

TRAVELLER

THE GLORIOUS EMPIRE



SCIENCE FICTION ADVENTURE IN THE FAR FUTURE

TRAVELLER

THE GLORIOUS EMPIRE

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CLASSIC TRAVELLER.

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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	02
HISTORY OF THE GLORIOUS EMPIRE	06
EXPLORING THE GLORIOUS EMPIRE	22
SLAVERY	33
MILITARY FORCES	46
GLORIOUS EMPIRE TRAVELLERS	56
WORLDS OF THE GLORIOUS EMPIRE	73
GLORIOUS EMPIRE CAMPAIGNS	103
THE CANONVERSE	121
THE HIERATE CAMPAIGN	125
THE FALL OF WORLDS	134
USING TRAVELLERMAP.COM	136
CENTRAL SUPPLY CATALOGUE	139
HIGH GUARD: GLORIOUS EMPIRE	142
GLOSSARY OF ASLAN WORDS & TERMS	159



INTRODUCTION

The fall of an empire is never a pretty thing. Some collapse under their own weight, many simply fade into nonexistence, and some are brutally and deliberately destroyed. The Glorious Empire is slowly being whittled away from both within and without. Inside its borders, the Empire's worst enemy is itself. Its myopic, overly centralised, slavery-dependent government has proven to be incompetent at anything other than fighting a prolonged and devastating battle of attrition. Externally, the Empire is under siege by the Aslan Hierate who – after four and a half centuries of sporadic warfare – now have the Empire reeling with the loss of several key star systems.

Despite recent events, finishing the Glorious Empire off is not going to be easy. Even in its diminished state it remains a force to be reckoned with. Furthermore, there is the matter of what will take its place after the Empire falls. The prevailing but simplistic belief is that it will simply be engulfed by the Hierate, whereupon its land will be redistributed among the victorious clans and it will settle into place within the Aslan feudal structure. On the most basic level, this is exactly what would occur; one clan or a collection of clans defeats another and the defeated clan cedes all territory to the victors. However, such predictions fail to take into account that the Empire is heavily populated by billions of human slaves. Incorporating them into Aslan society is going to be a monumental task.

Most regions in Charted Space are stable, with reliable borders, trade routes and world characteristics. This book describes a region that is anything but that. The Glorious Empire is about to fall. Borders will change, populations are on the move, new powers will rise, old powers may fall and things will never be the same in this territory. Just how that plays out may depend largely on the actions of the Travellers. Whether they be conquerors from the Hierate, dissidents from the Empire, mercenaries from the Dustbelt, human slaves breaking free from their bonds or the freedom fighters who have come to liberate them, the Travellers can have an active role in changing the star charts forever.

WHY THE GLORIOUS EMPIRE?

The Trojan Reach is a wild area of space, occupied in part by two great powers: The Third Imperium and the Aslan Hierate. For centuries, the two have been content to engage in a proverbial stare-down across the sparsely populated buffer zone that is the Outrim Void. The Aslan are expansionists and most believe it is only a matter of time before they continue their coreward march into human space. However, before they go that far, they have a more pressing problem closer to home... the Glorious Empire.

Despite its relatively small size in comparison with the whole of Aslan space, the Empire is viewed as an *akyafteirleao*, an existential threat to their culture. The subtlety of this threat is lost on most humans. They see only another dispute between two rival Aslan polities, a military standoff that can be measured in armies and fleets. However, to the leading clans of the Hierate, the danger is much more severe. The Aslan Hierate is a fractious entity, a collection of thousands of clans in a perpetual state of conflict with one another, vying for territory and engaging in various levels of ritualised war. The thing that keeps them linked and enables them to sustain an interstellar civilisation is the complex code of honour, called *fteir* in their native language of Trokh. In all of Aslan space, the Glorious Empire is the only place where a distinctly rival interpretation of *fteir* has somehow managed to survive and flourish. Ideas that diverge from tradition are considered dangerous by the Aslan, more dangerous than even the most massive war. *Fteir* is thought to be the only thing that truly holds the Hierate together; without it they are lost. For this reason and this reason alone, the Glorious Empire must be destroyed.

The Glorious Empire and its surrounds represent a rich story environment for Travellers. The worlds of the Empire and systems on its periphery are a warzone. The Dustbelt – the unaligned human worlds coreward of the Empire – are experiencing a renaissance of sorts, fuelled by trade relationships with the Imperium, Aslan Hierate and Florian League. The Hierate regions surrounding the

Empire are a wild frontier, rife with competing clans, burgeoning commercial enterprises and *ihatei* invaders ready to pounce on unwitting human worlds.

The region is also a place where ‘east meets west’ or – more appropriately – coreward meets rimward. Humans and Aslan mix freely on Hierate border worlds, creating a hybrid culture with customs from both species. Because of the Empire’s practice of slavery, there are billions of humans living in the region, many of whom have been freed by Hierate liberators. What will become of them when the Empire falls? Will they petition for membership to the Imperium? Will they attempt to found an independent state? Or, after centuries of Aslan occupation, have they been so fully inculcated in the ways of *fteir* that they become a society of humans with a decidedly Aslan bent? The answers to these questions are to be determined by the Referee and the Travellers who take part in the region’s transformation.

Only a special breed of Traveller is willing to brave the dangers of the Glorious Empire. It is not a place for the faint of heart but not everyone can be satisfied by plying the safe and reliable jump-1 mains of the Imperium. Some Travellers are made of hardier stuff and seek out greater dangers and challenges to satisfy their thirst for adventure.

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

Many sourcebooks contain detailed information about a region, a historic era, an alien race or another topic that is intended to be used when the Travellers wander into the relevant region of space. The subject material is presented in static fashion, as if it is in a museum, under the glass, just waiting for the Travellers to touch it. Once they do, they embark upon a series of adventures. When the Travellers are done visiting the region and depart for other pastures of the far future, they leave the subject material behind and it remains intact, waiting for them should they ever return.

The *Glorious Empire* describes a mercurial region of space, torn asunder by violent events that are unfolding right before the Travellers’ eyes. The material contained herein is intended to be more interactive than that of some other sourcebook. Travellers cannot enter the Glorious Empire and its surrounds without materially changing it and it changing them. The information contained in this book is merely the starting point. Once your Travellers have entered the region and taken part in its unfolding events, it will not be the same place they originally encountered.

Several tools are provided to help the Referee manage the events, personalities and the changes taking place. Among them are the following:



Flashpoints: Whilst the Glorious Empire is collapsing at a blistering pace, some regions are hotter than others. Flashpoints describe such places, providing the most up-to-date details and hooks with which a group of Travellers can become involved. More often than not, there will be no choice. Just coming into contact with a Flashpoint has a tendency to draw Travellers right into the action.



Key Figures: Like any major historical event, the fall of the Glorious Empire has an array of personalities who dominate the scene.

Key Figures are those who have a great effect on a given world, region or – in some cases – the entire Glorious Empire and surrounds. High-ranking nobles, military officers and the Grand Emperor himself are among those described but Key Figures are not limited to the biggest and most obvious power brokers. Sometimes they are people who operate behind the scenes or simply individuals who have an outsized influence on events due to circumstances beyond their control. Use Key Figures as Allies, encounters, patrons, Contacts and Enemies. They might be people who fade into the background, influencing events and affecting outcomes in secret, eventually making a dramatic appearance and becoming key allies or nemeses of the Travellers. This category also includes historical figures who have left their mark and whose presence still resonates in the region long after they have passed on.



Game Changers: The march of history is often difficult to predict. Unexpected developments can change the course of events. The sack of Rome, the Norman Invasion and the advent of the atomic bomb were historical Game Changers, events that altered the course of history. In the volatile Glorious Empire, there are several things that can alter its outcome. Some of these are obvious and some are happening behind the scenes. Game Changers can cause a surprising turn of events or be the source of an adventure or campaign. A doomsday weapon, a hidden fleet or an unknown Ancients device are all Game Changers that can disrupt the flow of events and turn them on their heads. Travellers might find themselves in a position to prevent Game Changers from happening or – in some cases – to make sure that they do.

These tools are provided throughout the *Glorious Empire* and intended to serve as hooks for an adventure or campaign. Referees may use them as they wish, alter them or invent their own. They are presented for the Referee's use to help guide things or provide additional excitement in this chaotic and unpredictable place.

In addition to the more unique aspects of this sourcebook, there are chapters detailing the history, worlds, culture, military and, of course, equipment and starships unique to the Glorious Empire. These sections are initially intended for the Referee as a primer, an introduction to this volatile place; however as the Travellers delve deeper, they will discover secrets and surprises contained within. The Glorious Empire is very much a closed society. Entering its space is like travelling into a forbidden land, a place few offworlders have seen and lived to tell the tale. While it is not easy to close off a region of space and shun the outside universe, the Empire has done its best to do exactly that.

In spite of efforts to protect it from outside influences and incursions, the Glorious Empire is on the verge of collapse. How this happens and what comes next should largely depend on the actions of the Travellers. This is an opportunity to literally change the map. The information presented herein is designed to give a Referee and an intrepid group of Travellers all the information needed to create a vibrant and exciting story in which history unfolds before them. Whilst the possibilities are endless, this sourcebook hints at several possible campaign paths and outcomes. After becoming familiar with the region, its history and the current state of affairs, the Referee should proceed to Glorious Empire Campaigns on page 103. This chapter describes four divergent approaches in detail, each of which changes the map, leaving something entirely different in its wake.

CONVENTIONS

This sourcebook provides history, background information, starship and equipment designs, and animal encounters that Travellers may experience on the worlds of the Glorious Empire and those that surround it. To fully convey the alien aspect of this very foreign and isolated culture, Aslan words are used when practical. The intention is to fully immerse the Referee and Travellers into the universe of the Aslan and, in particular, the aggressive and steadfast culture of their cousins in the Glorious Empire.

Dates are given in Hierate *ftahea* (the Aslan 'year', about 320 standard human days) with the Imperial year in parentheses. Words for Aslan family and social units are given in Trokh, the language of the Aslan. An *ekho* refers to an Aslan family, an *ahriy* is a pride or group of

families and a *huiha* is a clan or a group of prides. Other Trokh words are also used when appropriate, especially if they have no comparable Galanglic term. For example, *ihatei* refers to groups of young male Aslan who settle or invade new lands.

Trokh words are shown in italics to differentiate them from the otherwise Galanglic text of the sourcebook. Proper nouns in the Aslan language are not in italics; for example, the names of historical figures or places. For reference purposes, all Trokh words presented in this book and how to pronounce them are defined in the Glossary of Aslan Words and Terms on page 159.

THE SLAVERY ISSUE

"Slavery diminishes all involved. It strips the slave of his dignity and freedom, and deprives the master of his sophontarianism."

— Yuleihehar,
epic poet laureate of clan Hlyueawi

"I have found that, to make a contented slave, it is necessary to make a thoughtless one. It is necessary to darken his moral and mental vision, and, as far as possible, to annihilate the power of reason. He must be able to detect no inconsistencies in slavery; he must be made to feel that slavery is right; and he can be brought to that only when he ceased to be a man."

— Frederick Douglass,
Terran orator, writer and statesman

Incorporating slavery into a game universe is a tricky business, especially if the Travellers are cast in the role of slave owner. Slavery is a despicable enterprise and this sourcebook does not seek to romanticise or endorse its practice in any way, shape or form. The unfortunate reality is that slavery has existed throughout human history and continues to do so even in supposedly civilised countries. This setting purports to examine the phenomenon from the perspective of an alien species that has subjugated billions of humans.

Slavery is illegal in the Third Imperium and the Aslan Hierate, considered to be a relic of each species' barbaric past. However, there are other species and polities that practice one form of slavery or another. The Vargr have been both victims and practitioners of slavery. The K'kree actively enslave and exterminate other species within the Two Thousand Worlds. The practice of slavery by the Glorious Empire may be more visceral because it is Humaniti who is enslaved. It invokes dark imagery and feelings from our own history when we imagine humans as chattel slaves, even if the perpetrators in this case are aliens.



It is beyond the ability of this book to influence how individual Referees portray slavery in the Glorious Empire or anywhere else in Charted Space for that matter. In fact, it does not need to. The immorality of slavery and the ways in which it debases both its victims and perpetrators are patently obvious. The slave is deprived of freedom and dignity, and often subjected to horrific forms of cruelty and torture. The master arbitrarily sets themselves above their fellow sophonts and fails to exercise their innate capacity for empathy.

Historians attribute the practice of slavery as a key component in the fall of empires. It stifles economies, contributes to moral turpitude and indolence, and ultimately reduces innovation and prosperity. This book attempts to portray a crumbling interstellar empire that is in very large part failing due to its practice of slavery.

There are many ways to incorporate the material in this book into a campaign setting. The Travellers might be Hierate Aslan fighting to destroy the Glorious Empire. They might be human slaves who escape from the Empire or the foreign freedom fighters who come to their aid. They might also take the part of Glorious Empire Aslan themselves. An Aslan Traveller with TER or SOC 6+ will have slaves at his disposal. So the Travellers must ask themselves: Are they prepared to portray an alien who owns human slaves? This should be an uncomfortable exercise for even the boldest of Travellers but it might also be a learning experience. The portrayal of something so dark might encourage them to seek the light. Perhaps Aslan Travellers are progressive forces

within the Empire who seek to shed their dark history, free their slaves and re-join the interstellar community by ending the vile practice of slavery. Pitted against centuries of tradition and the will of the Empire's ruling clan poses a monumental challenge but such are the things of which great campaigns are made.

It may seem strange to moralise about slavery in a game in which the Travellers take the part of interstellar pirates, unscrupulous traders and war-fighting mercenaries, however the concept of slavery has a unique and dark place in human history. Myriad forms of slavery have been practised from the dawn of humankind to the present day. Exploring it in a roleplaying game poses many challenges and, through the lens of a dying alien empire, delves into a dark and controversial aspect of our own species' sordid history.

RECOMMENDED MATERIALS

In addition to the *Traveller Core Rulebook*, the Referee should have the *Pirates of Drinax* campaign set. The second book in this set, *The Trojan Reach*, contains a great deal of information about the Aslan, the Hierate, and how to create Aslan Travellers. *The Glorious Empire* presents some modifications to the Traveller creation rules contained therein. The third book in the set, *Ships of the Reach*, has an entire section on Aslan starships. Whilst the Glorious Empire has many of its own ship designs (see page 142), the majority of their ships are more or less identical to those found in Hierate space.

HISTORY OF THE GLORIOUS EMPIRE

Long before the Aslan crossed the Great Rift, the Tokouea'we clan were vassals of the Tralyeaeawi, a powerful member of the Tlaukuh, the governing body of 29 clans based on Kusyu. The homeworld of the Tokouea'we is uncertain since their origins post-date the Aslan diaspora. Their numbers were drawn from the diffuse populations of several worlds in the coreward Hlakhoi sector so it is virtually impossible to determine their exact system of origin. The Tokouea'we eventually established a base of operations on the world of Atuakhtea, from which they branched out to several neighbouring star systems.

The Tralyeaeawi sponsored the Tokouea'we as vassals with the intention of making them into a coreward foil to their rivals, the vaunted Yerlyaruiwo clan. The cosmopolitan Tralyeaeawi, known for their inclusiveness and acceptance of many alien species, had become interested in the Tokouea'we after learning about the clan's success in contacting and incorporating several minor races into Aslan society.

Over the ensuing centuries the Tralyeaeawi became somewhat less enthusiastic with their vassal as the Tokouea'we developed tendencies towards aggression and conflict. Like most clans, the Tokouea'we engaged in various forms of ritual warfare to resolve disputes. The practice of ritual warfare is designed to prevent widespread destruction and loss of life but the Tokouea'we became known for escalating conflicts one or two levels higher than would normally be warranted. For example, if a War of Assassins were appropriate, the Tokouea'we would push for a Strictly Limited War. If a Limited War were expected, they would strive for a Minor War and so on. Over time the Tokouea'we became quite skilful at warfare but only at the expense of good relations with their peers.

As Tokouea'we holdings grew, they eventually shed Tralyeaeawi vassalage, became independent and established themselves as a regional power. Their primary holdings included a number of Kusyu-prime worlds, upon which grazing animals and other creatures suitable for Aslan consumption were bred for trade across the coreward Hlakhoi and Ealiyasiyw sectors.

The Yerlyaruiwo had long suspected that the Tokouea'we were appointed by the hated Tralyeaeawi to oppose them and engaged in aggressive tactics

against the Tokouea'we, the most damaging of which were blockades and embargoes that prevented the Tokouea'we from extending their reach. Forced to abandon many of their most valuable worlds, the Tokouea'we retreated to some of their lesser holdings in the Wahtoikoeakh subsector of the Riftspan Reaches. The clan became hardened by its losses and began to show some of the merciless traits that would one day make them infamous. In Wahtoikoeakh, they started indenturing outcast and minor alien race populations that had once willingly supplied labour to them.

THE CULTURAL PURGE

After the Grand Conclave was held in 2304 (-63 Imperial) and its principles were adopted by the Tlaukuh, the Yerlyaruiwo prosecuted the Tokouea'we for the forbidden practice of slavery and gratuitous use of force in ritualised warfare. One could argue that Tokouea'we labour practices resembled slavery but in most cases, they were more similar to serfdom at this point. The actual practice of slavery would not be practised by the Tokouea'we for centuries, long after they had crossed the Great Rift and established themselves in the Trojan Reach. However, the Tokouea'we tendency to escalate to more destructive levels of ritualised warfare continued to rankle the Yerlyaruiwo and other clans.

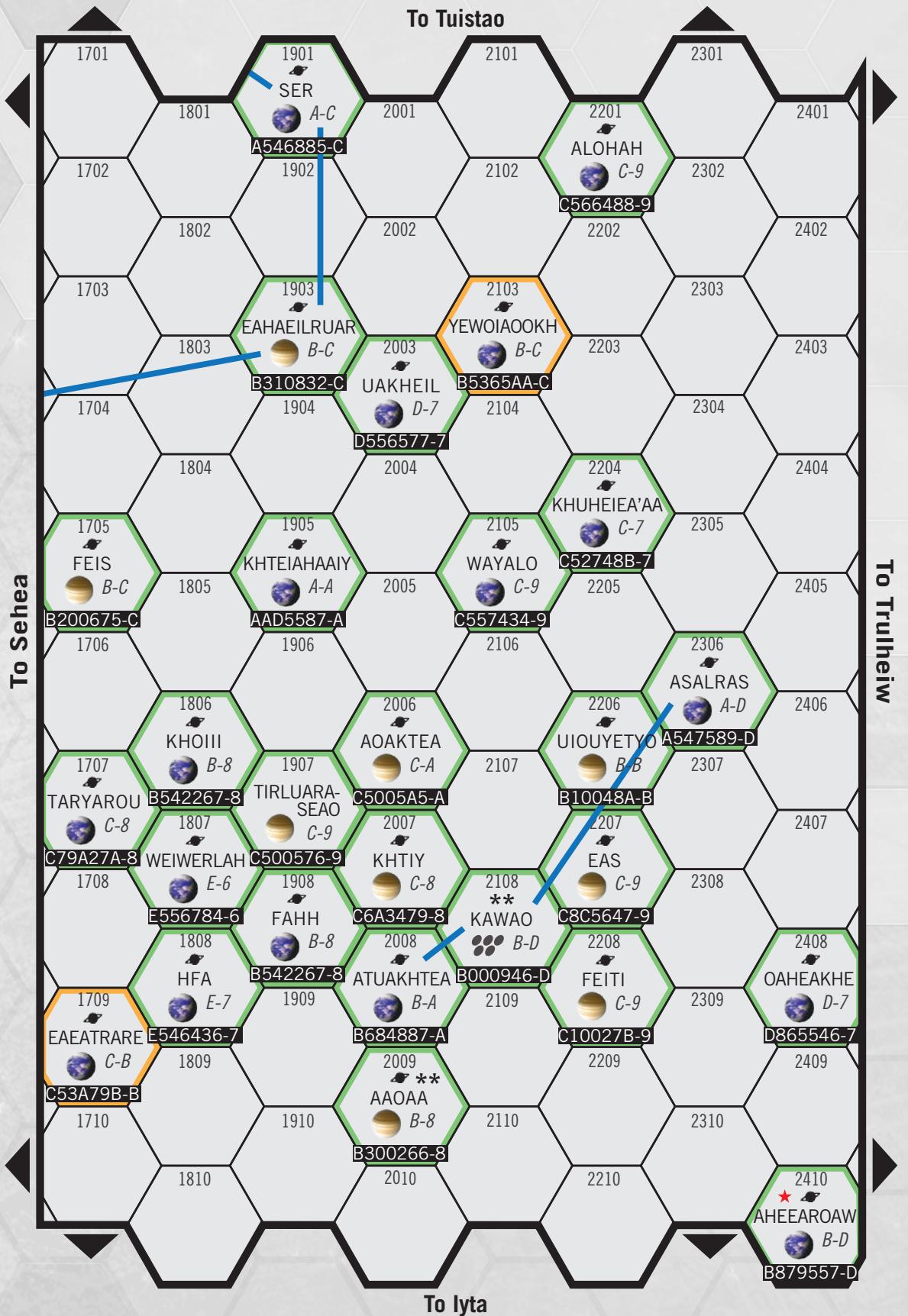
As the *Uwaralyekose* (Cultural Purge) got under way, the Tokouea'we found themselves disenfranchised of the worlds and trade routes they had come to depend on for wealth and prosperity. Despite identifying as devout *khiraokhaor'ya* – or traditionalists – the Tokouea'we found themselves firmly cast among the *tsekho*, the ‘progressive’ faction. The Cultural Purge brought about an extreme reversal of fortune for the Tokouea'we. Just as they had been about to petition for membership in the Tlaukuh, they fell from grace. Historians theorise that had they not arrogantly cast aside Tralyeaeawi vassalage, none of this would have come to pass. It would have been unlikely for the Yerlyaruiwo to engage in conflict with a Tralyeaeawi vassal given the political climate of the era.

The Tokouea'we were a proud and independent clan and refused to relent to the Yerlyaruiwo. They challenged their much larger and more powerful rival to bouts of

C

Hlakhoi

YUAOEITREAKH SUBSECTOR



Gas Giant

B-6 Starport Class & Tech Level

★ Other Naval/Tlauku Base

** Corsair/Clan/Embassy

Secure System

Planet (dry)

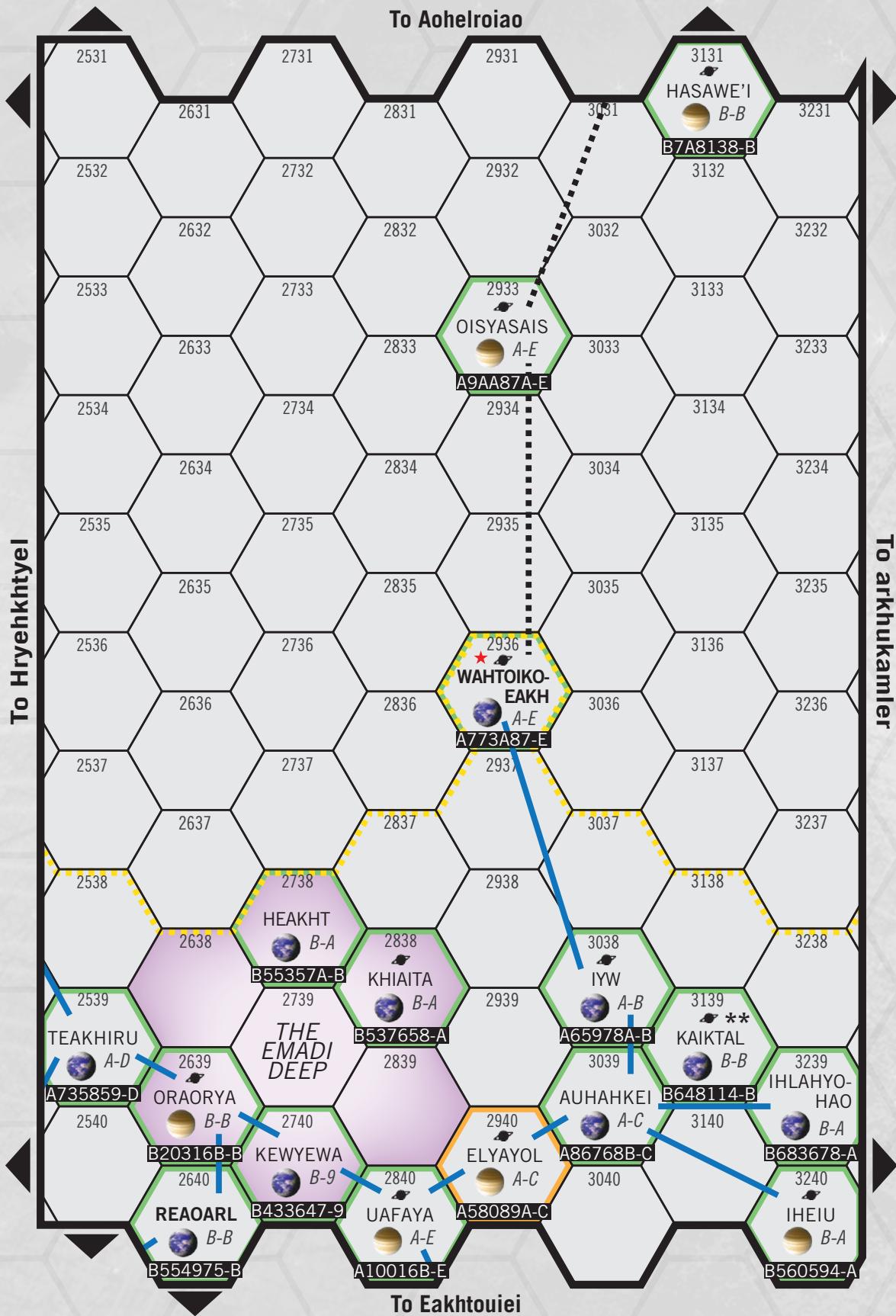
Planet (water present)

Asteroid Belt

Trade Route



WAHTOKOEAKH SUBSECTOR



Gas Giant

B-6 Starport Class & Tech Level

★ Other Naval/Tlauku Base

** Corsair/Clan/Embassy

Secure System

Amber Zone

Aslan Hierate

Planet (dry)

Planet (water present)

Trade Route

Jump 5 Route

ritualised warfare, usually finding themselves on the losing side. Undeterred, the Tokouea'we continued to fight even as they lost hard-fought territorial gains to the Yerlyaruwiwo and their vassals. It soon became clear that the Tokouea'we would have to leave their ancestral worlds or face extinction at the hands of the *khiraokhaor'ya*.

CROSSING THE GREAT RIFT

The dawn of trans-Rift travel had begun over a millennium before the events of the Cultural Purge. Most expeditions across the Great Rift were typical of Aslan culture: New lands were sought by *i hatei* and the wild, unsettled star systems to coreward beckoned them. The early immigrants to cross the jump-5 route were explorers and adventurers who left the relatively safe confines of the Hierate for the mostly uninhabited worlds of the Iyoihiuakh (Riftspan Reaches), Weasuirlaoa (Touchstone) and Hlairloahaurl (Trojan Reach) sectors. A thousand years later the jump-5 route had become an escape route for *tsekho* clans fleeing the *Uwaralyekose*.

The majority of the Tokouea'we were resistant to the idea of fleeing the Hierate. Most preferred a doomed – if honourable – fight to the bitter end. Thus, it was a momentous event in 2362 Aslan (20 Imperial) when the leading *ahriya* of the clan convinced the *Tokouea'weko* to divest the clan of its holdings in the Hlakhoi sector and prepare for a mass exodus across the Great Rift. The reasons for this about-face are complex but the primary cause is presumed to be a ‘reframing’ of the narrative by cadres of females from the leading *ahriya*. By cultivating a narrative in which the Tokouea'we would essentially *fight* their way out of the Hierate, across the Great Rift and into the pristine lands of the Trojan Reach, the *ahriya* were able to convince the *Tokouea'weko* that such a journey would be honourable and worthwhile. The Tokouea'we were among the first clans to flee the Cultural Purge for the trans-Rift colonies.

Transporting an entire multi-world clan across the Great Rift was a monumental undertaking and required the possession of a large fleet of transports and access to additional resources from other clans. The Tokouea'we had many ships but found themselves blocked by Yerlyaruwiwo-led factions when it came to securing the necessary transports. Their problems were compounded by the fact that a great deal of available resources was being consumed by the Esuaheakkahryoyulr clan who were also fleeing *khiraokhaor'ya* persecution at the time.

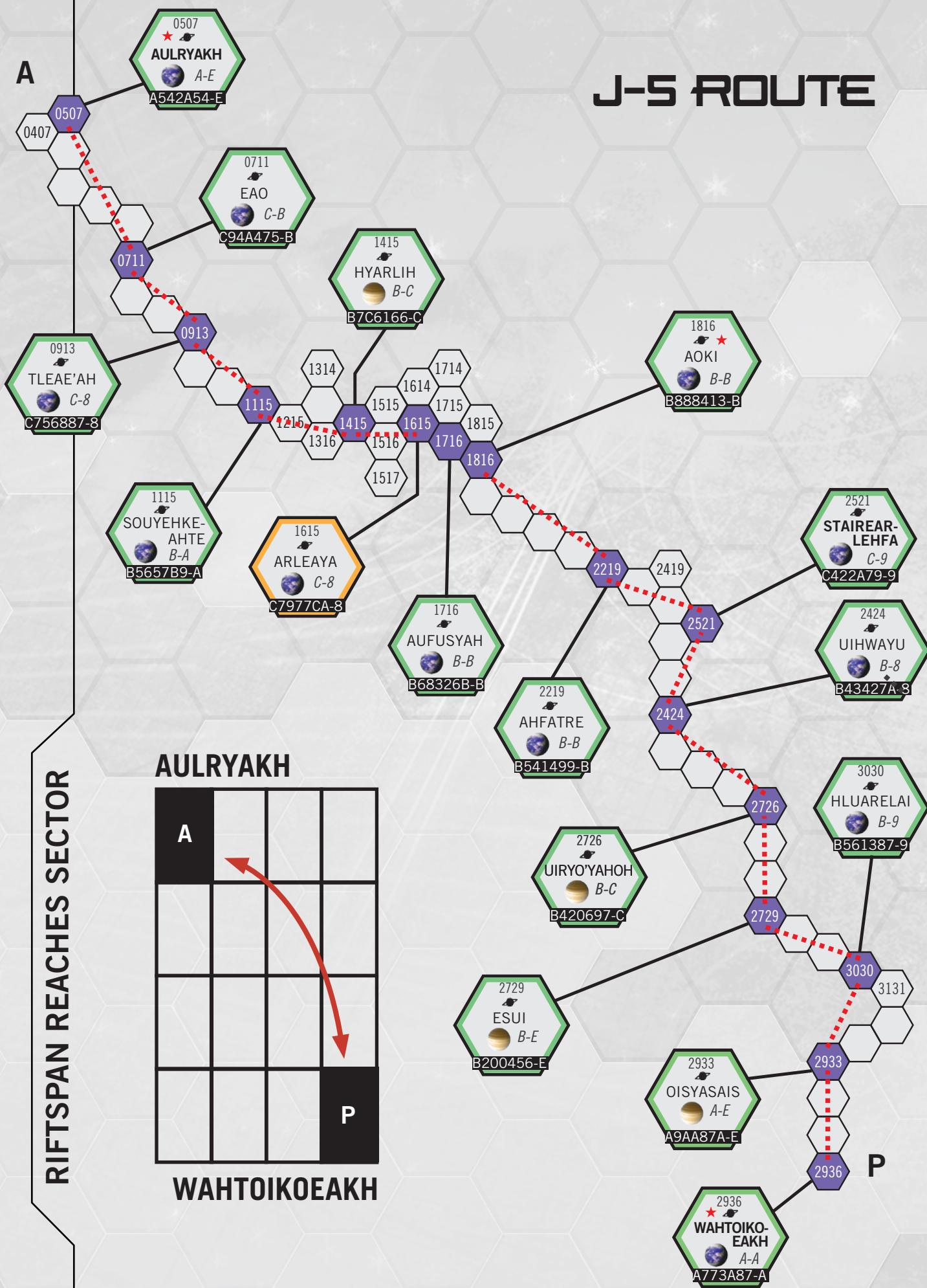
Their saving graces were twofold. Firstly, the Tokouea'we proved to be wily under pursuit, leveraging their intimate knowledge of the region and skill at using the Emadi

Deep – a jumpspace anomaly on the coreward edge of the Hierate – to befuddle and waylay their pursuers. Tokouea'we astrogators were adept at traversing the Emadi Deep with minimal effect on their transit times. It is difficult to translate the Trokh term for the technique but ‘Surfing the Emadi’ is a reasonable facsimile. Their pursuers, inexperienced with the Emadi, were less fortunate, losing dozens of ships to the deep’s jump-suppressing forces and ultimately being forced to navigate around the region. The delay and loss of ships gave the Tokouea'we ample time to escape. Secondly, the Tokouea'we established a mutually beneficial arrangement with the Wahtoi. Among the first clans to cross the Rift, the Wahtoi were known for technological innovation and exploration; however, they were notoriously bad at fighting. In return for assistance crossing the Rift, the Tokouea'we offered to provide much-needed military assistance to help the Wahtoi secure their trans-Rift holdings. The Wahtoi provided the Tokouea'we with technology, transportation and several squadrons of jump-4 couriers that became a staple of the Tokouea'we fleet.

During the crossing, the Tokouea'we found themselves frequently at odds with the feckless Esuaheakkahryoyulr, whom they swore to destroy. Both clans were ravenous consumers of the limited transportation resources available and repeatedly found themselves opposed to one another as they worked their way across the Riftspan Reaches and Trojan Reach. The crossing was a perilous endeavour for both clans. The *khiraokhaor'ya* had become skilled at hunting down, ferreting out and destroying the *tsekho*. Fleeing clans were forced to do battle with the *khiraokhaor'ya* as they navigated the narrow channel of the jump-5 route. It was like trying to cross a desert, through which the only passage was a narrow canyon with a single pathway running through it. There were few places to rest or hide so the only recourse was to get through the region as quickly and efficiently as possible, fighting a running battle as they went. The Tokouea'we exacerbated the situation by engaging in combat with not only the *khiraokhaor'ya* but by the Esuaheakkahryoyulr. The net effect was a slower crossing and a great deal more bloodshed than necessary.

The *khiraokhaor'ya* lost their will once the depleted clans made it across the Rift. The trans-Rift colonies were remote backwaters at the time and the forces of the Cultural Purge lacked the urge to chase down heretics once they had escaped the Hierate. After making the crossing, the *tsekho* clans scattered, making continued pursuit a difficult and expensive enterprise. Most of the *khiraokhaor'ya* turned tail and worked their way back to Hierate space, leaving their prey to their fates.

J-5 ROUTE



EKARLI OF THE KHYUITALR AHRIY

Females do not hold ‘command’ positions in Aslan culture but that does not stop them from manifesting and exerting power. Aslan females are responsible for the development and maintenance of technology and the management of business and trade. In effect, no grandiose plan thought up by an Aslan male can survive without careful planning and provisions established by females.

A female by the name of Ekarli, third wife of a space force commander from the Khyuitalr *ahriy*, is deemed to have been largely responsible for the decision to leave the Hierate for the trans-Rift colonies. Ekarli saw the impending fate of the Tokouea’we clan coming at them like a charging *aua* and determined that she would do whatever she could to avert such a disaster.

Ekarli was the highly successful manager of a multi-world livestock corporation and had borne her sire no fewer than six cubs over the course of her life. Ekarli’s productivity and contributions to *ahriy* and *huiha* were well known and respected. She had the ear of her husband, Oealaseah, who was highly regarded among the ranks of the Tokouea’we space officer corps. Ekarli used her lofty standing to influence the clan’s direction and guarantee its survival.

Ekarli devised the initial transactions to divest the Tokouea’we of their major holdings, thereby financing the exodus of the clan from the Hierate. She also employed clever misdirection techniques to prevent the *khiraothaar’ya* from figuring out what they were up to. Ekarli convinced Oealaseah to petition the *Tokouea’weko*, pointing out that the prosecution of the clan was dishonourable and had the stink of a Yerlyaruwiwo plot. Oealaseah’s argument was debated fiercely but ultimately accepted by the Tokouea’we *ahriya* and plans were hatched to escape the Hlakhoi sector.



The males may be the *head* of a clan but females are most certainly the neck and it is said that the head only sees what the neck allows it to turn and look upon.

Ekarli Khyuitalr is a highly regarded matriarch in the history of the Tokouea’we clan and her name is frequently invoked to convey female wisdom. ‘Do as Ekarli would do’ and ‘Pray for the wisdom of Ekarli’ are common refrains.

TRANS-RIFT CONSOLIDATION

The Tokouea'we respite was short-lived. Upon arrival in the Trojan Reach, they discovered that the majority of star systems in the rimward portion of the sector were already claimed by clans who had aligned themselves with the Ya'soisthea, a coalition that envisioned itself as the Tlaukuh of the new territories. Not wanting to invoke the ire of the Tlaukuh, the Ya'soisthea offered scant welcome to clans that were fleeing the *khiraokhaor'ya*. Clans like the Tokouea'we were compelled to drive ever coreward if they expected to re-establish any semblance of their former land holdings.

The Tokouea'we and Esuaheakhahryoyulr were two such clans. They found themselves pitted against one another yet again as they strove coreward. The warlike Tokouea'we might have completely destroyed the Esuaheakhahryoyulr if not for the Tokouea'we commitment to the Wahtoi, who were embroiled in conflicts of their own. Legions of Tokouea'we mercenaries were employed in the Wahtoi's various brushfire wars and territorial disputes. The Tokouea'we became a mobile force in service to the Wahtoi. They defended Wahtoi-controlled systems for decades, enabling the more technologically savvy clan to remain a player in the region. Historians postulate that the Wahtoi might have been reduced to a footnote in the history of the coreward migration if not for the military aid of the Tokouea'we.

Meanwhile, the Tokouea'we grew in size and power despite lacking permanent land holdings. Whilst the Wahtoi – then at the height of their powers – offered the Tokouea'we vassalage, their offer was spurned. The Tokouea'we had walked that road before and they were not about to do it again. Their mercenary services took them far and wide but somehow the clan managed to retain its cultural identity and cohesiveness. They held fiefs on many Wahtoi worlds and began to establish rent agreements with other clans in return for mercenary service. Intermixing with the Wahtoi and other clans resulted in a great deal of growth. In less than a century, the Tokouea'we became one of the largest clans in the trans-Rift colonies despite having no permanent settlements of their own.

The Tokouea'we clan had the vague sense that it would one day find its promised land. It required several generations to devote themselves to this abstract notion, knowing full well that they would not see it in their lifetimes. They developed an almost religious fervour centred on the concept of a manifest destiny. The Tokouea'we, guided by a variant concept of *fteir*, lived out their lives as ascetic warriors. Females managed

mercenary companies and investment firms that served the clan's purposes while males devoted themselves to the practice of warfare.

The advancement of the Tokouea'we clan deeper into the Reach was hindered by its commitments but also lent them purpose. The Tokouea'we were a touchy and violent clan whose inner fire burned with contempt for anyone who stood in their path. The established clans of the Ya'soisthea might very well have extinguished that fire if not for the ameliorating presence of the Wahtoi. As the dust settled, the Wahtoi entrenched themselves in the rimward trans-Rift colonies and their need for the Tokouea'we declined. Having never officially established themselves as a vassal to the Wahtoi, the split between the two clans was inevitable.

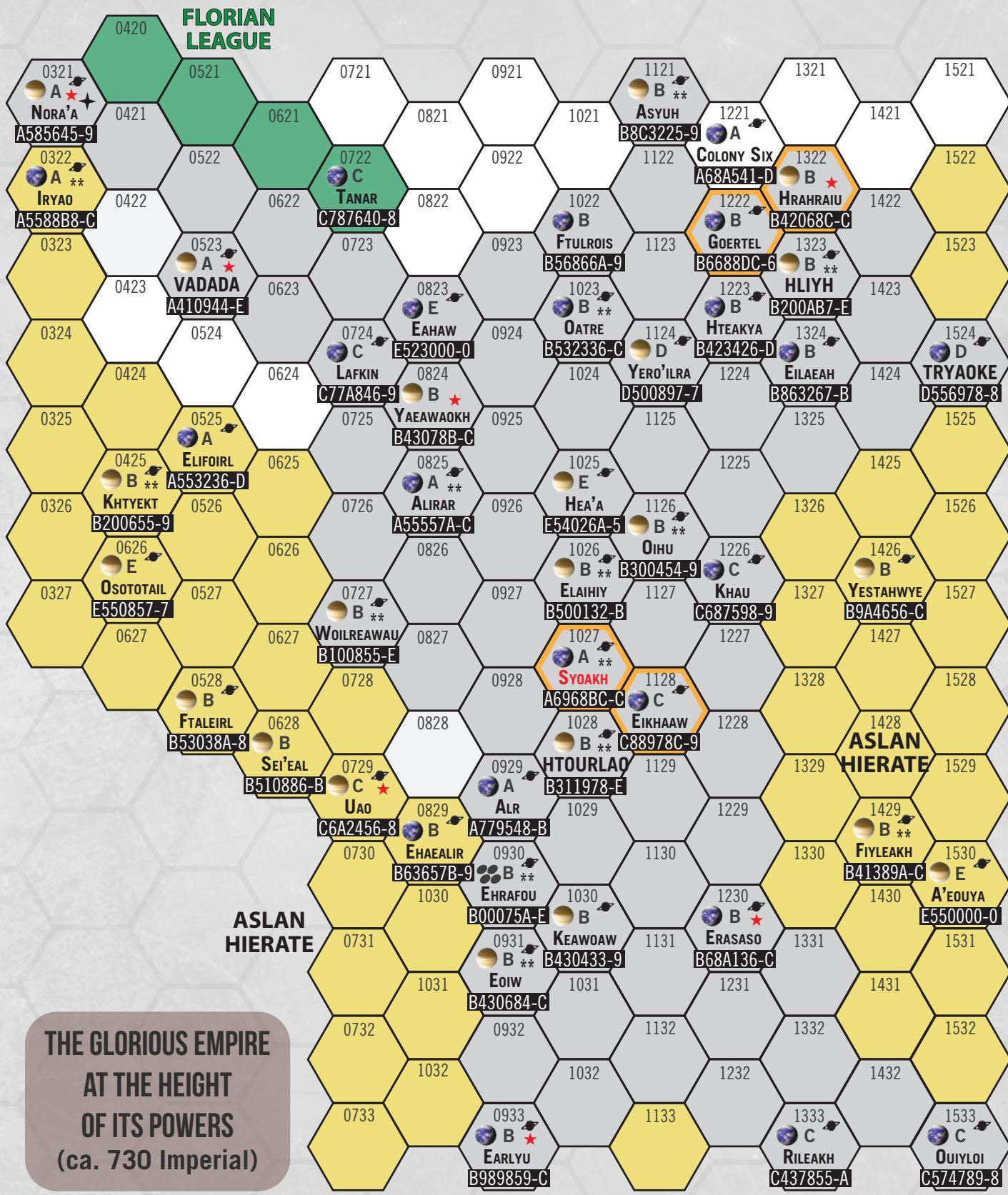
WORLD OF THE MOST GLORIOUS EMPIRE OF HONOURABLE WARRIORS

Enriched by over a century of service as a mercenary army, the Tokouea'we made their way into the Silraaihe and Goertel subsectors of the Trojan Reach. There were few permanent settlements in the coreward portion of Silraaihe, giving the clan an opportunity to perform a detailed survey of the region with the intention of selecting a new homeworld.

