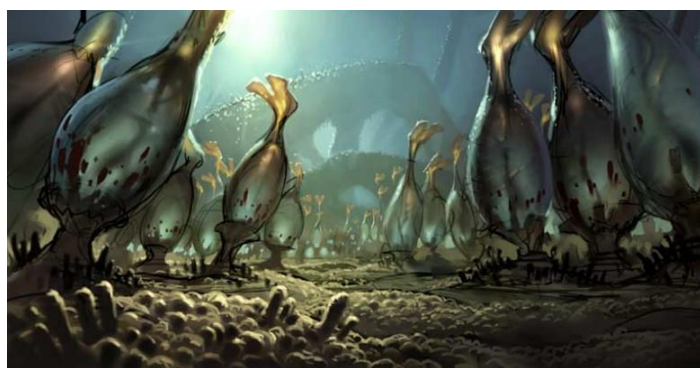
Agricultural, Non-Industrial G



**Planetology:** Much of the planet's landmass is covered by massive bogs and swamps of tree sized spore propagating plants. A combination of low gravity and high pressure has led to the evolution of a number of triphibian creatures. Mazandaran's swamps and bogs teem with life. The wetlands are covered in a thick layer of rich decaying organic material and support a vast array of creatures; ranging from tiny invertebrates to massive amphibians such as the Arngalds. This dense organic soup also produces a number of valuable chemical compounds and provides the planet with a valuable source of off-world income. Much of the world remains unexplored and only a tiny hand-full of Mazandaran's creatures has yet been classified. Despite the scarcity of large land animals, Ficant's has a diverse range of amphibian creatures, some of which grow to quite respectable size. Many of these amphibians are aggressive carnivores and travel through these areas can be quite hazardous. The largest thus far discovered is the Svensson's Arngald.

This creature can grow up to 6 meters in length and mass over 300 kilograms and has no hesitation in attacking humans.

The main continent is roughly hand-shaped (with six fingers) and 10,000km across at its



widest point. The fingers are extremely fertile lowlands. The palm of the hand is highland and the source of many rivers which irrigate the lowlands. The Hamantt is the central jungle from which the rivers flow. Hanak is a seaport at the mouth of a great river flowing out of the Hamantt. Most other settlements on the world are small and farming-orientated. There are large lakes and swamps dotted across the jungle.

**Fauna of Note:** The floating coral mats called Quicoral are native to the oceans of Mazandaran, with the heavily armoured land animal termed the hoplite by colonists, lives on land. The hoplite is found in JTAS 13, p15.



**Sociology:** Mazandaran is an argicultural world, its main continent divided between two rival powers, Hilung and Atarishii. Both have access to the starport which is in neutral territory between the two nations. Atarishii is currently engaged in sponsoring a guerilla war against Hiling, supporting camps of rebels in the central jungle. Consequently, police are at a high state of alert. The central continent is cloaked with a dense jungle known as the Hamantt. Human settlement on Mazandaran is limited to the lush equatorial coastal swamps. Here warm ocean currents combine with the equatorial climate to produce a pleasant Earth like environment. The world's inhabitants make their living either from agriculture, or from the harvesting of rich organics found in the equatorial swamps. While the capital cities are of TL 6, much of the lowland farming communities are still functioning at TL 3 or 4, there is a big disparity between the cities and the countryside.

## Persepolis

B486685-B

Rich

G



**Planetology:** Persepolis is a small world with a low mineral content, and a dense, humid atmosphere. The low gravity encourages plant growth. Immense pagoda trees, resembling a complex webwork of branches and roots can reach as high as two thousand metres. Since their roots cannot draw water up those distances, the pagoda trees are topped with huge water-retaining leaves, resevoirs that feed down to their lower levels. Both the dense atmosphere and low gravity allow a number of large floating creaturs to thrive, including the

amazing skywhale, the kite-like pond dipper, and the opportunistic gas-bag, a balloon-like plant which tethers itself to the ground, and exploits clearings in the pagoda forest made by sudden lightning-storm forest fires. Pagoda trees are purple and blue, lending the Persepolis landscape an eerie hue. Screamers are quad-lateral, four winged hunters with hooked beaks, that hunt in packs, bringing down vulnerable skywhales when they can. Two other unique forms of life on Persepolis are the spectacular crested jabberwock, and the floating lugiri.

**Fauna of Note:** Both the crested jabberwock (JTAS 15, p44) and the Luurgiri gasbags (JTAS 18,p28) are native to the jungles of Persepolis, but the dense atmosphere and low gravity also support the incredible sky whales, balloon plants and the kites.

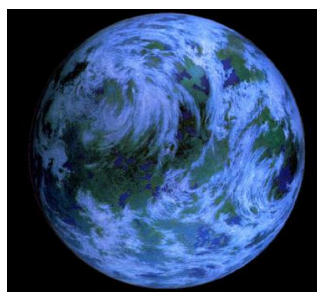
**Sociology:** Humans have not colonised the pagoda jungles or the lowlands with their incredibly dense and humid atmospheres, instead they have settled in the mountains, and as the colonies expanded have built architecturally stunning 'bracket cities' on the cliff-sides. These cities are magnificent, artificial terraces, steps that resemble the bracket fungus growing from the trunks of old Terran trees. These suspended, cantilvered, tiered and shelved cities occupy the cooler and thinner air of Persepolis, Food is grown on elaborate mountain-side terraces in paddy fields and tilled by dedicated agri-bots. Mountain lakes provide drinking water and recreation for the city dwellers. Life is good here.

There are opportunities to descend into the pagoda forests, on photo safaris, scientific expeditions, vacations to some of the lowland lakes, waterfalls and to inflatable vacation cabins.

## Quandry

E588542-8

Agricultural, Non-Industrial G



**Planetology:** The planet Quandry is renown for two things: its dangerous animal life and its gigantic trees. The planet's low gravity and extremely rich soils allow the trees to grow to fantastic size, upwards of 300 meters in height and 20-30 meters in diameter. The normal respiration of the trees, pouring great quantities of moisture into the air, makes the climate a veritable hothouse for plants of all sorts. The trees' size, unfortunately, makes them very hard to cut down, making it very difficult for the planet's colonists to clear land for cultivation. In the century or so since colonization, Quandry' colonists have brought land under cultivation only by great effort. The population is constantly threatening to exceed the maximum dictated by the amount of arable land available.

**Fauna of Note:** Quandry is intensely hot and humid, its dense atmosphere allowing for much larger life-forms than on Earth. It is also home to the dragons, a dinosaur-like species of megafauna that is hunted and herded by the Quandrians for food. The dragons are fast and deadly and many are armoured. Quandry is also home to the infamous tree kraken (JTAS 1, p5).

**Sociology:** The peculiar conditions of soil, gravity, and atmosphere on Quandry have convinced certain interstellar cartels that the planet could be an agricultural planet of great profit-making potential. They offered financing if the colonists present a plan to clear the planet which has a good chance of success. A means of rapidly clearing the planet's surface of trees would permit devoting large areas to producing rare foodstuffs on a scale not possible on most other worlds.

Dragon steak meat is processed and exported off-world, and has become a delicacy throughout the Human Republic. Dragon ranchers drive huge armoured vehicles resembling tanks that fire high-velocity rounds. The ranchers scout using jeeps as well as helicopter gunships. Settlements are typically protected by bunkers, electric fences, deep ditches, pits and minefields. A Quandrian rancher is tougher than a space marine!