In 2840 Aslan (406 Imperial) with great triumph the Tokouea'we discovered and laid claim to the world that would become their capital. One of their jump-4 couriers made the last of several coreward jumps from the Erasaso system to the coordinates of a star system that was known to have no gas giants but did have a bounty of terrestrial worlds that were thought to be rich in resources. The Tokouea'we settled the system and named their new home Syoakhkhaokhirtlaekhhtahu, 'World of the Most Glorious Empire of Honourable Warriors'. The name was a mouthful, even by Trokh standards, and was quickly reduced in most circles to simply Syoakh or 'Glorious Empire'.

Whilst Syoakh was not exactly a 'Kusyu Prime' world, it was habitable and would make a fine homeworld for the resurgent Tokouea'we. At the time of their arrival, Syoakh was only inhabited by a few Chirper habitations whom the Tokouea'we subjugated and put to work in the mines of the system's many planets.

Within a decade, the Tokouea'we branched out to neighbouring star systems where they found the remnants of several human colonies among the former



worlds of the long-dead Sindalian Empire. These primitive and isolated societies were easy pickings for the Tokouea'we, who enslaved their populations and made the worlds their own. Five centuries after enduring the ignominy of being dubiously branded as slavers, the Tokouea'we brazenly and deliberately embraced the practice. They incorporated the humans into their society and put them to work, tending their livestock, growing crops, mining for industrial and precious metals and serving in the manors of the nobility.

In the following century, the Tokouea'we expanded in all directions from Syoakh, annexing and conquering star systems at a blistering pace. By 2958 Aslan (510 Imperial), they had conquered every world from Keawoaw to Asyuh and began to make plans for a grand territorial expansion. During a century of expansion and consolidation, the Tokouea'we discovered that an old enemy had settled in their midst; the Esuaheakhahryoyulr had occupied all the worlds of what would one day become known as the Hliyh Chain. The 500-year-old feud was restarted by the Tokouea'we with renewed vigour. They defeated their old foes, conquering all worlds in their possession within a few decades, forcing the survivors to flee the Hierate. The Esuaheakhahryoyulr made their way into the reluctant arms of the Imperium who allowed them to settle the Hradus system.

Basking in the glow of victory over the Esuaheakhahryoyulr, the Tokouea'we conquered more star systems to rimward. Most of these worlds were taken from *i hatei*, many of whom were second sons of the Ya'soithea and Tlaukuh clans. The *i hatei* were deported to the worlds from whence they came. Those who put up resistance were defeated in battle and became the first Aslan slaves taken by the Empire. Most were eventually ransomed back to their parent clans, which stoked the ire of the Hierate.

Despite this slate of victories, the Tokouea'we obsession with the Esuaheakhahryoyulr had prevented them from securing many sparsely populated systems in the Nora'a subsector. While the Empire was busy committing the bulk of its forces against the Esuaheakhahryoyulr in Goertel, they left their spinward flank perilously underdefended and lost six star systems to Hierate clans, most notably Souftea to the small Arhiyao clan. However, they did manage to maintain their hold on Woilreawau, Yaeawaokh and Eahaw, creating a buffer zone against further incursions. In addition, for the first time in its history, the Tokouea'we conquered a system outside the Aslan sphere when they conquered Lafkin from the Florian League.

Having settled old grievances and consolidated power, the Tokouea'we sent emissaries to the Ya'soithea, championing the idea of making it the governing body of the trans-Rift colonies. The Tokouea'we envisioned the Ya'soithea becoming a new Tlaukuh that would break with the old Hierate completely, a place where new interpretations of *fteir* could flourish. With their military might and recent conquests, the Tokouea'we had become a powerful clan and their voice carried a great deal of weight in the region.

The Tokouea'we did not anticipate how eagerly the Tlaukuh supported the idea. Even in the far-flung trans-Rift colonies, the Tlaukuh was able to exercise considerable influence. The Ya'soithea, they said, must be given a certain degree of independence, as the distances were simply too great for the Tlaukuh to affect the region's affairs day-to-day. Nevertheless, the Tlaukuh belief in Aslan cultural purity held that all *fteirle* must be united. To the present day, the two dreams live uncomfortably side-by-side. Neither has completely absolved itself of the other. The independence of the Ya'soithea is unquestioned but the Tlaukuh wield considerable influence.

Tlaukuh interference eventually became more than the Tokouea'we could bear. The Tokouea'we had dreamt of dominating the Ya'soithea and leading the trans-Rift Aslan to new heights. Two centuries prior, on 2810 Aslan (380 Imperial), the Hierate had signed the Peace of Ftahalr, ending the Border Wars with the Imperium. This treaty, coupled with the growing power of the Tlaukuh in the trans-Rift colonies created ambiguity in the Aslan expansion. The treaty was signed in the remote realms of the old Hierate but many of the same clans were present in the trans-Rift colonies. Whilst technically the Hierate does not dictate to clans what they can or cannot do, influence guides policy more often than not and *fteir* remains its guiding principle. The clans of the Ya'soithea may or may not have intended to continue the coreward expansion but the Peace of Ftahalr and the growing influence of the Tlaukuh prevented them from invading human space... for the time being.

Their grandiose plans for the Ya'soithea dashed to the wind, the Tokouea'we split with the Hierate on 090-3118 Aslan (650 Imperial), declaring their worlds to be the Glorious Empire, an Aslan separatist state. Led by the Yerlyaruiwo, the Hierate immediately declared war on them. They decreed that an example must be made of the Glorious Empire, one which would resonate with all Aslan for eternity.

The period following the declaration was indeed 'glorious' for the Tokouea'we. They were at the peak of their powers and had a significant amount of momentum

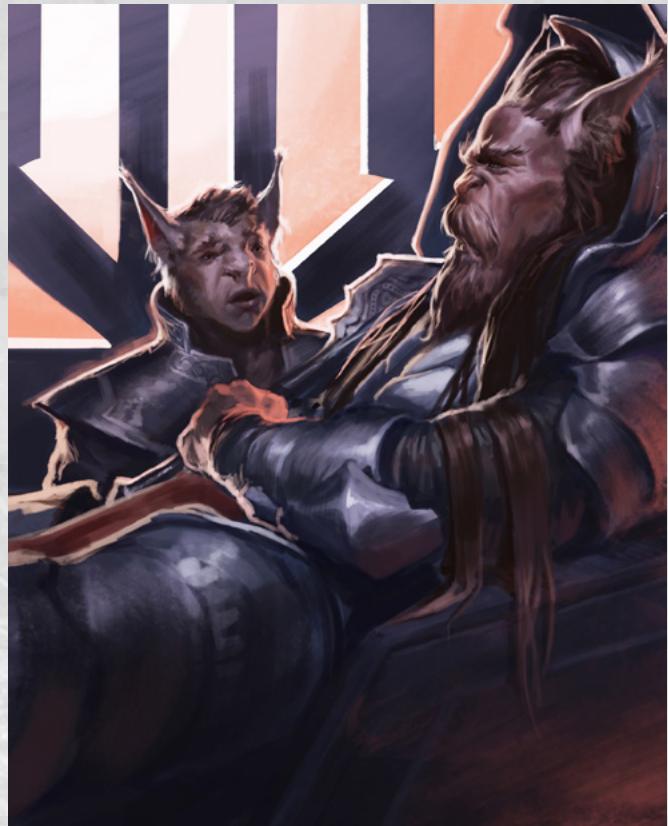
THE REGENT AND THE EMPEROR

The narrative of history is often told by those who would glorify events to their own ends. Future generations are emboldened by tales of their forefathers' greatness and the wonder of their accomplishments. The power of myth runs strong in Aslan culture with its adherence to *fteir* and ancestor worship. However, myth often diverges from reality. Such was the case with the Glorious Empire's regent and first emperor.

The tale told today is of the eternal glory and infallibility of the Imperial line. However, the Glorious Empire did not even have an emperor until decades after its formation. The selection of an emperor should have been as simple as appointing Aeao, the clan lord of the Tokouea'we in the Aslan year 3118 (640 Imperial) but an untimely controversy had made Aeao's appointment problematic. Leaders from the most powerful *ahriya* claimed that Aeao had violated *fteir* with a number of transgressions. Aeao would be allowed to defend his honour in a War of Champions, during which his duellist lost to the champion of the Khtoiyoiai *ahriy*. Shortly thereafter, the Khtoiyoiai were also challenged and their duellist lost to the champion of the Fuiaiyei *ahriy*. Despite the win, the Fuiaiyei were politically unpopular and lacked support for an ascension to the throne.

After a great deal of political infighting, the lords of the top eight *ahriy* selected Kheraeya, a decorated military leader and honoured *earleatras*, as regent to the throne. The regent was empowered to select the Grand Emperor from among the ranks of the leading *ahriya*. In the meantime, the regent would serve as de facto emperor. Kheraeya was a great general and known to be a fair and impartial *earleatras* but disinclined towards politics. In addition, he had neither the support nor the bloodline to make a viable bid for the throne himself. However, Kheraeya's string of victories and honourable career made him the perfect stand-in until the leading *ahriya* could get their affairs in order and present an appropriate candidate.

Over the next several decades, Kheraeya proved to be more adept at politics than he initially let on. He deftly manoeuvred and manipulated the *ahriya*, repeatedly delaying the selection process. Meanwhile, he proved to be an invaluable leader, coordinating the continued expansion of the Glorious Empire. His generals won war after war, extending their reach well beyond the Empire's original borders. The loss of the Nora'a colonies was soon forgotten amid the wash of newly conquered star systems.



The middle ranks of Empire society began to clamour for Kheraeya to take the throne but the leading *ahriya* blocked the move, citing several obscure tenets of *fteir* and thereby kept the throne in play. Kheraeya's reproductive fortunes betrayed him as well, giving him a plethora of daughters and only one son, Wuasiy, who was tragically killed in battle defending the Ouiyloi system from an *ibatei* incursion. Without a male heir, Kheraeya's ascension to the throne became a dubious proposition at best.

On his deathbed after four decades of glorious leadership, the regent declared Auii, lord of the Khileaa *ahriy*, to become Grand Emperor. The selection was a curious one given Auii's lack of distinction among the candidates but the line did manage to last nearly a century before the last of the Khileaa was unthrone by the Earatokouea'we *ahriy* whose champion defeated that of the standing emperor in trial by combat. The Earatokouea'we have been in power for nearly 300 years, culminating with Grand Emperor Krial in modern times.

from recent conquests. Thanks to a long association with the Wahtoi and more recent technological exchanges with the Ekhoaoiarl Corporation of the Hkakh system, the Glorious Empire had the highest average Tech Level in the coreward expanses of Aslan space. The practice of slavery, which has a deleterious effect over time, had only just begun to set in. The Hierate clans began to realise that the Empire posed a significant threat. Coupled with the growing internal pressure of massing *i hatei* forces, the clans knew that the Empire would have to be dealt with sooner or later.

A TARNISHED GOLDEN AGE

In an effort to secure its spinward border, the Empire invaded Vadada and Nora'a in 3209 Aslan (730 Imperial). The fall of Nora'a marked the apex of the Glorious Empire's conquests, raising the total star systems under its control to 32. The Empire maintained these borders for 42 years, threatening to expand even further from time-to-time but opting to fortify what it had instead. They lost only three worlds over the course of the next three centuries. In 3256 Aslan (772 Imperial), Earlyu was lost to an unusually large *i hatei* invasion sponsored by the Tlaukuh's Khaukheairl clan. Nora'a and Vadada were quickly reclaimed by the Florian League in 3321 (830 Imperial), although the Empire arguably never really held Vadada, having merely occupied several of its outer system planets. All three losses were written off as anomalies, unimportant in the grand scheme of things. The Empire continued to fortify its remaining 29 worlds, fending off attack after attack by *i hatei* and Hierate forces for more than a century.

The Glorious Empire endured a number of setbacks during this era. As its reach was extended and the military became preoccupied with securing newly conquered worlds, slave revolts and attempts at clan reform became commonplace within its borders.

The worst of the revolts occurred on Yero'ilra – where labour conditions and the hazardous environment stirred dissent among the slave population – and on Eikhaaw, whose human population had never been fully subjugated by its Aslan overlords. Each revolt was brutally put down. The Empire became more insular, blaming the influence of outsiders for the unrest and malaise that had begun to set in.

Meanwhile, many Tokouea'we *ahriya* had become frustrated by the Empire's conservatism and refusal to extend its reach. They revelled in the power of the military and wanted to use it to conquer poorly defended Aslan colonies in the Nora'a subsector. The *ahriya*

became divided between those who wanted to project imperial power and conservatives who wanted to cultivate the Empire's current holdings. These divisions resulted in a series of small civil wars that lasted from 3389 to 3458 (890 to 950 Imperial). During this era, the Empire ratcheted up counter-insurgency forces, declared martial law on more than half of its worlds and formally abolished vassal clans in an attempt to prevent future insurrections.

Despite the problems within its borders, this was a period of détente with the Hierate. Fruitless attempts were made by the Ya'soisthea to draw the Empire back into the fold. Ambassador Hraihourlholaurl, the Empire delegate to the Ya'soisthea, was a deft political operator. He would berate and castigate the clans of the Hierate for a while and then revert to more gentle rhetoric in an effort to quell the indignation he had stirred up. Hraihourlholaurl proposed alliances with various clans in order to create rivalries, sowing instability in the region. The Empire was a powerful potential ally and fledgling Hierate colonies took its offers seriously. These antics infuriated many of the clans but were effective at keeping the Hierate at bay.

Meanwhile, the Glorious Empire continued to spend heavily on its military. The nobility enjoyed the fruits of wealth and conquest whilst slave labour enabled them to build colossal public works; majestic temples, massive cities, sprawling orbitals, capital ships and feats of technology intended to serve as monuments to the glory and invincibility of the Empire.

The Empire's isolationism, arrogance and insistence on maintaining a slavery-based society hindered it from achieving its potential. Its internal problems prevented it from projecting power beyond its borders for over a century and all the while, the clans of the Hierate were advancing into Nora'a, Goertel and Silraaihe, settling worlds, building up forces, engaging in trade and commerce, and establishing allegiances that the Empire would be unable to break. The very things that made the Tokouea'we the most powerful clan of the trans-Rift colonies also prevented them from accomplishing loftier goals. When the opportunity arose for the Empire to become truly glorious, it receded from the interstellar community and dashed its chances of becoming anything more than a footnote in history.

UNREST IN THE HIERATE

Despite bold declarations that the Glorious Empire would be destroyed shortly after its inauguration, very little effort was made to eliminate it early on. The

Yerlyaruwiwo, who had the most face to lose by allowing the Empire to survive and prosper, were initially the only clan that expressed the will to take it down. What they lacked were the resources.

In the old Hierate, the Yerlyaruwiwo were the most powerful clan of the Tlaukhū; however, in the trans-Rift colonies, they had no more pull than any other clan. First, they attempted to wage war on the Empire by proxy, getting vassals and other clans to contribute forces to the effort. The Glorious Empire fleet balked at the paltry squadrons assembled on its borders and, in typical Tokouea'we fashion, refused all requests to settle disputes with ritualised warfare, insisting instead upon Open War. The Empire routed the ragtag flotillas, shaming their old rivals and lambasting them for leading so many of their unfortunate brethren to needless death in the cold wastes of space.

This was a time of expansion for many Hierate clans, who advanced heartily into the Trojan Reach and settled worlds by the dozen. There seemed to be more than enough land to go around and engaging in Open War with a superior opponent seemed like folly. Several half-hearted attempts to take on the Glorious Empire were made over the years but few had the teeth to go toe-to-toe with its superior forces. The Empire's technologically advanced military made short work of all comers. In addition, Empire spies were planted throughout neighbouring systems, where they fomented dissent, disseminated misinformation and did what they could to set the Hierate clans against each other. While such operations get little credit in most histories, they may well have been the single most effective tool that enabled the Empire to experience a 170-year period in which it lost no star systems.

Centuries later, when the Hierate finally got serious about eliminating the Empire, high-minded ideals and the sanctity of *fteir* were not its prime motivators; demographics and economics were.

Overpopulation – most notably in systems like Hreahrya and Irlaiw – began to present an internal threat that the Hierate could no longer overlook. They would soon be dealing with far worse problems than the Glorious Empire if they did not do something about the excessive number of restless young and landless males within Hierate space. In the past, the problem was solved by expanding ever outward with waves of *i hatei*. It took nearly a millennium for the Aslan to settle and consolidate power in the trans-Rift territories. Having finally abutted the Imperium, the clans could no longer expand coreward, lest they defy the dictates of the Peace of Ftahalr. Whilst many clans bristled at the

notion that they were limited by a document signed centuries ago and hundreds of parsecs away, few were willing to risk the ire of the signatory clans by breaking its tenets.

The Peace of Ftahalr was not the only impediment to expansion. Increasing trade with the Imperium had made many clans exorbitantly wealthy. The Ahroay'if – vassals of the Tlaiowaha – became the primary beneficiaries of the so-called 'Hierate Trade Route,' doubtless named by Imperials who saw the Hierate as a monolithic block instead of the loosely aligned feudal polity that it is. The Ahroay'if's New Horizon faction sublimated the desire for land by acquiring great riches instead. Whilst the Ahroay'if have done little to shepherd other clans along the same path, their model was nonetheless imitated. New shipping corporations began to pop up along the border, seeking access to Imperial markets and devising new routes into the Imperium and its neighbouring polities. Organic dustspice – difficult to come by in Hierate space – was desired above all else

BEGGING FOR MERCY

Over the course of history, the Glorious Empire continued to mercilessly raid human worlds throughout the Trojan Reach for slaves. From time-to-time, human diplomatic missions were sent to the Aslan Hierate to plead – and sometimes demand – that they intervene on the humans' behalf against their unruly cousins in the Empire. Ultimately there was little the Hierate could do. The Empire was too powerful to overcome, refused all efforts at diplomacy and besides, getting more than one clan to agree on a concerted plan of action on something that was seen as relatively trivial was a difficult proposition at best.

Human missions sent directly into the Glorious Empire from Caldos, Acis and the Senlis Foederate were never heard from again, their ships presumably captured or destroyed and their crews enslaved. In fact, no human world or polity had ever sent a successful mission into the Empire until exiles from Acis went to Yero'ilra to get help against Tyrian raiders.

Even now, as the Empire battles for its very existence, it continues to send slavers into human territory, relentlessly capturing more humans to fill its slave ranks.

but trade between the Aslan and humans had come to include an enormous and diverse array of goods and products. The trading clans benefitted from stability and the flow of *ihatei* into unincorporated space threatened their livelihood. Every parsec that the *ihatei* drew closer to Imperial space increased the perception that an invasion was coming. The trading clans did what they could to hinder the advance of the *ihatei* but the rising tide of immigrants ultimately became more than they could bear.

A conglomeration of the Ahroay'if and other trade-oriented clans began to support the notion of redirecting the *ihatei* towards the Glorious Empire, thus preventing their continued encroachment upon the Imperium. Consumption of the Empire's 29 remaining star systems by the *ihatei* would ultimately do little to solve the Aslan's long-term demographic problems but it could buy them time.

THE EAHAW CAMPAIGN

The insular and secretive nature of the Glorious Empire and its advanced counter-surveillance technology made it difficult for the Hierate to obtain useful intelligence. The Hierate believed that the Empire was still a formidable foe; however, it seemed unlikely that, bereft of interstellar trade, it could maintain the quality and readiness of its fleet. The Hierate needed more information to be sure.

The intelligence-savvy Syoisuis clan planted assets in Empire space and discovered that defences were thin on its spinward flank. They shared this information with the Yerlyaruwiwo who in turn leaked it to the Florian League.

The Floriani acted quickly on the information, reconquering Lafkin in a series of overpowering strikes out of Vadada. The defeated Empire squadrons limped into the Eahaw Cluster where they were met by fleet elements from the Tralyeaeawi (the clan to whom the Tokouea've had been a vassal 1,000 years ago) and an amalgamation of Ya'soisthea clans. The Hierate flotilla routed the Empire, forcing them to cede Yadawao, Eahaw and Woilreawau over the course of 3599 Aslan (1072–73 Imperial). The Empire deployed squadrons from Syoakh in time to prevent the loss of Alirar but suffered high casualty rates under a persistent assault. To make matters worse, a rebellion arose on Goertel after Empire forces were withdrawn to defend Alirar. Goertel was liberated by its exiled navy, which had returned in force from Delta Theta to destroy the Aslan garrison.

The Eahaw Campaign proved that the Empire lacked the ability to defend itself on multiple fronts and gave the Hierate clans confidence that they could chip away at its borders.

OPEN WAR

Blistered by the loss of the Eahaw Cluster, the Empire reacted by spreading out its limited defences. Suffering from a dearth of intelligence, the Empire did not know where the next attack might come from and felt compelled to defend itself on all sides. The Admiralty withdrew dozens of squadrons from the Hliyh Chain in order to stave off expected attacks at Keawoaw and Eikhaaw and even deployed ships to remote Asyuh.

The Yerlyaruwiwo left the imminent battle for the Hliyh Chain in the capable hands of the Seieakh–Akatoiloh–We'okunir Triumvirate. This garrulous threesome of clans was known for its ability to cooperate and coordinate, having engaged in numerous joint ventures dating back to the days before the Aslan crossed the Great Rift. In the spirit of cooperation, the Triumvirate enlisted the aid of the Uuiikhtaiu and the Hrakoea clans, among others.

In a concerted effort, the clans assaulted Empire forces at Tryaoke in 3600 (mid-1074 Imperial). They met stiff resistance and found themselves fighting – of all things – a majority-human ground army. Millions of dog soldiers had been deployed to fight on the front lines of the largest battle between the Empire and Hierate clans to date. The dog soldiers, armed and armoured to TL12 standards, attacked the invaders in waves. They were massacred but inflicted hundreds of thousands of casualties in the process. Empire Aslan suffered comparatively few losses, allowing their human slaves to take the brunt of the assault. The difficulty of the Hierate's task was compounded by the fact that billions of non-combatant humans were present as well. The genetically engineered Tryaokean humans, the Empire's failed attempt to create a pliable and docile work force, wanted no part of the war and did the best they could to hide within their hovels while the war went on around them; even so, hundreds of thousands were inadvertently killed during the assault.

After months of fighting, the Empire lost Tryaoke, retreating to Hliyh to lick their wounds, taking as many of the dog soldiers with them as they could. Some were left to die, their exploding collars detonating when their officers dusted off without them. The lucky ones survived to be hauled into prisoner-of-war camps and would eventually be given amnesty and allowed to intermix with Tryaoke's native population.

The loss of Tryaoke emboldened the Hierate, who advanced into Hliyh, Eilaeah and Khau mere months after their victory at Tryaoke. It was a bridge too far. Expeditionary forces and probes into the Empire's defences were routed at Hliyh and rebuffed at Eilaeah but did manage to establish a landing zone on poorly defended Khau. While not the capital, Hliyh was the jewel of the Empire. It would take more than a few squadrons of destroyers – with crews who were still fatigued from the Battle of Tryaoke – to take a star system of such importance.

SOMEBODY ELSE'S WAR

After the fall of Tryaoke, the last thing the Glorious Empire expected to become involved in was a foreign war; however, when a delegation of exiled leaders from Acis came to Syoakh, they received an unexpected offer.

The Dustbelt had long suffered under the relentless pillaging of the Tyrian Lordships, whose primary occupation was plundering its neighbours. The Tyrians had ruined most of the worlds along the main, denying them the ability to get back on their collective feet centuries after the fall of the Sindalian Empire. Acis had fared better than most because, as an agricultural

world, Acis was relied upon by Tyr for its survival. Whilst Acis was allowed to sell a good deal of its products on the open market, Tyr kept a portion of it for themselves and an additional share to sell at larcenous rates to the starving worlds of the Outrim Void. At long last, the government of Acis grew tired of Tyrian extortion and attempted to throw off their tyranny. Unable to muster the necessary forces to do battle with Tyr, Acis was soundly defeated but several of its leaders escaped into exile in Delta Theta and Colony Six.

The exiles soon discovered they had left one crisis zone for another. Both systems were under constant attack by probing forces from the Glorious Empire. The humans of these systems were able to defend themselves from the incursions but the Acisan exiles witnessed first-hand the dogged determination of the Empire. Key leaders from the exile community formed a delegation and travelled into Empire space, making their way along the perilous isthmus of worlds with the intention of reaching Syoakh. They were interned at Yero'ilra, where they thought their mission might end in futility with the delegation captured and enslaved; however, the delegation's leader, Gadim Auolage, managed to arrange an audience with a high-ranking member of the Yetrai *ahriy* to plead his case. Auolage, who spoke passable Trokh, humbly requested assistance in the war against



Tyr. The leading males from the *ahriy* initially balked but an entrepreneurial female from the clan by the name of Ahfoisa, saw this as a business opportunity. Through her husband, Ahfoisa offered to send Glorious Empire warriors to the Dustbelt to serve as mercenaries. They would initially be paid in agriproducts and imported dustspice, the latter of which they would sell on the black market through the interface world of Keawoaw.

The Yetrai *ahriy* dispatched the best warriors it could muster who had not already been deployed elsewhere. Their first assignments were strike and commando tickets aimed at liberating Acis from Tyrian control and were astoundingly successful at dislodging the Tyrians. Aslan infantry are typically far better at fighting ground wars but the Empire had centuries of experience using their warriors as marines. They were adept at boarding, zero-g operations and orbital assault. The Tyrians were overwhelmed and within a year completely expelled from Acis.

Word travelled quickly among the star systems of the Dustbelt and Acis employed Empire mercenaries in countless battles, eventually taking the fight directly to Tyr itself. As more tickets were offered, new mercenary companies were formed and dispatched to the front. The initial battles in the Tyr system went poorly for the Aslan. Removing an entrenched foe from home ground is usually a difficult task but over time the Empire's mercenary forces overcame the obstacles and then routed and destroyed the Tyrian Lordships. Acis did not want to become embroiled in a long guerrilla war with their former oppressors, so retreated from the battle after effectively destroying the seat of government and leaving less than half of the system's orbitals and shipyards intact.

Glorious Empire mercenaries have maintained a presence in the Dustbelt ever since. Whilst Tyr was defeated by the mercenaries, they remain a potent threat and continue to raid neighbouring systems, albeit with considerably fewer ships. Meanwhile, the restored government of Acis wonders if they have opened a Pandora's Box by inviting the Glorious Empire to establish a presence. The Aslan are instinctively motivated to obtain land and their travels to the Dustbelt have shown them many vulnerable worlds that appear ripe for conquest.

BARBARIANS AT THE GATES

A great deal of infighting was stoked by the success of the mercenary forces. What might have been a cause célèbre in another era received a mixed response from the

Tokouea'we clan leaders. The *ahriya* serving on the front lines of the Hliyh Chain resented the fact that while they were shedding their blood to save the Empire, the Yetrai and other *ahriya* were off fighting foreign wars for money.

Meanwhile, *Ihatei* from numerous clans began to settle the uninhabited outback of worlds like Eoiw, Eilaeah, Hteakya, Hrahraiu and Oatre. The Empire did what it could to prevent this from happening, using orbital bombardment to destroy camps as they were formed. After a particularly large camp was destroyed on Eilaeah, the survivors spoke of atrocities committed by the Empire. These stories spread, giving the clans of the region a rallying point. The rich Ahroay'if and their masters, the Tlaiowaha, funded an immense arms build-up and the stage was set. No fewer than 30 clans assembled their warriors under united banners for what would become known as the Battle of the Hliyh Chain.

The following decade was a tumultuous one, with feints and probes into the Hrahraiu, Hliyh and Eilaeah systems. Hierate clans established footholds in each system, concentrating the bulk of their forces in Hliyh's outsystem worlds and gas-giant moons. The final war was devastating to both sides and the Empire committed so many fleet elements to battle that they left the capital at Syoakh and their industrial powerhouse at Htourlao dangerously thin on defences. The Hierate clans, led by the belligerent Hrakoea, mounted an ostensible final assault on Hliyh, threatening to destroy its magnificent orbital ring, which billions of inhabitants called home. Realising that their pinnacle achievement might very well be destroyed, they appealed for a Strictly Limited War, reducing the stakes from Open War. The Empire simply refused to allow their beautiful, slave-labour-built orbital to be reduced to ruins.

Deciding upon the rules of the engagement took nearly a month. The Empire was ultimately forced to accept a slight disadvantage in the battle, in which they would be allowed to fight with three fewer squadrons than their Hrakoea-led opponents. The Hierate expected it to be a cake walk but the Empire – emboldened by desperation – quickly drew even with the Hierate, destroying or disabling two squadrons in the first week. Their pace slowed in the following weeks but still they drew closer, evening the odds. In a battle fought in the shadows of the system's enormous gas giant, Lourlailao, the Hierate finally got its footing and turned the tables on the Empire, winning the war with a mere two able capital ships to spare. The Empire limped away from the engagement, bloodied, defeated and having lost its most valued star system.



Back in the Empire, slave revolts began to intensify in number and severity. Word that Hliyh had been lost emboldened them. On Yero'ilra, thousands of miners at the Ayekhe Chasm raided a weapons cache and rose up against the Aslan. On Eikhaaw, slaves who had managed to communicate with Hierate scouts, promised fealty in return for liberation. On Htourlao, human gladiators turned on their masters, resulting in several bloody massacres. The Empire brutally put down the revolts but the desire for emancipation could no longer be suppressed. Slave populations on most populated worlds seethed against their Aslan masters. They could see the end of the Empire coming and were eager to gain their long sought-after freedom.

The remainder of the Hliyh Chain fell in short order. Within a single decade, the Empire lost five key star systems. The Battle of the Hliyh Chain and the devastating losses incurred by the Empire changed the conflict forever. It became not an issue of *if* the Glorious Empire would fall but *when*.

In the following years, the Empire continued to lose star systems to the Hierate. Ouiyloi, Eoiw, Ehrafou and others were wrested from the its grasp. The veneer of Glorious Empire invulnerability had been lifted and the clans of the Hierate learned the measure of their foe. Open War is difficult but if hit where it hurts, an enemy will assent to ritualised warfare.

AFTERMATH

The Glorious Empire is looked upon by the Hierate as an aberration, a blemish that must be wiped from the face of the galaxy. A heretical splinter state like the Empire poses an existential threat to the Aslan. The only thing that binds the Aslan together is their shared concept of honour and the Empire threatens that unifying force. After the fall of Hliyh, the Hierate finally has the Empire right where they want them. The Hierate is on the verge of bringing the Empire to its knees, whereupon it can finally declare the end of the Uwaralyekose, the Cultural Purge that was started over 1,000 years ago.

EXPLORING THE GLORIOUS EMPIRE



Thirteen star systems remain in the Glorious Empire, the remnant of a once greater and more imposing interstellar polity. Its star systems are bristling with defences. Deep-site meson guns, particle weapons and missile batteries pose a persistent threat to invaders, while fast interceptors, frigates and capital ships vigilantly patrol the space between its worlds.

The Empire once occupied many more star systems in the region. The poorly defended Souftea Ring was ceded to an alliance of Hierate clans. Several Florian worlds were once under Empire control but were lost in retaliatory strikes. All of the worlds that the Empire once held in the Silraaihe subsector were lost over time to *i hatei* incursions. In recent years, the most painful losses of all occurred when the Empire lost the wealthy and prosperous Hliyh Chain after a series of disastrous wars.

Like a pebble dropped in a pond, the Glorious Empire's presence is felt in a series of concentric ripples. At the core is the Empire itself, a war-ravaged dystopian gaggle of worlds huddled around the capital at Syoakh and its industrial powerhouse, Htourlao. Extending outward are worlds that the Empire once held, many of which remain occupied by massive numbers of human slaves. Most of these worlds are in a state of post-war reconstruction. Their human populations have been emancipated and either assimilated into Aslan society or emigrated into human space. Beyond that are the worlds of the Outrim Void. Glorious Empire slavers roam these lawless star systems in search of new slaves to capture.

The overwhelming sense one feels when visiting the Glorious Empire and interacting with its people is one of fatalism. They see the end coming but can do little about it. The nobility is arrogant and intransigent to the point of self-destruction. The Tokouea'we – the ruling clan of the Empire – are infamous for being touchy and prone to conflict. Aslan typically practice ritual warfare to prevent widespread destruction and loss of life but the Tokouea'we have always escalated conflicts one or two levels higher than warranted. If a War of Assassins were called for, the Tokouea'we push for a Strictly Limited War. If a Limited War were expected, they strive for a Minor War and so on. The clan became adept at warfare and destruction, at the expense of good relations with its peers.

The news is always good in the Glorious Empire or at least it would seem so. Its fleet of jump-4 couriers flit from system-to-system carrying news from the front. If one were to believe the state-run media, the Empire is always just one victory away from turning the tide of the war. The 'heathen clans' of the Hierate are portrayed as devils who would burn the Empire to the ground and slaughter all of its citizens should they get the chance. The propaganda is backed by a broad media campaign, ubiquitous military forces and an invasive army of clan agents. The people are constantly reminded that there is only one clan – the Tokouea'we – and that if it should fall, everyone perishes.

The tide of propaganda tells the people that the Empire remains strong and dedicated to the defence of the Tokouea'we way of life. However, beneath all the parades, banners and festivals honouring the Empire's past glories and alleged bright future, there is a level of desperation and fear thick enough to cut with a dewclaw.

Slaves comprise perhaps a third of the Empire's population. The slaves in many ways emulate their Aslan masters; they pray to their ancestors, build simple shrines and carry out their lives with a version of *fteir* that suits their enslaved state. Whilst slaves in labour occupations often lead harsh and brief lives, those in servant, technical and military positions enjoy a degree of status. Many an Aslan *ekho* sees their slaves as an essential part of their family and protects them as they would their own children. An increasing number of slaves serve in the Glorious Empire military, albeit usually in expendable roles.

The Empire's recent string of losses has not been lost on the slave population who know that billions of their people have been freed from bondage. This has fomented a level of unrest not seen since the early days of Aslan annexation of their worlds. Beneath a subservient facade, many slaves simmer with a desire to gain freedom and join their sisters and brothers 'on the other side'.



FTEIR AND THE GLORIOUS EMPIRE

The Aslan Hierate comprises thousands of clans with competing goals and ambitions. They maintain unity due to *fteir*, the complex code of honour to which they subscribe. *Fteir* links the Aslan together by providing guiding principles for conflict resolution, social behaviour and – perhaps most importantly of all – it keeps this carnivorous predator-descended species from tearing itself apart.

It was simple enough to preserve a consistent definition of *fteir* when the Aslan were confined to their homeworld of Kusyu but once they discovered the jump drive and began spreading to other star systems, it became more difficult. As the Hierate grew, clans began to deviate from one another and *fteir* became more loosely defined. To remedy the situation, a Grand Conclave was called on Kusyu to establish a clear and well-defined baseline of traditional values. The Grand Conclave determined that without the unifying principles of *fteir*, disunity would eat away at the Hierate from the inside like a disease. Worse yet, it would make it easy for an external enemy to divide and conquer them.

The tenets of the Grand Conclave were adopted by the majority of the Tlauku – the 29 pre-eminent clans of the Aslan homeworld – who initiated the Uwaralyekose (Cultural Purge) to bring the clans back into line. Most

clans purged had clearly violated aspects of traditional Aslan culture. Clans experimented with matriarchal society, psionics, genetic engineering, technological transcendence and other heretical practices. These clans became known as the *tsekho* or ‘progressives’. The *tsekho* clans knew they were pushing the envelope, delving into realms of philosophy and politics that challenged the old ways and as the Aslan expanded into new territories, the *tsekho* believed they would guide their species to new heights of power and enlightenment. The Tlauku and other signatories to the Grand Conclave thought otherwise and were determined to rein them in.

During the Uwaralyekose, heretical clans were destroyed, brought back into line with traditional Aslan values or fled across the Great Rift. Among the first to make the crossing were the Tokouea’we, who eventually founded the Glorious Empire, and are not the only deviant clan to have survived to the present day. Whilst many of these clans get away with minor infractions and more liberal interpretations of *fteir*, only the Glorious Empire outwardly defies its traditional tenets.

THE COST OF POMP AND GRANDEUR

As an oppressive and insecure state, the Glorious Empire has sought to justify its existence with the creation of massive, slave labour-fuelled public works

THE PRINCIPLES OF *FTEIR*

The Aslan concept of honour, or *fteir*, is based on three pillars:

- Respect
- Tradition
- Harmony of action

Respect refers primarily to respect for the territory of another. One does not trespass without leave. However, territory may be taken in time of war and the victor is entitled to whatever land he can conquer and protect. Tradition is the guideline for behaviour. The ways of the ancestors and heroes guide one's actions in the present. Most importantly, tradition determines how to settle disputes and feuds. Excessive violence or waste is a violation of tradition. Harmony of action, or *khoafteirleao*, is the most difficult to master. The Aslan believe the universe is thought in motion and that perfection may be achieved by acting in accordance with its will.

The Grand Conclave was called on Kusyu to more clearly define the tenets of *fteir*, lest deviant clans reinterpret it in ways that paid little respect for tradition. Like other *tsekho* clans, the Tokouea'we were found to be in violation of *fteir* and were called to account. The Tokouea'we failed to properly exhibit respect by enslaving and oppressing their rivals. Respect means that each and every sophont must be allowed to come to *fteir* on their own. Inhibiting the freedom of another is akin to trespassing upon their land.

The Tokouea'we violated tradition by ignoring the will of the ancestors and the heroes of old. When disputes arise, *fteir* demands the appropriate mode of war be selected to prevent waste and unnecessary bloodshed. If a Display of Strength is warranted, one does not escalate the conflict to a War of Champions. If a duel to first blood is appropriate, one does not fight to the death and so forth. The Tokouea'we made a mockery of tradition by constantly escalating conflicts and bringing about unneeded death and destruction.

Without respect or tradition, there can be no harmony of action, so the Tokouea'we found themselves in violation of all three pillars.

and monuments. Look no further than the Grand Golden Palace on Syoakh or the magnificent Ring of Hliyh for gratuitous tributes to the greatness of the Empire. These are their Pyramids of Giza, their Taj Mahal, their Angkor Wat, built on a planetary scale that defies the imagination.

The cost of these grandiose structures is high. The Empire does not have a market economy like the Hierate and therefore has limited resources. Money that could have been spent on universities or research and development centres is diverted to the military or to palatial estates and monuments. These immense and impressive structures are designed by female architects and built almost entirely by slaves. Their unique *yoyeaokhtef* – the decorative Aslan script that adorns starships, habitations and other structures – are designed by noble males but illustrated by human slaves, whose smaller and more dexterous hands lend them a characteristically refined and intricate look.

The Empire has few hospitable worlds, so the construction of such facilities often costs many lives. Millions of slaves have died labouring on the airless and highly radioactive surface of Yero'ilra, the corrosive canyons of Asyuh and the oceanic trenches of Eikhaaw. Slaves often operate outdated and dilapidated equipment; decades-old vacc suits, leaky hostile environment vehicles and faulty rebreathing units. This is of little consequence to the Aslan who can always find another slave to do the work where one has fallen. The slaves themselves have developed a black-market economy of their own to help them survive. In slave dens, one may find vendors dealing in boutique environment suit parts, protein rations, communications devices and other gear they desperately need to perform their dangerous work but with which they are seldom equipped by harsh Aslan masters.

The construction of palaces, estates and monuments serves a dual purpose in Empire society. Internally, they remind its citizens that they are part of something big. The buildings, capital ships and tributary sculptures of the Empire rival those on Kusyu – the Aslan homeworld – in quality and immensity. Just as the obelisks and brutalist concrete architecture of the fascists on ancient Terra were meant to make the individual feel small and insignificant in comparison with the state, the monuments of the Empire are intended to remind all of its citizens that they are members of the Tokouea'we clan and no other. The clan brooks no rivals and its ubiquitous and unique art and architecture is a constant reminder of one's place.



Whilst few Hierate Aslan are allowed to enter Empire space and therefore unlikely see the glory of its monuments and buildings with their own eyes, Empire propagandists broadcast lavish holovid productions outside their borders, displaying imperial grandeur to their provincial neighbours. Vids of the Empire's martial prowess are interspersed, showing its capital ships, deep-site meson guns and legions of Imperial Guard troops marching in the streets of the capital on Glorious Empire Day, the state's solitary holiday.

Travellers lucky enough to make their way into Glorious Empire space for a visit to its worlds are awe stricken at the unique and imposing presence of its art and architecture but those who spend more time there develop a more critical eye. It becomes apparent that beneath the layers of concrete, titanium and crystaliron is the corrupt and crumbling core of a dying interstellar polity.

MARTIAL LAW

For all intents and purposes, the entirety of Glorious Empire space is under martial law. The presence of Imperial Guard military units is as ubiquitous on its worlds as banners and flags declaring the glory and wonder of Grand Emperor Krial.