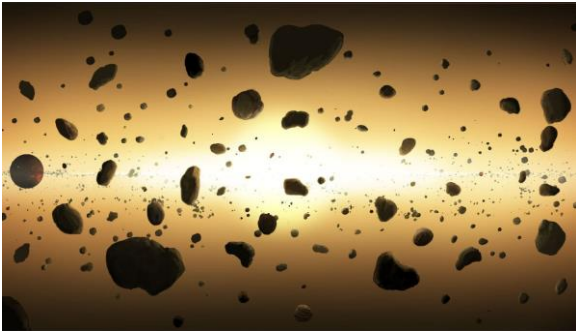




## Rho Tauri

D000414-9

Asteroid Belt, Non-Industrial G



**Planetology:** Rho Tauri is a type-A white star, surrounded by an asteroid belt. In addition, there are a number of rocky bodies and gas giants in the Rho Tauri system, one of which is Icarus, a small moon of gas giant Daedalus, which orbits within the life zone. Icarus has a breathable atmosphere and an ocean, but is lifeless, unexplored and untouched.

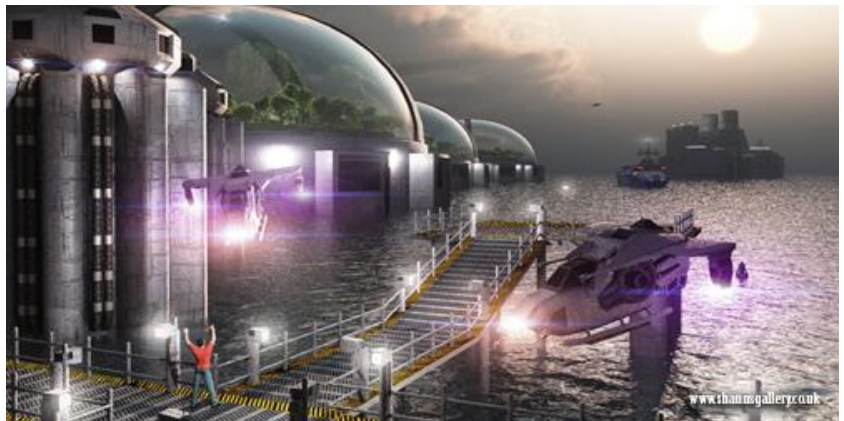
**Sociology:** The asteroid belt is populated by frontier belt miners, some independent but most working for a single mining corporation. In addition there are several fringe groups of humans who have made a home here.

## Thalassa

C66A9C8-A

Waterworld

**Planetology:** Thalassa is a waterworld with a warm, pleasant environment. A small number of islands exist, along with reefs exposed at low-tide. There are coriolis storms that sweep over the exposed ocean, but most large ships can survive them. A single moon creates tides. The oceans are home to extensive living greemats upon which the tiny pseudocrabs called skreekers live. Thalassa is best known, however, for the daghadasi or the 'floating islands', which are vast aquatic beasts often over a kilometre in length. They roam the oceans in the company of aerial chimearocs who nest on the backs of daghadasis, and daghsharks, juvenile daghadasis who hunt along the flanks of their larger relatives.



**Fauna of Note:** The immense daghadasi often growing to more than a kilometre in length are wonders of the known universe. See Adventure 9: Nomads of the World Ocean.





**Sociology:** Thalassa is an overcrowded waterworld, its billion souls living huddled in pylon-cities balanced on the peaks of tiny Korinthea island. Port Pegasus is the world's starport, a floating landing platform with associated refuelling and repair facilities. The world is governed by the cruel but fair dictator who leads a gang of powerful crime bosses called the Kravik. The Kravik began life as a labour union that overthrew the established autocracy and siezed power on the workers' behalf. Now its deep corrupt roots have been exposed, yet the people still hope that the crime-lords have the power to change their miserable lives. The bosses are competitive and head their own crime families; strongest are the K-Trang, K-Lor and K-Basor. Thalassa suffers overcrowding, disease, crime and food rationing. Life is, and always has been, vicious. Industry is focussed on food production, typically the processing of marine skreekers to create unappetising pastes and crackers.

On the open ocean, groups of technological nomads hunt the daghadasi using agile and well-armed hunterfoils, supporting an entire society with the results of the hunt. The nomads inhabit large catamaran-style ship-cities, each one holding several thousand people. The communities are independent and self-contained, though they do trade with one another and the pylon-cities of Korinthea. There are several hundred ship-cities on Thalassa.

## Thera

C779648-B

Non-Industrial

G



**Planetology:** Thera is medium sized world almost totally covered with ocean. It is tidally locked toward the red dwarf star it orbits, with one side in steaming daylight, the other in perpetual darkness. Much of the existing land is actually a vast mid-ocean ridge which trails across the planet on the darkside from pole to pole. There are many active volcanoes and geysers on the islands. The rich volcanic soil there is utilised by the red pigmented vegetation which grows in abundance. The atmospheric



taints of sulphur and other trace elements often result in black clouds, and terrific red sunsets that are spectacular to watch. The twin suns, red and orange set at separate times, altering the complex play of colours on the surface of Thera. The atmosphere of Thera is not breathable without a filter mask,

**Fauna of Note:** Intelligent dolphins, capable of tool use and communication with humans, live within the oceans of Thera. Many work in the mining industry.



**Sociology:** The two million inhabitants of Thera live on the fertile plains of the mountainous volcanic islands, many engage in crystal extraction industries, as well as the undersea extraction of minerals which pour out of black smokers on the sea bed. The cities are powered by geothermal energy and most are single arcology buildings, huge domed constructs housing hundreds of thousands of citizens. Spas are popular, hot water pools carved out of deep caves, some below the ocean surface with windows fitted to

look out in to the ocean. People are given plenty of freedom on Thera. A seabed industry exists, with underwater bases and mining facilities supported by fleets of submarines. Besides large mining corporations operating on Thera, there are many family-owned and run mining businesses, large clans of submarine miners who form a large part of the participatory government. They are a competitive and vociferous lot, all eager to secure better contracts with off-world concerns than their rivals. Food is produced on the plains, as well as in aquaculture stations on the seabed.

## Ubar

D330556-9

Desert, Poor, Non-Industrial



**Planetology:** The world of Ubar is small, with a very thin unbreathable atmosphere and ice caps, rather than liquid oceans. Its surface is scoured by storms, and the terrain is dominated by deserts of rock and sand. Ubar is unofficially known as 'eyeball', because of its resemblance of such from space. An asteroid impact in ages past has blasted a 2.5km deep crater into the surface, along the equator. At the crater bottom the atmosphere is denser and breathable to humans.

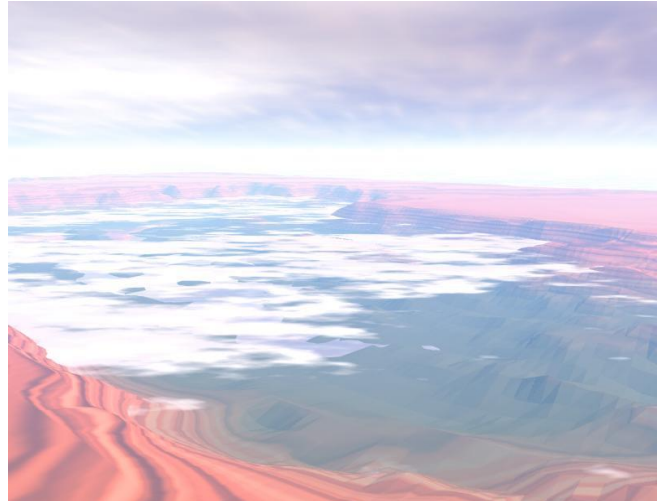
**Fauna of Note:** The kian (JTAS 9, p 37) is native to Ubar.  
10-60 Grazer 400kg 25/10 Jack 10 Hooves A9 F4 S3



**Sociology:** The harsh, dry deserts are difficult to colonise, and the majority of the million inhabitants of Ubar live within the crater, a vast asteroid impact crater 26 km across, with a central peak - called Mount Zothis. Here the air is denser (the crater is 2.5 km deep) and water is used to irrigate large areas of the crater floor. Settlements have spread out across the floor, but also climb the crater walls. Here the people are sheltered from the worst sandstorms, and enjoy a moderately comfortable environment. There is a whole population of primitive aliens who reside in the deserts away from the

crater, sand-walkers who recycle moisture and live in deep caves, hunting and surviving off what the deserts can offer. These sandwalkers are shunned, it is said they distill their dead and recycle their water, an idea abhorrent to the Ubarians.