Military vehicles and patrolling squads of soldiers are a common sight on all Empire worlds. Clan agents watch every move of the Empire's citizens to ensure there are

no dissidents. There is a great deal of unrest among the slave population and Aslan of the lower castes, who see themselves as trapped, involuntary prisoners to a government guiding them toward an untimely demise. Imperial Guard soldiers are quick and decisive in response to insurrections. As in all of Aslan society, disputes are often resolved by duelling. Dissidents and insurrectionists can expect to be challenged by Imperial Guard authorities for their insolence. Resolution of disputes is adjudicated by an *earleatrais* from the high *ahriya* or 'prides' and the *earleatrais* may resolve a dispute by rule or trial by combat. If the latter is selected, a duel is held, usually a War of Champions or War to First Blood. The Empire ensures that its favoured side is disproportionately well-equipped for the conflict and nearly always comes away victorious. There are few surprises in the Glorious Empire.

Despite appearances, military forces are not only used to quell rebellion. The majority are emplaced to repel invasions by the Hierate. The recent losses of several key star systems to the Hierate has whipped up a high level of paranoia among the military junta. The generals command their forces from armoured bunkers, sub-oceanic fortresses and buffered planetoids, while their soldiers vigilantly crew anti-spacecraft cannons, deep-site weapons and civil defence bunkers strategically located in urban centres.

The Empire has not conquered a single star system for centuries and has become obsessed with the defence of their remaining worlds. Empire space is akin to an interstellar mine field with defensive structures, weaponry and well dug-in bunkers and emplacements designed to fight the Hierate tooth and nail until the last Imperial Guard warrior falls in battle.

PAX TOKOUEA'WE

The Glorious Empire is a totalitarian regime with one clan and one Emperor. Vassal clans are not permitted and the process by which vassals develop has been dismantled with all potential offshoots of the clan immediately reconstituted into Tokouea'we *ahriya* or 'prides'. Authority is ridiculously centralised for an interstellar empire with even the most mundane minutiae decided upon at Syoakh and disseminated via jump-4 courier. The lords of individual Tokouea'we *ahriya* have little more than rubber-stamped authority.

Grand Emperor Krial is the undisputed 'voice of the Empire', whose dictates are believed to come to him directly from the ancestors themselves. The ancestral religion of the Aslan takes on a unique form in the Empire; worship of the Grand Emperor and his imperial line. Since all Aslan of the Empire are members of the Tokouea'we clan, the Grand Emperor is the living embodiment of their ancestral line and may therefore be worshipped during his lifetime rather than after death – or so goes Empire theology. All shrines of heroes, *ahfa* – the affectations and idols that Aslan use to commemorate the ancestors – and public meeting places honour the Grand Emperor alone. A cult of personality has been built around Krial, reinforced by art, holovideos and *yoyeaokhtef* that display his image and words of wisdom. In truth, Krial is little more than a puppet of the ruling military junta, who use him as the conduit through which they exercise authority.

The Glorious Empire would very much like to return to its world-conquering ways but the effects of lost territory and multiple generations of males lost to war has reduced its ability to project power. The Tokouea'we were seemingly unstoppable at one time, a highly motivated clan given the gift of high technology by peers in the Watoi clan. In the uncharted territories of the Hlairoahaurl sector (the Trojan Reach), they had no worthy rivals and easily rose to dominance. The trans-Rift colonies – if not the entire sector – were theirs for the taking but pride and arrogance consumed them.

The Empire is now a depleted polity, the embodiment of a wounded warrior who refuses to yield, knowing full well that doing so entails the dissolution of both Empire and clan. It is expected that the Empire will fall

within a decade or two. If not for the recent success of its mercenary forces in the Dustbelt, the government might have already been overthrown in a coup d'état. Its victories in the war against Tyr have given the Empire hope even as Hierate barbarians clamour at its gates on all sides.

A reluctant Krial and his cabal of generals maintain their grip on power with an iron fist. The Law Level on most worlds is high, reflecting the repressiveness of an isolated and dying regime. The people tend to look inward, holding onto the things they hold dear; land, family and the only civilisation they have ever known.

DECLINE OF IHATEI AND OPPRESSION OF VASSALS

Interstellar societies have institutions that promote intellectual curiosity, innovation and exploration. The Aslan are at heart an aggressive and violent species who have sublimated their base urges by practicing *fteir* and promoting expansion into new territory. The Aslan male, with his unquenchable desire for land, provides



AIEKHEIOLAULO

Many Aslan art pieces focus on interactivity, finding ways to draw the viewer in with multiple sensory elements. Krial's works are participatory as well but in subtle fashion. His latest work, *Aiekheiolaulo*, currently on display at the Palace of Fine Arts, is a sculpture that depicts a carnivorous flower native to Syoakh. Its pistils and tendrils flow outward from between its petals in suggestive fashion. The piece employs holovideo elements as well, flowing colours that run along the petals, building to a crescendo at which point gentle scents are released from its base. Some Aslan have said that the scents give them pleasure while others say they find them mildly noxious.

The authoritarian government of the Empire does not brook criticism of the Grand Emperor's works but the piece has been viewed outside the Empire as well where it has garnered nearly universal praise. Art aficionados have begun to question the meaning of *Aiekheiolaulo*. Some even surmise that Krial – in his own subversive way – is making a statement about the current state of affairs in the Glorious Empire.

GRAND EMPEROR KRIAL



SPECIES	GENDER	AGE
Aslan	Male	32
TRAITS		SKILLS
Dewclaw, Heightened Senses		Animals (handling) 2, Art (visual media) 3, Deception 1, Diplomat 2, Flyer (grav) 1, Gun Combat (archaic) 2, Language (Galanglic) 2, Leadership 0, Melee 0, Profession (civil engineer) 2, Science (archaeology) 3, Vacc Suit 0
EQUIPMENT	Weapons and Possessions: Ceremonial Sceptre, Decorous Laser Pistol, Jewelled Fierah, Emerald-Suffused Platinum Crown, Aliraran Silk Stasis Cloak, Bonded Superdense Girdle Armour: Ceremonial Polycarbonate Plate (+18)	

To the people of the Glorious Empire, Grand Emperor Krial is their anointed leader and living embodiment of the ancestors. To his family, he is kind Krial, a thoughtful, sometimes doddering, but occasionally aloof and daydreaming, patriarch. To his generals, he is a fool, a figurehead whom they believe they can charm and manipulate, all the while brazenly claiming to be the real power brokers of the Empire. Krial does not mind. He is beyond such concerns.

Krial is known to be highly interested in archaeology but spends most of his life sequestered in the Grand Palace and is rarely allowed to travel. If he cannot effectively examine a site virtually, using an immense holographic viewing room, then samples are brought to him. These are sometimes entire dig sites, dredged out in their entirety and transported over many parsecs. The most common discoveries are the remnants of human civilisations, those left behind by the Sindilians or their Solomani forebears. Krial is especially keen on learning more about the Chirpers



who inhabited Syoakh before the Tokouea'we arrived. Whilst most exploration is limited to the remaining worlds of the Empire, Krial's clan agents have been going outside Empire borders to the Dostoevsky and Akhwohkyal systems, negotiating for the acquisition of artefacts for the Grand Emperor to study.

What is less known about Krial is that he is an accomplished artist. He dabbles in many areas, including sculpture, painting and holography but his most impressive work is in the realm of mixed visual media. He has experimented with various combinations but most involve some combination of holography, painting and scent dispersion.

the impetus for expansion and the female cultivates and develops technology and industry on worlds the Aslan settle and conquer.

There are two vehicles that guide this expansion and development. The first of these are the *ihatei*. In Aslan society, clan lords practice primogeniture, passing all acquired territory to their first-born sons. Second and additional sons are thus deprived of territory and must strike out on their own to obtain it. Groupings of second sons are called *ihatei* and are a major catalyst for the expansion of the species. *Ihatei* bands form on frontier worlds where they meet, plot and plan, and eventually travel to other star systems for the express purpose of acquiring land. Such land may be acquired on worlds already settled by other Aslan, uninhabited worlds or worlds settled by other species. Settlement need not involve warfare but often does, especially when large swathes of a target world are already populated.

The Glorious Empire has no *ihatei*. They have been confined to the boundaries of their splinter state for centuries and have now lost more than half of the worlds they once held. For better or worse, the expansionist capabilities of the Aslan are intrinsically tied to the *ihatei*. Thrust from the protective womb of the Hierate, *ihatei* chase the frontier, using wits and creativity to handle challenges as they arise. By taking away the individuality and independence of the second son, the Empire has deprived itself of a key motivator in Aslan culture. Whilst some second sons from the Empire have managed to forge papers, travel into foreign territory and join formative *ihatei* bands, the vast majority remain in Empire space and are thus denied the opportunity. This has had a deleterious effect on innovation as the advent of the *ihatei* was the primary engine of economic and technological development. In Aslan society, no other environment spurs problem solving and innovation quite like the effort to take new worlds. For evidence, look no further than the crossing of the Great Rift; the yearning of *ihatei* to acquire new lands ultimately spurred the development of the jump-5 drive. Having to contend with the superior weapons and spacecraft of neighbouring species drove the development of other advanced technologies.

The Empire also lacks vassal clans which, by nature, develop and compete with their superiors, thereby driving societal growth. Throughout its history the Empire has shown an inclination towards authoritarianism and oppression of rival factions, exacerbated by confinement to an ever-shrinking region of space. Vassal clans are a natural development of the Aslan feudal system. Communication across the reaches of space is not

instantaneous and – as an empire grows – it becomes more difficult to maintain uniformity of culture, tradition and exert the will of the *huihako* or ‘clan lord’. Vassals usually serve as an extension of their host clan’s power, making it easier to govern interstellar land holdings but also allowing for individuality and self-determination.

The development of vassals is a natural occurrence but the Empire has done everything it can to eradicate them. The centralised nature of the government coupled with a lack of local empowerment and accountability have resulted in a high level of corruption. Deprived of self-determination but instinctively driven to fragment and disperse, most systems have developed ‘shadow governments’ of a sort to meet their needs. The Empire has attempted to address this problem by granting its *ahriya* with a greater degree of freedom; however, remotely deployed prides such as those on Ftulrois and Asyuh have naturally begun to splinter into functional vassals over time. The Aslan desire for independence and agency cannot easily be denied. The Empire is quick to suppress these ‘insurrections’ with two tools; its fleet of jump-4 couriers and rapid deployment troops. Couriers carry news and constant reminders of one’s duty to maintain fealty to the Grand Emperor. If additional coercion is required, TL14 shock troops from the capital showing up on one’s doorstep brings a not-so-subtle reminder.

Despite its best attempts to quell them before they develop, the Tokouea’we face many vassal crises. On the world of Yero’ilra, the Yetrai *ahriy* has essentially transformed into a vassal clan that is proving difficult for the Empire to expunge. So strong is the urge to splinter and compete among the Aslan that even under threat of war, vassals continue to develop. Thus far, the Tokouea’we have been highly effective at quashing and reincorporating vassals but with the dissolution of its Empire and constant vigilance against external threats, it has become difficult to suppress them all.

GENDER ROLES

Aslan gender roles are the same in the Glorious Empire as they are in the Hierate, with a few key differences. Males are still very much in charge, with their primary focuses being command of military forces and political leadership. Females, who typically take roles in industry and the sciences, are strictly and rather frustratingly limited by the narrow scope of the Empire. Both genders are subjected to the claustrophobic and shrinking territory in which they live and forced to sublimate their instinctive traits into avenues and vocations still available to them.

The martial aspects of the culture are suitable for Aslan males; there is no shortage of battles to be fought. The Empire is beset on all sides by enemies and must maintain constant vigilance to protect the remaining territory that it has. If fighting was all the Aslan male was meant to do, they would be quite content. However, the Empire's constant wars have taken their toll on the male population, resulting in extreme gender imbalance. There is approximately only one male for every four Aslan females due to the attrition of war. Furthermore, being sequestered in an ever-shrinking polity has resulted in a sense of loss that has dealt severe psychological blows to a species shaped by its evolution for expansion.

For thousands of years, the Aslan have curtailed their savage instincts by engaging in a number of deliberate behaviours. Inter-clan politics and ritualised warfare gave the Aslan the ability to develop civilisation. The monolithic nature of the Empire's single-clan government with no vassals and no *i hatei* has denied them the former and insistence upon Open Warfare with their many enemies has deprived them of the latter. The male has no avenues of escape from his present circumstances and cannot scratch the most egregious itch he has; the desire to acquire land. What is left is the shell of a species that had quite carefully cultivated and sculpted its culture over thousands of years. The Glorious Empire Aslan male is a frustrated creature, engaged in constant warfare but unable to acquire new territory.

The female in Empire society is equally if not more deprived of the ability to realise her potential. In the Hierate, females engage in industry, trade, commerce, engineering and the sciences, with a broad array of choices and actions that have a positive and lasting effect on her clan's fortunes. Most engage in the dual life of being wife and mother whilst pursuing a secondary role on the side. In the Empire, females struggle to even find a mate with so many eligible males having been slain in combat. To make matters worse, few of those who remain have land holdings impressive enough to entice a female. These deficits have brought about an increase in the number of *Siyajkhoara*, females who focus strictly on their vocations, shunting marriage aside and dedicating their lives to the generation of wealth and knowledge for the clan. The Glorious Empire female has neither the liberty nor range of choices that the Hierate female has. She is forced to use her talents for a narrow array of opportunities.

The Glorious Empire's isolationist and inbred economy focuses only on industries that – on the most simplistic level – serve to further its continued existence. The

Empire's industrial sector has made impressive advances in these fields but to what end? To defend and secure an Empire whose demise is inevitable? The lack of political, martial and commercial opportunity has paralysed the Aslan of the Glorious Empire and left them bereft of any purpose other than keeping their dying empire on life support.

Despite their limitations, females find innovative ways to make themselves useful. Females are heavily involved in the salvage business, for example. Some of the Empire's largest 'corporations' are salvage operations that use what ships they have to capture enemy spacecraft and repurpose them or break them up for parts. These parts are then distributed by the dual agencies of the military procurement administration and the black market. Female engineers incorporate salvaged parts into their ships, which – due to the strict dictates of Tokouea'we tradition – must meet certain aesthetic standards. The effort by female engineers to use a wide array of odd replacement parts from Hierate and human starships has proven to be a difficult enterprise; however, given a lack of alternatives, it is an appropriate use for their talents. Despite the complaints of oblivious males that various jump drive components or blocky bonded superdense hull plates threaten to wreck the fine curvature of their ships, females merely sigh and go about solving problems as best they can.

BUSINESS AS (UN)USUAL

Among the Aslan, industry and engineering are female realms. Males lead the clan, obtain land and serve at the sharp end of the military service. Females operate corporations and research ventures independently of the clan. Things work differently in the Glorious Empire. Since there is only one clan, very little trade occurs with the outside universe and all corporate ventures are effectively state-run enterprises. The bane of inefficiency and drag on productivity does not sit well with the industrious females. Some have been known to buck the centralised authority of Syoakh and create underground cottage industries to meet local needs. While crackdowns occur from time-to-time, many enterprises are so profitable and beneficial to society that they are allowed to continue – for a price.

The highly centralised nature of the Glorious Empire extends to its industrial and commercial ventures. The unfortunate result is a low degree of innovation and development. Trade and exchanges of ideas are necessary to provide a healthy, innovative economy and the Empire suppresses such practices.

Despite the introverted nature of Glorious Empire industry, they excel in several fields, primarily weapons manufacture, civil defence construction, security and surveillance systems and cryptography software to name a few. Empire weapons manufacturers have mastered just about every type of weapon and ammunition up to TL14 and they have been particularly innovative in the development of gravitic and ion weapons. The same technology used to create cutting-edge gravity spears is used by the Empire in ballistic weapons. Gravitic field weapons use heavier materials and require compensators to make them portable but due to the high number of augmented and power-armoured soldiers in the Empire's armies, portability is usually not a problem. Ion weapons are one of the many non-lethal weapons systems in which the Empire excels. As a society that thrives on slaving and scavenging, use of such weapons is prudent since it is much easier to salvage or obtain slaves from a ship you have not wrecked with lasers, missiles and particle accelerators. See page 99 of the *Central Supply Catalogue* and page 67 of *High Guard* for a few examples of the Empire's innovative application of ion and other technologies.

What the Empire cannot obtain from internal sources it gets from its black market. Females from low- to mid-level *ahriya* run a number of shell corporations outside the Empire's borders, which are used to obtain embargoed goods from Hierate sources. Rumour has it the Hierate corporation, Glories Under the Claw, is complicit in setting up and running these organisations. The black markets are used to obtain luxury goods for the nobility, advanced electronics and automation technology that cannot be found in the Empire, as well as parts for the more advanced ships of the Empire's fleet. A good example is the Empire's fleet of *Wahtoi* jump-4 couriers. The Empire lost its ability to create jump-4 drives some years ago but has been able to keep the fleet running by importing the parts it needs. The Empire pays dearly for these, giving up disproportionate amounts of natural resources, weaponry and the few products that it has to trade.

In addition to more pressing needs, black marketeers find creative ways to establish the flow of goods and services between the worlds of the Empire. In a healthy, vibrant region of Hierate space, trade and commerce are respectable businesses, with a significant portion of clan space force resources appointed to them. In the martially oriented Glorious Empire, few resources are apportioned for trading ships and isolation from the Hierate means there would be little use for them if they did. Black marketeers are savvy and creative

GLORIOUS EMPIRE DAY

Haloiale Akhwihteair Aloiaht, 'Shining honourable-civilisation-of-honour day'

Celebrated on the 90th *eakhau* (day) of each *ftahea* (year), Haloiale Akhwihteair Aloiaht is marked by military parades, displays of martial prowess, duelling exhibitions, art shows, epic poetry readings, holofilm/prey-scent festival, and merriment throughout the otherwise dour worlds of the Empire. There has been little to celebrate in recent decades as the Glorious Empire dwindles into an entrenched and paranoid pocket empire with little to hope for. However, this does not stop them from celebrating past glories. The emphasis of the holiday is now remembrance of ancestors and their sacrifices, the once-dominant empire they created and the expectation that it will one day reacquire its former greatness.

In the now distant past, the majority of Aslan military personnel were given a furlough day and its 32 worlds would virtually shut down to reminisce about the Empire's history and poeticise the great glories to come. The Grand Emperor himself would step out onto the dais to read the chronicle of the prior *ftahea* and present the annual Haloiale Akhwihteair Aloiaht *yoyeaokhtef* to be copied and displayed on honoured ships of the line. The commemorative glyph would be designed by a noble from one of the high *ahriya* houses and rendered by a talented child slave.

Large numbers of slaves are trussed up and trotted out for the party, shown grudging appreciation for their contributions to Empire society and then promptly sent back to their mines, factories, domestic servitude or military units before the close of festivities.

In modern times, large celebrations of the holiday are consistently held only on Syoakh and Htourlao, the citizens of its other star systems being preoccupied with fending off Hierate incursions. Grand Emperor Krial's speech no longer describes historical events. Instead, he now typically delivers abstract speeches about loyalty and perseverance that often leave his audience perplexed. The generals have begun to worry that the weight of the crown has driven him mad but so far Krial has been able to assure them that he is quite sane.

administrators who work with a colourful array of shady characters to get citizens of the Empire the goods they want and need.

In recent years, the Empire has been a huge exporter of mercenary forces. Their success fighting in the wars of the Dustbelt has given them a well-deserved reputation as skilled soldiers for hire. Aslan females from the Empire are in stiff competition to manage the many state-run mercenary companies. In typical Empire fashion, such positions are awarded based on clan connections, not merit. Females from leading *ahriya* invariably obtain these roles whether or not they are the most qualified. In the Hierate, inter-clan competition would weed out the weak companies from the strong but in the Empire, connections, corruption and bribery win the day. This sometimes results in poorly qualified managers running companies of well-trained and effective soldiers. The results can cause friction but the nature of gender relations among the Aslan prevents serious conflicts from arising.

WHY THE EMPIRE REFUSES TO FALL

Tlaukuh clans have a significant presence in the Reach, when it comes to the Glorious Empire they have often taken the role of a dissembling uncle, scolding the Ya'soisthea for not putting their house in order but contributing few resources to help them do it.

The reluctance of the Hierate to match the Empire's level of ferocity bought the Empire time with which it could have modernised, fortified and altered its course; however, the Tokouea'we penchant for arrogance prevented this from happening. They are a determined and proud clan, and the very things that gave them strength would guarantee their eventual downfall.

The initial timidity of the clans was not the only element that aided in the Empire's survival. Astrography plays a significant role. The stellar bight located rimward-trailing of the Empire's borders poses a barrier to easy access. In addition, the Empire's spinward flank in Nora'a was – and largely still is – a backwater. The most powerful clans settled the trailing portions of the sector long before they advanced deeply into Nora'a where they might have established a platform for attacks against the Empire. The situation in Nora'a was exacerbated by conflicts with the Florian League, which presented yet another distraction.

Perhaps the most effective deterrent to the destruction of the Glorious Empire was the proximity of the Imperium. The humans' desire to trade was readily accepted by Hierate clans centuries ago and the New Horizon faction of the Ahroay'if clan has become extremely wealthy from trade with the Imperium. Mere parsecs from the Empire's borders, trade-oriented clans became awash in riches. The worlds of Stohyus, Irlaiw, Tlaiohaha and Tyokh, among others, became economic powerhouses. As their wealth grew, it became exceedingly easy to ignore the Empire's existence. Markets benefit from stability and Open War threatens the burgeoning wealth of the mercantile clans. The Hierate became apathetic to the heresy of the Empire and began to look upon it as more nuisance than threat. From time-to-time, various clans engaged in half-hearted attacks on Empire borders but little ultimately came of it.

In addition to this, there are many Aslan who secretly do not want the Empire to fall. Whilst they do not voice the sentiment, their actions belie their words. The Empire makes a convenient boogey man, a villain to revile and despise and, without that villain, the light of *fteir* righteousness might be shone elsewhere and who knows what it might reveal. The Cultural Purges chased many clans across the Great Rift but only one of those clans chose to draw attention to itself. Many other 'deviants' made their home in the Reach, quietly and deliberately continuing to interpret *fteir* in their own way whilst hypocritically accusing the Empire of being the sole offender. The Wahtoi are atheists who do not pray to the ancestors. The Aslan of Irlaiw employ males and females interchangeably with no regard for traditional gender roles. Taukhaotuar males create clones of themselves to become their own first-born sons. The list goes on. The Reach is a hotbed of heresy, filled with clans that are experimenting with new ways of interpreting age-old traditions and philosophies. The vigilant clans and vassals of the Tlaukuh live among them and the young clans of the Ya'soisthea wither under the accusing gaze of more pious brethren. The Glorious Empire draws that gaze away and therefore has the tacit support of many a clan, even if they refuse to acknowledge this fact or defend them in Ya'soisthea assemblies.

Much of this has changed in recent years as Hierate clans have finally begun to encroach into Glorious Empire territory. A perfect storm of population pressure, economic opportunity and clan ambition has coalesced into an effort to eradicate the Empire once



and for all. In the last two decades, it has lost six star systems, including Hliyh – the jewel of the Empire – and Tryaoke, its primary slave breeding and genetic engineering facility. Now that Hierate clans have been conquering Empire worlds at an accelerated rate, they have discovered yet another disincentive the slave populations they inherit. To the Aslan, acquisition of land is of paramount importance. When territory they acquire is occupied by other sophonts, it complicates matters. Nevertheless, the effort to crush the Empire moves forward.

Things have never looked so bleak for the slavers of the Reach. However, like a cornered and wounded predator, the Empire refuses to give in. Its vaunted mercenary soldiers have struck out into the Dustbelt, becoming the most feared warriors in the sector. With newfound wealth and opportunities, they have found hope just as the Hierate has prepared to levy the killing blow, shattering the Empire once and for all.

SLAVERY

It is difficult to overstate the importance of slavery to the Glorious Empire. It is its defining characteristic and an anomaly among Aslan. There is no evidence that any other Aslan clans have practiced slavery since the beginning of the spaceflight era, before the advent of the Tlauku and the Hierate itself. The Grand Conclave declared slavery to be an abhorrent practice, far beneath the dignity of the *fteir*.

Even more baffling is that the Empire has managed to maintain a technologically advanced society and yet insists on employing slaves, whose efficiency cannot match that of advanced machinery. Whilst the Aslan shun automation, its benefits cannot be ignored. The design and manufacture of high-technology goods – including starships, grav vehicles, robots and so on – requires a high degree of precision that simply cannot be hand-crafted by a labour force, much less a *slave* labour force. Yet the Glorious Empire has staunchly persisted with its use of slaves.

Some believe that the Empire's continued practice of slavery is merely an expression of identity, a declaration of independence from the Hierate. If the Aslan are defined by the practice of *fteir*, then behaving in a way that clearly and obstinately rebels against its traditional interpretation might be how the Empire draws a distinction between themselves and the Hierate.

It is difficult to pinpoint an event or movement in the Empire's history that served as a catalyst for the modern practice of slavery. In the distant past, the Tokouea'we clan were guilty of impressing lower Aslan castes and minor races into forced labour but they did not resort to outright slavery until colonising the worlds of the Trojan Reach. The Empire took its first slaves after settling Syoakh and its interstellar neighbours. They subjugated and enslaved the remnants of human colonies and Chirper populations found there.

Seven centuries later, the practice of slavery remains ingrained in every aspect of society. At its apex, there were billions of human slaves, eclipsing the Aslan population on many worlds. The treatment of slaves varies from world-to-world, with some merely treated like third-class citizens and others as chattel. During the early era of the Empire, some humans were said

to have been consumed as food but such claims are dubious. Whilst it is difficult to know every aspect of what went on in the 'closed-door' society of the Glorious Empire over the course of its long and bloody history, there is no evidence that citizens of the Empire ever bred humans as livestock and consumed them as food on any significant level.

Early on, not all slaves were human and some were taken from conquered Aslan clans although most were eventually ransomed, repatriated or incorporated into Tokouea'we society. Very few Aslan remain as slaves in the modern era. There is a smattering of Vargr, Yont, Floriani, Chirpers and other alien races who have been enslaved but the Empire considers human slaves to be ideal since they can be easily incorporated into the existing population and because there is such a large and easily obtainable supply of them in the wilds of the Outrim Void.

Virtually all industries in the Empire use slave labour, especially for menial or repetitive tasks. Because of this, the Empire lags when it comes to automation technology. Robots are used as well but only for specialised purposes. Industries like mining, agriculture, tending livestock and most manufacturing is performed by slaves. A minority of slaves are educated and have specialised skills. Most of these were recently captured from the civilised worlds of the Reach. Humans born to slavery rarely acquire the skills to perform complex tasks like engineering, medicine or scientific research although there are exceptions, such as the Eikhaawi humans.

Slaves enjoy a degree of protection due to their importance to society. Their owners are allowed to treat them as they wish to a large degree but excessive harm or punishment of slaves is usually prosecuted as a serious crime. Brutal treatment is considered a breach of *fteir* as the Empire interprets it and the killing of a slave is cause for punitive action. In some cases, slave treatment disputes are resolved by duelling; in others, an *earleatrais* may intervene and declare an offending party to be in violation of *fteir* and sentence them to death. On some level, all slaves are considered property of the ruling Tokouea'we clan and their destruction is akin to trespassing or destruction of property.

So important are slaves to the Empire that they are considered akin to the concept of territory. Much like land, slaves and their progeny are owned by the nobility.

Despite such laws, life as a slave is not pleasant. Slaves in servant and labour roles can expect to work from childhood to old age, usually until death. They serve in the most demanding and hazardous jobs such as mining airless rockballs, constructing buildings, orbitals, and spacecraft, clearing biospheres of dangerous flora and fauna, performing farm work in challenging environments and – more recently – serving as cannon fodder in the Empire's armies.

Recent forays of the Glorious Empire into the wars of the Dustbelt have necessitated the use of human slaves as soldiers. The 'dog soldiers' as they are known, serve primarily as front-line infantry and have a high mortality rate, with only the shrewd, hardy and lucky surviving more than a few years of service. With the depletion of the Empire's male Aslan population in its devastating wars against the Hierate, the Empire now places great value on human service. Humans who serve for a minimum of two terms are granted their freedom provided they remain loyal subjects of the Empire. Most of those who have been freed continue to serve in the armed forces and are treated as *awkhea*, or 'landless serfs'. While they can never own land, freed human warriors are essentially treated like low-caste Aslan, enjoying vastly more liberties than the rest of their species.

The Glorious Empire has embarked upon several ambitious breeding and genetic engineering programs to produce specialised slaves. The results have been mixed with a few successful experiments and several dismal failures such as the Tryaoke and Fantasy strains. Whilst many experiments have resulted in subtle changes to the human genome, others have created monstrosities.

There have been many slave revolts over the course of the Empire's history, most of which have been brutally put down. The Aslan tend to subjugate humans with abandon but seem to lack the will to ensure obedience among them. The Aslan by nature crave conflict and challenge, so subconsciously creating circumstances in which slaves can revolt makes sense on some level. One must remember that the Aslan are alien; their thinking is shaped by complex biological and psychological factors that differ greatly from those of Humaniti.

Billions of human slaves have been liberated on worlds the Hierate has captured from the Empire, most notably Hliyh and Tryaoke. Many of these freed slaves had families on other worlds of the Empire and some have sought to free them. It has been impossible for the

Empire to fully inoculate the slave population from the idea of emancipation now that so many of their number have been liberated elsewhere. Some of the bravest among the freed have furtively returned to Empire space to foment rebellion among their still-enslaved brothers and sisters.

The future of the Glorious Empire's slave population is difficult to ascertain. Within the Empire's borders, many slaves now know that freedom is a possibility and this has created a high degree of unrest. On the liberated worlds, freed slaves pose a conundrum for their new Hierate masters. The Aslan crave land more than anything else and it is not easy to claim territory occupied by freed human squatters. Their options are to incorporate humans into society, deport them or, in the worst case, exterminate them.

There is little charity for the freed slaves among the human populations of the Trojan Reach. Separated for centuries from the humans of the Imperium and Outrim Void, freed slaves are seen as alien, a virus with which they do not want to become infected. With the presence of *ihatei* on many predominantly human worlds, many fear the mere idea of incorporating humans into their society who readily assent to Aslan authority.

Their destiny may be uncertain but their demographics are not. There are approximately 7–14 billion humans living on current and former Glorious Empire worlds, far outstripping the human population of the entire Outrim Void. No one really knows what will happen when the Glorious Empire crumbles and there are suddenly billions of free humans in what is ostensibly Hierate space. It is an unprecedented problem and one that neither the Empire nor the Hierate looks forward to dealing with.

GENDER AND SLAVE MANAGEMENT

The management of slaves is considered to be the realm of the male Aslan who acquire, train and command slaves in their various roles. Females expect slaves to follow their instructions as well but should there be any problem, they typically turn to males to rectify disobedience. Aslan males are larger and more imposing than the majority of humans and those responsible for the management of slaves use their physical presence to intimidate. When this fails, they are not averse to using force or corporal punishment to make slaves cooperate. Exceptional cruelty against slaves is illegal in the Empire but this does not stop an aggressive male from exacting severe punishments on slaves who refuse to comply.

THE SAIHLEA

The higher an Aslan noble rises in the ranks, the more slaves he is likely to have. Managing hundreds or even thousands of slaves is a difficult job and with the depletion of able-bodied males in Empire society, there is a dearth of overseers. To remedy this problem, many nobles appoint human leaders – or *saihlea* – to manage portions of their slave labour force.

Saihlea remain slaves but enjoy exalted status, serving as intermediaries between a master and his slaves.

Saihlea live a much more comfortable existence and most are not required to engage in labour. Many live in the manor of their master, not in the slave quarters.

As for the slaves themselves, some see the *saihlea* as traitors, fawning over their Aslan masters and betraying their own kind. Others see them as a much-needed go-between, an ambassador who represents the slaves and can stand up for their rights.

One rises to the rank of *saihlea* by exhibiting talents that set them above or beyond their peers. Some examples include:

- A slave working the mines who shows the ability to organise and distribute labour forces for maximum effectiveness.
- A house servant whom the other slaves look up to and who shows a knack for managing the affairs of the servantry.
- A slave who constructs ships and buildings in vacuum or other hostile environments and who identifies problems or pitfalls before they happen, directing cohorts to pre-emptively address issues.
- A dog soldier who shows a talent for rallying slave soldiers, keeping them in line and getting them to bravely serve as cannon fodder in the Empire's armies.

There are historical accounts of many *saihlea*, most of them written by the Aslan or literate *saihlea* themselves, exhorting the *saihlea* for their ability to maintain order and serve the interests of the clan. They are portrayed as loyal and valuable members of the clan but always under the direct advisement of the *huiha* or *ahriy* lord.

If and when the Empire falls, what will become of the *saihlea*? Those who have curried favour with their Aslan masters at the expense of their own kind might suffer greatly. The slave population has watched the Empire lose world after world and many are getting restless, eager to obtain their long-sought freedom. When liberators arrive, a lifetime of resentment might bubble over against those humans who were seen as collaborators. Violence is likely and some *saihlea* might attempt to flee with their Aslan masters to avoid retribution.

On the other hand, there are some *saihlea* who have used positions of power for the betterment of their fellow humans. These individuals might make the transition to become leaders in the refugee communities that develop after the Hierate clans have freed their worlds.

Few independent slave narratives exist but those that have been recovered most often depict the *saihlea* as traitors to their own kind. However, some are depicted in a much more sympathetic light. There have been *saihlea* who carefully trod the boundary between slave and subversive. Some of these masquerading saboteurs are the heroes of a growing liberation movement, both within and outside the borders of the Glorious Empire.

The slave roles here are a sample of those seen in the Glorious Empire. Slaves are put to work in all manner of tasks and used to perform any role deemed fit for them. Many are given more traditional careers, educated and trained as lab assistants, becoming teachers or administrators, operating as starship crew, in some cases, or even serving in the military.



SLAVE LABOURER

SPECIES		GENDER		AGE
Human				—
TRAITS		SKILLS		
STR	9	INT	5	Athletics (strength) 1, Electronics 0,
DEX	8	EDU	3	Mechanic 1, Melee 0,
END	9	SOC	0	Profession (mining, construction or similar) 1, Vacc Suit 1

EQUIPMENT

Weapons: Club or Dagger
Armour: Vacc Suit (+8) or Hostile Environment Suit (+9)
Equipment: Shovel or entrenchment tool, mechanical tools, monitoring collar

Labourers are a rough-and-tumble lot, selected for strength and hardiness. Few are given anything more than a rudimentary education, just enough to read safety regulation signs, mining maps and basic directions. Most labourer groups establish their own subcultures with customs, dialects, music and other aspects.

LABOURER SAIHLEA

SPECIES		GENDER		AGE
Human				—
TRAITS		SKILLS		
STR	10	INT	7	Athletics (strength) 1,
DEX	9	EDU	5	Leadership 2, Mechanic
END	10	SOC	0	2, Melee (unarmed) 1, Profession (mining, construction or similar) 2, Vacc Suit 1

EQUIPMENT

Weapons: Club or Dagger
Armour: Vacc Suit (+8) or Hostile Environment Suit (+9)
Equipment: Shovel or entrenchment tool, mechanical tools, monitoring collar

A *saihlea* labourer is often larger and more physically capable than a typical labourer but not always. *Saihlea* of the labourer caste have ingratiated themselves with their Aslan masters but commonly side with their human compatriots in conflicts as sycophants of the Aslan tend to suffer ‘unfortunate accidents’ or find themselves on the wrong side of an airlock without a vacc suit.

SLAVE SERVANT

SPECIES		GENDER		AGE
Human				—
TRAITS		SKILLS		
STR	5	INT	6	Diplomat 0,
DEX	9	EDU	5	Jack-of-All-Trades 1,
END	8	SOC	0	Mechanic 1, Persuade, Steward 2

EQUIPMENT

Equipment: Cookware, maintenance tools, standard slave collar

Servants work on the estate of an Aslan *ahriy* lord, the offices of a clan emissary or in a minor role on the staff of a starport or other facility. Servants are selected for coordination, mental aptitude and appearance, and are often in highly public roles with superior hygiene to the labourer caste.

MANOR SAIHLEA

SPECIES		GENDER		AGE
Human				—
TRAITS		SKILLS		
STR	6	INT	9	Admin 1,
DEX	10	EDU	6	Athletics (dexterity) 1,
END	9	SOC	1	Deception 1, Leadership 1, Persuade 2

EQUIPMENT

Equipment: Hand computer, ornamental slave collar

Rising to the top of the servantry caste requires wits, intellect and to some degree betrayal of one's own kind. The manor *saihlea* is selected for an ability to administer a large staff of slaves, keep the estate in order and report on any transgressions or failures on the part of the staff. *Saihlea* in this role have forsaken their own kind and fawn over their Aslan masters.

SLAVE OWNERSHIP

Most Aslan in the Glorious Empire employ or own slaves. The number of slaves owned is based on the Aslan's Territory (TER) characteristic as shown on the Owned Slaves table.

Owned Slaves

TER	Status	Slaves Owned
0	None	None.
1–2	Average	None. Able to rent slave labour from nobles.
3–5	Wealthy	Often none. May own a number of slaves less than or equal to TER score.
6–8	Minor Noble	Owns a number of slaves up to 2D x TER.
9–11	Average Noble	Owns up to 1D x TER x 100 slaves.
12+	Grand Noble	Owns up to 1D x TER x 1,000 slaves. May own or lease additional slaves as necessary for farming or industrial purposes.

The expense of slave ownership typically dictates that a slave owner must keep his slaves employed to ensure he is able to meet expenses. Members of the Tokouea'we nobility typically use both their land and slave assets to generate wealth. Herding and disciplining slaves is a male responsibility but generating income and running businesses is a female occupation.

Whilst the most valuable land in a typical Aslan society is that which provides lush hunting grounds, the possession of slaves in the Glorious Empire alters the definition of 'value'. Appealing land on a Kusyu Prime world is still desirable but land abundant in resources with which the clan can generate income ultimately has greater value. For example, territory that is rich in precious metals, minerals and petrochemicals may fetch a premium regardless of its suitability for life. The slave population can be made to work such land to extract its resources, granting their master the ability to retain his holdings and acquire yet more wealth.

GENETIC ENGINEERING

The Glorious Empire has engaged in extensive research of the human genome with the intention of creating more useful slaves. Most of these experiments have failed. The Tryaokean and Fantasy strains of *homo*

sapiens and the Ouiyloi Man Brute are a few examples of projects that failed to meet expectations. However, there have been a few modest successes – if one can consider the forced manipulation of a sentient species' genome a success – although none have resulted in lasting and effective genetic engineering programs.

The experiments on Tryaoke, the most ambitious of all the Empire's genetic engineering programmes, were intended to produce a race of strong and tractable humans. It is difficult to determine the origins of the Tryaokean programme but some believe it was inspired by the Feskals of the Florian League. The Feskals, physically powerful but utterly obedient to their Barnai masters, were seen by the Empire as the ultimate human species. Despite decades of research, the programme failed to create the desired product. The Tryaokean strain are hardier than typical humans but highly uncooperative and superstitious. Not only are they resistant to authority but they seem to lack the mental capacity or desire to advance their station, preferring instead to live a simple and pastoral existence on their homeworld.

The Empire's fascination with the Feskals did not stop there, unfortunately. It is rumoured that a cabal of ambitious – some would say mad – scientists from the Empire took hundreds of captured Feskal to the remote world of Ouiyloi, where they attempted to genetically engineer them to maximise their physical potential. The Feskal, altered or not, managed to escape to the wild forests of the planet where they live a feral existence. They are now known as Ouiyloi Man Brutes, extremely dangerous and generally avoided. In addition, the Empire is concerned that should the Florian League discover that experiments were performed on their Feskal brethren, they might ratchet up the stakes along the Hierate–Florian border to all-out war.

LANGUAGE

The language of the slaves is unlike any other human language in Charted Space. The majority of humans in the Imperium speak Galanglic, a language that has carried over Imperial borders into dozens of adjacent human polities. The peoples who were conquered by the Tokouea'we were descended from colonists who originated on worlds of the now extinct Sindalian Empire. The Sindilians predated the Third Imperium but their language was essentially similar to modern Galanglic. After becoming enslaved, the Tokouea'we insisted humans learn to speak Trokh but it quickly became apparent that the human tongue could not master a language so clearly designed for the Aslan to speak. Add the additional complexity of Aslan gender-based sub-languages and it was a recipe for confusion.



Over time, humans learned to speak a variant of Trokh, which they merged with their native language. Had the Aslan strictly sequestered the slave populations on their worlds of origin, each might have developed a unique dialect; however, movement of slaves from world-to-world resulted in a more or less homogeneous language. Although this was not by design, it ended up working to the advantage of the Empire as it would have been counterproductive for slaves to speak multiple languages; if this had been allowed to happen, the highly transient slave population would have been unable to communicate when groups were transported from one world to another.

So it was that Hankakho, the language of the slaves, was born. A great many slaves remain on one world for their entire lives, so it was inevitable that dialects would develop; however, the advent of Hankakho schools has helped to establish a baseline language that almost all slaves speak and understand.

Now that billions of slaves have been liberated from the Glorious Empire and incorporated into the Aslan Hierate, Hankakho has become the official language of the human minority. Activist linguists from independent Outrim Void worlds and the Imperium have made themselves available to help update the language and teach standard Galanglic. Linguistics experts from the University of Camoran and the Imperial Research Station on Dostoevsky have observed that Hankakho has inherent structures that helped to reinforce subservience. Linguists have been working with the freed slaves to remove these linguistic artifices in order to fully liberate freed slaves from their past bondage. Despite the implications, most Hierate clans have been supportive of these initiatives.

SLAVERY IN THE TROJAN REACH

The slaver has an ambiguous place in Glorious Empire culture, both hallowed and reviled at the same time. Hallowed for bringing in a steady stream of newly captured slaves but reviled for the dark and unseemly deeds that must be performed to get the job done. Even in a culture that unabashedly embraces slavery, the acquisition of slaves remains an unsavoury and downtrodden practice. Slavers occupy nearly the bottom rung of society, living on the edge, roving human space for new captives and seldom spending a lengthy period of time within the shrinking borders of the Empire.