Not all humans live within the comfortable confines of the crater. Around the crater rim wall there are grasslands, watered by the rain that falls along the crater rim. Herds of two-legged beasts called kian are tended by human ranchers, driving ATVs and quad-bikes across the dusty plains. They spend much of their lives out on the desert fringe, away from the crater floor. Ranchers live in sealed environments and wear filter-masks when outdoors. The kian provide meat for the crater-dwellers, as well as for export. The starport sits on the crater rim, easily accesible to the annual khian drives.



Other humans living outside of the crater are miners who have discovered a great seam of valuable minerals south of the rimwall, associated with the initial asteroid impact. Their underground mine is a cramped warren, filled with workers and their families, and with an entire town established to provide services for them. The company who own the licence to run the mine is harsh and uncompromising, poor shielding from the radioactive ores has even led to mutations and birth defects. A workers rebellion has begun in some quarters, and the company is determined to crush it fiercely. The mutants are an underclass and many support the recent mutant uprising.

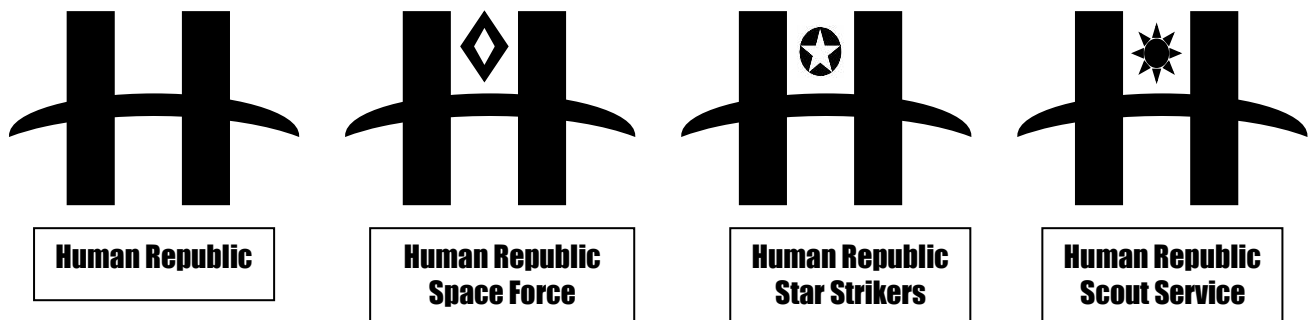


<b>Pi Orionis</b>	0103 X20A000-0 ^	G
<b>Chi Orionis</b>	0104 X532000-0 ^	G
<b>Ross 406</b>	0201 X430000-0	
<b>Gamma Gemini</b>	0205 X9F0000-0 ^	G
<b>Mu Orionis</b>	0410 X674000-0	G
<b>122 Tauri</b>	0701 X3A2000-0	G



# The Human Republic

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## Government

Once a free and open democratic government, the Human Republic is now a closely controlled and inward-looking force. The individual worlds are allowed to organise and rule themselves, while the great council of the Republic on Persepolis, the Praesidium, conducts the overall government of the interstellar state. High status individuals, elevated by the Republic to various high citizen ranks form an interstellar elite. Members of this elite are given estates and privileged incomes and in return become the patrons of worlds and organizations; they are ambassadors, arbitrators, representatives and judges. The high citizen ranks are hereditary, but some individuals in the military may be able to gain admission to their numbers following diligent service.

Many high citizens sit on the Praesidium which debates policy and makes rulings in the interests of all Republican worlds. The most experienced and long serving members form an elite clique that decide through secret discussion and lobbying who sits on the all important Council of State. Forming the heart of government, running the economy, deciding policy and governing the Republic's military and civil departments, its members are all-powerful. All of the members of the Council are of consular rank or higher, and always leave with the rank of proconsul. This denotes that an individual or family member has sat on the Council of State in the past.

### High Citizen Ranks

B 11 Justice	The Council of State consists of 19 people: the Chairman, four Deputy Chairmen, the Secretary and thirteen Members. All are elected by Parliament for a four year term, although most members serve multiple terms before falling out of favour. The Council of State serves as a collective head of state, though its chairman actually stands as the figurehead and leader of all humanity. As such, it ratifies and renounces interstellar agreements, appoints and recalls the representatives of the Human Republic to alien states and to interstellar organizations; it confers orders and has the power of pardon.
C 12 Prefect	
D 13 Tribune	
E 14 Consul	
F 15 Proconsul	

Interstellar political parties are tightly controlled by the Republic security service, Sigma Section. In their place the Fellowship Party binds all high citizens together, creating loyalty and shared goals. In past decades competing political parties brought factionalism and interstellar war, with the threat of alien invasion still present, the Council of State uses the Fellowship Party as a binding force, a channel of belief along which aspiring politicians must first travel. Sigma Section ensures that no high citizens stray from the path.

Sigma Section is a secret police force, infiltrating and reporting on most private activity in the Human Republic. It limits opportunity for non-sanctioned political organisation and by its ominous overwatch, acting as a directing force.

## **Military Forces**

To protect itself from pirates and occasional alien raiders from coreward, the Human Republic maintains a military force.

**Republican Star Force:** Responsible for the policing of space, patrols, customs checks, anti-piracy and smuggling operations. It has bases at several starports from which missions or patrols are launched. In war-time its spacecraft will defend the worlds of the Republic. Many crews are recruited locally and defend their own system with system defence craft.

The RSF combat elements are divided into two wings, the 1<sup>st</sup> Alexandrian Wing and the 2<sup>nd</sup> Coronis Wing. These fighting units are fully functioning and independent. Each wing is composed of around ten squadrons, and these squadrons are dedicated mission units, each equipped with a certain type of spacecraft and tasked to carry out a certain mission.

The squadron types are:

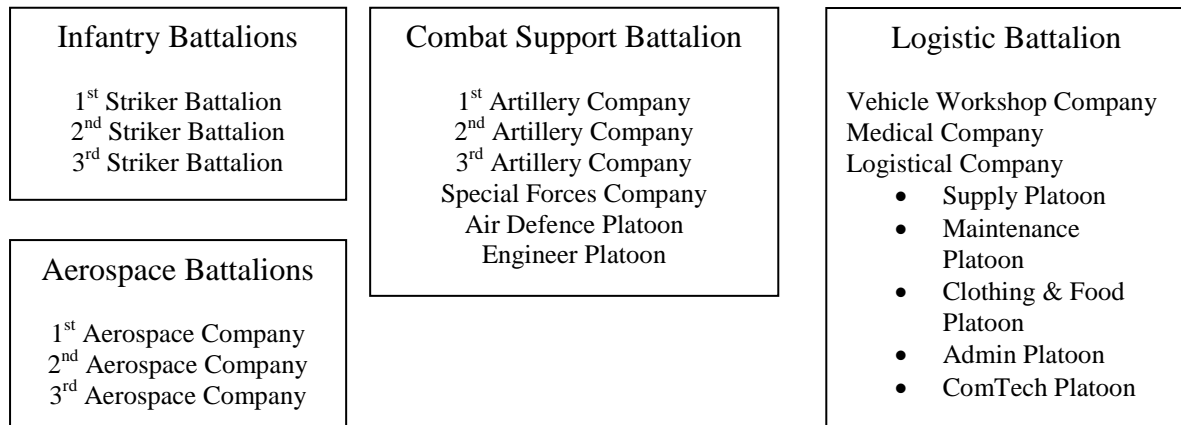
- **Battlespace Squadron (BSS)** – Equipped with a single battle carrier and several interdictor craft used in concert to totally dominate one or more star systems, over a long period of time.
- **Fast Attack Squadron (FAS)** – Fast moving spacecraft in these squadrons are heavily armed and capable of making lightning raids into enemy-held territory and fighting their way out again.
- **Starlift Squadron (SLS)** – Every squadron requires fuel and supplies, the starlift squadrons are equipped with tankers, logistics craft and salvage rigs to keep the Star Force operating.
- **Communications and Courier Squadron (CCS)** – Light transport, courier and VIP transport are the missions of this particular squadron.
- **Space Survey Squadron (SSS)** – The RSF requires up-to-date navigational charts that the survey craft of the space survey squadron provide.
- **Vertical Assault Squadron (VAS)** – These assault squadrons operate troop transports that can drop an entire battalion of star striker commandos onto a world in less than 4 hours.