Slavers would be considered outcasts in Hierate society, occupying a station just barely above that of slaves themselves. Most slavers are ruffians and malcontents, knowing nothing of the Golden Palace, what it is like to have a land hold or what it means to own slaves of their own. They are deprived of the comforts and resources available to the citizens and nobility of the Empire. Given their poor treatment, some might wonder what keeps them coming back. They roam far and wide, sometimes a dozen parsecs or more beyond the Empire's borders. What slavers have discovered is that the only Aslan who revile them more than their own brethren are the Aslan of the Hierate, who see them as a blight upon their species, lowly and dishonourable creatures that must be eradicated for *fteir* to be preserved. Captured slaving ships are often destroyed outright and their crews spaced. As cruel as the Empire is to them, it seems that the rest of the universe views them with even lower regard.

Glorious Empire slaving operations extend deeply into the Trojan Reach. The sector's large expanses of lawless unincorporated territory, rash of brushfire wars, border conflicts and poorly defended trade routes make it an ample hunting ground for slavers.

Slaving is a highly competitive business run by a fleet of state-owned *Hkisyelaa* slaving ships that are put into the hands of qualified crews. Participation in the business is hotly contested among members of the lower castes, particularly among females who want to serve as purasers and engineers in the slaving fleet. Despite the unseemliness of the slaving profession, purser roles are in high demand. The business of slave acquisition – lowly as it is – is a profitable business and such positions are hard to fill under the Empire's current circumstances. Male crew positions are sometimes filled by applicants who have been washed out of military service or those who could not qualify for a more prestigious role on

a mercenary spacecraft. The remainder of crew roles are taken by rough-and-tumble spacers, many of whom barely qualify for the jobs they perform. The grunt soldiers used to round up and capture slaves are the most low-born and rowdy of the bunch. They lack the discipline to serve in a real military unit and have wandered into their role by some misfortune or another. Grunts are kept in line by a huntsman and several sergeants who double as vehicle drivers.

Slavers stake out territory that they cultivate and develop as if they are exploiting a region's natural resources. The best slavers know where good stocks of slaves may be found and often spend a fair amount of time getting to know a region and establishing contacts there. Contacts or 'agents' are used to identify vulnerable populations who may be easily raided for slaves. In some cases, agents actually do the majority of the work, capturing slaves themselves and selling them to the Empire's slaving ships for a nominal fee. In this scenario, slavers are afforded the luxury of leisurely examining the stock and selectively picking the ones they want, after which the slaves are ushered into the ship's low berths for transport.

More often than not, an agent is merely a surveyor who identifies vulnerable colonies, towns, rural farming communities or other locales where large stocks of slaves may be obtained. Agents are cowardly and low, often traitors, thieves, ex-convicts, grounded pirates or some other form of filth that has been coughed up by the bowels of the Outrim Void.

Whilst slavers do not shy away from acquiring most of the stock their agents discover, what the Empire really needs is technical talent. Nearly five centuries of warfare and closed borders has resulted in a severe talent drain. The Empire needs qualified personnel to run its industry, extract natural resources and in many cases to fill the crews of its starships.

Obtaining technical talent is difficult. Most humans with the kinds of skills the Empire needs live safely within the confines of large and well-defended worlds. Attempting to extract them by force is risky and not something most slavers are equipped for. Instead, they look to their agents for tips and hints about where they may find bounties of technical talent. Research parties, corporate junkets and poorly defended trade convoys present juicy opportunities for the Empire to make large, technically talented acquisitions.

On occasion, Empire mercenary forces accompany a slaver run when a particularly high-quality stock of potential slaves is available. This practice is generally frowned upon by the mercenary companies who view themselves as above such things but it does occur from time-to-time, especially when a high-ranking noble requests it. One scenario that frequently does feature mercenary-slaver cooperation is in the acquisition of technical talent from Tyrian raider starship crews. The Empire's mercenary exploits in the Dustbelt are well known, particularly in operations against Tyr. Whilst the Empire often repatriates or engages in prisoner exchanges with the Tyrians, live crews have been known to disappear from Tyrian space, presumably having been appropriated by the Empire where they fill various roles. Prisoners taken by mercenary forces are transferred to slavers who take them to the Empire for distribution. The Tyrians, of course, loudly protest this practice but when you have been raiding your neighbours for upwards of two centuries, it is difficult to find a sympathetic ear.

The Reach can be a wild and lawless place and the Glorious Empire is not its only practitioners of slavery. Empire slavers are often seen selling or trading portions of their stock to illicit buyers. The warlords of Oghma have been customers on occasion, as have a rash of other non-aligned worlds. The Strend Cluster and Senlis Foederate are also rumoured customers of the Empire but never within their own borders. Each is believed to have purchased slaves for illegitimate resource extraction operations on remote rockball worlds and asteroid belts.

Crewing a Slaver

Slaver crews are different from those of most ships. It takes a special array of skills and a certain temperament. Slaving voyages are similar to fishing. Like a fisherman, slavers travel to familiar 'waters' where big bounties have been taken in the past. Eventually they may find that the waters have been 'overfished', at which point it is time to search out new locales.

It takes patience to crew a slaver. Some voyages result in a bounty of slaves that fill the ship's low berths, sometimes two per capsule. Other voyages return to their home ports with nothing to show for their efforts. It is often said that a successful slaving run is established during the prior voyage. Slaver captains and their pursers make contacts and hire agents to collect intelligence for them. When they return on a subsequent run months later, their agents inform them where the best acquisitions are to be had, such as a fledgling colony, scientific expedition or exploratory trade mission might yield a bounty of slave talent. A slaving voyage is often only as good as the intel acquired by its agents.

Slaver crews are tightly knit and often comprised of individual *ekhoia* or selected members of a few *ahriya*. Slaving voyages are long, drawn-out affairs, so crews must be willing and able to work together for long periods of time. The cramped confines of a starship become a prison of sorts if crew are not able to work with each other. Slavery is a detestable institution in most circles, even in the wilds of the Outrim Void, so the crew of a slaver must choose its destinations wisely and often spend months in space without docking at an orbital or making planetfall at a downport.

Slaving ships are lightly armed and often travel with an escort. For important runs or voyages crewed by highly ranked *ahriya*, an *Ekawsiykua* escort may be deployed, but more often than not the escort is an armed trader.

The ship of choice for the Aslan slaver is the *Hkisyeleaa* slaver, essentially a converted livestock hauler configured to house captured human slaves. In addition to its crew, a *Hkisyeleaa* also includes a master huntsman and eight ATV drivers called *roakoieil* or 'slaver sergeants'. Grunt huntsmen for the ATVs are usually carried on the escort craft and transfer to the slaver just before a raid is carried out.

The captain and purser of a slaver work in concert. The captain never decides where the ship will travel without consulting the purser first. The purser is responsible for researching potential destinations, establishing contacts in the field and recruiting agents while the captain runs the ship and serves as its ambassador. The purser is the executive officer and runs the business side of things.

Slaver Crew

Slaver crews vary widely in skill and experience. The characters on page 41 may be used as a guideline or inserted directly into an encounter with a *Hkisyeleaa* slaver.

For most crew positions, insert a specialist with a skill level of 1 or 2 in a primary specialty. Other than the purser and master huntsman positions, slavers do not obtain the cream of the crop. The most skilled spacers and warriors in Glorious Empire culture join one of its many prestigious mercenary units. The remnants fill out the ranks of a slaver.

Grunt soldiers are a rough and tumble bunch with a few combat skills at level 1 or 2, drawn from the ranks of low commoners and second sons in Glorious Empire society. In a healthy Aslan society, these young males usually become *ihaeii* but these do not exist in the Empire. They are often rowdy and dangerous, and some captains elect to store them in low berths to keep them out of trouble until the slaver arrives at the site of a raid.

Noticeably missing from slaver crews are any slaves. The obvious dichotomy of using slaves to capture more slaves is not one the Aslan typically engage in but a few crews bring one or two along to serve as a liaison

SLAVER CAPTAIN

SPECIES		GENDER		AGE
Aslan		Male		—
TRAITS		SKILLS		
STR	9	INT	9	Gun Combat (slug) 1, Leadership 2, Melee (cudgel) 1, Melee (natural) 1, Persuade 2, Pilot (spacecraft) 1, Tactics (naval) 1
DEX	6	EDU	6	
END	9	SOC	6	

EQUIPMENT	Weapons: Autopistol (3D-3) Armour: Lightweight Poly Carapace (+12) or Vacc Suit (+6) Equipment: Expert Software (Gunnery/2, Drive/2), Neural Link (TL13), Wafer Jack (TL12)
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A slaver captain comes from a variety of backgrounds but most have a sordid past: a promising space officer career that ended with a mishap, perhaps followed by a stint as a pirate or a

to fresh captives, mostly with the intention of calming them down enough until they can be slapped into a low berth and shipped back to the Empire.



landless youth who eventually served on a black-market trader. These are the sorts of career paths that lead to an officer position on a slaver.

SLAVER PURSER

SPECIES		GENDER		AGE
Aslan		Female		—
TRAITS		SKILLS		
STR	7	INT	10	Admin 1, Advocate 1, Broker 2, Deception 2, Gun Combat (slug) 1, Science (psychology) 1, Streetwise 2
DEX	7	EDU	7	
END	8	SOC	8	

EQUIPMENT	Weapons: Autopistol (3D-3) Armour: Vacc Suit (+6) Equipment: Expert Software (Broker/2, Navigation/2), Neural Link (TL13), Wafer Jack (TL12)
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Slavery is one of the few bona fide business opportunities in the Glorious Empire and therefore attracts a surprising number of quality applicants from eager pools of females. Unable to apply their talents to more legitimate enterprises, slavers often end up with highly qualified pursers. Whilst



the captain is technically in charge, the purser wields considerable influence and has a say in most major decisions.

MASTER HUNTSMAN

SPECIES		GENDER		AGE
Aslan		Male		—
TRAITS				—
STR	12	INT	9	Animals (handling) 2, Animals (training) 2, Athletics (strength) 1, Gun Combat (slug) 2, Leadership 2, Melee (bludgeon) 2, Melee (natural) 1, Persuade 1, Recon 1, Survival 1, Tactics (military) 1
DEX	8	EDU	6	
END	11	SOC	6	
EQUIPMENT		Weapons: Autopistol (3D-3), Assault Shotgun (4D, Bulky), Stunner (3D, Stun), Fierah (1D) Armour: Lightweight Poly Carapace (+12) or Combat Vacc Suit (+9) Augmentations: Claw Edging (3D), Prehensile Tail		

Most slaver crews use animals to assist with the rounding up, capture and herding of slaves. The master huntsman manages and trains the animals and leads the hunt. The Aslan are descended



from predatory animals and the instinct to hunt runs strong in them. Slaver sergeants follow the huntsman's instructions during the hunt.

MASTER SLAVER SERGEANT (*ROAKOIEIL*)

SPECIES		GENDER		AGE
Human		Male		—
TRAITS				—
STR	10	INT	6	Athletics (dexterity) 1, Drive (wheel) 2, Melee (natural) 1, Gun Combat (slug) 2, Heavy Weapons (vehicle) 1, Leadership 1, Navigation 1, Recon 1
DEX	9	EDU	6	
END	10	SOC	4	
EQUIPMENT		Weapons: Autopistol (3D-3), Assault Shotgun (4D, Bulky), Stunner (3D, Stun), Fierah Armour: Lightweight Poly Carapace (Armour +12) or Combat Vacc Suit (+9)		

Slaver sergeants drive the ATVs that are used to round up slaves. They also command squads of grunt soldiers who assist with the task of subduing and storing them in the ATV holds.



TAO'KHEKHIYA

The tao'khekhiya is a reptiloid animal native to the former Glorious Empire world of Eilaeah. The planet's dry ecosphere and abundant subterranean aquifers are home to a large number of species, most of which are small, herbivorous mould and fungus eaters. Such creatures can be difficult to find without the right equipment but the tao'khekhiya with its cavernous nasal cavities and millions of smell receptors is the right lizard for the job.

Tao'khekhiyas find their prey with an impressive sense of smell and dig them out of the Eilaeahian sands with clawed, spade-like front paws. The creature has poor vision, using its eyesight only to discern basic shapes and movement but once the presence of prey is determined, it relies far more on its nose. Like many Eilaeahian surface dwellers, the tao'khekhiya has retractable protective membranes that can cover its eyes to protect it from sand and other irritants.

ANIMAL	HITS	SPEED
Tao'khekhiya	16	8m
SKILLS	Melee (claws) 2, Recon 2, Stealth 2, Survival 1	
ATTACKS	Claws (1D+2), Bite (2D)	
TRAITS	Armour (+6), Heightened Senses	
BEHAVIOUR	Carnivore, Hunter	

It is an intelligent animal and can be trained with a reasonable amount of effort. The Aslan of the Glorious Empire use the tao'khekhiya as a 'bloodhound' of sorts. Slavers use it to capture runaways and individuals who have managed to flee a raid into one wild terrain or another. The animal is excellent at separating competing scents and staying focused on primary assigned quarry. It is a docile beast for the most part but can inflict a nasty wound with its sharp front claws or long rows of sharp, gnashing teeth when provoked.



STAILOAKH SLAVER ATV

The *Stailoakh* is a specialised ATV used for the capture and transportation of slaves and is designed to roam the countryside stealthily until suitable targets are found. Its primary weapon is a water cannon, which is used to knock down captives so that *roakoieil* can capture them using nets and stunners. Targets of a water cannon torrent must pass a Difficult (10+) STR check or be knocked prone and rendered helpless for one round.

The water cannon magazine contains enough fluid for 20 torrents of water. The cargo section contains eight slave stowage compartments, basically narrow diagonal cages that provide just enough room to contain a single captive. The compartments are small and uncomfortable so slavers sometimes sedate captives for the journey back to the *Hkisyeleaa* slaver.

Weapon	TL	Range	Damage	Tons	Cost	Magazine	Magazine Cost	Traits
Water Cannon	5	0.1	—	0.5	Cr2000	20	—	—

STALOAKH SLAVER ATV

TL	9
SKILL	DRIVE (WHEEL)
AGILITY	-1
SPEED (CRUISE)	MEDIUM (SLOW)
RANGE (CRUISE)	500 (750)
CREW	2
PASSENGERS	2
CARGO	250KG
HULL	60
SHIPPING	20 TONS
COST	CR191575

ARMOUR

FRONT	6
REAR	6
SIDES	6



EQUIPMENT AND WEAPONS

Autopilot (enhanced), Camouflage (improved), Communications System (improved, satellite uplink), Computer/3 (navigation), Control System (improved), Fire Extinguishers, Gun ports x 4, Life Support (short term), Navigation System (improved), Sensors (increased range, sensor mast), Slave Stowage x 8, Smart Wheels, Smoke Discharger, Stealth (improved)

Ring Mount (water cannon, pop-up mount)

TRAITS

Off-Roader

Autopilot (skill level)	2
Communications (range)	500km
Navigation (Navigation DM)	+5
Sensors (Electronics (sensors) DM)	+1
Camouflage (Recon DM)	-2
Stealth (Electronics (sensors) DM)	-2



TRAVELLING IN GLORIOUS EMPIRE SPACE

Entering Glorious Empire space is a risky idea at best. The Empire is extremely xenophobic and looks upon outsiders with suspicion and contempt.

Most Empire systems are heavily defended and have numerous system defence squadrons on hand. Determine space encounters using page 145 of the *Traveller Core Rulebook* as normal but any result of 7+ on the 10's dice results in an encounter with a military or system defence spacecraft. To determine the disposition of a Glorious Empire military spacecraft, roll 2D and consult the Space Encounters table with the following modifications:

- DM+1 if the Traveller spacecraft is an Aslan ship.
- DM-2 if the Traveller spacecraft is a human ship.
- DM-1 if the Law Level of the system is 7–9.
- DM-2 if the Law Level of the system is 10+.

Any approach to a Glorious Empire world with Class B starport or higher and Law Level 7+ results in automatic boarding and inspection as in the Space Encounters table. The Travellers can expect to be contacted at the 100-diameter limit shortly after coming out of jump and approached for boarding and inspection before they reach the 10-diameter limit.

Visiting the worlds of the Glorious Empire is an inadvisable thing to do, especially for human Travellers. Other than heavily defended Syoakh and Htourlao, all of its worlds bear the scars of war. The wrecks of warships may be seen in decaying orbit around many Empire worlds and evidence of orbital bombardment by the Hierate is present on most planets. Most major cities have suffered battle damage and some have been completely destroyed.

Space Encounters

2D Actions Taken by Glorious Empire Military Spacecraft

5–	The ship fires upon the Travellers without attempting to communicate. Attempts to contact the hostile craft and cease hostilities may or may not be accepted at the referee's discretion. Even if convinced to stand down, the Travellers' ship is escorted to the nearest starport and impounded.
6–8	The ship hails the Travellers and demands to board them. The Travellers must make a Difficult (10+) Persuade or Diplomat check (SOC or TER). Add DM+2 if the Travellers speak Trokh. Success results in a cursory boarding before the Travellers are allowed to proceed to a starport under escort. Failure results in an intrusive boarding followed by temporary impounding of the ship for 2D days.
9–10	The Travellers are instructed to proceed under escort to the nearest starport.
11+	The Travellers are left alone but watched closely. If they do anything other than perform wilderness refuelling and jump out of the system, they might very well be subjected to an inspection, as above.

Despite the destruction, Travellers will find that citizens of the Empire do their best to get on with their lives. Life on a Glorious Empire world is much as it is on any Hierate world. The key difference is the overwhelming presence of slaves. Some simply appear to be low-class citizens whilst others are attended by their Aslan masters and may be mistreated from time-to-time.

Whilst the Empire once enjoyed some of the highest Tech Levels in the Hierate, most of their technology is now in rapid decline. Fusion power plants are being maintained dangerously with low-tech materials and equipment, gravitic systems on many orbitals are failing or in dire need of repair and the Empire's once-great cities, known for their grandiose design, are a shadow of their former selves.

There are opportunities for bold Travellers to make a tidy profit in the Glorious Empire. Its people are desperate for everything from common industrial goods to foodstuffs like fresh aua meat and dustspice. A lucrative black market for goods exists in the Empire underworld; playing that market is a dangerous game but potential profits are astronomical.

Human Travellers are always at risk in the Glorious Empire, viewed as inferior and being worthy only of enslavement. However, despite the fact that the Empire wantonly roams the Reach capturing and enslaving humans, there is no mechanism for capturing human visitors who have somehow been willingly admitted into the Empire. It may seem to be a fine distinction but enslaving human visitors is an uncommon occurrence. Even so, humans in the Empire would be wise not to test their limits. There is a first time for everything.

MILITARY FORCES

Winning wars is difficult. War on an interstellar scale is horrifically destructive and inflicts a massive amount of damage to both sides of a conflict. In war, victory is declared by one side or the other at some point but, in reality, both sides lose when one considers loss of life and resources wastefully consumed. The Aslan, whose violent and aggressive tendencies are legendary, ameliorate conflicts by engaging in ritualised warfare. Duels, Wars of Champions, Wars of Assassins and Strictly Limited Wars are but a few of the highly regimented forms of conflict that Aslan engage in to prevent widespread loss of life and destruction. By establishing rules to limit aggression, the Aslan resist the temptation to destroy one another in an orgiastic cacophony of nuclear fire. By controlling their natural urges, they allow themselves to get on with what they really want to do: obtain territory.

The Glorious Empire has been locked within the confines of a shrinking polity for centuries. Unable to satisfy their expansionistic urges, they have been forced to fortify the territory they still have. Over the years, they have become masters of civil defence, brinkmanship and wars of attrition. Under current circumstances, they do not have the means to do anything other than fight a reactive war, responding to attacks on their forces and incursions into their territory.

The Glorious Empire puts a high price on conflict for any would-be opponents. When a dispute arises, Hierate clans almost invariably request one of the lower forms of ritual warfare – often starting with a Strictly Limited War – with the hope that the Empire will be reasonable and accept their terms. Alas, the Empire rarely does. With very few exceptions, the Empire insists upon Open War in all conflicts. The Tokouea'we ambassador to the Ya'soisthea quite patiently listens to the pleas of the Hierate clans to 'save our sons from needless bloodshed' and to 'preserve the sanctity of the hunting grounds', after which he almost universally spurns them.

This policy is not pursued out of bloodlust – not entirely, anyway – but as a deterrent to continued aggression by the Hierate. Both sides in the conflict possess powerful and deadly high-tech weapons of mass destruction but so far only one side has shown an uninhibited willingness to use them. The Empire rightly believes that it ultimately has nothing to lose by taking this

stance. On the other hand, Hierate clans have a great deal to lose when new lands are attainable at a much lower cost in lives and effort elsewhere. Whilst the clans have for centuries attempted to obey the dictates of the Tlaukuh to conquer the Glorious Empire heretics, they have met with such violent and unrelenting resistance that most have begged off and sought easier paths to land acquisition.

This policy has worked for the Empire for centuries but is beginning to fray at the edges. Up until recently, the Empire's territorial losses were few. Hierate clans have

A ROCK AND A HARD PLACE

The Peace of Ftahalr dictates that the Aslan shall press no further into neutral space lest they breach the agreed-upon buffer zone. The courts of the Ya'soisthea nobility debate just how binding the Peace is to the trans-Rift territories but the presence of the Tlaukuh in the sector has thus far prevented further expansion. The Florian League has yielded some worlds to Hierate incursions but conflict with them has been costly. The Floriani seem able to drum up horrifically powerful weapons on demand and have decimated weaker, less well-equipped clans in battle. To make matters worse, the most powerful clans in the region, such as the Tlaiowaha and their vassals, the Ahroy'if, have settled into lucrative trade arrangements with the Imperium and do what they can to prevent *i hatei* from spoiling the trade routes. However, none of this changes the challenging demographics of the Hierate, whose billions of landless second sons champ at the bit for new worlds to conquer. Whilst the Glorious Empire is certainly not bluffing when they threaten to use every weapon in their arsenal, land-hungry Hierate clans and their *i hatei* are becoming more and more willing to entertain the notion of Open War with the Empire to get what they want. Their choices are few and many clans feel that conquering the Empire is, at the very least, a suitable delaying tactic if not a final solution to their problems.



now expanded fully into the coreward portions of the Trojan Reach and they abut the Imperium and Florian League on multiple fronts. Empire military forces, once the envy of the Reach, have begun to lose the battle of wills against the Hierate.

THE GRAND FLEET

The Glorious Empire long ago lost the ability to maintain a large and powerful navy. While many ships of the Grand Fleet still have operational jump drives, the majority have declined due to centuries of limited access to replacement parts and service technology. The government secretly uses the black market to obtain what it can but with few willing trade partners, it is nigh impossible to get the needed materials on a consistent basis.

At one point in time, the Empire had the most fearsome fleet in the Trojan Reach. Whilst many clans eschew extensive investment in capital ships, the Empire built them wholeheartedly. Driven by insecurity and a desire to one up the Hierate, they created a magnificent *aikohō* – Grand Fleet – intended to strike awe and fear into their rivals. Squadrons of dreadnoughts and battleships that far outstripped those of nearby Hierate clans were constructed, like most of the Empire's grandiose accomplishments, using a legion of slave labourers. As the descendants of hardy and resourceful colonists, many of the early generations of slaves were technically skilled and adept at modern manufacturing techniques. The Empire put them to work in the construction of

starships and orbitals, most of which remain in service in modern times. The Grand Fleet was among their crowning achievements.

Like many of the Empire's military expenditures, the Grand Fleet consumed copious resources that might have been better used elsewhere. Rarely do Aslan invest in capital ships with such fervour. Aslan expansion is driven by *ihaeti*, most of whom are transported on much smaller spacecraft. The concept of capital ships flies in the face of tradition; *ihaeti* require flexibility and mobility. Capital ships have enormous drive components, highly regimented crews and complex weapons systems. They are anything but flexible. Dreadnoughts and battleships are designed to defend trade routes, protect the space between worlds and do battle with other fleets of capital ships. Such ships are considered to be – for the most part – a luxury by most clans in the Hierate, only used to resolve feuds and border disputes between the most powerful of clans. In the Reach, an Aslan fleet of this magnitude had little to do other than to impress and intimidate lesser clans – that is, until recently.

The Grand Fleet has seen a great deal of action in recent wars, particularly in the Battle of the Hliyh Chain. Ironically, when the Empire most needed its vaunted capital ships to shine, they had become too old and creaky to be truly effective. Few of these ships retain their original grandeur and many have been reduced to slower-than-light monitors and few of its megacarriers still have the ability to transport armadas of battle riders and fighter squadrons to star systems on the Empire's

periphery. A precipitous decline in jump-capable ships has deprived the Empire of the ability to project power beyond its borders.

As their vaunted Grand Fleet began to decline, the Empire distributed many of its remaining naval resources to vulnerable systems before the ships were no longer jump-capable. Thus, there are now battleships and dreadnaughts stranded in frontier systems like Oihu and Keawoaw, where they serve as a sublight vanguard against Hierate invasion. Some have retained jump drives in the hope that one day the parts will become available to restore their capabilities. Others have simply given up and stripped out the drives, replacing them with missile pods and other weaponry. Likewise, large asteroids – where available – have been converted into weaponised buffered planetoids and placed around worlds the Empire hopes to defend. These platforms bristle with missile batteries and mass drivers, weapons that are cheaper to maintain but pack a tremendous punch.

Most of the Empire's remaining jump-capable naval assets have been sent to Syoakh and Htourlao where they prepare for what might be the final battles of the war with the Hierate. These ships have been maintained at great expense in order to provide a ready strike force in the event of Hierate attacks on the seat of empire. Strategically speaking, the Empire has placed its most mobile assets where they are least needed but its centralised nature and skewed logic dictates that the capital and chief industrial centre must be defended at all costs by the best ships available.

Female Crews and the ‘Purser-in-Chief’

Jump-capable *hryo* patrol and show the flag throughout the Empire to provide assurance that the clan is ready and able to defend its remaining worlds. A shortage of male personnel – most of whom have been diverted to infantry roles – has precipitated the need to crew many naval ships with more females than is typical. Ratios of males to females on these ships is sometimes 1:2, with females filling many of the gunnery and crew positions that otherwise would have gone to males. Slave labour is also employed on the Empire's warships, with males commanding the slaves and females administering the usage of slave resources.

The role of purser on the Empire's warships has become of tantamount importance. Supplying and maintaining the ships of the line is a challenge, making the purser a crucial and prestigious position. *Siyajkhaora* – unmarried females – are often selected for such roles due to the high demands of the job. The purser corps is under extreme pressure to ensure the fleet is efficient and effective. A successful purser must be part accountant, part black marketeer and – more often

than not – part ship commander. Males on the Empire's warships are often commanders in name only with females calling most of the shots since it is they who truly know what is required to keep ships operational and battle ready. Purzers are rewarded for frugality and resourcefulness given the scarcity of material. Wasteful or spendthrift purzers either wash out of the space forces or see their careers interminably stalled.

Ships of the Line

The Yero'ilra system has become a nexus for the construction of new capital ships, largely built with technology obtained in trade with Acis. Whilst Yero'ilra lacks both the technology and shipyard facilities to construct new interstellar spacecraft, mobile yards from Alirar and Alr have been deployed to the L4 and L5 Lagrange points of each system mainworld. The spacecraft built at these facilities are far below the Empire's maximum Tech Level but beggars cannot be choosers. Admiralty views these ships as fine ‘sacrificial aua’ should a final apocalyptic battle occur, intended to take the brunt of an attack while the Grand Fleet's more powerful capital ships destroy invading forces.

Slaves are employed on all ships of the Empire's space forces, primarily in secondary roles such as drive hands, turret gunners, yeomen and technical staff but after centuries of neglect, technical skill among slaves is hard to come by. Many slaves from the more capable ranks of Eikhaaw serve, in effect, as low-ranking officers but are rarely accorded as such. The Eikhaawi are treated with ambivalence, reviled for being human yet valued for the talent and skill they bring. Many slaves who serve in the Empire's navy are recent captives from systems of the Outrim Void, taken with the express purpose of addressing the scarcity of technical talent.

Much like Hierate space forces, Glorious Empire squadrons are grouped in *hryo*, squadrons of 6–12 ships with mixed roles and capabilities. *Hryo* sometimes appear to be random groupings of ships with a broad range of function and tonnage but there is usually a method to their organisational madness. One or two capital ships are typically tended by much smaller, often insufficient, tender craft in the sub-100,000-ton range and the remainder filled out by frigates and corvettes. *Hryo* are designated as either jump-capable or sublight and are not mixed. The majority of jump-capable *hryo* are stationed at Syoakh or Htourlao but a few heavily reinforced *hryo* may be seen patrolling the Glorious Empire's frontier worlds from time-to-time.

Two or more *hryo* form an *aikoho*, or ‘fleet’. Because of the mixed-up craft in most *hryo*, it is often difficult to discern them within a given *aikoho* but the Empire command structure manages to make it work.

KHIREIA'KHAIOKA, PURSER

The Chief of Staff and Executive Procurement Shipmaster for the Glorious Empire Space Forces is Khireia'khaioka. She has served with distinction during all of the Empire's recent wars, all of which have been losses. After the loss of the Hliyh Chain, the previous Executive Procurement Shipmaster was relieved of duty and Khireia'khaioka was given the role. Admiralty has recognised her for achievements that have, in their estimation, enabled the Glorious Empire to suffer minimal losses and retrieve as many key personnel from embattled regions as possible.

Khireia'khaioka is a problem solver and her role in the Grand Fleet far transcends that of a typical space officer. Like many *siyajkhaora*, Khireia'khaioka has dedicated her life to her career, having served in the space forces for nearly 50 *ftahea* (about 43 standard years). Female officers in most clans typically answer to one or more male officers but in its depleted state, the Grand Fleet has been turned on its head. Whilst Khireia'khaioka technically does still answer to the all-male Supreme Admiralty, she is directly supervised and instructed by no one, allowing her to operate with near complete independence. She runs the fleet's corps of pursers like a strict governess, her staff of female auditors meticulously pouring over the procurement logs of each and every ship of the line, eliminating waste and making sure that not one Credit is misspent.

Her reach extends deeply into naval affairs. When the Empire lost Hliyh, it was Khireia'khaioka – at the time an executive lieutenant – who was tasked with determining who the most valuable officers were and ensuring that they were given ample cover to retreat to Glorious Empire space. She ran algorithms that assessed their value based on a complex array of data and executed her plan without mercy. Subpar officers were left behind to be killed or captured by Hierate forces.

In addition to penny pinching and personnel management, Chief Khireia'khaioka is credited with singlehandedly engineering the branch of the space forces which oversees the maintenance, staffing and acquisition of supplies and parts for the declining but still quite lethal Grand Fleet. She has built a network of contacts both within and beyond the Empire's borders to aid her in these tasks.

The Empire is fighting a war of attrition and as far as Admiralty is concerned, Khireia'khaioka is



winning it. They are biding their time, waiting for an opportunity to turn the tide and officers like Khireia'khaioka are what the Grand Fleet needs until they do.

These are some example *hryo*:

Hryo Name and Description	Hryo Elements
Syoakh Hryo Kheh 3 rd Squadron, Syoakh Fleet	<i>Syoakhtei</i> Battleship <i>Weakhto</i> Cruiser <i>Ukhtai Syoakha</i> Carrier <i>Tai'ao</i> Frigate x 2 <i>Ekawsiykua</i> escort x 6
Htourlao Hryo Starlkhu 45 th Squadron, wHtourlao Fleet (Base-8 translation: 37 th squadron)	<i>Firuah</i> Carrier <i>Si'khiraokhaor</i> Battleship <i>Tyaeo</i> Heavy Destroyer x 2 <i>Tai'ao</i> Frigate x 4
Yero'ilra Hryo Hlai 2 nd Squadron, Yero'ilra Fleet	<i>Tyaeo</i> Heavy Destroyer <i>Tai'ao</i> Frigate x 4 <i>Halaheike</i> Pocket Warship x 6

THE IMPERIAL GUARD

Aslan military forces are binary by nature. When conquering new lands, they are at war; once they have acquired them, they invest energy into securing and maintaining their land holds. Even *i hatei* who manage to peacefully settle uninhabited worlds or untouched regions on populated ones, are prepared to defend themselves. The Aslan are always ready to flip the switch at a moment's notice but, despite their penchant for conquest, they are at heart a species that much prefers to engage in art and philosophy than warfare and destruction.

Conquering worlds and building an interstellar empire is a tough business. Holding onto one is even harder. When the Glorious Empire first established a foothold on Syoakh and proceeded to conquer all worlds in the vicinity, they possessed one of the finest fighting forces the Trojan Reach has ever seen. They were equipped with the most technologically advanced weaponry and armour in all of the trans-Rift colonies and motivated to prove their martial prowess and right to exist as an independent Aslan state.

Initially, Empire military forces had three advantages over their adversaries:

- Superior technology
- Mobility
- An aggressive interpretation of *fteir*

The Empire's superior technology was largely gifted to them by the Wahtoi clan but Tokouea'vee corporations learned to build weapons of their own. This enabled

them to defend themselves long after the association between the two clans had come to an end. Even so, the influence of the Wahtoi persists to this day. Whilst weapon designs have become more utilitarian over time, the style and make of most Empire weaponry resembles that of the Wahtoi many centuries after the two clans dissolved their partnership.

Tokouea'vee mobility was necessitated by their service as the Wahtoi's military. The Wahtoi were – at one time – on the bleeding edge of colonial advancement and the Tokouea'vee were their fighting force. The Tokouea'vee had an unusual arrangement with their sponsors; they would take no land of their own and would merely rent it from the Wahtoi for the duration of the alliance. The eventual goal was to strike out on their own, once the opportunity presented itself. This required a great deal of patience from the Tokouea'vee but their *huihako* (clan lord), promised them that one day they – or their descendants as it were – would have their own land. Their instinctive urges were sated for the time being. This aspect of their culture has enabled them to maintain cohesiveness for long centuries of retraction. Patience and a selfless acceptance that although one may not attain one's goals during life, their descendants will one day reap the rewards of their parents' sacrifices and such sacrifice will be rewarded with ancestor worship in the great hunting grounds of the afterlife. The Tokouea'vee know their history well and firmly believe that one day they will resume their conquering ways.

The ability to sublimate their instincts was, of course, not the only thing that distinguished the Tokouea'vee from other clans. Their interpretation of what it meant to be 'honourable' was unique. *Fteir* is typically not up to debate, its tenets well defined by the Tlaukuh and reinforced by the Grand Conclave, but the Tokouea'vee were signatories to neither. A clan that does not play by the same rules is unpredictable and therefore poses problems for any other clan they come up against. Most Aslan military forces are designed and prepared to fight various levels of ritualised war but the Tokouea'vee are armed and predisposed only for Open War. Despite the protestations of their enemies in the Hierate, the Tokouea'vee march to the beat of their own drummer. This has given them an undeniable advantage when conflicts arise.

For a brief golden age – little more than a century, really – the Empire branched out and looked to be indomitable. They had an immense head start on all of their rivals, able to defeat most of their opponents with overwhelming force because of the quality of their equipment and willingness to fight Open Wars. That was then and this is now.

The Empire squandered its early advantages to pursue petty vendettas, quash slave revolts and build a military machine that was far better at posturing than actual conquering. Aslan military forces are traditionally known as *Trekhair* – literally, land protectors – but once the most daunting military force in the Reach actually had land to protect, they began to devalue and dismantle the things that made them successful.

The effects were not immediate. It took time for malaise to set in. The Tokouea've had centuries of experience as a mobile mercenary fighting force and fought in wars throughout the Trojan Reach. In the early days, their forces were more than capable of mounting lightning strike missions but have since become an entrenched and defensive army after almost 400 years without expanding their borders. They have not conquered a single star system or acquired so much as a hectare of new territory since they took Nora'a in 3209. It was never the intention of the Empire to hold the line there but the encroachment of Hierate *i hatei* and retaliation from the Florian League put an end to the Empire's days of conquest.

The Glorious Empire military has become an inward-looking force whose primary goal has been to defend the homeland. Rapid strike units and marines have their place in the Empire military but the majority of forces are now designed to defend territory against incursions by the Hierate or other enemies of the state. More personnel are assigned to cavalry and support units than any other. The Empire's most valuable worlds are absolutely bristling with artillery and ground-based anti-spacecraft weaponry and marines serve as ship's troops aboard the Empire's most agile craft, including its line of fast interceptors.

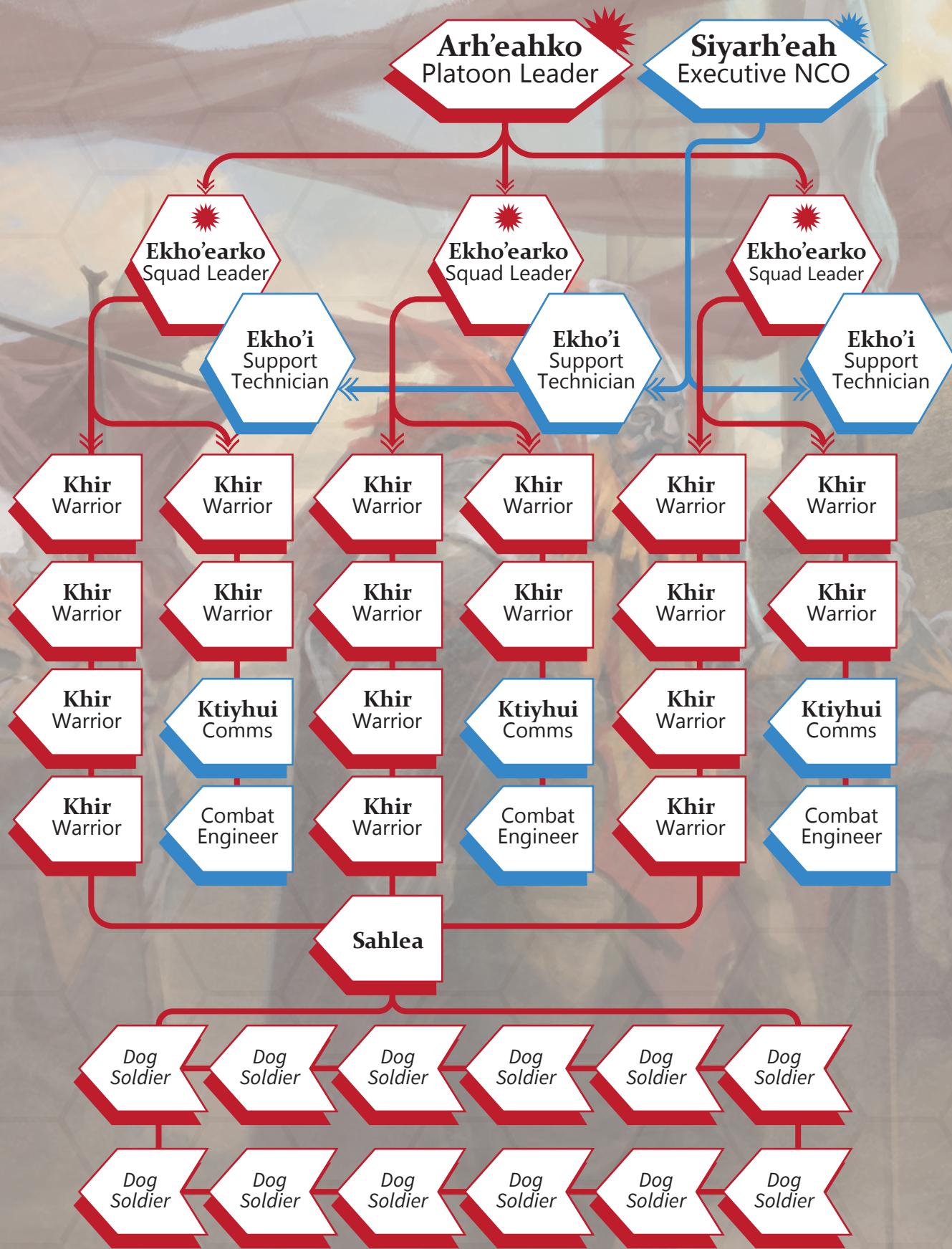
With the recent losses of Ehrafou, Eiow and the Hliyh Chain worlds, the Empire has begun to rethink its strategy for the retention of its remaining worlds. Infantry forces are now being trained to fight guerrilla wars. Special operations forces are being trained in the arts of minimalism, survival and how to handle disproportionate battles in which the Hierate brings overwhelming numbers of warriors to bear. Mercenary forces that have been fighting wars in the Dustbelt have returned to the Empire to train the Imperial Guard how to fight with limited resources and employ creativity in battle. Their goal is to make the Hierate pay for every inch of territory the Empire is forced to cede. It is rumoured that a special operations team was sent to Nora'a to retrieve long-lost members of the clan who have lived in the jungle outback of the planet for centuries, fighting back against the Floriani. The retrieved survivors now serve as expert trainers, teaching Empire military forces how to hold out against a superior opponent in a battle of attrition.

The Glorious Empire warrior is, on the whole, no more fearsome or effective than those of any other Aslan clan. In some ways, they are less so. Their increasing dependence on human 'dog soldiers' to bear the brunt of their attacks has, in some ways, curbed their warriors' ability to harness and develop their fighting skills. In addition, the attrition from the Empire's many wars has left them bereft of warriors and their commanders have become less willing to risk lives in foolhardy assaults. The Empire warrior makes up for these shortcomings with his more aggressive interpretation of *fteir*. Whilst Aslan from the majority of clans exhibit a tendency towards restraint in armed conflict, the Empire warrior has no such compunctions.

Slaves now comprise a greater percentage of the Glorious Empire military forces than ever before. In fact, on Alirar, Alr and Eikhaaw, humans make up the majority of military personnel. In some cases, slaves are coerced to fight using horrific methods; mind-altering drugs, cerebrally implanted, nanites and explosive collars, to name a few. In others, slave forces are granted levels of freedom and a greater stake in Empire society than ever before. Empire Aslan are admittedly treading a fine line with this practice, especially in light of the growing calls for resistance and revolt by the slave population but, ultimately, they have little choice. On many worlds, the Empire has lost an entire generation of warriors as they continue to fight a losing battle against the Hierate.