<b>1<sup>st</sup> Alexandrian Wing</b> 14 <sup>th</sup> Space Survey Squadron 	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Coronis Wing</b> 2 <sup>nd</sup> Communications and Courier Sqdn 
101 <sup>st</sup> Fast Attack Squadron 	22 <sup>nd</sup> Starlift Squadron 
102 <sup>nd</sup> Fast Attack Squadron 	23 <sup>rd</sup> Starlift Squadron 
112 <sup>th</sup> Starlift Squadron 	29 <sup>th</sup> Fast Attack Squadron 
154 <sup>th</sup> Vertical Assault Squadron 	243 <sup>rd</sup> Vertical Assault Squadron 
177 <sup>th</sup> Battlespace Squadron 	288 <sup>th</sup> Battlespace Squadron 
71 <sup>st</sup> Striker Btn 	81 <sup>st</sup> Striker Btn 



**Republican Star Striker Regiments:** This force is composed of mobile infantry who are distributed between star force base defence, guard deployments and ships of the Star Force as quick-reaction landing or boarding troops. As a fighting force it can drop thousands of men onto a world with supporting vehicles, artillery, medical facilities and other elements. It is truly mobile and adapted to fight in all weathers, on all worlds, in any atmosphere – and in space, too. Strikers are analogous to Earth-based parachute or airmobile troops.

The two regiments, the 71<sup>st</sup> and the 81<sup>st</sup> have an identical organisation, with three operational infantry battalions, a combat support battalion, an aerospace (transport) battalion and a logistics battalion.



**Planetary Army, Air Force and Maritime Forces:** The Republic maintains an Army, Airforce and Navy that has a central command on Coronis, but that is each broken down into constituent parts on member worlds. Thalassa has the 3<sup>rd</sup> Fleet, Thera has the 4<sup>th</sup> Fleet, and so on. Each world is responsible for maintaining and recruiting its forces, while Coronis provides equipment, training and funds. Every fleet, air force or army unit is equipped according to the world's own technological base. In a time of crisis, these forces would defend the world from attack or invasion, typically in concert with the Star Strikers who often train with independent armies for just such an occasion.

The Republic Star Force (RSF) is an interstellar military service operating spacecraft in the Republic. It is capable of defending the Republic from external threat, it constantly prepares for full-scale war.

Not only is the RSF responsible for defence, but is also concerned with the policing of cluster space with patrols, customs checks, anti-piracy and smuggling operations. It has bases at several starports from which missions or patrols are launched. Many crews are recruited locally and defend their own system with system defence craft.

# Character Creation

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## Noble Titles

The Human Republic recognises a series of social status levels that represent an individual or family's loyalty to the Republic. These titles are associated with estates and incomes granted to the 'high citizen', and are hereditary. They originate in the period of the First Gukamatz War, when naval officers were responsible for conquering new territories and forcing Gukamatz forces back to their homeworld leaving planets free for settlement. The new Human Republic gifted estates to these officers and provided recognition with the high status titles. Practically all of the founders of today's high citizen lineages were officers.

## High Citizen Ranks

B 11 Justice  
C 12 Prefect  
D 13 Tribune  
E 14 Consul  
F 15 Proconsul

## Career Equivalents

Most of the career types found in Book 1 and Supplement 4 can be used in Shoulder of Orion. They can roughly be described as follows:

- Navy:** Members of the Republican Star Force which patrols space between the stars.
- Marines:** Members of the Republican Star Strikers, commandos and peacekeeping troops.
- Army:** Members of the Republican Army, organized into separate planetary regiments.
- Scouts:** Members of the Republican Interstellar Scout Service, who conduct search and rescue, enforce mining rights and run the communications networks of the Human Republic.
- Merchants:** Merchants of the large trading corporations or the independent free traders.
- Sailors:** Members of the Republican Navy, organized into separate planetary fleets.
- Flyers:** Members of the Republican Air Force, organized into separate planetary air forces.
- Agent:** An agent of Sigma Service, the Republic's secret intelligence agency.
- Pirates:** Member of a Mashana nomad clan, wandering the stars to salvage and build starships.
- Belters:** Asteroid miners most often operating in Alexandria, Rho Tauri or Yalatora.
- Diplomats:** Members of the foreign service of governments.
- Doctors:** Training medical practitioners.
- Barbarians:** Primitives from either Ubar, Mazandaran or the irradiated wastes of Coronis.
- Bureaucrats:** Government or organization managers.
- Rogues:** Criminal individuals, flourishing in particular on Coronis or Thalassa.
- Nobles:** Aristocrats with title, wealth and a sense of superiority.
- Scientists:** Individuals trained in technological or scientific research.
- Hunters:** Individuals who track and hunt animals for sport or profit.

## New Career: Agent

When joining Sigma Service, roll 1D for branch; on 1-4 the character is recruited as an open agent, on a 5-6 he is recruited as a secret agent. Open agents use the enlistment and promotion rolls as Marine, as well as all ranks. However, they use the skills, auto skills and mustering out benefits of the Rogue.

The secret agent enjoys automatic enlistment, and rolls 1D on the draft roll to determine the career into which he is assigned. His rank in Sigma Section is always one level higher than their 'cover' rank. The secret agent moves through his cover career as normal, but must roll 4+ every term during re-enlistment or have his cover blown. If this happens the character assumes his Sigma rank and immediately musters out. He musters out on the Rogue table with his Sigma Service rank.

## HOMEWORLD SKILLS

TL 5-9	Ground Car-0
TL 7+	Computer-0
TLA+	Grav Craft-0
Vacuum World	Vacc Suit-0
Atmosphere A-C	Vacc Suit-0
Desert World	Survival-0
Water World	Water Craft-0
Rich World	Carouse-0
Hi Population	Streetwise-0

### Homeworld

Characters can assume their character comes from the Earth-like world of Persepolis, or can select one of the other worlds of the Human Republic. Crucial

information to check on that world's UWP is its hydrographic percentage (is it a desert?), its size (what gravity is the character used to?) and tech-level. The player can roll his homeworld randomly if desired. Allocate any skills at level-0 if applicable.

## RANDOM WORLDS

3D	World	TL	Notes
3-4	Ixion	A	Atmos C
5-6	Ubar	9	Desert
7	Thera	B	Waterworld
8	Quandry	8	-
9	Alexandria	C	Vacuum
10	Coronis	E	Hi Pop
11	Thalassa	A	Hi Pop, Waterworld
12	Persepolis	B	-
13	Enmerkar	8	-
14	Bellatrix	C	Vacuum
15	Mazandaran	6	-
16	Beta Tauri	9	-
17-18	Rho Tauri	9	Vacuum

## Skills

All of the skills from Book 1, Book 4, Book 5 and Supplement 4 are used, with the following clarifications:

**Blade Combat:** Take as Blade Combat, with no cascade.

**Fwd Observer:** Take as Gunnery.

**Gun Combat:** Select either Auto Pistol, Rifle, Shotgun, SMG, Laser Rifle or Autogun.

**Ship's Boat:** Take as Pilot.

**Vehicle:** Select from ATV, Aircraft, Grav Craft, Hovercraft or Watercraft.

## Mustering Out Benefits

Belters receive a free Vacc Suit.

Free Traders are received by Merchant characters paid for out-right.