In this environment, female support personnel have become more highly valued. The Empire's comms specialists and combat engineers have become just as important as its warriors. All Empire infantry units use advanced communications technology to maintain tight cohesion during battle; an Empire *ekho'ear* (platoon) relies more upon teamwork than a typical Hierate unit. Individual acts of heroism are less favoured than organised and coordinated assaults. In addition, Empire combat engineers – also female – make craftier use of explosives, entrenchment and breaching tools than their peers in Hierate armies.

The Empire military is a heavily armed defensive force, designed to fight tooth and nail with overwhelming destructive force, in an effort to keep the remaining lands they have. Its armies have grown increasingly dependent on female support officers and human slaves. The growing use of females has changed the ways Aslan fight, relying more on technology than individual acts of courage. The use of humans has enabled the Empire to maintain its personnel numbers but also created tension, especially with the growing numbers of freed humans on the worlds the Empire has lost.



ARH'EAH (PLATOON) STRUCTURE

Empire *arh'eah* differ from typical Aslan units due to a greater reliance on female support personnel and human dog soldiers. Females use technology to tightly coordinate and enhance the actions of the unit; a traditional Aslan *arh'eah* relies more on individual acts of bravery from its warriors to achieve

its objectives. Dog soldiers effectively report to any Aslan male in the unit but are primarily commanded by a *khirkō* from each squad.

The roles of *arh'eahko* (platoon leader), *ekho'earko* (squad leader), *khirkō* (corporal) and *khir* (warrior) are male. *Siyarh'eah* (executive NCO), *ekho'i* (support technician), comms and combat engineer roles are female. Dog soldiers and their *saihlea* may be of either gender.

Mercenary Forces

Despite all the doom and gloom, the Empire military shines brightly in one of its enterprises: mercenary forces. Mercenary companies have been a part of Empire military culture throughout its history but only recently have they reclaimed elite status in the Reach.

The Empire's mercenary forces first acquired distinction in the employ of the Wahtoi clan during the crossing of the Great Rift and in their subsequent efforts to establish a durable fief in the trans-Rift colonies. Tokouea'we mercenaries were feared by the warriors of other clans for centuries. They were without peer in the early history of the colonies and rarely lost battles. However, once the Tokouea'we settled Syoakh and began to form their empire, mercenary operations declined and the most renowned forces were called home to serve the needs of the clan during the formative years of the Empire. Some historians believe that this was an early attempt to rein in the *ahriya*, many of whose successful mercenary enterprises threatened the solidarity of the Tokouea'we clan. By dissolving mercenary forces and redirecting their aggression towards designated enemies of the clan, the Empire consolidated the *ahriya* and prevented them from becoming vassals.

As the Empire began to crumble centuries later, mercenary enterprises experienced a resurgence. In the 3580s (1060s Imperial), exiles from Acis reached out to the Empire to request assistance against Tyr, which had oppressed not only Acis but most of the systems of the Dustbelt. Empire mercenaries turned the tide against Tyr and eventually destroyed the Tyrian Lordships. Their success begat more work for them in the Dustbelt and they have since acquired a reputation throughout the sector for ruthlessness and efficiency.

Aslan are far superior at fighting in terrestrial environments than in space. Taking on the Tyrians – who by and large spend most of their time in raiding

ships – posed a challenge to Empire mercenaries. The Empire initially went into battle with the mentality that conquering the Tyrian mainworld should be their primary objective. However, the resource-poor world of Tyr is of only passing importance to the Tyrians and is often thought of as little more than a gravity well around which they inhabit space stations, artificial habitats and the ships with which they raid their neighbours. After a rough start, the Empire learned the measure of their foe and adapted to the notion of conducting battle in space. The Aslan are a large species and fighting in the tight confines of a starship hull can be a challenge but they have taken to it with alacrity and developed technology and tactics to get the job done. The concept of Aslan 'marines' has traditionally been far less important than that of the infantry warrior but Empire mercenary marines have become some of the most effective ship's troops in Charted Space.

The renaissance of the Glorious Empire's mercenary companies comes at an opportune time for them. Females in Empire society have long suffered from a dearth of both economic opportunities and males from their desire to obtain more land. Females from well-to-do *ahriya* can aspire to become mercenary company administrators. Males, long denied the opportunity to acquire new lands have, for the first time in centuries, left the confines of the Glorious Empire to do battle in foreign star systems. Whilst the mercenaries are not technically *i hatei*, the act of branching out into other worlds and conquering their inhabitants has been cathartic. Tales of their exploits abound in Empire space, feeding dreams of a new golden age. In fact, Acis may have opened a Pandora's Box by introducing Empire mercenaries into their midst. It would not take much more than a little shove for them to make the transition from mercenary to true *i hatei* and set about conquering some of the weak, infirm and depopulated systems of the Dustbelt.



Those who have gone to battle against Empire mercenary companies – and lived to tell the tale – report that it is unlike any other wartime experience they have had. There is a methodical nature to their tactics that makes them unique. They are not selfless like most Aslan warriors; the Glorious Empire soldier does not fight with reckless abandon in pursuit of honour. They almost always seem to be one step ahead of their opponents, a result of relentless training and planning for multiple eventualities. Their female communications and combat engineering technicians are the unsung keys to their success. Led by an executive officer, who in turn takes broad commands from the commanding officer, female technicians tightly coordinate a unit's activities.

A Tyrian unit whose destroyer was taken by an Empire boarding party once said:

'They're doing multiple things at once. After they breached the hull, we sent marines to protect the life support systems but they were already there. They made such a mad rush for the bridge that we overcommitted to and by the time we realised what they were doing, they had taken engineering and powered the ship down, including the grav plates. We fired a few shots and put up a good fight but they had us before we knew what was going on.'

The practice of slavery – even in the wilds of the Outrim Void – is generally frowned upon. For this reason, standard dog soldiers are rarely used in mercenary units; however, freed slaves are sometimes employed. These freed slaves, typically called *hisol'i khir* (human warriors), can rise to the rank of *awkhea* (landless serf) in Empire society. A select few have actually managed to acquire small land holdings and slaves of their own. Because they have risen through the ranks by surviving the absolutely horrific conditions of fighting as dog soldiers, *hisol'i khir* are often the most skilled and battle-tested warriors in a mercenary unit.

Dog Soldiers

Employing slaves as soldiers is a recent event in Glorious Empire history. The idea of giving humans guns was not one the Aslan were initially very keen on but the advent of various genetic engineering projects and the declining population of Aslan males has made it a necessity.

Aslan of the Empire have not considered humans as viable warriors for the majority of their history. While they were aware that humans had a vast and powerful interstellar empire of their own and were certainly capable of fighting, they were thought to be inferior in most ways and definitely not fit to serve in the Empire's armies. However, having bred humans for slavery for

centuries and eventually subjecting the humans to genetic engineering programmes, designed to 'improve' them in one way or another, the idea of using them as low-level soldiers eventually took hold.

The Empire prejudicially saw human temperament as unfit for the battlefield. They deemed the human species to be undisciplined, unpredictable and physically unsuited to the rigours of war; therefore, the first attempts to use humans as soldiers were centred upon altering their genome to make them tougher and more resilient. Such programmes met with varying degrees of success by Empire standards. Early genetic research enterprises bred humans with hardened skin, improved senses and quicker reflexes, but most suffered side effects of one sort or another. Millions of years of evolution could not easily be altered without creating physical and psychological side effects. One such programme succeeded in creating a durable and combative strain of Humaniti who were resilient in hazardous conditions but so utterly insane that they could not be relied upon to participate in any orderly type of warfare. They were employed as suicide shock troops against the Empire's worst enemies but ultimately the programme was scuttled after a platoon of the modified humans turned on their creators and slaughtered them.

Genetically altered humans are still present in the armies of the Empire in modern times, but serve in specialist functions:

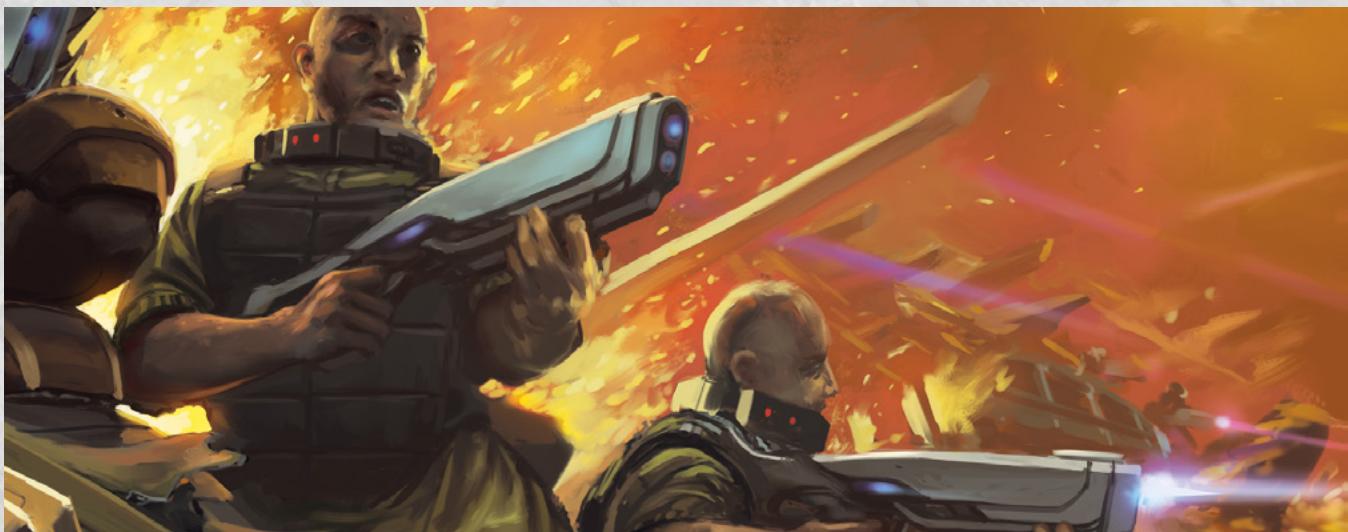
- Radiation-resistant specimens who could – at least for a short duration – survive post-nuclear battle zones.

- Stealthy but feral agents who could be dropped into enemy encampments and wreak havoc for short periods of time before being destroyed.
- Pain-resistant subjects who could man the front lines, take point in infantry assaults and continue fighting even after losing limbs, being blinded, or otherwise suffering horrific damage before perishing.

They eventually resorted to augmenting humans for warfare but the costs outweighed the benefits. Subdermal armour, neural links and muscular bridging simply could not be employed on a large scale at reasonable expense.

As the Empire began to lose territory and their economy started to collapse, it became more expedient to simply use unaltered humans to fight in their battles. At first, this was done under the most egregious circumstances and with little regard for the humans, who were sent into battle with inferior armour and arms. They were slaughtered in droves. Merciless generals used them to probe enemy lines, clear mine fields, rush through breaches and similar suicide missions. It did not take long for them to realise that, just like everything else, the humans were a finite resource and if continued to be used in this fashion, they would soon be scarce. Thus, the dog soldiers were born; human slaves taught how to fight and given reasonably effective weaponry and armour.

Dog soldiers are given the most dangerous assignments, the most hazardous duties and suffer harrowing mortality rates but are considered an important part of Empire military forces. Those who survive the first year or two are usually the hardiest and most clever of the lot. For the dog soldiers, it is survival of the fittest and those who survive and thrive in the Empire's armies are often its best soldiers – Aslan included.



GLORIOUS EMPIRE TRAVELLERS



The Aslan of the Glorious Empire are similar to those of the Hierate but there are enough differences to warrant alterations to Traveller creation. Life is hard in the Empire and career descriptions, events and mishaps should be used to convey the limited prospects and life-threatening hazards that one faces on a day-to-day basis in this volatile region of space.

In addition to the changes made for Aslan Travellers, the system demonstrates how to make human Travellers who served as slaves.

Referee's Note: While most slaves have been relegated to the roles of servant, labourer, technician and dog soldiers, some may be employed in careers traditionally held only by Aslan at the Referee's discretion. Most such slaves are those who have been recently captured and have the aptitude to do so. For these Travellers, use the labourer, servant and technician Events table from the Slave career for all non-combatant careers and the Dog Soldier Events table for military careers.

CAREERS

For Aslan Travellers, determine characteristics and gender as described in *Aliens of Charted Space, Volume 1*. No roll is necessary to determine clan, family and pride as Aslan from the Glorious Empire are always from the Tokouea'we clan, which gives no positive DM on the Ancestral Deeds table. Instead, males with STR 10+ and females with INT 8+ receive DM+1 on Ancestral Deeds. If a 7 is rolled on Ancestral Deeds, it indicates that the Traveller's *ekho* was one of the most influential in the Glorious Empire, not the Hierate, but still bequeaths DM+3 on the Ancestral Territory table. Past Deeds are determined as normal, as are starting age, name and *akhuaeuhrekhyeh* (rites of passage).

Most of the Aslan careers presented in *Aliens of Charted Space, Volume 1* are available in the Glorious Empire. Use the following careers as normal, adjusting Mishaps and Events to fit the Glorious Empire:

- Ceremonial
- Envoy (spy and duellist only)
- Management (corporate and clan aide only)
- Scientist (healer and researcher only)
- Outlaw

The following careers are rare or non-existent in Glorious Empire space:

- **Envoy (negotiator):** Diplomatic ties to other polities have been all but cut off. Referees may make an exception but should be aware that the career is extremely uncommon.
- **Management (governess):** In the Glorious Empire, this role is typically performed by the matriarch of an ekho and her slaves. Referees may optionally use the Governess career to create a family matriarch.
- **Scientist (explorer) and Wanderer:** Very few individuals are given the option to travel beyond Empire borders.
- **Outcast:** The Glorious Empire does not exile failures as their brethren in the Hierate do. Instead, they relegate them to the bottom-feeding careers of Landless One and Outlaw. These lowly Aslan remain in Empire space but operate in its underworld.

Military, Military Officer, Spacer and Space Officer careers are all present in some form within the Glorious Empire but have been replaced by the Warrior, Warrior Officer, Fleet and Fleet Officer careers, respectively.

Human Travellers

For human Travellers, apply the following adjustments to characteristics: END+1, EDU-2. SOC is 0 for all slaves but may rise to 1 or 2 if the slave is freed after serving two or more terms in a military career.

When mustering out from any career other than Slave, human Travellers may only take the Cash Benefit once. Humans are sometimes allowed to have money in Empire society but it is difficult to come by. Whilst slaves may serve in traditionally Aslan careers if the Referee permits it, any levels of rank they receive only reflect their standing among other slaves; no human slave can ever outrank an Aslan in the same career.

Unique Careers

There are two new careers in Glorious Empire space: Landless One and Slave. Landless Ones are Aslan who have failed to find a career for themselves and thus relegated to underworld roles. The Slave career is strictly for human slaves and includes Servants, Labourers, Technicians and Dog Soldiers.

Slave Ownership

If an Aslan Traveller has SOC or TER 3+, it is possible that they own human slaves. See page 37 for more information. If an Aslan Traveller owns slaves, the Referee may use the templates provided there or create them using the Slave career.

TOLERANCE

The Aslan of the Glorious Empire are exceedingly intolerant. They are touchy and proud and are highly unlikely to accept any slights or insults without becoming provoked into a duel or, at the very least, demanding a full apology. Whenever Tolerance skill is rolled during Traveller creation, reroll the skill. If Tolerance is rolled a second time, the Traveller has overcome the Empire's cultural resistance to tolerance and may take a level in the skill. If any Event results in the reception of the Tolerance skill, the Traveller may

alternatively take Diplomat instead. Whilst the Traveller may take Tolerance when it is awarded during an Event, keep in mind that possession of this skill is deemed a weakness in Empire society, not a strength.

QUALIFICATION FAILURE

As described above, the Glorious Empire has no Outcasts. Depleted as they are, the Empire does not have the luxury of throwing away available personnel in the cavalier fashion that the Hierate does. When creating an Aslan Traveller, Qualification failure does not result in immediate assignment to another career. After failing to qualify, the Traveller may make one additional attempt to qualify for another career at DM-1. If this attempt fails, the Traveller must select either the Landless One or Outlaw career and the Traveller's SOC is reduced to 0.

OTHER NOTABLE DIFFERENCES

Glorious Empire Aslan are not averse to augmentation. During the Mustering Out process, Travellers in military roles (Warrior, Warrior Officer, Spacer or Space Officer) may receive Combat Implants as Benefits. Select a suitable augmentation from either the *Central Supply Catalogue* or the Aslan-oriented augmentations in *The Trojan Reach*.

Travellers from the Glorious Empire rarely bother to learn languages other than Trokh. They seldom travel outside the Empire's borders and rarely have the need to learn foreign languages. Those who do should have special reasons for acquiring them.

CAREER SUMMARY

Fleet and Fleet Officer are substitutes for the Spacer and Space Officer careers. Warrior and Warrior Officer replace the Military and Military Officer careers.

CAREER SUMMARY

Career	Assignment	Gender	Qualification	Survival	Advancement
1 - Fleet			Rite 8+		
	Pilot	Male		DEX 8+	INT 5+
	Gunner	Male		INT 7+	DEX 6+
	Engineer	Female		END 7+	INT 5+
	Crew	Either		EDU 5+	INT 7+
2 - Fleet Officer			Rite 9+		
	Commander	Male		SOC 8+	INT 5+
	Shipmaster	Female		EDU 7+	EDU 6+
	Navigator	Female		INT 7+	SOC 7+
3 - Warrior			Rite 6+		
	Imperial Guard	Male		END 8+	STR 5+
	Imperial Dragoons	Male		DEX 8+	INT 6+
	Support	Female		END 6+	INT 6+
3 - Warrior Officer			Rite 9+		
	Leader	Male		END 7+	INT 6+
	Executive Officer	Female		END 7+	EDU 7+
	Assassin	Male		END 8+	DEX 6+
5 - Landless One			None		
	Labourer	Either		END 6+	STR 7+
	Wildcatter	Either		DEX 7+	INT 7+
	Slaver	Either		END 8+	INT 7+
6 - Slave			Automatic		
	Labourer	Human, either		END 7+	STR 6+
	Servant	Human, either		INT 6+	DEX 6+
	Technician	Human, either		INT 6+	EDU 6+
	Dog Soldier	Human, either		END 9+	DEX 6+

BENEFITS

Cash and Benefits are determined in the same way for Travellers that hail from the Glorious Empire as they are elsewhere but the following Benefits are unique to this region.

Brotherhood of the Empire

This ceremonial organisation gives you the ability to travel about the Empire freely. Gain D3 Allies among the officer corps from your career and one Middle Passage per month.

Courier

Your *ahriy* gains access to a *Wahtoi* courier and you are its custodian. Possession of a *Wahtoi* is a great honour but imposes responsibilities on its owner. You must carry the mail for the Empire, transferring it to the starport data core on each Empire world you visit. Ships of this class are quite old and difficult to maintain. Roll three times on the Spacecraft Quirks table for the ship.

Transport

Your *ahriy* gains access to a military transport craft in order to carry out mercenary missions outside the Empire. You may use this starship freely for the benefit of your *ahriy* but may be called to action in the Empire if your services are required. This ship may be an armed trader or an *Aoheileikh* Mercenary Cruiser (see page 150) at the Referee's discretion.

External or Aslan Ally (Slave Only)

You gain an Ally from the Hierate or Outrim Void or an important Aslan within the Empire.

Freedom (Slave Only)

You are granted your freedom by your Aslan master and become an *awkhea* (landless serf). Resume your career with a suitable one from the *Traveller Core Rulebook*, and gain SOC 2.



1

FLEET

Qualification: Rite of Passage 8+

This career includes all roles required to maintain and operate the interplanetary and interstellar spacecraft of the Grand Imperial Fleet, from its jump-4 couriers to its aging but still lethal squadrons of capital ships. Males in the fleet are primarily gunners and pilots; females are technicians or support personnel.

ASSIGNMENTS

Choose one of the following:

Pilot: You fly anything from a swift courier to a massive capital ship or the smaller shuttles and fighters that accompany them.

Gunner: You man a turret or other weapon, slaughtering your foes with lasers and missiles or disabling their ships so their crews can be enslaved.

Engineer: You maintain the systems of a starship, despite a scarcity of spare parts and a constant need for damage control.

Crew: You serve as a shipboard labourer or deckhand.

Gender: Only males can enter the Pilot or Gunner assignments. Only females can enter the Engineer assignment. Either gender can become Crew.

CAREER PROGRESS

	SURVIVAL	ADVANCEMENT
Pilot	DEX 8+	INT 5+
Gunner	INT 7+	DEX 6+
Engineer	END 7+	INT 5+
Crew	EDU 5+	INT 7+

MUSTERING OUT BENEFITS

ID	CASH	BENEFITS
1	Cr500	1 Clan Share
2	Cr1000	INT +1
3	Cr1000	EDU +1
4	Cr5000	Weapon or Augmentation
5	Cr5000	Brotherhood of the Empire
6	Cr10000	2 Clan Shares
7	Cr20000	SOC +1
8	Cr30000	3 Clan Shares

DM+1 if SOC 9+

DM+1 if male

SKILLS AND TRAINING

ID	PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT	SERVICE SKILLS	ADVANCED EDUCATION – MALE (MIN. EDU 8)	ADVANCED EDUCATION – FEMALE (MIN. EDU 8)
1	Independence (male) or Admin (female or slave)	Melee (male or slave) or Broker (female)	Pilot	Astrogation
2	DEX +1	Flyer	Electronics (Sensors)	Electronics
3	INT +1	Mechanic	Tactics (naval)	Admin
4	Melee (natural or blade)	Athletics	Independence	Advocate
5	Jack-of-All-Trades	Electronics	Leadership	Profession
6	Vacc Suit	Vacc Suit	Gunner	Science

ID	SPECIALIST: PILOT	SPECIALIST: GUNNER	SPECIALIST: ENGINEER	SPECIALIST: CREW
1	Pilot (small craft)	Gunner (turret)	Electronics	Steward
2	Pilot (spacecraft)	Gunner (any)	Engineer (m-drive)	Mechanic
3	Pilot (capital ships)	Tactics (naval)	Engineer (j-drive)	Medic
4	Tactics (naval)	Athletics (dexterity)	Engineer (power)	Admin
5	Gunner (turret)	Electronics	Engineer (any)	Vacc Suit
6	DEX +1	DEX +1	EDU +1	Gun Combat

RANKS AND BONUSES

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

RANK	ENGINEER, CREW	SKILL OR BONUS
0	Recruit	—
1	Spacehand	Mechanic
2	Veteran Spacehand	—
3	Honoured Spacehand	EDU +1
4	Petty Officer	—
5	Veteran Petty Officer	—
6	Honoured Petty Officer	2 Clan Shares

MISHAPS TABLE

1D MISHAP

- 1 Severely injured. Roll twice on the Injury table and take the lower result.
- 2 A superior officer has you demoted. Reduce Rank by -1 and gain a Rival. You are not ejected from this career.
- 3 You are infected by an alien parasite. Roll END 8+; if you succeed, you do not lose any END; otherwise lose END -1. You are not ejected from this career.
- 4 You are accused of smuggling illegal goods into Empire space. Lose SOC -2 and you are ejected from the career. You may only enter the Landless One or Outlaw career.
- 5 You run afoul of your commanding officer. Lose SOC-1 and one Benefit roll. You are not ejected from the career.
- 6 Injured. Roll on the Injury table. Receive a combat implant and return to service next term.

EVENT TABLE

2D EVENT

2	Disaster! Roll on the Mishap table but you are not ejected from this career.
3	Your vessel is attacked by a Hierate clan ship. Roll either Pilot 8+, Gunner 8+, or Mechanic 8+. If you succeed, you drive off the attackers and gain DM+2 to your next Advancement roll. If you fail, the Hierate dogs damage your ship. Lose all Benefit rolls for this term.
4	You are sent on an operation to retrieve black market goods from a Hierate port. Roll Admin or Deception 8+. Succeed and gain 3 Benefit rolls. Fail and suffer DM-3 to your next Advancement roll.
5	You are considered for promotion to the officer caste. You may add the number of terms served in this career as a DM if you attempt to qualify for the Fleet Officer career next term.
6	You are given advanced training in a specialist field. Roll EDU 8+ to increase any one skill you already have by one level.
7	Life Event. Roll on the Aslan Life Events table in <i>The Trojan Reach</i> .
8	You serve as a crewmember on a mercenary cruiser or commerce raider and are exposed to foreign worlds and cultures. Gain a level of Language, Streetwise or Tolerance.
9	You are engaged in a series of vicious battles against the Hierate. You may demonstrate heroism or prudence in battle. If you demonstrate heroism, roll DEX 9+ to avoid rolling on the Injury table, and gain DM+2 to your next Advancement roll. If you cower, roll Stealth 8+ to avoid losing SOC -1.
10	The captain sees you as a promising crewman and entrusts you with an important ceremonial duty. Either gain a level in Steward or DM+4 to any Advancement roll thanks to his aid.
11	You serve under a hero of the Empire. Either gain a level in Tactics (naval) if male or Admin if female, or DM+4 to your next Advancement roll.
12	Your efforts strike a great blow for the Empire. You are automatically promoted and gain SOC +1.

2

FLEET OFFICER

Qualification: Rite of Passage 9+

You serve as an officer in the Grand Fleet. As a member of the officer caste, it is forbidden for you to fraternise with the enlisted ranks.

ASSIGNMENTS

Choose one of the following:

Commander: You command a starship of the Grand Fleet.

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

Navigator: You manage your ship's passage through jump space.

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

DM+1 if SOC 9+

DM+1 if male

CAREER PROGRESS

	SURVIVAL	ADVANCEMENT
Commander	SOC 8+	INT 5+
Shipmaster	EDU 7+	EDU 6+
Navigator	INT 7+	SOC 7+

MUSTERING OUT BENEFITS

ID	CASH	BENEFITS
1	Cr1000	3 Clan Shares
2	Cr5000	INT +1
3	Cr5000	EDU +2
4	Cr10000	5 Clan Shares
5	Cr20000	TER +2
6	Cr50000	Brotherhood of the Empire
7	Cr50000	SOC +2
8	Cr50000	Courier

SKILLS AND TRAINING

ID	PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT	SERVICE SKILLS	ADVANCED EDUCATION (MIN. EDU 8)
1	INT +1	Electronics	Admin
2	EDU +1	Gun Combat	Advocate
3	Carouse	Pilot	Persuade
4	Jack-of-All-Trades	Athletics	Leadership
5	Melee (natural)	Vacc Suit	Science or Medic
6	SOC +1	Gunner	Tactics (naval)

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

RANKS AND BONUSES

RANK	COMMANDER	SKILL OR BONUS
0	Probationary Intendant	—
1	Intendant	Leadership 1
2	Lieutenant	—
3	Senior Lieutenant	—
4	Commander	Tactics (naval) 1
5	Captain	—
6	Admiral	TER +2 and SOC 10

RANKS AND BONUSES (CONTINUED)

RANK	SHIPMASTER	SKILL OR BONUS
0	Probationary Intendant	—
1	Intendant	Admin 1
2	Lieutenant	—
3	Senior Lieutenant	Advocate 1
4	Executive Lieutenant	—
5	Executive	—
6	Chief of Staff	2 Clan Shares

RANK	NAVIGATOR	SKILL OR BONUS
0	Trainee	—
1	Junior Navigator	Astrogation 1
2	—	—
3	Navigator	Electronics (computers) 1
4	—	—
5	—	—
6	Senior Navigator	2 Clan Shares

MISHAPS TABLE

1D	MISHAP
1	Severely injured. Roll twice on the Injury table and take the lower result.
2	Your ship is crippled in battle with the Hierate and you are blamed. Roll Advocate 8+ or Melee 8+ to challenge this decision. If you fail, lose all Benefit rolls for this term.
3	A shift in clan politics damages your reputation. You are demoted one Rank and lose SOC -2. You are not ejected from this career. Gain an Enemy.
4	Your vessel is destroyed in battle with the Hierate. Gain the foe who defeated you as a Rival. You are not ejected from this career.
5	You are captured by a Hierate clan but returned to the Empire in a prisoner exchange. The disgrace ends your career. Your SOC and TER are reduced to 0. You may return to the Empire but may only continue in the Landless One or Outlaw careers. If you remain in the Hierate, gain a Contact but your SOC is reduced to 2.
6	Injured. Roll on the Injury table. Receive a combat implant and return to service next term.

EVENT TABLE

2D	EVENT
2	Disaster! Roll on the Mishap table but you are not ejected from this career.
3	Your ship is attacked by Hierate corsairs. Roll Tactics 8+ or Engineer 8+. If you succeed, you drive off the attackers and gain DM+2 to your next Advancement roll. If you fail, the corsairs steal your cargo. Lose all Benefit rolls from this term and gain the Hierate corsair captain as an Enemy.
4	You commerce raid Hierate star systems and have the opportunity to skim some profits off the top. If you choose to do so, roll Deception 8+ or Admin 8+. Succeed and gain 1D Benefit rolls. Fail and you are ejected from this career, drop to SOC 2 and may only continue in the Landless One or Outlaw careers.
5	You spend time in alien space. Gain one level of Tolerance, Diplomat, Language or Science.
6	You are given advanced training in a specialist field. Roll EDU 8+ to increase any one skill you already have by one level.
7	Life Event. Roll on the Aslan Life Events table in <i>The Trojan Reach</i> .
8	You are awarded a fiefdom on a world of the Empire. Gain TER +2.
9	After a battle, you capture an enemy commander. You may ransom them back, and gain TER +2, or free them and gain them as an Ally.
10	You are challenged to a duel by a rival. If you refuse, you lose 1D SOC. Accept and roll Melee 8+. If you fail, you lose all Benefits from this term. Succeed and gain DM+2 to your next Advancement roll and a level of Melee (natural).
11	You befriend an admiral and are assigned to his fleet. Gain Tactics (naval) if male or Admin if female, or DM+4 to your next Advancement roll.
12	Your efforts strike a great blow for the Empire. You are automatically promoted and gain SOC +1.

3

WARRIOR

Qualification: Rite of Passage 6+

You serve in the military forces of the Glorious Empire, the last line of defence against the Hierate devils. Males are combatants; females are support personnel. The Imperial Guard resolves most conflicts with Open War, which is reflected in reduced survivability.

ASSIGNMENTS

Choose one of the following:

Imperial Guard: You defend the Empire on the front lines of battle.

Dragoon: You drive a grav tank, mobile artillery platform, atmospheric fighter or other vehicle.

Support: You are a mechanic, medic, comms operator or combat engineer.

Gender: Only males can enter the Imperial or Dragoon assignments. Only females can enter the Support assignment.

CAREER PROGRESS

	SURVIVAL	ADVANCEMENT
Imperial Guard	END 8+	STR 5+
Dragoon	DEX 8+	INT 6+
Support	END 6+	INT 6+

MUSTERING OUT BENEFITS

ID	CASH	BENEFITS
1	Cr500	1 Clan Share
2	Cr1000	EDU +1
3	Cr5000	END +1
4	Cr10000	Weapon or Combat Implant
5	Cr20000	Secret School
6	Cr50000	2 Clan Shares
7	Cr50000	SOC +1
8	Cr100000	5 Clan Shares

DM+1 if male

DM+1 if one or more terms included a Mercenary Event

SKILLS AND TRAINING

ID	PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT	SERVICE SKILLS	ADVANCED EDUCATION (MIN. EDU 8)
1	Independence (if male) or Admin (if female or slave)	Independence (if male) or Admin (if female or slave)	Navigation
2	STR +1	STR +1	Electronics
3	DEX +1	DEX +1	Explosives
4	END +1	END +1	Mechanic
5	Gun Combat	Gun Combat	Tactics (military)
6	Athletics	Athletics	Survival

ID	SPECIALIST: WARRIOR	SPECIALIST: DRAGOON	SPECIALIST: SUPPORT
1	Vacc Suit	Drive or Flyer	Medic
2	Gun Combat	Gunner (turret)	Mechanic
3	Heavy Weapons	Heavy Weapons	Electronics
4	Recon	Mechanic	Navigation
5	Stealth	Electronics	Admin
6	Athletics	Drive or Flyer	Explosives

RANKS AND BONUSES

RANK	WARRIOR OR DRAGOON	SKILL OR BONUS
0	Recruit	—
1	Warrior (Khir)	Melee 1
2	Warrior (Khirkō)	—
3	Warrior (Khirkō'i)	END +1
4	Veteran Warrior	—
5	Honoured Warrior	—
6	Supreme Honoured Warrior	3 Clan Shares

RANK	SUPPORT	SKILL OR BONUS
0	Recruit Technician	—
1	Combat Technician	Mechanic 1
2	Veteran Technician	—
3	Warsister	EDU +1
4	Veteran Warsister	—
5	Honoured Warsister	—
6	Supreme Honoured Warsister	2 Clan Shares

MISHAPS TABLE

1D	MISHAP
1	Severely injured. Roll twice on the Injury table and take the lower result. Receive a combat implant and return to service next term.
2	A superior officer has you demoted. Reduce rank by -1 and gain a Rival. Return to service next term.
3	You are lost behind enemy lines. Gain a level of Stealth, Survival, Streetwise or Gun Combat. Optionally, defect to the Hierarchy and begin a new career there but reduce SOC to 2 if you choose to do so. If you remain in the Empire, you may return to service next term.
4	You are captured and ransomed back to your clan. Lose SOC -1 and leave this career. You may only resume a career as a Landless One or Outlaw.
5	You risk severe injury in a dangerous skirmish. If you fight bravely, roll Gun Combat or Athletics 8+. If you fail, you are injured and must leave this career. If you refuse to fight bravely, you must leave this career.
6	Injured. Roll on the Injury table. Receive a combat implant and return to service.

EVENT TABLE

2D	EVENT
2	Disaster! Roll on the Mishap table but you are not forced to leave this career.
3	You are sent to fight the Hierarchy on the front lines. Roll Recon or Gun Combat 8+ to avoid rolling on the Injury table. Regardless of the result, gain one level of Stealth, Medic or Explosives.
4	You are assigned to garrison duty on a clan outpost. Gain a Contact there and one of the following skills: Melee (natural), Electronics or Mechanic.
5	You take the battle to the Hierarchy and fight outside the Empire. Gain one level of Melee (natural), Gun Combat, Independence (if male) or Survival, then make a check on that skill. On an 8+, your unit is victorious and you gain either SOC +1 or DM+2 to one Benefit roll. If you fail, you receive DM-2 on your next Advancement roll.
6	You are given advanced training in a specialist field. Roll EDU 8+ to increase any one skill you already have by one level.
7	Life Event. Roll on the Aslan Life Events table in <i>The Trojan Reach</i> .
8	You fight side by side with the dog soldiers. Gain a level of Language or Tolerance.
9	Your <i>ahriy</i> 's honour is questioned and you must duel to defend it. Roll Melee (natural) 8+. If you succeed, gain SOC +1. If you fail, lose SOC -1. Also gain a Rival.
10	If Aslan, you are considered for promotion to the officer caste. Add the number of terms served in this career as a DM if you attempt to qualify for the Warrior Officer career next term.
11	Mercenary Event, You serve as a mercenary and fight in the Dustbelt. Either gain Tactics (military) if male or Electronics if female, or DM+3 to your next Advancement roll.
12	Mercenary Event. You serve with distinction as a mercenary. You are automatically promoted and gain SOC +1.

4 WARRIOR OFFICER

Qualification: Rite of Passage 9+

The Imperial Guard officer caste are the most highly regarded *fteirle* in the Glorious Empire. Assassins are used to conduct ritualised warfare between rival *ahriya* but also cross enemy lines to exact revenge on enemies of the state.

ASSIGNMENTS

Choose one of the following:

Leader: You command Aslan warriors in defence against the vile Hierate aggressors.

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

Assassin: You are a hidden agent of vengeance.

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

DM+1 if SOC 9+

DM+1 if male

CAREER PROGRESS

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

MUSTERING OUT BENEFITS

1D	CASH	BENEFITS
1	Cr500	1 Clan Share
2	Cr1000	END +1
3	Cr5000	EDU +1
4	Cr10000	Weapon or Combat Implant
5	Cr20000	Secret School
6	Cr30000	TER +2
7	Cr50000	SOC +1
8	Cr100000	5 Clan Shares
9	Cr200000	Transport

SKILLS AND TRAINING

DM+1 if SOC 9+

DM+1 if male

DM+1 if one or more terms included a Mercenary Event

1D	PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT	SERVICE SKILLS	ADVANCED EDUCATION (MIN. EDU 8)
1	Independence (male) or Admin (female)	Tactics (military)	Navigation
2	STR +1	Drive or Flyer	Electronics
3	DEX +1	Gun Combat	Melee
4	END +1	Melee (natural)	Recon
5	INT +1	Leadership	Tactics (military)
6	Athletics	Vacc Suit	Survival

1D	SPECIALIST: LEADER	SPECIALIST: EXECUTIVE OFFICER	SPECIALIST: ASSASSIN
1	Tactics (military)	Admin	Melee
2	Recon	Medic	Stealth
3	Melee	Electronics	Streetwise
4	Leadership	Profession	Recon
5	Gun Combat	Advocate	Deception
6	Heavy Weapons	Navigation	Athletics

RANKS AND BONUSES

RANK	LEADER	SKILL OR BONUS
0	Probationary Lieutenant	—
1	Junior Lieutenant	Vacc Suit 1
2	Lieutenant	—
3	Captain	Leadership 1
4	Commandant	—
5	Division General	—
6	General	TER +2 and SOC 10

RANKS AND BONUSES (CONTINUED)

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

RANK	SUPPORT	SKILL OR BONUS
0	Recruit Technician	—
1	Combat Technician	Mechanic 1
2	Veteran Technician	—
3	Warsister	EDU +1
4	Veteran Warsister	—
5	Honoured Warsister	—
6	Supreme Honoured Warsister	2 Clan Shares

MISHAPS TABLE

1D	MISHAP
1	Severely injured. Roll twice on the Injury table and take the lower result. Receive a combat implant and return to service.
2	A failing on your part causes a catastrophic loss for your clan. You are injured and lose SOC -1.
3	A shift in the <i>ahriy</i> hierarchy causes a loss of face for you and your clan. You are demoted one Rank and lose SOC -2. You are not ejected from this career.
4	You are defeated in battle. Roll once on the injury table and gain the foe who defeated you as a Rival. You are not ejected from this career.
5	You are captured by a Hierate clan but will be returned to the Empire in a prisoner exchange. The disgrace ends your career. You may return to the Empire but you must select the Landless One or Outlaw career if you choose to continue. If you remain in the Hierate, gain a Contact in the Hierate but your SOC is reduced to 2.
6	Injured. Roll on the Injury table. Receive a combat implant and return to service.

EVENT TABLE

2D	EVENT
2	Disaster! Roll on the Mishap table but you are not ejected from this career.
3	You lead a host of warriors in a brutal ground war. Gain Recon, Heavy Weapons, Vacc Suit or Drive.
4	You are assigned to attaché duty at the Empire capital on Syoakh. Gain an Ally and a level in one of the following skills: Independence (if male), Admin (if female), Diplomat, Streetwise or Deception.
5	Your efforts strike a great blow for the Empire. You are automatically promoted and gain SOC +1.
6	You are given advanced training in a specialist field. Roll EDU 8+ to increase any one skill you already have by one level.
7	Life Event. Roll on the Aslan Life Events table in <i>The Trojan Reach</i> .
8	You are awarded a fief on a world of the Empire. Gain TER +2.
9	After a battle, you capture an enemy commander. You may ransom him back and gain TER +1, or free him and gain him as an Ally.
10	You are challenged to a duel by a rival. If you refuse, you lose 1D SOC. Accept and roll Melee 8+. If you fail, you lose all Benefits from this term. Succeed and gain DM+2 to your next Advancement roll.
11	Mercenary Event. You perform flawlessly as a mercenary leader, fighting in foreign wars along the Dustbelt. Either gain Tactics (military) if male or Electronics if female or DM+3 to your next Advancement roll.
12	Mercenary Event. You are assigned to a mercenary unit and fight outside the Empire. Gain one level of Gun Combat, Melee (natural), Independence (if male) or Vacc Suit, then make a task check on that skill. On an 8+, your unit is victorious and you gain either SOC +1 or DM+2 to your next Advancement roll.

5

LANDLESS ONE

Qualification: Automatic

Aslan who fail to find their place in Glorious Empire society do not become Outcasts as they do in the Hierate. Instead, they become Landless Ones who are looked down upon as the scum of society but actually fill several crucial roles.

ASSIGNMENTS

Choose one of the following:

Labourer: You work in a dead-end job, often alongside human slaves.

Wildcatter: You are a scavenger and resource hunter, retrieving derelict starships or mining asteroids, comets and gas giants for natural resources.

Trader: You are a black marketeer, operating on the fringes of the Empire to goods the Empire dearly needs.

Slaver: You raid foreign star systems for human slaves.

Gender: Both males and females can enter any of the Landless One careers.

CARREER PROGRESS

	SURVIVAL	ADVANCEMENT
Labourer	END 6+	STR 7+
Wildcatter	DEX 7+	INT 7+
Trader	INT 8+	END 7+
Slaver	END 8+	INT 7+

MUSTERING OUT BENEFITS

ID	CASH	BENEFITS
1	Cr0	INT +1
2	Cr500	END +1
3	Cr500	Weapon
4	Cr1000	Independence or Streetwise
5	Cr10000	Contact
6	Cr30000	EDU +1
7	Cr50000	END +1 and EDU +1

DM+1 if male

SKILLS AND TRAINING

ID	PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT	SERVICE SKILLS	LABOURER
1	STR+1	Independence (male) or Admin (female)	Athletics
2	DEX +1	Vacc Suit	Drive
3	END +1	Streetwise	Streetwise
4	Gun Combat	Melee (natural)	Gun Combat
5	Gambler	Mechanic	END +1
6	Jack-of-All-Trades	Survival	STR +1

ID	WILDCATTER	TRADER	SLAVER
1	Mechanic	Broker	Melee
2	Profession (miner or belter)	Streetwise	Stealth
3	Vacc Suit	Admin	Deception
4	Survival	Deception	Recon
5	Astrogation	Persuade	Astrogation
6	Pilot	Gun Combat	Pilot or Flyer

RANKS AND BONUSES

RANK	LABOURER	SKILL OR BONUS
0	Awkhea	—
1	—	Independence 1
2	—	—
3	Foreman	Streetwise 1
4	—	—
5	—	—
6	—	—

RANK	WILDCATTER	SKILL OR BONUS
0	Scavenger	—
1	Finder	Profession (miner or belter) 1
2	—	—
3	Surveyor	Mechanic 1
4	—	—
5	Seeker	Jack-of-All-Trades 1
6	—	—

RANKS AND BONUSES (CONTINUED)

RANK	TRADER	SKILL OR BONUS
0	—	—
1	Fence	Independence 1 (male), Admin 1 (female)
2	—	—
3	Operator	Broker 1
4	—	—
5	Source	INT +1
6	—	—

RANK	SLAVER	SKILL OR BONUS
0	Recruit	—
1	—	Melee 1
2	Huntsman	—
3	Sergeant	Recon 1
4	First Officer	—
5	Captain	Deception 1 or Streetwise 1
6	—	—

MISHAPS TABLE

1D	MISHAP
1	Severely injured. Roll twice on the Injury table and take the lower result.
2	Your friends desert you. Lose an Ally or Contact. If you have none, lose all Benefits for this term.
3	Your ship crashes on a hostile world. Gain any one of Survival 1, Mechanic 1, Animals 1 or Recon 1.
4	You suffer a life-threatening disease or starvation and lose END -1.
5	A rival sabotages your ship. Gain Mechanic from the experience of fixing it and gain him as a Rival.
6	Injured. Roll on the Injury table.

EVENT TABLE

2D	EVENT
2	Disaster! Roll on the Mishap table but you are not ejected from this career.
3	You find a cache of valuable supplies and make a tidy profit on the black market. Gain 1D Benefit rolls, Streetwise 1 or Broker 1.
4	Without help or available spare parts, you learn to do it yourself. Gain Jack-of-All-Trades.
5	You cross the border into Hierate or human space for a job and you get to know the locals. Gain Tolerance and one of the following: Persuade 1, Deception 1, Independence 1 or a Contact.
6	You are given advanced training in a specialist field. Roll EDU 8+ to gain any skill except Jack-of-All-Trades.
7	Life Event. Roll on the Aslan Life Events table in <i>The Trojan Reach</i> .
8	You pick up some useful shipboard skills. Gain one of Pilot (spacecraft), Gunner (turret), Engineer or Mechanic.
9	You have to recruit to fill positions in your crew. Gain Carouse, Streetwise or Persuade and an additional roll on the Cash Benefits table.
10	You come into conflict with a rival team. Roll Melee 8+ or Deception 8+. If you succeed, gain an Ally from your crew. If you fail, lose your Benefit roll for this term and gain an Enemy.
11	Your clan offers you a chance at redemption. You may restore your SOC to its original value and attempt to qualify for another career next term but you owe a great debt to a clan elder, whom you gain as a Contact.
12	You are conscripted to fight as a warrior grunt in the battles of the Empire. You automatically qualify for the Warrior career and must serve at least one term.

6 SLAVE

Qualification: Automatic provided the prerequisites listed in the assignments are met.

You are a slave of the Glorious Empire, serving as a labourer, servant to a noble household, skilled technician or dog soldier, the spearhead of its military forces. The lives of slaves are often nasty, brutish and short but you are a survivor, biding your time as the Empire collapses around you.

ASSIGNMENTS

Choose one of the following:

Labourer: You do the tough, back-breaking work of building the Empire. Prerequisites: STR and END 5+.

Servant: You serve a noble as a caretaker or steward. Prerequisites: DEX and EDU 5+.

Technician: You have the unenviable but challenging task of keeping the Empire's technology up and running. Prerequisites: INT and EDU 5+.

Dog Soldier: You are the cannon fodder that leads the Empire's armies into battle. Prerequisites: DEX and END 6+.

CARREER PROGRESS

	SURVIVAL	ADVANCEMENT
Labourer	END 7+	STR 6+
Servant	INT 6+	DEX 6+
Technician	INT 6+	EDU 6+
Dog Soldier	END 9+	DEX 6+

MUSTERING OUT BENEFITS

ID	CASH	BENEFITS
1	—	Blade
2	—	END +1
3	Cr250	INT +1
4	Cr500	Gun
5	Cr1000	Aslan Contact
6	Cr5000	External or Aslan Ally
7	Cr10000	Freedom

DM+1 if Rank 5+

SKILLS AND TRAINING

ID	PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT	SERVICE SKILLS	LABOURER
1	STR +1	Deception	Navigation
2	DEX +1	Athletics	Electronics
3	END +1	Melee	Jack-of-All-Trades
4	INT +1	Streetwise	Mechanic
5	Gambler	Persuade	Stealth
6	Carouse	Mechanic	Profession

ID	SPECIALIST: LABOURER	SPECIALIST: SERVANT	SPECIALIST: TECHNICIAN	SPECIALIST: DOG SOLDIER
1	Athletics	Steward	Mechanic	Vacc Suit
2	Vacc Suit	Medic	Electronics	Athletics
3	Profession	Electronics	Engineer	Gun Combat
4	Mechanic	Admin	Science	Melee
5	Electronics	Profession (teacher)	Jack-of-All-Trades	Heavy Weapons
6	STR +1	Steward	Deception	Survival

RANKS AND BONUSES

LABOURER, SERVANT OR TECHNICIAN		SKILL OR BONUS
RANK		
0	—	—
1	—	Profession 1
2	—	—
3	—	Drive 1 or Vacc Suit 1
4	—	—
5	Saihlea (Slave Chief)	Leadership 1
6	Awkhea (Landless Serf)	—

RANK	DOG SOLDIER	SKILL OR BONUS
0	Fodder	—
1	Chaff	Gun Combat 1
2	Brunt	—
3	Boss	Vacc Suit 1
4	Fore	—
5	Gunny	END +1
6	Old Salt	—

MISHAPS TABLE: LABOURER, SERVANT, TECHNICIAN

1D	MISHAP
1	Severely injured. Roll twice on the Injury table and take the lower result. Resume your career next term.
2	You are exiled from your slave community by a rival. Gain an Enemy and select a new Assignment in the following term.
3	You are subjected to brutal treatment by your Aslan master or are exposed to a dangerous environment. Lose END -1.
4	You have the opportunity to report an impending slave revolt to your Aslan masters. If you choose to do so, you are automatically promoted but gain the leader of the revolt as an Enemy. If you allow the revolt to go on as planned, roll once on the Injury table and be reassigned to either the Prisoner career (see the <i>Traveller Core Rulebook</i>) or Dog Soldier assignment next term.
5	You are captured by the Hierate along with your Empire masters. Serve one term in the Prisoner career from the <i>Traveller Core Rulebook</i> . Roll Stealth or Persuade 8+ to avoid prison and escape to enter a career from the <i>Traveller Core Rulebook</i> .
6	End of the line. Your perceived uselessness or insolence has prompted your Aslan master to send you away. Resume your career as a Dog Soldier in the next term.

MISHAPS TABLE: DOG SOLDIER

1D	MISHAP
1	You die in combat. Alternatively, roll three times on the Injury table and you are ejected from the service. You may resume your career in another Assignment.
2	Severely injured. Roll twice on the Injury table and take the lower result. Receive a combat implant and return to service.
3	You are seen as unfit for duty and relegated to another Assignment in the next term.
4	You are defeated in battle, taken prisoner and then freed. Roll once on the Injury table and gain the foe who defeated you as an Ally. Enter a suitable career from the <i>Traveller Core Rulebook</i> .
5	You are captured by a Hierate clan but are returned to the Empire in an exchange of prisoners. Serve one term in the Prisoner career from the <i>Traveller Core Rulebook</i> and then resume your Slave career in the Empire.
6	Injured. Roll on the Injury table. Receive a combat implant and return to service.

EVENT TABLE: LABOURER, SERVANT, TECHNICIAN

2D	EVENT
2	Disaster! Roll on the Mishap table but you are not ejected from this career.
3	You have the opportunity to serve your Aslan master. Gain DM+2 on your next Advancement roll.
4	You pick up a few handy skills. Gain Jack-of-All-Trades 1.
5	You are taken from your family to another world. Gain Deception 1, Mechanic 1 or Streetwise 1.
6	You show an aptitude for learning and are given training in a specialist field. Roll EDU 8+ to gain a level in any skill you already have.
7	Life Event. Roll on the <i>Traveller Core Rulebook</i> Life Events table.
8	You are attacked by thieves and ruffians. Roll Melee 8+ to defend yourself or Stealth 8+ to escape. If you fail, lose all Benefit rolls from this term. If you succeed, gain an additional Benefit.
9	An Aslan from another <i>ahriy</i> notices your handiwork and acquires your services. Gain him as a Contact and DM+2 to any one Benefit roll.
10	You grow spiritually by worshipping with your fellow slaves at the human shrine. Gain an Ally and one level of Carouse, Art or Language.
11	You become a respected member of the slave community by resolving a dispute. Gain a level of Leadership, Admin or Diplomat.
12	The <i>saihlea</i> of your slave clan recognises your potential. You are automatically promoted.

EVENT TABLE: DOG SOLDIER

2D	EVENT
2	Disaster! Roll on the Mishap table. You are not ejected from this career.
3	You survive a series of frontal assaults. Well done, Chaff! Gain Survival, Recon or Athletics.
4	You are taken under the wing of an Old Salt who shows you the ropes. Gain DM+1 on your next Survival roll and an Ally.
5	You fight against the Hierate on a hostile environment world and are outfitted with special gear. Gain Electronics, Vacc Suit or Survival.
6	You are given advanced training in a specialist field. Roll EDU 8+ to increase any one skill you already have by one level.
7	Life Event. Roll on the <i>Traveller Core Rulebook</i> Life Events table.
8	You show your worth to your Aslan commanders and are outfitted with a combat implant.
9	You save the life of an Aslan warrior. Roll once on the Injury table and gain an Ally.
10	You are challenged to a duel by a rival dog soldier. If you refuse, you are demoted one rank and lose SOC-1. Accept and roll Melee 8+. If you fail, you lose all Benefits from this term. Succeed, and gain DM+2 to your next Advancement roll.
11	Your Aslan masters recognise your value and assign you to a more useful role than taking bullets and flak on the front lines. Gain Tactics (military) and DM+2 to your next survival roll.
12	Your unit bugs out after losing a battle. You can escape to freedom but you must leave your fellow dog soldiers behind. Leave and you may start a new career outside Empire space but gain 1D Enemies. Stay and automatically qualify as a Warrior for your next term.

WORLDS OF THE GLORIOUS EMPIRE

At its peak, the Glorious Empire comprised 32 worlds but that does not tell the whole story. Before declaring its independence and breaking off from the Aslan Hierate, the Tokouea'we clan had held and later lost several other star systems as well. The tale of the Empire's worlds is best told by aligning them into three groups:

- The Remaining Worlds of the Glorious Empire
- Former Worlds of the Glorious Empire
- Other Key Worlds

Each tells an important part of the story. The Remaining Worlds describes the star systems and worlds that comprise the Glorious Empire, circa 3638 (1105 Imperial), where the Empire has been whittled down to a paltry 13 star systems. The Former Worlds describes those star systems once under the Empire's control but lost to Hierate or Florian forces. Each of these worlds bears the scars of battle and has been influenced by its time in the Empire. The Other Key Worlds describes star systems that are major factors in the story of the Glorious Empire, either as an important part of their history or a major player in its current fate.

THE REMAINING WORLDS OF THE GLORIOUS EMPIRE

The waning Glorious Empire retains only 13 star systems. Few of its remaining worlds exhibit the imperial grandeur of its golden age but each in its own way contributes to the story of the Empire's declining fortunes.

The Empire today is a broken and dysfunctional collection of star systems held together by proverbial string and baling wire. Just like a city, an island or nation, interstellar polities have an infrastructure designed to serve a certain number of people over a specific expanse of territory. When one loses large chunks of territory, the polity does not simply scale down to the next level without serious, and often crippling, consequences. What happens to the sewers, freeways and energy grid of a city that loses half or more of its people? Infrastructure requires careful planning

and construction, and when it suddenly no longer serves the expected number of citizens, there are breakdowns and problems that cannot be accounted for.

The Glorious Empire as it stands today has a massively overbuilt military but is starved of natural resources, industry and technology. Its vaunted jump-4 courier communication network is largely intact but has almost nowhere to go. The seat of empire on Syoakh was designed to serve tens of billions of citizens and their enslaved servants but most have been lost to war or captured by the Hierate. The loss of the Hliyh Chain alone resulted in a decrease of over 18 billion Empire citizens and slaves. All that remains is a hyper-militarised populace of some six billion.

Despite their warrior culture, most Aslan clans do not overinvest in military forces, preferring instead to use resources to develop and maintain land holdings. There are, of course, clan armies present on most worlds but just as the Aslan try not to be wasteful in their conflicts, they are also careful not to create massive standing armies that have little to do. Conversely, the Empire has spent a great deal on its armies and space forces, and the bureaucracy that maintains them. As the Empire has ceded territory – quite painfully in the case of the Hliyh Chain – it has lost billions of slaves, legions of warriors and squadrons of warships. Even so, many have been allowed to retreat to Empire space, as it is not in the nature of Aslan to spend resources pursuing the losing side of a battle once territory has been conquered. There is little to gain from spite and vengeance as they see it. The remaining worlds of the Empire are now host to large numbers of soldiers and fleet elements allowed to leave the field of battle after their recent losses. An abundance of defeated and exhausted warriors has exacerbated the problems.

A functional interstellar polity typically has a well-distributed populace, strategically placed military bases, a flow of trade and commerce, tourism and industrial centres that produce the goods and services needed by its citizens. The Glorious Empire retains only the shell of civilisation. Most worlds are now inhabited by transient military forces and bombed-out post-

Name	Location	Bases	Profile	Trade Codes	Travel Code	Gas Giants
Alirar	0825	ACS	A55557A-C	Ag Ni Ht	—	G
Alr	0929	—	A779548-B	Ni	—	G
Asyuh	1121	ACS	B8C3225-9	Lo Fl Ni	—	G
Eiahiy	1026	ACS	B500132-B	Lo Ni Va	—	G
Eikhaaw	1128	—	C88978C-9	Ri	A	G
Ftulrois	1022	—	B56866A-9	Ag Ni Ri	—	—
Hea'a	1025	—	E54026A-5	Lo Ni De Po Lt	—	G
Htourlao	1028	ACS	B311978-E	Hi Ic In Na Ht	—	G
Keawoaw	1030	—	B430433-9	De Po Ni	—	G
Oatre	1023	ACS	B532336-C	Lo Ni Po Ht	—	G
Oihu	1126	ACS	B300454-9	Ni Va	—	G
Syoakh	1027	ACS	A6968BC-C	Ht	A	—
Yero'ilra	1124	—	D500897-7	Na Va	—	G

apocalyptic survivor populations, their sole purpose to protect the capital at Syoakh and keep its last bastion of industry at Htourlao functional enough to fight one last battle against the Hierate. There are outliers at Yero'ilra where the only vassal clan in Empire history resides and at Eikhaaw where a successful slave revolt has created a strange détente between Aslan and an isolated population of freed human slaves. The other worlds of the Empire are sparsely populated and make paltry contributions to its defence. Most of these worlds are ripe for the picking by future Hierate invasions. Perhaps the only thing holding them back is exhaustion from decades of war and the high concentration of Empire space forces still present. Most believe it is only a matter of time before the Hierate clans catch their breath and finish the job they started decades ago.

Alirar

The Empire's last star system in the Nora'a subsector, Alirar is in a state of near collapse. The Alirari were called upon in disproportionate numbers to fight and die in the wars of the Eahaw Campaign; the Hierate destroyed its industrial base and killed the majority of its urban population, leaving the rural human population alive. The Aslan are now vastly outnumbered with approximately 900,000 humans tended to by less than 10,000 Aslan.

The Aslan use brutality and superior technology to suppress slave revolts. Explosive slave collars, pain projectors and gas bombs are but a few of the tools used to terrorise and control the humans. Slave groups suspected of plotting an uprising are sent to concentration camps where they are

worked to death or executed. The Aslan have begun to geld slaves in an effort to reduce the chances that any will lead an insurrection.

The Empire was prepared to abandon Alirar until its leading *ahriy* appealed to the Grand Emperor for assistance. The Alirari convinced the generals that the system was the ideal place from which to launch an attack to either regain its lost worlds or – more ambitiously – conquer Vadada and use its shipyards to reconstitute the Grand Fleet. Capital ships and warrior transports have begun to gather in the system to prepare for the eventual assault.

Alr

Once the site of an ambitious aquaculture and marine bioengineering project, Alr has fallen on hard times after being orbitally bombarded by the Serauleiai clan, which wrested Ehrafou and Eoiw from the Empire's grasp several years ago. The attacks spoiled the nearly pristine conditions of the planet's oceans and left it shrouded with murky fallout.

Without any complex life forms of its own, the Empire seeded Alr with algae, corals, fish, aquatic mammals and other creatures centuries ago. The Aslan of Alr created a culture in which the hunt took place on the seas instead of the wide-open plains. Nomadic *ekhoia* and their slaves wandered the world's oceans, fishing and hunting creatures such as the foakhoa, a large carnivorous ocean mammaloid.

Some of Alr's Aslan were evacuated after the bombardment but many hardliners remain, toughing it out in post-apocalyptic conditions. This arrangement

JUMP-4 COURIER ROUTES

The Glorious Empire is controlled by a highly centralised and autocratic government.

Virtually all decisions are made on Syoakh and communicated to its worlds via an aging fleet of *Wahtoi* jump-4 couriers. The couriers frantically jump to all worlds within four parsecs of the capital, conveying the dictates of the Grand Emperor and providing a massive data dump of news and propaganda which arrives on a near daily basis. Ftulrois and Asyuh – which are more than four parsecs from Syoakh – are served by auxiliary vessels and subjected to a somewhat lighter barrage of information. Comparable routes served by the Imperial x-boat system see only a third of the traffic.

**The Glorious Empire,
3638 Aslan (1105 Imperial)**

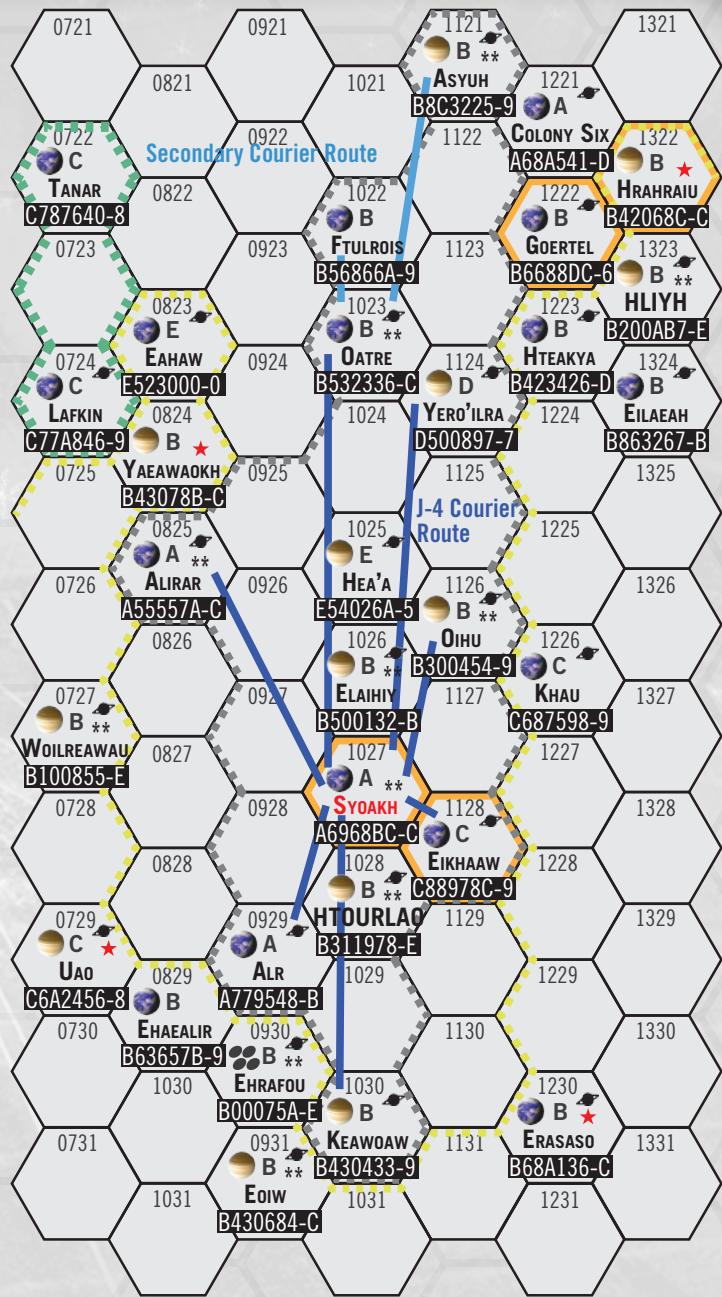


has left a power vacuum on the planet, which has been resolved by installing – of all things – democratic institutions to address the issues of famine, rebuilding and civil defence. A council of the leading aquafarmers and sea hunters convenes each *ftahea* to vote on how to handle the planet's myriad crises. Many of the planet's slaves have been freed and allowed to participate in the rebuilding of society.

In orbit of Alr and throughout the system, the Empire has stationed fleet elements to stave off attacks on Htourlao, one parsec away. These spacecraft also drop relief packages on Alr from time-to-time to help the survivors.

Asyuh

At a distance of seven parsecs from the capital, Asyuh is a frontier stopover for slavers and mercenaries making their way into the Outrim Void. It is a dismal place with few of the amenities of civilisation. One redeeming quality is the relative freedom enjoyed by its people. As long as the refuelling and resupply depots continue to function, they are left free to live more or less as they wish. It takes four weeks for the Empire's jump-4 couriers to complete the trip out from the capital and back, making it difficult to run remotely.



Because of the mainworld's insidious atmosphere, there are few terrestrial habitations with citizens opting instead to live in orbital facilities. Most of its other worlds are airless rockballs, all of which are in tidally locked orbits around the system's two smouldering red dwarf stars. The Aslan of Asyuh own no slaves and have opted to run their society as a direct democracy. The people make all legislative and social decisions via a computer network that runs on its orbital platforms, planetoid monitors and sublight ships. A council of three determines which issues see the light of day in this dismal place, making sure to give their constituents plenty to decide upon.

FOAKHOA

The origin of the foakhoa is unknown but this large, oceanic mammaloid has adapted well to Alr's aquatic habitats. Foakhoa travel in pods of up to two dozen adults with half as many calves but are often found alone or with a single calf due to the expansive areas they graze. Foakhoa filter small crustaceans and seaweed polyps and munch on a type of seaweed that congregates in large, half-metre-thick pads. When attacked, the first instinct of the foakhoa is to flee into the depths of the ocean, which Aslan sea hunters prevent by harpooning and 'anchoring' them to the surface with air-filled bladders. When forced to defend itself, a foakhoa brings its enormous fluke to bear as a bludgeon, sometimes with deadly results. For this reason, the Aslan attack them from the front in order to

ANIMAL	HITS	SPEED
Foakhoa	72	15m
SKILLS	Melee (natural) 1, Survival 1	
ATTACKS	Fluke (5D)	
TRAITS	Alarm, Armour (+2), Large (+4)	
BEHAVIOUR	Filter, Grazer	

avoid being clubbed to death. Lastly, the foakhoa often sounds a blaring, trumpet-like alarm, which can either bring more foakhoa into the fray or urge the remainder of the pod to flee the area.



Eiahiy

This nearly abandoned star system is home to a remote outpost of the Grand Fleet and little else. Eiahiy is a captured planet with a hugely eccentric orbit that varies from 2.5 to 45 AU from its system primary. It has an orbital period of 210 *ftahea* and is about halfway to its aphelion in 3638 Aslan (1105 Imperial). Its Population code reflects permanent base staff only but the system's proximity to Syoakh means that one or more well-armed *hryo* (squadrons) are likely to be present at any given time. Most personnel rarely set foot on the surface of the planet, instead docking with one of its artificial moons, each of which is heavily armed with missile batteries and particle accelerator bays.

The majority of the system's planets are clustered close to its highly unstable red dwarf star. Its solar flares coupled with the radioactivity of its inner gas giants make travel to the inner system risky. The system's

outermost gas giant is the only one that can be used for wilderness refuelling but is heavily mined and guarded by a *hryo* of *Su'ikh* interceptors, most of which patrol its depths. Whilst refuelling access is often 'negotiable' in the more remote Glorious Empire systems, Eiahiy is close to the capital and therefore under the watchful eye of staunchly loyalist space forces and clan agents. Travellers may attempt to skim fuel at their own peril.

Eikhaaw

The Eikhaaw system has long been a flashpoint for civil strife. Its human slaves were never fully pacified and have revolted dozens of times over its history, usually with bloody results.

Eikhaaw is a rich world with abundant resources and was once a colony of the Sindalian Empire called Okeonos. Its people surrendered to the Tokouea'we when they arrived centuries ago but have always had a strong independent streak. Because of their expertise at taming their home



A rapidly developing mercenary community is sprouting up on Wao'ftekhauyuiy, a frozen gas giant moon in the outer system of Asyuh. Mercenary culture – which is heavily derived from staunch traditionalists of the Imperial Guard – finds Asyuan culture distasteful and has opted to develop a freeport of sorts from which to launch operations into the Outrim Void. With the immense influx of wealth from their exploits, the freeport is quickly turning into a viable competitor to Asyuh's frontier starport.

planet and developing its resources, they were granted a degree of independence and autonomy unknown by slaves elsewhere in the Empire. The Okeonosians, as they continued to call themselves, were reasonably cooperative and operated in good faith with their new overlords by partnering with them on the system's many resource development and industrial projects.

Over the centuries, the Eikhaawi became willing accomplices to the Empire, serving in its military forces and adhering to its interpretation of *fteir*. The Aslan came to look upon the Eikhaawi humans as partners more than slaves but the famous Tokouea'we arrogance and penchant for subjugation kept them from ever truly integrating the native population of the planet. Over time, the Empire grew tired of the arrangement. They had become accustomed to subjecting humans to slavery and the thought of Eikhaawi humans having rights was distasteful. They began to strip them of privileges, systematically subjugating one borough after another to more traditional types of slavery. By pitting humans against each other, they hoped to whittle down resistance. The sophisticated Okeonosians caught on and staged a planetwide revolt, which the Tokouea'we put down as best they could.

It proved to be difficult to ferret out all the entrenched populations of humans, who had the wherewithal to flee into the wilds of their world's oceans and its labyrinthine caverns from which they continued to foment revolt against the Aslan.

With the Hierate engaging the Glorious Empire on dual fronts from 3600 to 3632 (1075 to 1103 Imperial), it became increasingly difficult to quash unrest and the Eikhaawi humans rose up and overthrew Empire security forces in 3623 (1095 Imperial). Despite their victory, the humans did not declare independence from the Empire or commit atrocities against their oppressors. Instead, they renegotiated their relationship and now live on almost equal terms with the Aslan.

To turn the tables on the Aslan, the humans had used technology given to them by the Empire to achieve victory in the revolt. On Eikhaaw, the technology-savvy human slaves were often fitted with wafer jacks and neural links so they could serve in much-needed technical roles. They obtained copies of military Expert software, which they uploaded into their wafer jacks. The humans assaulted armories on several of the world's less well-defended military bases, achieving victory with a surprisingly low number of casualties. The bulk of Empire forces were engaged in battle in the Hliyh Chain and had left Imperial Guard forces dangerously thin. The day of 108 has come to be called 'Armoury Day' by the Eikhaawi humans, which they celebrate each year.

The humans remain, for all intents and purposes, loyal subjects of the Empire; not that they were given much of a choice. However, things are tense on Eikhaaw. A state of martial law is in force on all of the planet's archipelagos and arcologies. The Aslan have deployed invasive surveillance technology to keep watch on the humans, mostly with an armada of armed aerial drones. Despite the humans' pledge of fealty to the Empire, the Aslan do not completely trust them and fear that they may become a fifth column for Hierate invaders.

Ftulrois

Whether these are the end times for the Empire or not, Aslan must have their dustspice and Ftulrois is the chief supplier for the entire Glorious Empire. Unlike on most Empire worlds, labour here is largely automated. Slaves do little of the work themselves but are tasked with the operation of the machines and robots that work the fields. In an effort to prevent unrest, the Grand Emperor has dispatched a legion of his finest Imperial Guard to the planet to ensure the facilities are secure and things run smoothly. There is no ruling *ahriy* on the planet, presumably in order to prevent a vassal crisis like the one on Yero'ilra. By distributing fiefs to a disconnected gaggle of *ekhoia*, the Empire hopes to instil loyalty among the masses.

The output of the farms and factories has not declined for decades and they still pump out the same quantities of dustspice that they did when the Empire was a much larger and more populous interstellar state. With consumption fairly constant, it begs the question; just where is all the surplus going? Where else – the black markets. Lying just outside the single-jump range of the Empire's jump-4 courier network, Ftulrois is a provincial system but is well defended and considered a plum assignment by members of the military whose females know they can make a tidy sum participating in black

market trade or merely by looking the other way and accepting bribes. The odious presence of Tokouea'we clan agents has yet to be felt on Ftulrois but it is only a matter of time before they descend upon the system to break up the smuggling rings – or perhaps just to get their fair share of the bounty.

Hea'a

A system with prodigious resources but few habitable planets, Hea'a was once host to a Class C starport and a sprawling network of small cities and industrial centres. The system was, and is, a tightly held possession of Syoakh, an ‘industrial reserve’ whose resources were used to generate goods and services for the high nobility. During the disastrous Eahaw Campaign – in which the Empire lost several of its spinward star systems – one of the strategies used by the Hierate was to jump *past* the primary battlefield to harry and hinder the Empire’s marshalling point on Hea'a, where they bombed the clustered population centres into dust, leaving few survivors.

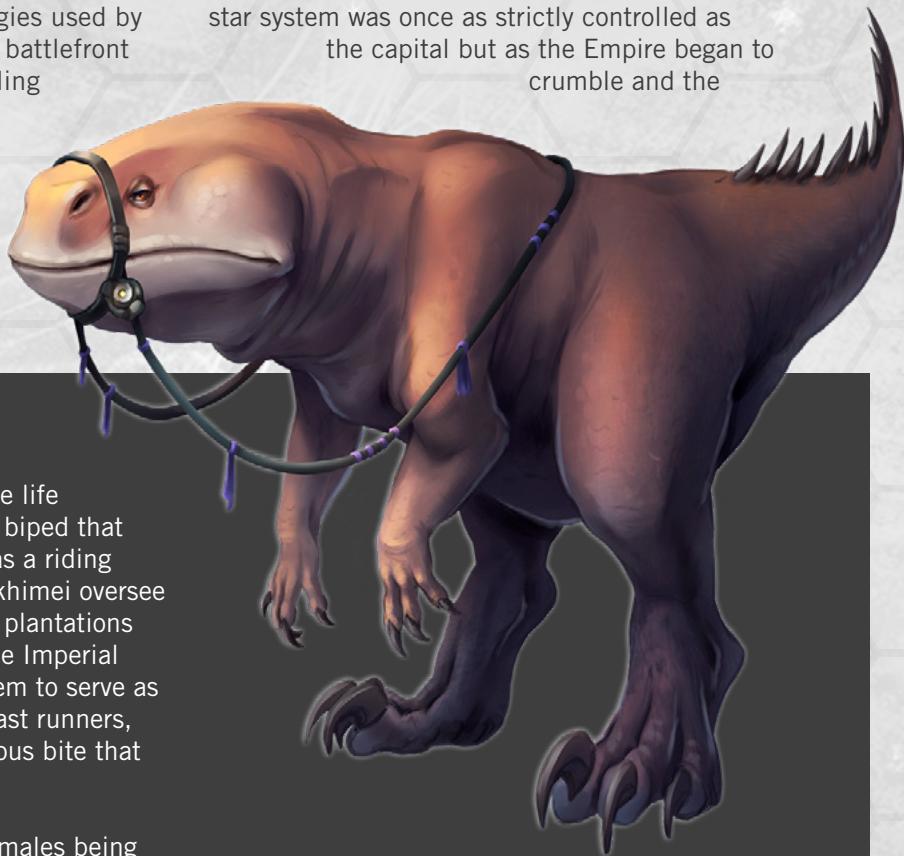
The official population of the planet accounts only for its Aslan survivors. The slave population, well versed in

desert survival techniques, fled to the outback where they have formed nomadic tribal groups. These humans wander the planet’s arid dunes and craggy mountain ranges, scraping a living off the land as best they can. It is a harsh existence but at least they are free.

The destruction of its civilisation has denigrated the system’s value but the Empire refuses to allow anyone to provide relief or rebuild its fallen cities. Its impressive reserves of high-grade industrial metals and rare earth elements had only begun to be exploited but the Empire has more pressing issues to deal with at the moment.

Htourlao

If the brain of the Empire is Syoakh, then its heart is most certainly Htourlao. This bustling industrial star system was once as strictly controlled as the capital but as the Empire began to crumble and the



KHIMEI

Ftulrois is host to a wide range of native life forms including the khimeい, a reptilian biped that the Aslan have domesticated and use as a riding animal and beast of burden. Aslan on khimeい oversee slave populations on those agricultural plantations that have not been fully automated. The Imperial Guard has trained a few hundred of them to serve as low-tech cavalry. In addition to being fast runners, the khimeい delivers a nasty and poisonous bite that causes necrosis.

An adult khimeい masses 500kg with females being slightly larger. They are omnivorous scavengers but limit most of their meat consumption to slow, medium-sized animals and obtain the majority of their nutrients from eating plants, primarily long grasses and low-hanging fruits. Their bites are venomous but have a slow interval. If not treated, the venom causes necrosis over time and may result in loss of an affected limb.

ANIMAL	HITS	SPEED
Khimeい	35	9m
SKILLS	Athletics (endurance) 1, Melee (natural) 2, Recon 1	
ATTACKS	Bite (2D, Poison)	
TRAITS	Armour (+5), Heightened Senses, Large (+1)	
BEHAVIOUR	Omnivore, Grazer	

Poison	END check Difficulty	Damage	Interval
Khimeい venom	Average (8+)	1D-1	1D hours and eventual loss of limb if not treated

dangers of a coup d'état increased, Grand Emperor Krial dissolved the ruling junta and divided the world among the Empire's leading *ahriya*, splitting it into competing territorial and political factions. In short, it is the closest thing the Glorious Empire has to a fully functional, *fteir*-based system.

Conflicts between the *ahriya* are mostly resolved in the traditional manner but go no further than a War of Assassins. Generals from Syoakh serve as *earleatrais* in any disputes but do little to influence the outcome. Their presence is merely to ensure that conflicts do not escalate far. A new level of ritualised warfare has been introduced on Htourlao that makes use of its slave population: Gladiatorial War. Nobles from each *ahriya* maintain small armies of human warriors who are trained to use traditional Aslan weapons and fight in one of the system's many arenas. This method of dispute resolution lies somewhere between War Games and War to First Blood. Gladiators fight in all manner of environments from standard gravity medieval arenas to space battles fought in vacc suits or combat armour. Conflicts can be between individuals, groups or even small armies. Tradition dictates that the losers are summarily executed which – as far as the Aslan are concerned – motivates the humans to fight harder.

Despite this barbaric and wasteful use of slaves, the feudal government structure on Htourlao has created a lively competitive environment in which individual *ahriya* feel encouraged to innovate and achieve prosperity. This unusual – for the Empire at least – arrangement has created a thriving economy and enabled the system to maintain the highest Tech Level in the realm. The heavy hand of the military guides most enterprises towards weapons and security sector but despite occasional interference, Htourlao females have been allowed to create and cultivate a variety of independent businesses and financial firms.

The leader of the engineering-oriented Khtouheoau *ahriy* has petitioned the Grand Emperor for the right to build jump-capable spacecraft on Htourlao. Despite the logic of leveraging Htourlao's high technology to create starships, the Emperor has been resistant to the idea thus far. The Empire's highly regimented and controlled starship construction firms are centralised on Syoakh. The prospect of allowing the creation of new TL14 starships would seem to be an obvious choice but this is yet another example of the Empire's inability to get out of its own way. Truth be told, the Syoakhian *ahriya* are jealous of Htourlao's industrial capacity and cling to the one industry they can monopolise, regardless of the consequences.

With the recent loss of Hliyh, home of the Empire's grandest technological achievements, Htourlao has been looked upon to fill the void. Indeed, it has become home to many of the Aslan refugees from that war. Whilst Htourlao has nearly the same industrial output that Hliyh had, it has little of the grandiosity and charm of the Empire's lost golden world. Where Hliyh's glistening orbital ring and immense monuments served as a bright and shining testament to the wonder of the Glorious Empire, Htourlao is a grey and dismal place with brutalist architecture that does little to stir the imagination. Given the besieged state of the Empire, this is not about to change any time soon.

Keawoaw

The binary red dwarf stars at the centre of the Keawoaw system have made it distinctly uninhabitable. Within the last few centuries, the slightly larger of the two has begun to give off flares that have wrought havoc on the other planetary bodies in the system. The Glorious Empire maintains a research facility on the system mainworld, which is located outside what would typically be considered the habitable zone.

Dubious rumours abound that the scientists on the planet actually *caused* the flares with some sort of rudimentary star trigger. Spurious claims have been made that the Empire acquired the knowledge from the Aslan within the Darrian Confederation. This is highly unlikely given the relatively low Tech Level of Keawoaw and the fact that there is no evidence whatsoever that the Empire has ever established ties with the far-off Darrians, who in any event have never been known to share the secrets of their most dangerous technology.

Empire naval forces have an intermittent presence in Keawoaw, presumably to serve as an early-warning system should there be any incursions by Hierate clans. Clan agents maintain a base on a moon of the outermost gas giant. Their primary purpose is to perform counterintelligence and spread false information beyond the Empire's borders.

The Keawoaw system is also an interface in the Empire's active black markets. Traders and smugglers live a transient existence, hopping from one virtually uninhabitable rockball to another in order to dodge clan agents. Black marketeers set up shop, deploy fast-setup advanced bases, trade with smugglers who make their way across the border and then pick up their gear to move on to the next site, hopefully before clan agents descend upon them.



Oatre

One of the last bastions of defence on the Empire's spinward frontier, the Oatre system is host to a small but bustling military base that serves as a depot for naval patrol craft and mercenary units making their way up the chain towards the Dustbelt.

Oatre lies just outside the habitable zone of the system and shows the strains of gravitational force exerted upon it by the system's outermost gas giant. The two are in virtual lockstep in a long, multi-century trek around system primary, Hakhui, an old and brightly lit orange giant. While Oatre is not currently a moon of the gas giant, it is at the tipping point of being acquired as one.

Swelling Hakhui has consumed any inner-system worlds that may have once orbited it and is closing in on Hwiyei, its massive inner-zone gas giant. The star's gravity has stretched Hwiyei into an ovoid and is rapidly stripping away its outer atmospheric layers, creating a visible stream of gas drawn into the star in a phenomenon known as hydrodynamic escape. Empire astrophysicists theorise that Hakhui will consume virtually all of Hwiyei within a few million years, leaving a chthonian planet behind. This is rare in K-type stars and thus makes the system a magnet for scientific expeditions from the Hierate and the Imperial client

state of Dostoevsky, who are both keen to observe it up close. Access grants to the system are rare but may be obtained for the right price. Visiting scientists can expect all manner of intrusive surveillance by their hosts, including an armed escort and frequent inspections of their spacecraft.

Wuie, the system's red dwarf companion, is hundreds of AU away and not known to have any planets of its own.

Oihu

Oihu was once the site of a large naval and military base where raw recruits of the Grand Fleet and Imperial Guard were trained. Warriors were taught how to operate grav vehicles, battle dress and all types of weaponry on the system's airless rockballs, and fleet personnel learned to fly combat spacecraft amid the system's many planets.

The majority of Oihu's barracks and parade grounds were shuttered long ago, a relic of the Glorious Empire's past. With the recent advent of mercenary forces into the Outrim Void, some of its facilities have recently been renovated for their use. Oihu and its gas giants are protected by several well-armed squadrons of the Grand Fleet. Should the Hierate clans battle their way through Yero'ilra and make their way toward the

capital, these ships are to jump immediately to Syoakh to sound the alarm to prepare for what may well be the Empire's last stand.

Yero'ilra

This trinary star system is known as the 'Iron Spine' due to its possession of 15 metal-rich planets and gas giant moons. Yero'ilra's stable main sequence primary might have been just cool enough to host one or more hospitable planets were it not for the disruptive presence of the 'twin brothers', a pair of red dwarfs in orbits outside the habitable zone. Stellar emanations from the more unstable of the two has system-wide repercussions.

Despite its middling size, Yero'ilra exhibits a surprising 0.85g due to its immense metal core. In addition to massive lodes of iron, gold, silver, platinum, tungsten and lanthanum, the planet is rich in rare earth minerals and has large deposits of radioactives sprinkled sporadically beneath its surface. The radioactives, coupled with the planet's powerful magnetic field and frequent exposure to stellar flares, make it absolutely essential to use heavily shielded vehicles and vacc suits when outdoors.

Yero'ilra is home to the only vassal clan in the Glorious Empire. Most vassals are forced to integrate into the ruling Tokouea'we but the subversive Yetrai have managed to carve out a unique niche for themselves. A combination of their distance from Syoakh, high production of valuable resources and various political factors have enabled the separation to occur. The Empire's recent rash of losses, involvement in the affairs of the Dustbelt and constant vigilance against Hierate incursions have made it reluctant to engage in a long and drawn-out suppression and counter-insurgency campaign against a clan that is in all other ways a strident ally. Should the Empire ever regain its footing, it might well rein in the Yetrai, however unlikely that day is to come. Many of the high nobility on Syoakh still refuse to acknowledge the independence of the Yetrai and refer to the wayward vassal as an *ahriy*.

Quality of life on Yero'ilra, as on any vacuum world, is highly dependent on technology. The system is nominally rated as TL7, which is accurate for the vast majority of society; however, the nobility enjoys a much higher standard of living, courtesy of trade with their rimward neighbours and black market trade with the Hierate. Lush artificial habitats and hunting grounds are maintained underground by the ruling class with no access granted to the majority of the population. Life for most citizens of Yero'ilra is unpleasant which, as far as the Yetrai are concerned, is just fine.

The slave population on Yero'ilra are essentially lower class free agents able to choose their vocations from a number of unappealing and deadly options. The majority, of course, are miners working in horrifically suboptimal conditions. Some slaves live 'on basic', a form of government welfare; however, the Yetrai reserve the right to round them up at will and assign the unemployed to the most egregious jobs available. For this reason, most slaves opt to find work on their own.

Yero'ilra's lone orbital starport is a converted planetoid located in the planet's L4 Lagrange point. The port is of poor quality and has no artificial gravity. The downport, for what it lacks in services and amenities, is expansive and busy. Visitors chafe at fuel and hospitality shortages but the system's central location in the Empire makes it a busy port. Whilst the Yetrai have abjectly failed to develop the downport to serve its many visitors, Tokouea'we state-run corporations have taken it upon themselves to make it the hub that it is. Its ramshackle commercial, transport and lodging facilities are a civil engineer's nightmare and the startown is burdened by rampant traffic, pollution and crime.

The Yetrai covetously keep a great secret from their Tokouea'we overlords; the outer system world of Htirlaosea, sandwiched between the two dwarf stars, Oúolaoeis and Oúoyukhai, is ridiculously rich in high-grade industrial metals and purportedly has huge subterranean caverns filled with natural zuchai crystals. Unfortunately, most of its resources are on the star-facing side of the tidally locked planet, which is savaged by solar flares. Bereft of radiation-resistant mining tools and vehicles, the Yetrai have so far failed to plunder its riches.

Whether inadvertently or not, the Yetrai have created a poison pill for any prospective attempts by Syoakh to draw them back into the fold of the Tokouea'we clan. By fomenting a society replete with infrastructural problems and a semi-independent slave population, the Yetrai have not only established their independence but also created a dystopian nightmare that the Empire would struggle to digest.

Syoakh

The Glorious Empire's capital at Syoakh is to the Tokouea'we like Kusyu is to the clans of the Hierate. Its proper name is Syoahkhaokhirtlaekhhtahyu, 'World of the Most Glorious Empire of Honourable Warriors'. Land holdings on Syoakh are of incalculable worth and only the *ahriya* highest in the Emperor's esteem may live there.

Syoakh society is dominated by the government and military. The role of Grand Emperor is not hereditary – any head of an *ahriy* may challenge the sitting Emperor to trial by combat but the title has remained within the Earatokouea'we *ahriy* for nearly 300 years. It is rumoured that the Emperor is in fact a puppet controlled by a junta of military officers, who ensure that no prospective challenger (other than a few carefully vetted sacrifices to maintain the deception) may challenge for the throne.

The capital city is mostly consumed by the ruling bureaucracy and machinery of government. The Glorious Empire is absurdly centralised. Virtually every non-military decision of note is taken by clerks on Syoakh and vetted by the generals and civilian bureaucrats. This

policy is designed to ensure that the Empire remains united and firmly in control but has limited its ability to react to crises.

Traffic at the highports is stifling, clogged with the egress of jump-4 couriers and military spacecraft. The former carry news and intelligence from the Empire's conflict zones and the latter report to its Class A facilities for refits and repair of battle damage. Interceptors and manned defence satellites abound, ready to fend off attacks.

The capital city and starport of Syoakh are magnificent, one of the best examples of high Aslan art outside the Hierate. The Grand Golden Palace is a testament to what can be done with a few genius artists and architects, an unlimited budget and an army of slaves. Aslan weep at its beauty; humans may weep at the hundreds of thousands who died building it.

The military camps on the outer islands and in orbit are far more important to the running of the Glorious Empire than the court of the Emperor or so it seems. The military junta rules from a deeply buried fortress under the ocean, cloaked with stealth technology and layered with meson and nuclear screens to defend them from orbital attacks. The junta know the Empire is in a precarious position and frantically plot ways to deflect the Hierate or, at the very least, prepare for what comes after its eventual fall.

The Syoakh system is unremarkable in most regards but its stellar similarity to Kusyu appealed to the Tokouea'we. Like Kusyu, Syoakh has a stable main sequence primary with a white dwarf close companion. The fact that its habitable-zone mainworld was less hospitable than the Aslan homeworld was largely overlooked. The system contains 10 rocky planets and an aggregate nine moons, with no gas giants or planetoid belts. Only Syoakh itself has easily accessible liquid water with the other planets and moons either desert worlds or frozen wastelands. The worlds of the system are not resource-poor but nor are they exceptionally rich.

Whilst Khyeiryostye is listed as Aokhaor's companion, the two actually orbit each other around a common barycentre. Khyeiryostye is a ravenous little star. With a mass that approximates that of Aokhaor but a volume only a little greater than Syoakh itself, Khyeiryostye's close proximity to both its primary and innermost world have made it a consumer of both atmospheres. Over the eons, the star has stripped most of super Earth Hkealoeai's atmosphere away and is accreting mass from Aokhaor as well. White dwarves are the

THE YETRAI CLAN

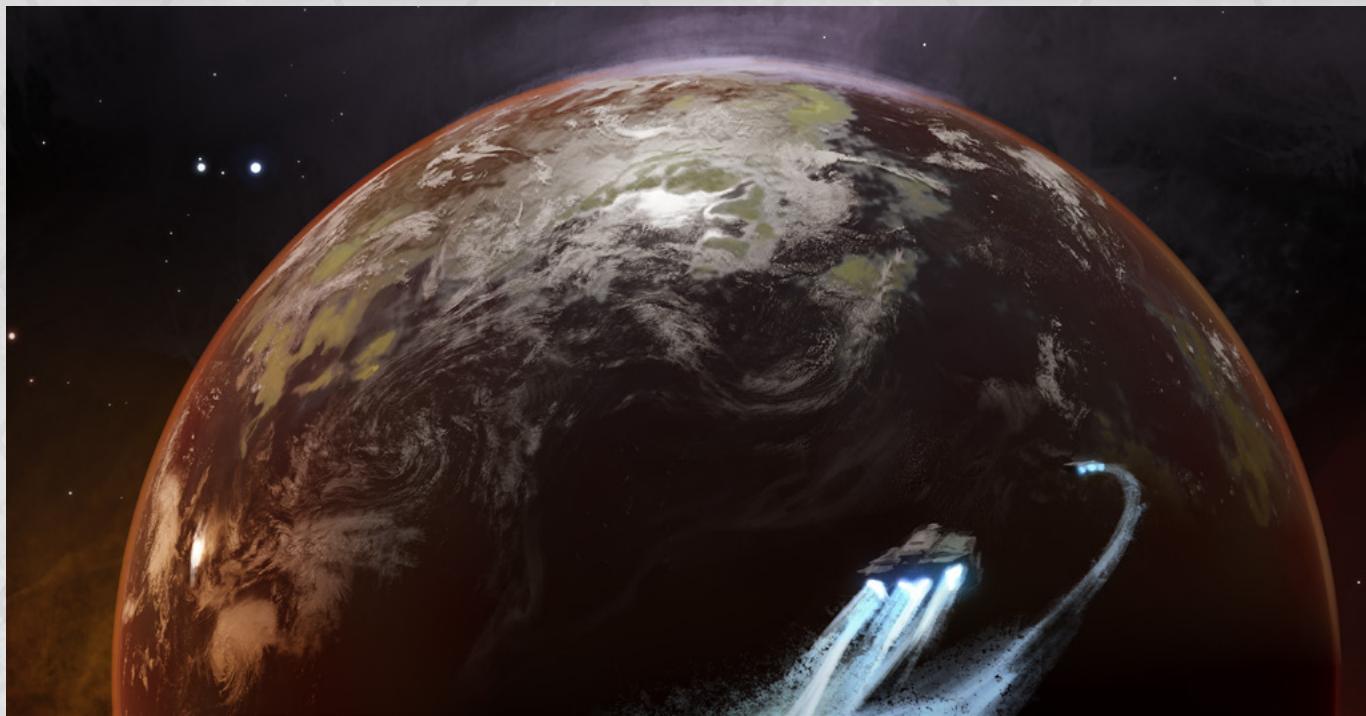


Whether they are a clan or a pride, the Yetrai are an anomaly in the Glorious Empire. They are the only *ahriy* to successfully break from the ruling clan to form what is effectively a vassal clan.

The Tokouea'we would very much like to reverse this development and rein the Yetrai in but are preoccupied with the retention of their empire.

Located right next door to the recently lost Hliyh Chain, the Yetrai are often solicited by neighbouring Hierate clans, who want them to secede from the Empire and petition the Ya'soithea for membership as an independent clan. The Yetrai have been coy thus far – partially because they fear reprisals from their host clan – but have not fully rebuffed such entreaties. Should the hordes of Hierate clans finally pour across the borders of the Empire for a final war, no one is quite sure what the Yetrai will do. They may side with their Empire brethren and fight the Hierate to the bitter end or they might defect to the Hierate and aid in the Empire's demise.

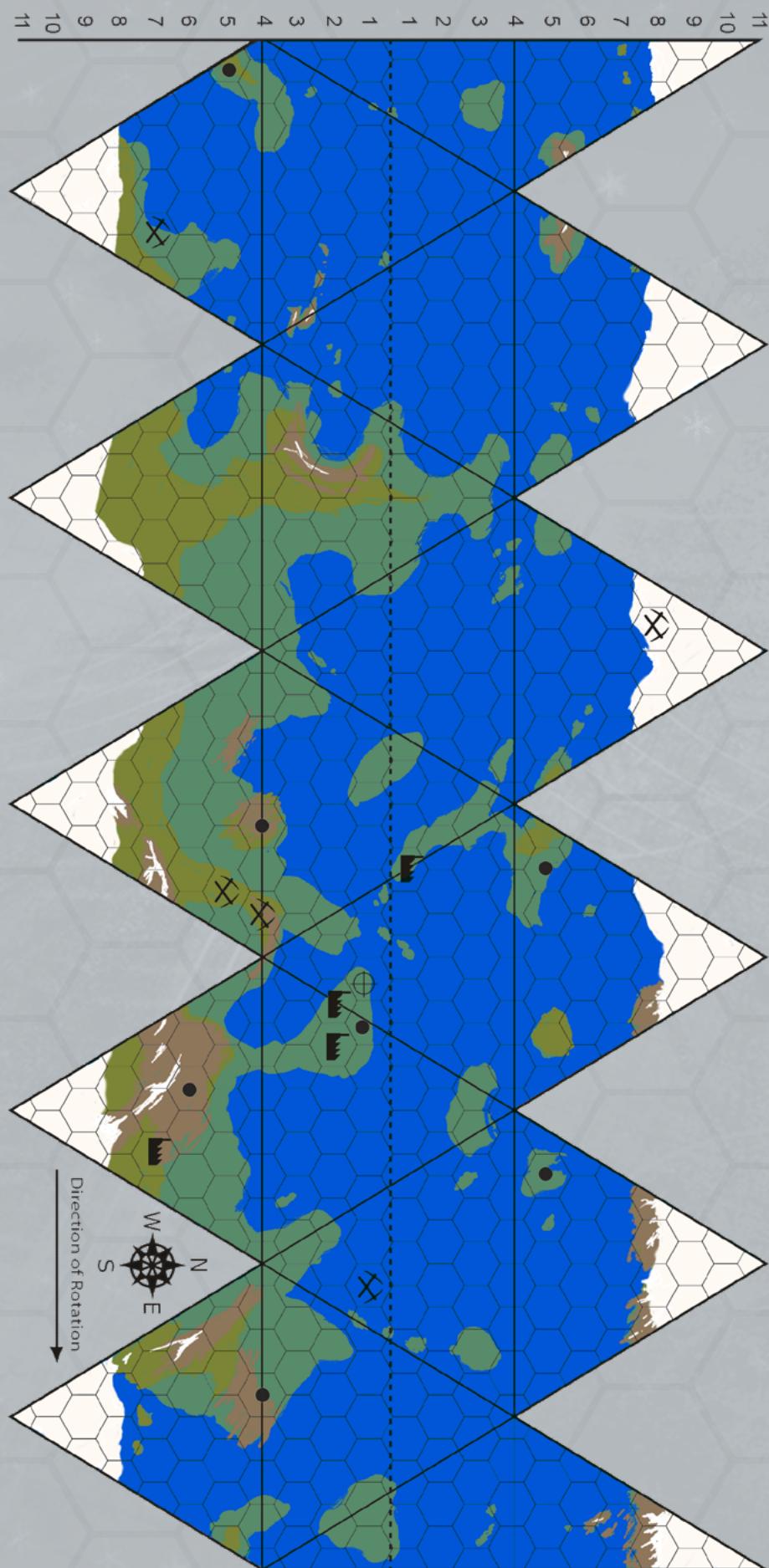
Despite the independence of the Yetrai, Empire clan agents keep up a nefarious presence on Yero'ilra. The clan agents are, of course, keenly aware of the presence of Hierate suitors and do what they can to ferret them out and eliminate them. Cloak and dagger shenanigans abound in the Yero'ilra system, creating a chaotic and dangerous environment in which espionage and assassinations are commonplace.



Orbit	Name	UWP	Remarks
Primary	Aokhaor	—	Primary star.
1	Khyeiryostye	—	White dwarf companion.
2	Hkeaaloai	CE3026C-C	Super Earth. Desert.
7	Fuiwokhaea	X450000-0	Desert.
8	Auie	X610000-0	Desert.
3	Eayo	X200000-0	Vacuum.
4	Syoakh	A6968BC-C	Capital. Military base. Amber Zone.
9	Aokhir	BS0026C-C	Small. Vacuum. Military spaceport.
5	Khyeiryeakh	X201000-0	Ice-capped. Captured planet.
6	Hkiyheo	X400000-0	Vacuum.
7	Hruihokaaiy	X402000-0	Ice-capped. Vacuum.
8	Ftaoheleakh	D91436C-C	Ice-capped. Research facility.
10	Traliywe'a	X300000-0	Vacuum.
11	Aokha	C61116C-C	Ice-capped. Resource extraction.
30	Lei'hea	D40016C-C	Vacuum satellite. Military spaceport.
9	Wakhei'alei	C7A236C-C	Exotic atmosphere. Resource extraction.
11	Uayei	X100000-0	Vacuum.
13	Ealokheilr	X201000-0	Ice-capped. Vacuum.
10	Kteofealr	X300000-0	Vacuum.
11	Khiylroaktyaea	C33116C-C	Military spaceport.
10	Takhfeilr	XS00000-0	Small. Vacuum.

NAME: Syoakh (1027 / Trojan Reach)

UWP: A6968BC-C



- City
- Starport
- Mining
- Farming
- Industry
- Power Plant
- Military

Hex Scale

857 km

World Gravity

0.75 G

Mean Equatorial Temp

30 C

dense stellar remnants of once more massive stars that went supernova, unable to generate fusion, but accretion enables them to reobtain mass. Given a few hundred million years this is likely to cause a Type Ia supernova, which will ravage every planet in the system. Astronomers from neighbouring Hierate clans have quipped that should they be unable to conquer Syoakh, nature will eventually take care of the problem for them; all they must do is be patient.

The Empire has established spaceports on several worlds and a partially functional starport on Ftaoheleakh, a large planet in its outer system that features a large liquid ocean beneath 25 kilometres of ice. Most of the spaceports in the system house system defence boat and interceptor squadrons, which are present to ward off any unwanted visitors. Hkealoeai's population are entirely in orbital habitats; the planet's gravity is much too severe to land upon.

Syoakh's nearest neighbour, Khyeiryeakh, is a captured planet with an eccentric orbit. Every few centuries, it comes close to Syoakh, producing significant tidal effects. The two were close to one another when the Tokouea'we originally settled Syoakh, which had an effect on the architectural choices made at the time and most of Syoakh's older cities are further away from bodies of water than is typical among settled worlds.

FORMER WORLDS OF THE GLORIOUS EMPIRE

The Glorious Empire has lost more worlds than it now retains. Were the Aslan a more unified species with contiguous forces, the pincer-like vice that has slowly eaten away at the Empire's borders probably would have consumed it long ago. As it stands, the Hierate is as fractious as ever, with individual clans and inter-clan alliances engaging in piecemeal acquisitions of Empire space. Whilst some partnerships resulted in long-term agreements, most have returned to political and military infighting.

Many conquered worlds have simply been subsumed into the Hierate and their operation has taken on the typical feudal structure of Aslan space. Others have more transient populations where corporations, mercenaries, belters and clan military forces gather to either plunder their resources or prepare for the next stage of conquest. The border worlds are a wild place, fraught with occasional incursions by Empire forces probing for an advantage in the next stage of the war.

The Eahaw Cluster

Even at the apex of the Glorious Empire's powers, the Eahaw Cluster was never looked upon as anything more than a provincial region. Its primary purpose, as far as the Empire was concerned, was to serve as a marshalling point for military adventures into the Florian League. It would be fair to say that Imperial Guard High Command was far more obsessed with conquests on the Empire's trailing flank but a powerful and influential cabal of generals believed the Florian League to be a threat and had always sought to secure their spinward frontier from Florian attacks.

The Floriani, who more than anything would just prefer to be left alone, were little understood by the Glorious Empire. Had they merely left the Floriani to their own devices, they likely would have been a peaceful and neutral neighbour. Unable to leave well enough alone, the Empire's conquests of Nora'a, Vadada and Lafkin revealed them to be a viable threat – one which the Floriani would be more than happy to see eradicated.

Eahaw

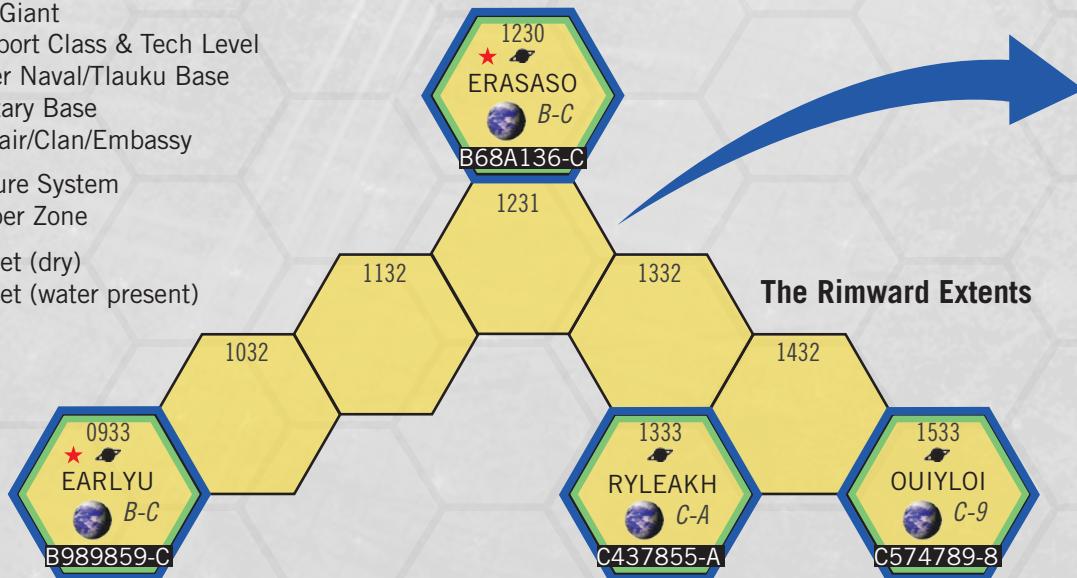
Arbitrarily shown on most star charts as a possession of the Hierate, it might be more accurate to give Eahaw no territorial designation at all. A resource-poor, low-population system to begin with, Eahaw was the site of skirmishes with the Hierate and Florian League in the early stage of a war that would later be referred to as the Eahaw Campaign. The Florian League, having just retaken Lafkin from the Glorious Empire, pursued retreating squadrons into Eahaw where they routed them alongside Hierate clan forces and bombed the mainworld with nuclear weapons. A tidally locked 'twilight world', Eahaw had few habitable areas and is now barren and radioactive. A few Hierate belter communities have sprung up in the system's moderately lucrative planetoid belt in the years since.

Yaeawaokh

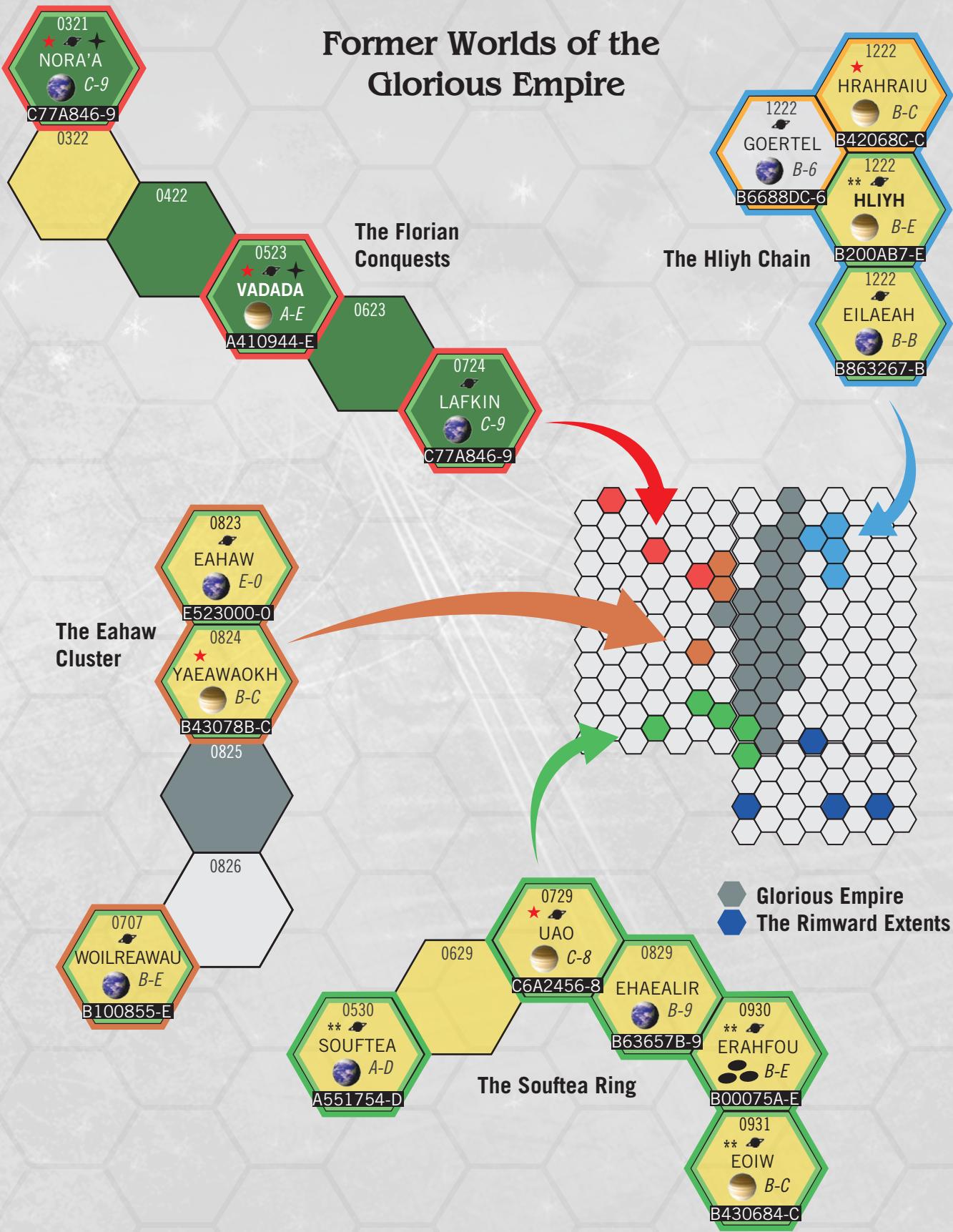
Once the site of a Glorious Empire military outpost, Yaeawaokh was conquered by an alliance of Hierate clans, most of whom were sponsored by members of the Tlaukuh. The system has poor resources in comparison with its neighbours and had never been considered for long-term settlement by the Empire. Victory by the Hierate in the Eahaw Campaign and the subsequent loss of the Hliyh Chain a few parsecs away has changed all of that. Yaeawaokh is now seen as a bulwark against future Empire aggression and an ideal world from which to launch a new wave of attacks.

Name	Location	Bases	Profile	Trade Codes	Travel Code	Gas Giants
The Eahaw Cluster						
Eahaw	0823	—	E523000-0	Ba	—	G
Woilreawau	0727	ACS	B100855-E	Ht Na Va	—	G
Yaeawaokh	0824	ACS	B43078B-C	De Na Po Ht	—	—
The Florian Conquests						
Lafkin	0724	—	C77A846-9	Wa	—	G
Nora'a	0321	N, M	A585645-9	Ag Ni Ri	—	—
Vadada	0523	N, M	A410944-E	Hi In Na Ht	—	G
The Rimward Extents						
Earlyu	0933	ACS	B989859-C	Ri Ht	—	G
Erasaso	1230	AIC	B68A136-C	Lo Wa Ht	—	G
Ouiyloi	1533	—	C574789-8	Ag Ht	—	G
Rileakh	1333	—	C437855-A	—	—	G
The Souftea Ring						
Ehaealir	0829	—	B63657B-9	Ni	—	—
Ehrafou	0930	ACS	B00075A-E	As Na Ht Va	—	G
Eoiw	0931	ACS	B430684-C	Ag De Na Ni Po Ht	—	G
Souftea	0530	ACS	A551754-D	Po Ht	—	G
Uao	0729	ACS	C6A2456-8	Fl Ni	—	G
The Hliyh Chain						
Eilaeah	1324	—	B863267-B	Lo	—	G
Goertel	1222	—	B6688DC-6	—	A	G
Hliyh	1323	ACS	B200AB7-E	Hi In Na Va Ht	—	G
Hrahraiu	1322	ACS	B42068C-C	De Na Ni Po Ht	A	—
Hteakya	1223	—	B423426-D	Ni Po Ht	—	G
Tryaoke	1524	—	D556978-8	Hi	—	G
Khau	1226	—	C687598-9	Ag Ni Ga	—	G

- Gas Giant
- B-6 Starport Class & Tech Level
- ★ Other Naval/Tlauku Base
- ◆ Military Base
- ** Corsair/Clan/Embassy
- Secure System
- Amber Zone
- ⊕ Planet (dry)
- ⊕ Planet (water present)



Former Worlds of the Glorious Empire



Woilreawau

Woilreawau is named for a small rockball world that orbits the system's binary pair, a yellow main sequence star and a white dwarf companion, similar to the stellar compositions of Kusyu, the Aslan homeworld and Syoakh, the capital of the Glorious Empire. Despite the stability of its stellar pair, the system has no habitable worlds.

A vassal of the progressive Tralyeaeawi clan administers the system and has leveraged its rather challenging environment to foster technological advancement. It has also recently become the unlikely location for the gathering of *ihatei* groups whose sights are set on Alirar.

THE FLORIAN CONQUESTS

The Glorious Empire established notable presences in only a few Florian systems but they certainly left their mark. An Empire subculture of sorts still exists on Nora'a and sorties into Vadada have made the Floriani even more paranoid and covetous of the system than they already were. Empire aggression has created a cold war state between the two interstellar polities, much as it has elsewhere.

Lafkin

Most worlds that the Floriani have taken from the Glorious Empire and Aslan Hierate are those which were once theirs, lost to the Aslan and then reconquered at some point in time. Not so with Lafkin, which was a Glorious Empire world for centuries until it was lost to the Floriani during the Eahaw Campaign. The Floriani use it as a remote outpost, presumably to stave off future incursions by the Aslan. Despite populating the planet, they have not built any permanent military bases on the resource-rich water world.

Nora'a

The Glorious Empire held the Nora'a system for nearly a century after taking it from the Floriani in 730. Nora'a is quite far from Empire space and was destined to be a difficult acquisition to keep.

As the Empire began to divert resources to counter growing threats from the Hierate closer to Syoakh, the Floriani leapt at the chance to reclaim this world, which they had once called Humboga. Before that, under Sindalian rule, it was known as Farhold. For reasons all their own, the Floriani have kept the Trokh name, Nora'a, in place after reacquiring it. The Floriani, as is their wont, used overwhelming force to retake the system and devastated the Empire forces there.

Nora'a has several enviable agricultural zones – three major rivers, each of which has a flow comparable to the Amazon on Terra, all empty into the ocean in a single massive river delta called the Trident, while the hills of the south are thickly forested with fruit trees. The Floriani have far too few Feskals farmers on Nora'a to fully exploit this bounty, so the League is considering importing more labourers. Barnai overseers flit from farm-to-farm using grav platforms.

The population of Nora'a is approximately 90% Floriani. Another 5% are Solomani-stock from the Sindalian Empire; these hill tribes lost their technology after the fall of the Empire and survived in a basic agrarian society until the Floriani arrived. The Solomani have been integrated into Florian society and are treated as Feskals.

The remaining 5% are Glorious Empire Aslan, left stranded when the League reconquered Nora'a. These warriors fled to the thick jungles along the Kaelca river and have stayed there ever since. The Aslan are at approximately TL5 and can produce higher-Tech Level equipment but Florian hunter-killer squads have learned to home in on radio emissions and heat sources in the jungle. The stranded Aslan are trapped by the jungle that protects them; any attempt to move outside the shelter of the canopy brings the Floriani down on them within hours. The Floriani have little talent for counterinsurgency and may one day employ mercenaries to eliminate this threat once and for all.

Vadada

The Vadada system has been a Florian star system since they initially colonised it centuries ago. Vadada is the primary shipyard of the Florian Navy and its moon, Jarno, is home of the Florian Naval Academy.

The Glorious Empire claimed the system early in its history but really only managed to conquer some of its sparsely inhabited outer zone planets and gas giant moons. The Empire needed access to the Vadada system as a way station to reach distant Nora'a. The Floriani eventually swept the system clean of the Empire's presence, destroying their bases with nuclear weapons.

THE RIMWARD EXTENTS

Following the declaration of the Glorious Empire, anticipation of attacks from the Hierate led to the militarisation of the Empire's rimward holdings. For centuries, the Empire protected these systems with large fleet elements and standing armies. Earlyu and Ouiyloi were valuable systems that were deemed worthy of the expenditures. Alas, the region saw most of these defences withdrawn and redeployed in a failed effort

to hold onto the Hliyh Chain. The Empire suffered the domino effect of losing its most hallowed worlds and then saw its rimward systems plundered as well.

Earlyu

The first world to be lost to the Hierate, Earlyu was overcome by *ihatei* in 3255. The attack was so successful that it garnered the attention of the Khaukheirl clan, who offered to support the *ihatei* in exchange for vassalage. In 3288, the *ihatei* were made nobles of the Khaukheirl and Khaukheirl warriors flooded onto the planet, routing the remainder of Glorious Empire forces present.

The loss was painful for the Empire to swallow since Earlyu is rich in valuable resources, especially petrochemicals and anagathic moss. In the aftermath, Earlyu became an important part of the Silraaihe subsector economy. The Siroal industrial complex – a city-sized factory – produces pharmaceuticals, clone meat and synthetic fabrics. The human slave population, originally numbering some five million, was reduced to less than 500,000 during the wars. The humans now live on reservations in the swamps, where they make counterfeit Imperial goods that are sold in the Hierate.

The loss of Earlyu was symbolic in that it exposed the vulnerability of the Glorious Empire, which – to that point – had been thought indomitable.

Erasaso

Abandoned by the Empire recently, Erasaso was acquired by a trio of Tlaukuh clans who see the system as a viable launching point for the next round of incursions into Empire space. The mainworld is deemed uninhabitable due to the presence of several runaway species of algae that propagate themselves by spewing airborne spores. The spores have a poisonous effect on life and affect machinery as well, filling every crack and void. The planet was not known to have harboured native life forms and it is believed that the algae is the result of a failed experiment by Empire scientists.

Ouiyloi

Gifted with a lush biosphere and rich, coastal agricultural lands, Ouiyloi was host to thousands of plantations. These lands were doled out to Tokouea'we *ahriya* a century ago in an effort to placate growing unrest with the Empire's authoritarian excesses. The slaves working the plantations were brutally treated, often worked to death or left to die of malnutrition. Ouiyloi was a notorious slaver world, whose ships raided the Outrim Void mercilessly in an effort to bring a constant flow of new labour.

In the desperate effort to prevent the loss of Hliyh, several star systems were left poorly defended or even abandoned. Ouiyloi was one such world, despite its importance. Bereft of its defence fleets and Imperial Guard forces, the *ahriya* were left to fend for themselves. Invading clans from the Hierate made short work of them, cutting off the rail lines that linked the plantations from one another. The Tlaukuh trio that currently administers this 'liberated' world is beset by frequent guerrilla attacks from the many warriors who were not pacified. In addition to this threat, there are the Man Brutes. It seems that long ago, Feskal from the Florian League were enslaved and brought to Ouiyloi. With the fall of the Empire, these Feskal fled into the world's forests and jungles where they pose a significant threat to unwary Aslan. The Man Brutes have grown especially large and strong, and have seemingly devolved into a subhuman state. An adult Man Brut towers above a typical Aslan male and can snap the neck or spine of an Aslan with little effort.

Rileakh

Formerly a way station for Glorious Empire agricultural freighters making their way to and from Syoakh to lush Ouiyloi, this system was sparsely populated until recently. After it fell into the hands of an ambitious group of Ya'soithea clans, it was delegated to a vassal of the Sahao', a Tlaukuh clan. This has caused a great deal of strife on the planet and attracted forces from numerous other Ya'soithea clans, seeking to 'right the wrong' perpetrated by the Tlaukuh bullies who annexed the system. Tensions are extremely high and the Sahao' – who had a majority interest on the much more valuable Ouiyloi system – have found themselves drawn into the quagmire to protect the interests of their vassal. To make matters worse, it is believed that deeply planted insurgents from the Glorious Empire are present on the world, sowing dissent and fomenting conflict whenever and wherever they can.

THE SOUFTEA RING

The Glorious Empire's rimward frontier was always the most neglected one. It would have made a great deal of sense for the regent or the newly crowned Grand Emperor to create a stronger buffer zone around the capital but the obsession with the Esuaheaklahryoyulr clan and subsequent decision to make Hliyh the jewel of the Empire kept the Tokouea'we from making a strong effort to defend this region.

Souftea and the other star systems along the Empire's spinward-rimward spur were destined to fall at some point, which they eventually did to the lowly Arhiyao clan. The Arhiyao were unable to consolidate power

OUIYLOI MAN BRUTE

ANIMAL	HITS	SPEED
OUIYLOI MAN BRUTE	32	7m
SKILLS	Athletics (dexterity) 1, Athletics (strength) 2, Melee (unarmed) 3, Recon 1, Survival 2	
ATTACKS	Fists (3D)	
TRAITS	Heightened Senses	
BEHAVIOUR	Carnivore, Killer	



in the region, only managing to hold onto Souftea itself, but their victory over the Glorious Empire was as effective at proving the vulnerability of the Empire – if not more so – as the loss of Earlyu.

Today, the region is still seen as ‘the one that got away’, the single-most egregious loss the Empire has withstood save Hliyh itself.

Ehrafou

The asteroid belt in this system has never yielded much in the way of mineral wealth. What little lanthanum and other valuable metals it did have were long ago extracted by the fledgling Glorious Empire during the heady days of expansion. Low-grade metal and silicate caches continue to be discovered but are of little use to the Hierate’s more powerful, high-tech societies in the region.

When they lost the system in 3632, the Empire left behind an impressive array of high-tech industrial facilities, which the Hierate has been quick to salvage. Factories for the production of small craft hulls, industrial goods, biochemical and bioengineering products have been returned to service by the ruling Oahrleakh clan.

Most factories were located in the belt but others have been found on the system’s planets and gas giant moons. A clandestine research facility was recently discovered on Aul, a satellite of Hroalr, the most distant outer system gas giant. Most facilities of this nature were engaged in tampering with human genetics,

presumably in order to create stronger, more pliant slaves but the one on Aul is different. From what Oahrleakh scientists have been able to determine, the Empire was doing research on the Aslan genome with the intention of developing bioweapons that would work against their own kind.

Eoiw

Lost to Hierate clans in 3632, Eoiw is now the site of an extensive orbital graveyard of Glorious Empire warships, several of which have already plunged onto the world’s parched surface. In the final throes of the war, the Empire sent legions of human soldiers to the front with explosive collars and scant weaponry to die in droves under the Hierate assault. The invading Hrakoea clan and its *ihaezi* minions are still cleansing the world of stranded dead enders. Pockets of resistance remain with Imperial Guard warriors holed up in many of the world’s more remote domes and transdome tunnels.

The Hrakoea have commandeered the world’s orbital military base, powering it with a docked warship. The facility itself is unimpressive, and Eoiw has few resources, but the Hrakoea and their allied clans intend to use it as a base of operations for further conquests of Empire worlds.

THE HLYH CHAIN

The liberation of the Hliyh Chain from Glorious Empire control has led to a great deal of military activity on the Empire’s borders and the fall of Hliyh is viewed by most

as the penultimate event of the war. Hliyh was the jewel of the Empire and while the capital has always been on Syoakh, Hliyh had eclipsed the capital in all other ways. It had become the Empire's economic, military and most of all cultural nexus. Taking the world required a herculean effort by an alliance of Hierate clans.

Eilaeah

Eilaeah is a beautiful world with a well-developed ecosystem, especially around its large seas. The Glorious Empire used this planet as a hunting ground for nobles and the expectation is that the Hierate will do the exact same thing. With its four gas giants and planetoid belt, Eilaeah offers ample resources for wilderness refuelling and resource exploitation.

Goertel

This world is controlled by the Church of Nom, a human messianic cult that believes a divine entity will one day arise from humanity's collective soul and that its ascension can be hastened by fostering psionics. The Church has outlawed space travel for the vast majority of its citizens, allowing only the priesthood and select trained technicians to operate spacecraft. Conquered by the Glorious Empire in 3009, the planet recently overthrew its oppressors when the Empire had to withdraw to defend other worlds from the Hierate. The archaic Sindalian fleet of Goertel, mothballed on Delta Theta for centuries, returned to assert the authority of the Church.

After centuries of enslavement to the Empire, the people of Goertel had little choice but to acquiesce to the priesthood when they returned from exile. Whilst many adhered to the gospels during their centuries as slaves, the absence of psionic priests changed the religion drastically. The clergy made their triumphant return to find willing and compliant parishioners; however, they had developed a self-reliant streak that the priests have since attempted to suppress. The Church asserts that it has liberated the population but it might be said that Goertelians have merely exchanged one form of slavery for another.

Hliyh

Once the jewel of the Glorious Empire, Hliyh was lost to joint-clan Hierate forces less than a decade ago. The Empire could not bear the thought of seeing it ravaged by Open War and consented to cede it to Hierate clans after losing a Strictly Limited War. Most see the loss of Hliyh as the turning point of the war against the Empire and that its capture is ultimately of greater significance than taking Syoakh itself.

The victorious Hierate clans have converted the immense slave population into a mostly planet-bound labour caste. Whilst life in the artificial abodes of Hliyh's airless surface is less than ideal, it has improved under Hierate management. Under the Glorious Empire, the slaves were exposed to horrifically dangerous jobs, working in deep open-pit mines on the planet and in vacuum conditions constructing Hliyh's extensive orbital cities. Whilst the airless environment remains as hostile as ever, the introduction of automation and other forms of technology has made conditions much safer.

The majority of Hliyh's Aslan inhabitants live in orbitals, including a magnificent ring that encircles the entire planet, containing sprawling Kusyu-like artificial habitats and cities. The dun-coloured world below has been mercilessly mined for raw materials for centuries, its surface becoming a blasted out, dishevelled husk with vast portions of its outer layers repurposed into industrial materials. The joke among the Aslan is that given a few more centuries, only the ring will remain and the planet itself will be a distant memory. The world was intended to be a monument to the greatness of the Glorious Empire but now the Hierate has staked its claim upon this technological and architectural wonder.

It took the Empire years to evacuate personnel, space forces and soldiers; there was simply no way for them to get billions of inhabitants out of the system within a short period of time given the limited number of craft available. Many stayed behind, some as prisoners of war while others have been incorporated into Hierate society.

Hrahraiu

This system is under the auspices of the Hrahraiu Triumvirate. The Seieakh, Akatoiloh and We'okunir clans have worked together for millennia on one project or another, exemplifying a spirit of unity among the clans. As in any marriage there are rows from time-to-time but their strong commitment to one another keeps the Triumvirate together. Unfortunately, cooperation with clans outside their sphere is sometimes lacking. The Triumvirate thinks of itself as a miniature Tlaukuh *within* the Tlaukuh and has been known to exhibit exclusionary behaviour even when the influence and advice of outsiders might be sorely needed.

The Triumvirate has determined that the best course of action for their millions of freed slaves is extermination. Few reasons are given for this other than some vaguely expressed notions that the logistics of shipping them off planet far outweigh any benefits. The independent human systems in the region, neighbouring Hierate worlds, and some of the systems in the Dustbelt have decried the Triumvirate's declaration. In response, the

EAGLE OF NOM

XX

TL13

		TONS	COST (MCR)
Hull	200 tons, Streamlined, Reinforced Superior Stealth	— —	18 200
Armour	Crystaliron, Armour: 6	15	5.4
M-Drive	Thrust 6 (reduced tonnage)	10.8	26.4
J-Drive	Jump 2 (stealth jump)	15	28.125
Power Plant	Fusion (TL13, energy efficient), Power 219	13.5	14.6
Fuel Tanks	J-2, 4 weeks of operation	42	—
Bridge	Holographic controls	10	1.25
Computer	Computer/25	—	10
Sensors	Improved Countermeasures suite	3 2	4.3 4
Weapons	Ion Cannon (high yield) Triple Turret (sandcasters)	5 1	6.6 1.75
Systems	Fuel Processor (20 tons/day) Fuel Scoop Chapel Repair drones	1 — 4 2	0.05 — 0.5 0.4
Staterooms	Standard x7 Psionic Stateroom x1 Low Berths x8	28 4 4	3.5 2 0.4
Software	Manoeuvre/0 Jump Control/2 Library Auto Repair/1 Fire Control/1 Intellect Virtual Crew/1	— — — — — — —	— 0.2 — 10 2 1 5
Common Areas		8	0.8
Cargo		31	—

TOTAL: MCR 346.275

CREW

**ASTROGATOR,
STEWARD, HIGH PRIEST**

RUNNING COSTS

MAINTENANCE COST
Cr28.856/month

• • • •
PURCHASE COST
MCR346.275

POWER REQUIREMENTS

120

40

**MANOEUVRE
DRIVE**

**BASIC SHIP
SYSTEMS**

40

5

JUMP DRIVE

SENSORS

11

1

WEAPONS

**FUEL
PROCESSOR**

THE EAGLE OF NOM

The *Eagle of Nom* is the primary conveyance for the high priest of the Church of Nom in the Goertel system, a variant of the *Harrier*, which were primarily used for law enforcement and commerce raiding.

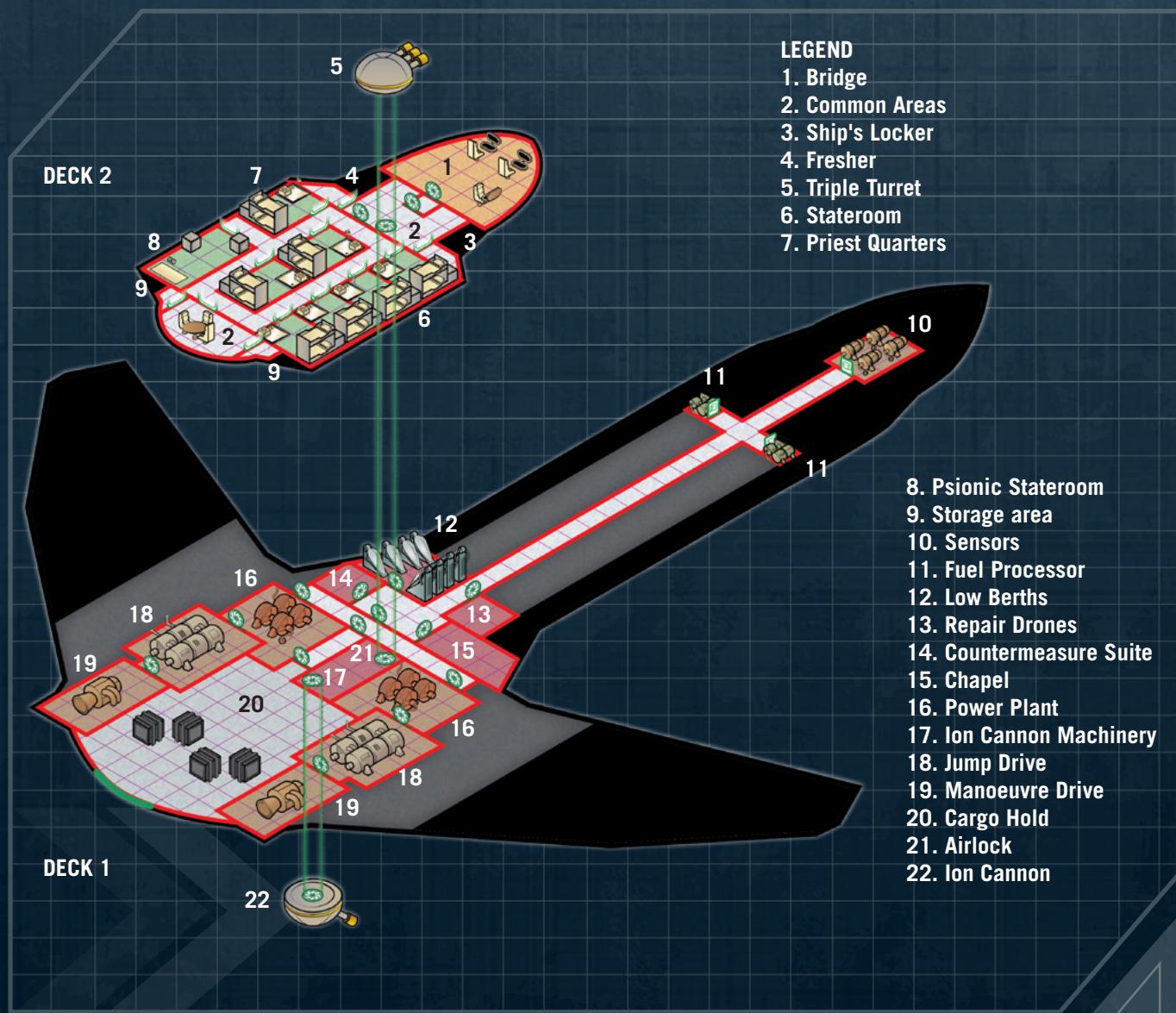
This ship was one of many that fled to Delta Theta where it would remain for centuries until the Church shook off the yoke of Glorious Empire slavery decades ago. The *Eagle* has been refit with defensive weaponry and is almost completely automated, enabling the high priest to command it to do his bidding as if it were one of his disciples.

Like all of the recovered Sindalian spacecraft that belong to Goertel, the *Eagle* is an old ship and has several quirks. It is expensive to maintain but as the personal spacecraft of the high priest, allowances are made to keep it running.



88

HULL POINTS





Triumvirate have made their operations *more* opaque, interdicting the mainworld and closing the downport to most traffic. The orbital starport remains open to offworlders but visitors often express how unwelcoming the culture is. Most merely stop by, refuel, offload freight and then move on to the next system.

Peering down from the orbital starport, Hrahraiu appears to be a dusty and rocky ball with dozens of canyon systems that line its surface like stress fractures. The world is rich in low-grade mineral resources having long been stripped of lanthanum and other valuable metals. It is still quite active in the niche market of selling its rich and hardy array of natural pigments that Aslan use in many art forms, including the decorative *yoyeaokhtef* inscribed upon their starships.

Hteakya

Hteakya is a craggy, cracked, mostly dry world with the majority of its water locked in polar ice caps. Long, tendril-like seas meander from the caps like fingers attempting to reach the equator. From orbit, the predominant colours of the world are a rusty orange sharply contrasted with dark greys and browns along mountain ranges. The ice caps are a stark white that gradually turns blue as the water thaws and melts in the temperate regions. The planet's weak magnetic field and eccentric elliptical orbit around the system's binary pair have stripped it of what otherwise might have been denser, more breathable air.

The primary purpose of the world has always been to serve as a stopover for mining interests in its prosperous asteroid belt. Hteakya itself is not short on mineral resources but in its long history of colonisation by the

Solomani, Glorious Empire and now the Aslan Hierate, it has yet to see its day as a boomtown. Its current caretakers, the Uiuikhtaiu clan, are hoping to change that. The Uiuikhtaiu are a former vassal of the powerful Khaukheirl clan who gave up their vassalage to join the effort to conquer the Hliyh Chain. The gambit has clearly paid off and the prevailing sentiment is that now is the time to reap the rewards. The Uiuikhtaiu have determined that the first step is to rid the world of its unsavoury past by getting rid of its population of freed slaves.

In due time the Uiuikhtaiu intend to model themselves after the Ahroay'if, the wealthy vassal clan of the Tlaiwaha who set down their arms and became rich from trade with the Imperium. If their plan comes to fruition they will eventually dominate the Hliyh Chain and establish new trade routes into the Imperium and Florian League.

Khau

A largely overlooked system, Khau was a possession of the Glorious Empire from very early on but never became much more than an agricultural backwater. The small Solomani colony on the system mainworld had existed largely beneath the notice of the Sindalian Empire and surrendered to the Tokouea'we immediately when the Aslan invaded 700 years ago. The Empire held the world with little more than a reinforced regiment for seven centuries until it was conquered three decades ago by the Triyr'leakhoa, a vassal of the Yerlyaruwiwo.

The inhabitants of Khau were nominally slaves of the Empire but their lives scarcely changed after occupation. They continued to grow bountiful crops on the world's bioengineered soils, producing foodstuffs

for enslaved human populations elsewhere in the Empire. In addition to edible crops, the natives had introduced a genetically engineered variation of Terran cattle to the planet, apparently designed to thrive in the planet's lower gravity and higher atmospheric density. Attempts by the Aslan to introduce the aua to the world failed rather miserably. The normally hardy beasts were unable to digest the native vegetation and proved to be susceptible to several of the world's viruses. Rather than bother with it further, the Empire left things as was and allegedly named the planet using the Solomani word for the hardy bovine beasts that roved its plains.

Tryaoke

An ambitious breeding and genetic engineering operation has transformed this habitable world into a nightmare for the Hirate Aslan who wrested it from Empire hands over 30 years ago. Empire scientists, thought to have been inspired by the Florian Feskal, were determined to create a tough and tractable breed of human labourers. By one measure, they were wildly successful; the Tryaocean strain of Humaniti has proven highly fertile, reproducing at an astounding rate and populating the world with over eight billion humans. However, the humans have proven to be anything but tractable, refusing to participate in the Empire's slave labour pool and providing to be resistant to all forms of coercion.

The Hirate Aslan who captured the world desperately want to claim its land but the ubiquitous presence of human squatters has made it a vexing enterprise. The Aslan have been unable to convert the humans from slavery into a viable un-landed labour force and are currently at a crossroads. Plans have been put forward to either grant them independence or commit genocide on a truly massive scale, wiping out the humans so the land can be properly disseminated among the Aslan.

Despite their intransigence, the humans have proven to be highly industrious as aua ranchers. Tucked into the planet's lowlands where the atmosphere is denser, Tryaocean humans breed billions of aua, which they use for everything from a food source and leather to by-products such as oil for lanterns.

OTHER KEY WORLDS

While these worlds have never been controlled by the Glorious Empire, they are notable players in the region and factor heavily into its story. All of these worlds are controlled by humans and play an outsized role in the destiny of the Empire.

Acis

Acis has the distinction of being the most continuously settled planet in the Dustbelt. Its breathable atmosphere, pleasant climate and active biosphere has made it a home to humans for over 2,500 years. The planet was named for the mythical figure Acis, who loved the beautiful Galatea and was murdered by the jealous cyclops, Polyphemus. His blood created the River Acis and the ruddy, reddish hue of the Acis River Delta may have inspired the name.

Acis has abundant sea life and a developing terrestrial ecosystem. Scientists believe that the developmental stage of the world is approximately equivalent to the Terran Devonian Era, in which most complex land creatures had yet to appear. Rich minerals and nutrients in the planet's soil made it an ideal candidate to host a bounty of agricultural products and it has been subtly terraformed over the millennia to enhance its ability to do so.

Acisan society is notable for gender stratification. Occupations are strictly managed by the Central Authority, an agency of the governing bureaucracy that determines each citizen's ability to perform a job based on their qualifications and gender. Women are assigned the majority of leadership and administrative roles and men are soldiers and labourers. There is a degree of flexibility but all vocational assignments are ultimately made by the government. Should a citizen desire a role that does not fall under the purview of their gender, the government allows them to undergo gender reassignment surgery, thereby making them eligible for the role they desire.

Acis is also known for its employment of Thalassan councillors in an advisory role to the government. Thalassans are renowned for their ability to predict

Name	Location	Bases	Profile	Trade Codes	Travel Code	Gas Giants
Acis	1619	—	B885796-A	Ag Ri Ga	—	G
Camoran	1823	—	A55167A-B	Ni Po	—	G
Sif	0820	—	A765867-7	Ri Ga	—	G
Tyr	1518	—	A551557-B	Ni Po	—	G

the future by using a complex array of closely guarded algorithms. The Thalassans have held influential positions on Acis for nearly a century and are thought to have been involved in many of the government's major decisions.

Whilst the majority of the Dustbelt suffered from the oppression of the Tyrian Lordships, this was only sporadically felt on Acis. As the 'golden child' of the Sindalian Main and its primary producer of agricultural products, Acis was rarely raided and allowed to be relatively autonomous, provided that shipments of foodstuffs and other products were donated to the Lordships on a regular basis. Despite its prosperity, the chains of tyranny eventually began to chafe on Acis. A resistance movement began to develop, which was repressed by Tyrian counterinsurgency agents until exiled Acisians hired mercenaries from the Glorious Empire to defeat Tyr.

Basking in the glow of liberty, Acis sees this era as a bright new dawn. The Central Authority has begun to establish itself as a sort of regional capital in the Dustbelt and has started to pursue policies to help uplift downtrodden neighbouring systems. However, the Aslan mercenaries, having been given a taste of victory and new lands to settle, have been reluctant to leave. It is feared that the Empire might return to the region, this time not as soldiers of fortune but as conquerors.

Camoran

Camoran is an anomaly in Hierate space with its human population and Imperial client state status. The system was settled in the early 400s by an Imperial expedition from the Gushemege sector. Funded by an adventurous group of nobles, the original expeditionary fleet consisted of dozens of well-armed and far-reaching scout and colonial spacecraft. The Camoranian mission was notable for its outreach to the myriad dying colonies and Sindalian survivor populations of the region.

Camoran is a parched and uninviting world with poor resources. Technically, it is located within the habitable zone of the system but is a shade too close to its bright yellow-white star. Despite the presence of a magnetic field and life-supporting atmosphere, its native fungoid and plant species were incapable of producing enough oxygen to create a more pleasant environment. Its close proximity to the star brings about nasty dust storms, many of which encompass the entire planet for months at a time. Attempts were made to terraform the world that have borne fruit today. Bioengineers designed and planted several species of plant life whose roots start deep beneath the planet's surface, tapping into its water table and extend upward through its dry, cracked surface into mushroom-like blooms that collect stellar radiation. These species, whose

stalks and caps extend hundreds of metres into the air, are credited with the absorption of at least some of Camoran's carbon dioxide and have helped to create a thin – if only marginally breathable – atmosphere.

Centuries after its inception, the colony developed into a microcosm of the Imperium with a loose, mostly cooperative collection of feudal nations, which mined or harvested what resources the planet did have. In time, this collection of baronies extended its reach into the much richer collection of planets and gas giant moons elsewhere in the system.

Camoran is now a beacon of human civilisation, surrounded by Aslan on all sides. Approximately a century ago, the world became threatened by *iHatei* incursions but the Imperium came to its rescue. Petitioning the Duke of Tobia himself, the Camoranians cited their shared heritage and invoked mutual defence protocols in the Moot. Unfortunately for Camoran, the Imperium seems intent on letting the veil of protection expire when it comes due in 1108.

Today, Camoran is a highly secure system with its own small but well-equipped navy and a tradition of public service and cultural pride. Whilst the Camoran system is seven parsecs distant from the Glorious Empire, it has a decidedly active presence closer to its borders. The vaunted Camoranian Starfighters – mercenary space and atmospheric fighter squadrons – are commonly found fighting alongside Hierate clans in one battle or another.

Sif

Throughout its long history Sif has been the site of failed experiments, draconian dictatorships, lost colonies, invasions and at least one attempt to completely depopulate the world by environmental extremists who believed the planet was better off without the presence of sentient life. Despite its sordid history, Sif has recently developed a degree of importance it previously lacked.

After its most recent dictator was deposed, an interim government was formed to seek outside assistance to find a more lasting solution to the planet's perennial governance problems. Despite its rich and bountiful resources, the Council of Sif was unable to find any takers until they met the corporate managers of Delta Theta, a wholly owned subsidiary of Starlink Merchant Factors. Starlink appointed the ne'er-do-well son of one of its high-level executives to be Sif's provincial governor. In the ensuing years, he proceeded to make a series of horribly disadvantageous trade deals with the neighbouring Florian League, Aslan Hierate, various and sundry Dustbelt worlds and even the reticent Glorious Empire. The young fop cut a deal with just about anyone willing

CAMORANIAN LIGHT CARRIER

ADVERSARY-CLASS

TL11

		TONS	COST (MCR)
Hull	700 tons, Streamlined, Light Hull	—	31.5
Armour	Crystaliron, Armour 4	35	4.725
M-Drive	Thrust 1	7	14
J-Drive	Jump 2	40	60
Power Plant	Fusion (TL8), Power 320	32	16
	High Efficiency Batteries (TL10), Power 100	2.5	0.25
Fuel Tanks	J-2, 4 weeks of operation, reaction fuel refill for all fighters	154	—
Bridge		20	3.5
Computer	Computer/15	—	2
Sensors	Military Grade	2	4.1
	Improved Signal Processing	1	4
Weapons	Triple Turrets (sandcaster, long range pulse lasers x2) x7	7	26.25
Systems	Fuel Processor (40 tons/day)	2	0.1
	Repair Drones	7	1.4
	Docking Clamp Type II	5	1
	Briefing Room	4	0.5
	Docking Spaces (10 tons) x13	143	35.75
	Full Hangar (10 tons)	20	4
	Launch Tube	100	0.5
	Workshop	6	0.9
Staterooms	Standard x 15	60	7.5
Software	Jump Control/2	—	0.2
	Library	—	—
	Manoeuvre/0	—	—
	Auto Repair/1	—	5
	Virtual Gunner/0	—	1
Common Areas		15	1.5
Cargo		37	—

TOTAL: MCR 221.675

CREW

CAPTAIN, PILOT,
ASTROGATOR, ENGINEERS X2,
MAINTENANCE X2, FIGHTER
PILOTS X14, OFFICERS X2

RUNNING COSTS

MAINTENANCE COST
Cr18.472/month

PURCHASE COST
MCR221.675

POWER REQUIREMENTS

70 140

MANOEUVRE DRIVE BASIC SHIP SYSTEMS

140 3

JUMP DRIVE SENSORS

63 2

WEAPONS FUEL PROCESSOR

280

HULL POINTS

ADVERSARY CAMORANIAN LIGHT CARRIER

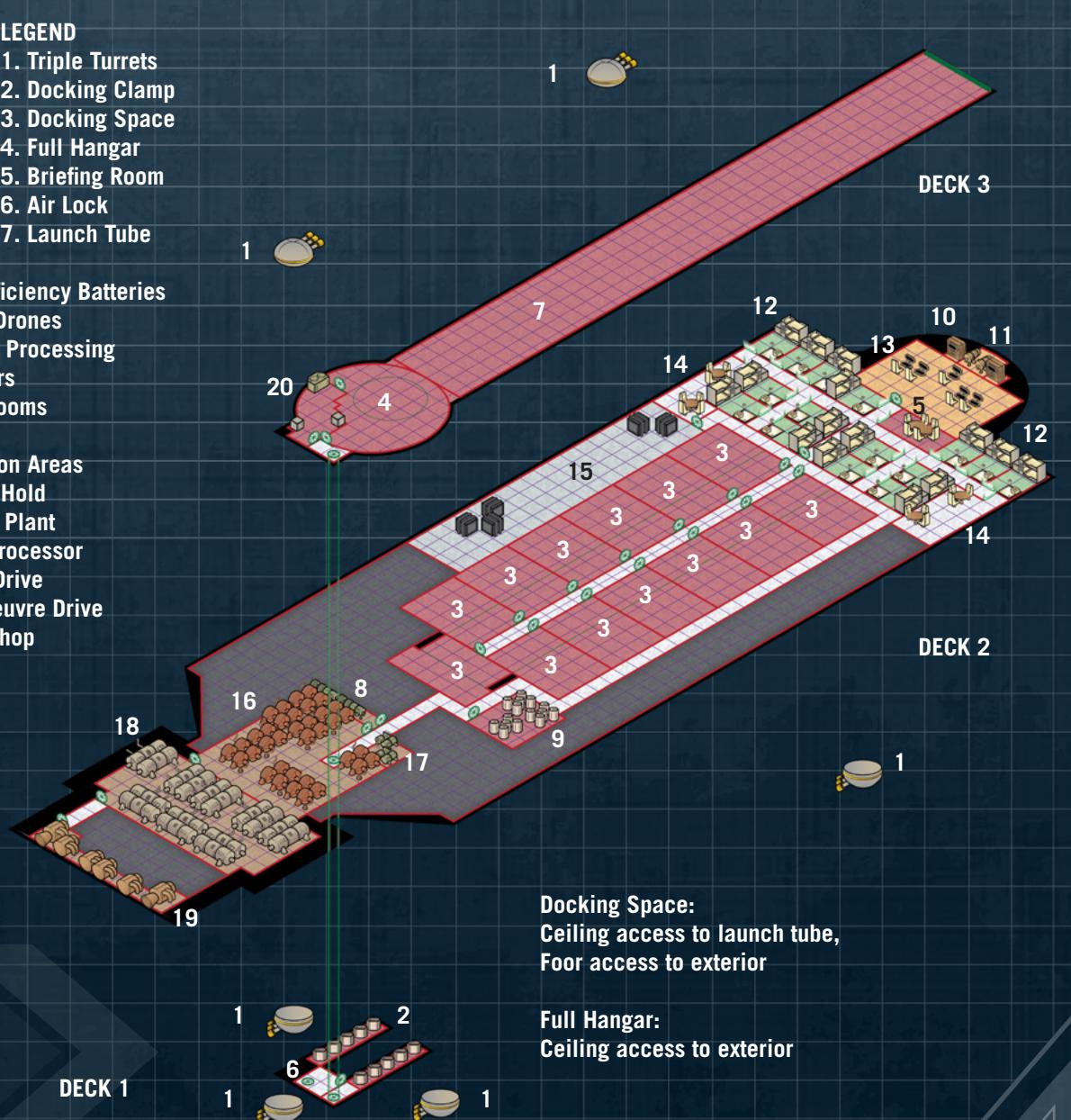
The Adversary is a utilitarian launch platform for the Camoranian Starfighters, a mercenary force known throughout the region for their courage and expertise. For missions in the wilds, the carrier has a docking clamp to which a modular cutter with fuel module is attached. The cutter makes skimming runs whilst the fighters perform their mission and the carrier maintains a high guard position. The ship has an additional 10 tons of fuel that may be used to refuel the fighters' reaction drive tanks after they have been expended or for additional jump drive fuel when a cutter is attached.



LEGEND

- 1. Triple Turrets
- 2. Docking Clamp
- 3. Docking Space
- 4. Full Hangar
- 5. Briefing Room
- 6. Air Lock
- 7. Launch Tube

- 8. High Efficiency Batteries
- 9. Repair Drones
- 10. Signal Processing
- 11. Sensors
- 12. Staterooms
- 13. Bridge
- 14. Common Areas
- 15. Cargo Hold
- 16. Power Plant
- 17. Fuel Processor
- 18. Jump Drive
- 19. Manoeuvre Drive
- 20. Workshop



CAMORANIAN LIGHT STEALTH FIGHTER

TL11		TONS	COST (MCR)
Hull	10 tons, Streamlined Emissions Absorption Grid Stealth Coating	— 0.2 —	0.6 0.4 1
Armour	Crystaliron, Armour: 5	0.625	0.15
M-Drive	Thrust 5	0.5	1
High Burn Thruster	Thrust 7 (fuel efficient)	1.4	0.35
Power Plant	Fusion (TL8), Power 13	1.3	0.65
Fuel Tanks	4 weeks of operation	1	—
Thruster Fuel	30 minutes	0.525	—
Cockpit		1.5	0.01
Computer	Computer/15	—	2
Sensors	Military	2	4.1
Weapons	Fixed Mount (very high yield pulse laser) Small weapon mount x4	0 1	1.35 0.004
Software	Manoeuvre/0 Library Evade/2	— — —	— — 2
TOTAL: MCR 13.614			

XX

CREW

PILOT

RUNNING COSTS

MAINTENANCE COST

Cr1.135/month

PURCHASE COST

MCR13.614

POWER REQUIREMENTS

5 2

MANOEUVRE DRIVE BASIC SHIP SYSTEMS

4 2

WEAPONS SENSORS

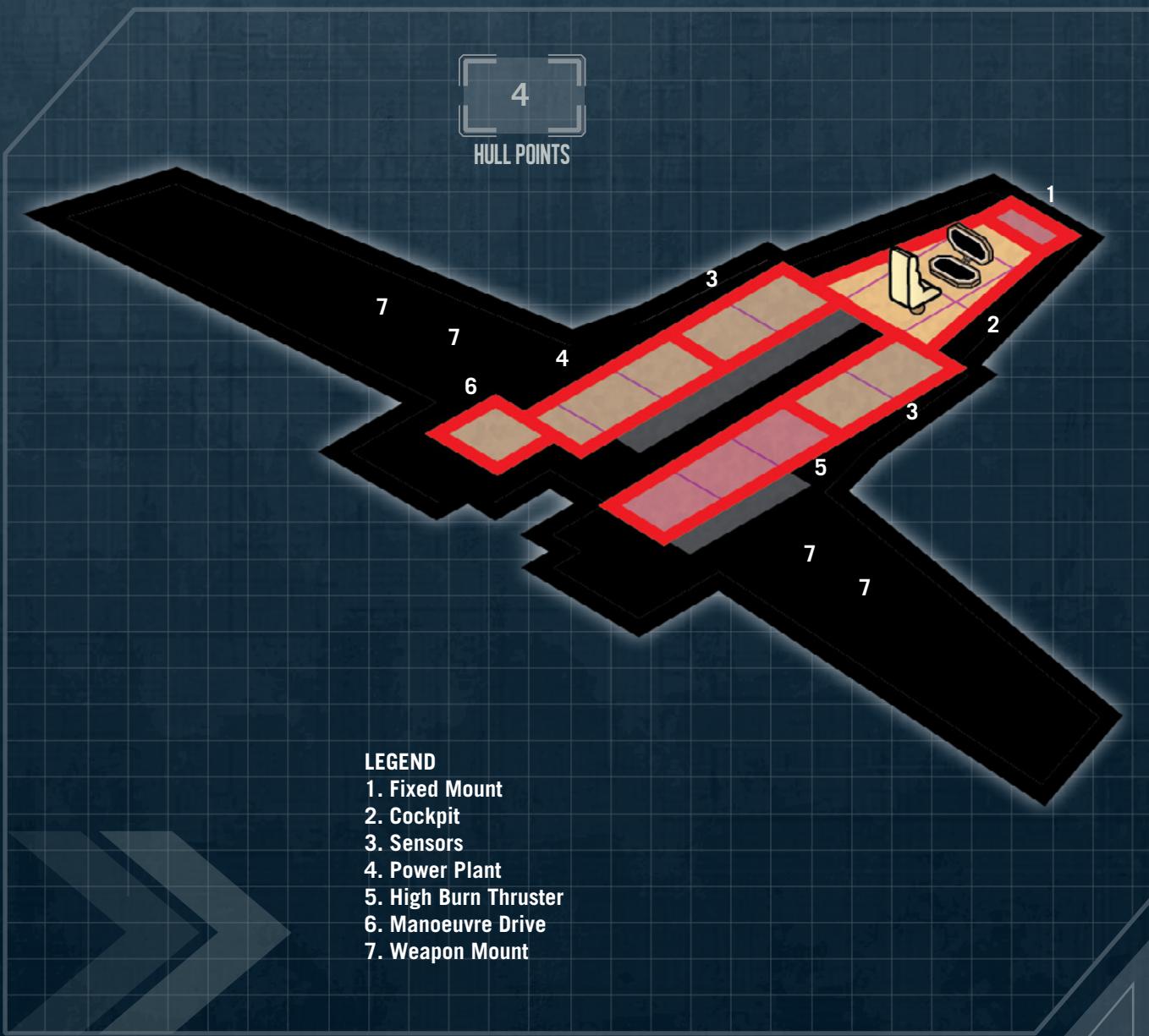


CAMORANIAN LIGHT STEALTH FIGHTER

The Camoranian light stealth fighter is built on an Imperial model but incorporates an emissions absorption grid, stealth coating and superior armour for enhanced survivability. The fighter's high burn thrusters enable it to close on the enemy with a combined 12g of thrust. Whilst it can only maintain this level of acceleration for a short time, skilful Camoranian pilots are known to make the most of it. The fighter is typically armed with four smaller weapons such as missiles or autocannon, which may be used to attack armoured targets and personnel on the ground or lightly armoured spacecraft.

POWER REQUIREMENTS

5	2
MANOEUVRE DRIVE	BASIC SHIP SYSTEMS
4	2
WEAPONS	SENSORS



to make the long trip into the spinward bight in which the world is perched. While these developments did nothing to enhance Sif's stability or economic progress, it did have a delightfully unexpected effect; Sif became the de facto centre for diplomacy of the powers of the region.

The regional powers have since invested heavily in the world, building cities, transit networks, light industry, expansive foreign service bureaux and impressive if culturally hodgepodge orbital and downports.

Sif now has sizeable minorities of Florian and Aslan. The various groups have segregated themselves into cultural regions but the planet's urban centres tend to feature a diverse mix of people. The Delta Theta connection has become minimised as the system acquires greater importance and increased foreign investment. Starlink, knowing a good thing, attempts to assert itself from time-to-time after which it is typically bribed and shoved off stage. The regional powers are disinterested in establishing any lasting imprint on the planet lest they offend or threaten one of their peers and are thus more than happy to allow Starlink to be the 'face' of Sif if nothing else.

Its high-quality starport is capable of servicing and constructing starships provided materials are brought to the planet from outsystem, as the manufacturing and technological base of the planet simply cannot support soup-to-nuts construction of interstellar craft. Thanks to the magnanimity of neighbouring powers, craft can and are built on planet. Whilst this is seemingly impractical, Sif's shipyard has found its niche as a builder of prototypes and test spacecraft.

The people of Sif are mostly provincial, living on plantations while growing and selling agricultural goods in the world's nascent trade zone. In spite of their seeming lack of sophistication, Sifians are eager to trade with offworlders and with Starlink's role minimised, many farmers have become quite prosperous. Despite the world's humble beginnings, its prospects going forward seem bright.

Due to its rather inconvenient placement in a rather inaccessible stellar bight, Sif is not on the Empire's short list of worlds to conquer; however, it has established itself as a neutral site where Aslan and humans from both the Outrim Void and Florian Reach can meet and negotiate. Whilst the Empire has eschewed most interstellar relationships, it is worth noting that it sends envoys to Sif from time-to-time. Should the Empire's current downward-trending status change, they might even establish a permanent embassy on the world.

Tyr

Once a dying colony of the Sindalian Empire, Tyr was revitalised by deserters from the Imperial Navy's 142nd BatRon shortly after the Second Frontier War. After failing to repel the Zhodani, the unit chose to remain in the wilds of the Outrim Void rather than face the ignominy of court martial for dereliction of duty and other war crimes. The renegade squadrons joined with the remainders of a lost Sindalian colony to create what would one day become the Tyrian Lordships.

The admiral of the 142nd and his officer corps founded a raiding culture that cut a bloody swathe across the stars, conquering one world after another until the mid-700s when their empire encompassed the entire Dustbelt, adding Dpres, Connaught and Solaria for good measure.

Gunboat diplomacy ruled the day under the Lordships. Their superior technology, focus on resource exploitation and investment in military strength enabled them to dominate the region for nearly four centuries. Tyr used its technological advantages to oppress, harry, assault and coerce its victims. The proud denizens of Janus were the first to buck Tyrian authority but their short-lived revolt was ultimately put down and hundreds of thousands of Janusians were killed in the conflict. Many escaped to become refugees on other worlds.

No other Dustbelt system bucked Tyrian authority until the early 1080s when rebels from Acis commandeered a Tyrian destroyer and turned it upon its masters. Tyr put down the rebellion with a brutal counterinsurgency programme but it was not the last they would hear from Acis. Exiled Acisan militia officers and politicians hired thousands of Aslan mercenaries from the Glorious Empire to help them fight Tyr. Despite some early setbacks, the Aslan became the lynchpin that turned the tide against Tyr.

As the only power in the Dustbelt capable of building and maintaining jump-capable starships, Tyr has had an enormous advantage over its neighbours. The Tyrians are natural spacers who live and die by their starships and orbitals, declaring themselves to have been 'born on grav plates' and, as a result, their home planet is in many ways inconsequential to them. The little industry and infrastructure on the planet is largely automated. Far more robots exist on Tyr than humans.

The 50,000 or so permanent residents of the planet mostly comprise religious zealots who adhere to the dictates of the Church of the Stellar Divinity. Pacifists for the most part, they refused to take part in Tyr's bloody conquests but still dutifully performed



administrative roles that served the Lordships. They largely perform the same role under Tyr's recently reformed government.

While the planet is technically the seat of government, the majority of its citizens live on three gigantic orbital starports, dozens of space stations and spaceports and within the bulkheads of their own starships. When most Tyrians speak of 'Tyr,' they refer not to the terrestrial planet but its gravity well. Their orbitals are adorned with the grandeur and opulence of raider wealth.

Tyrians' ambivalence to their homeworld and space-bound culture played against the Aslan mercenaries in the early battles. The Aslan mistook the system mainworld as the seat of power when its orbitals and roving fleets were the essence of its civilisation. The Tyrians initially slaughtered the Aslan in droves and then proceeded to retaliate vehemently against Acis. However, the Aslan mercenaries learned from their mistakes and soon became the threat they were

intended to be, turning their attacks on Tyr's orbitals and starships, overwhelming them with sheer numbers. Tyr's navy was not spared from the destruction, losing a full third of its ships and destroying all but three of Tyr's fearsome orbital bombardment destroyers, effectively crippling their ability to maintain an empire.

The Tyrian Lordships were utterly destroyed. A charismatic figure – some would say a demagogue – assumed the role of Tyrant, declared martial law and disbanded the Lordships. Recognising that some level of civic governance must remain, she maintained the structure of Tyr's technocracy, assigning power to regional governors on an appointed basis.

Tyr is now experiencing an existential crisis. After centuries of dominance, the tables have been turned and they find themselves under siege. Whilst still clinging to the technological advantages that enabled them to build an empire, their grip is failing quickly.

GLORIOUS EMPIRE CAMPAIGNS



The dark and sordid history of the Glorious Empire is coming to an end. At one time, it was the mightiest power in the Trojan Reach but hostility towards its neighbours, isolationism and the practice of slavery made it a pariah. The Empire held strong for centuries, keeping to itself, fortifying its borders and raiding vulnerable planets for slaves. At long last, corruption, economic decline and defiance of the Hierate have made the Empire vulnerable. It has begun to lose star systems at an accelerating rate, alarmingly so with Hliyh, a slave-built monument to power and grandiosity, and Tryaoke, its core genetic engineering facility. The Glorious Empire is at a crossroads from which most paths lead to its demise.

The *Glorious Empire* provides all the detail a Referee and group of Travellers need to conduct exciting adventures or even an entire campaign in this region. Such a campaign could go in many directions, more than this book could possibly cover; however, this chapter suggests several possible paths that such a campaign might take.

Campaigns based in the Glorious Empire and its surrounding region may involve both Aslan and human Travellers. *Pirates of Drinax: The Trojan Reach* provides guidance for Referees who want to run an Aslan campaign. The Aslan are one of the more accessible alien races in Traveller and playing them can be a fun and engaging experience. Adherence to a code of honour, the distinction between male and female roles, use of the Independence and Tolerance skills, duelling and the overwhelming desire to obtain land are just a few of the things an Aslan Traveller must take into account.

Opportunities for human Travellers are also present. Exploratory traders making their way from the Dustbelt into the Hliyh Chain, emancipated slaves adapting to their new lives as freed Hierate citizens, Camoranian Starfighters, Eikhaawi insurgents, freedom fighters who create a ‘jump space railroad’ to free the Empire’s slaves, and many more.

The human population of the Glorious Empire and the liberated worlds far surpasses that of the Dustbelt. Billions of humans have been freed and there are billions more awaiting the chance. Come what may,

when the Empire falls, there will be a massive number of free humans in Aslan space. Their liberation could shake the very foundations of both the trans-Rift Hierate and the various polities of the Outrim Void.

CAMPAIGNS SET WITHIN THE EMPIRE

Seeing the fall of the Glorious Empire from within offers perhaps the most dynamic, event-filled and exciting way to use the contents of this book. Travellers operating within Empire borders will be witnesses to history as a once-mighty interstellar polity undergoes titanic changes. There are a number of ways to go about it.

- The Aslan of a loyalist ahriy must struggle with the fact that the jig is up. The Empire is falling and they must face the music, prepare for the loss of their land and make arrangements to come out of it the best they possibly can or go down with the ship.
- The black market has been one of the only ways the citizens of the Empire have been able to maintain any semblance of their former civilisation. Without it, the Empire would have crumbled under its own weight long ago. The ahriya who run it – and most importantly the females who operate the markets – are the most connected to the outside universe in all of the Empire. Is it time to cut and run with the profits? Is there a way to get through this thing with honour intact? What lies ahead for the family? Life as outcasts? A new path as tramp traders on the Sindalian Main? Or are there brighter horizons for a crafty ahriy lord and his clever wives?
- Ever since the fall of Tryaoke, two decades ago, the slaves of the Empire have learned that freedom is not just a dream – it is a real possibility. Rumours abound that when the Empire goes up in smoke, its slaves will be wantonly slaughtered; however, most slaves believe there will be a chance to escape and many are not waiting for this moment to happen but finding ways to get out of the Empire now. However, the slaves are not alone in their quest for freedom. They have the help of freedom fighters from the Sindalian Main, the Camoranian Starfighters and honourable Hierate Aslan who want to hasten the fall of the Empire.

- Some merchants are just made of tougher stuff than the pampered merchant princes who ply the jump-1 mains of the Spinward Marches. They like to live on the edge. Human traders, smugglers, scoundrels, mercenaries, pirates and thieves are making a good – if precarious – living, operating on the periphery and even within the borders of the Empire.
- One of the few shining lights in the Glorious Empire is the strength of its mercenary companies. Thanks to their successes in wars of the Sindalian Main, especially the destruction of the Tyrian Lordships, Empire mercenary units are the most feared in the Trojan Reach. Mercenary companies are run by high-ranking noble females and their personnel are the best warriors the Empire has to offer but there are pressures on these units. While they are abroad, fighting battles far from the Empire, their people are losing their homeland. Many hallowed mercenary units are recalled to help defend the Empire from time-to-time, and fight in some of its most harrowing battles. Most eventually return to fight the wars of the Outrim Void where they gain far greater prestige and earn top Credit. Many face a quandary by leaving the Empire behind; they may achieve either honour or profit but doing both is elusive.
- Piracy and commerce raiding are risky professions in the Outrim Void; doing them within the borders of the Glorious Empire could be seen as suicide. Whether the Travellers are Aslan, human or some combination of the two, a piracy campaign in this environment could be one barn burner after another. The dangers of being destroyed by Empire warships are balanced against the huge scores one can make nabbing a black market smuggler or Hierate trader (provided the Travellers are equal opportunity pirates). Luckily, there is a subculture of corrupt clan agents, dissident military officers, freedom fighters, mercenaries and other malcontents to work with. Not for the faint of heart, this type of campaign is for adrenaline junkies only.

No matter which path the Travellers choose, the goal should be to create an open-ended campaign in which several outcomes are possible. Railroading Travellers through history is not very interesting. The ball should be in the Travellers' court and their actions should have a chance to affect the path of history. The Glorious Empire campaign is the story of an empire's likely fall. There are many moving pieces and unlimited opportunities to take part in big, galaxy-changing events.

PLAYING THE BAD GUYS

Taking the role of bad guys – slavers, thieves, pirates or soldiers on the wrong side of a war – can be a challenge for even the most experienced gamers. The idea of cutting loose and going to the dark side often seems appealing but most Referees and Travellers quickly discover that doing so has diminishing returns. Pirating starships, capturing innocent farmers and mowing down weak opponents quickly becomes dull, repetitive and repulsive, and even those who have the stomach for it soon realise that it loses its lustre quickly; however, playing bad guys who have a heart of gold, who are in the process of realising the error of their ways, who learn to be good or even just those who are forced to change can be a far more rewarding experience.

For this reason, the Referee should think carefully when determining what kind of campaign to run. Playing a thief or a pirate might be entertaining in the short run but the best campaigns feature a storyline in which the Travellers are building or working toward something, in which they grow. The Glorious Empire is crumbling and something will take its place. The Travellers might very well become catalysts for that change. Far more interesting and sustainable campaigns will feature the Travellers in a heroic role rather than a villainous one.

WITNESS TO HISTORY

The Empire is an enigmatic, opaque and highly inaccessible region of space. To the best of its abilities, it has set up blockades and impediments intended to keep the majority of interlopers out. The Empire is an insular and untrusting place, which – perhaps rightfully – sees everyone outside its borders as an enemy, an insurgent or rabble rouser; in short, a threat to everything for which the Empire stands. The Aslan of the Glorious Empire know they are unpopular, the pariah of the Reach but are contrarians by nature. They see intransigence, defiance and tyranny as characteristics to aspire to, not spurn. The Tokouea'we clan and subsequently the Empire itself have been persecuted for their entire history because of their beliefs and way of life.

To fully understand the Glorious Empire, one must live within it, whether as a foreigner who operates within its borders or a native son seeking to survive the coming apocalypse. In some ways, living within the Empire might be similar to Stalinist Russia, Maoist China or modern North Korea; one does not live freely within its borders and there is danger at every turn. It is oppressive and dark. That does not mean it will not be

fun. Far from it. Ducking nefarious clan agents, dodging trigger-happy interceptors and navigating dystopian worlds can be the stuff of great campaigns.

Things are tense in the Glorious Empire. The way things currently stand, it should fall within the decade. Whether it actually does remains to be seen. There are several movements afoot that give context to current events. The following sections describe the events, participants, influential groups and the movers and shakers in Glorious Empire space during its fall. Finally, a list of patrons is included to be used as adventure hooks and to give examples of the kinds of individuals operating in the Empire. Allow the Travellers to encounter, interact with and join these groups and movements.

The Generals

The military junta that runs the Glorious Empire from within its buttressed fortresses on Syoakh publicly behave like they are confident that the recent string of losses is merely a setback and a change in fortune is just one victory away. In fact, their bluster is not just delusion or arrogance but a barrier, a shield against those who would unseat them. To be a high-ranking officer in the Imperial Guard is to know constant fear, to see subversives in every corner and to spend just as much time staving off challengers and imprisoning dissidents as it is plotting retaliatory attacks and defending one's worlds from the Hierate.

To speak against the Empire is tantamount to a capital offence. The Empire is, of course, an Aslan polity and the accused are given the opportunity to defend their honour. Dissident military officers may accept the results of a duel, arranged by a high-ranking *earleatras*. Depending on the severity of the offence, the difficulty of the duel varies. If an officer commits a minor offence, perhaps speaking out of turn or merely joking about the Empire's poor chances, he might be given even odds; but a major offence results in a battle to the death against the clan's champion duellist. The outcome will be all but certain.

The generals must outwardly project confidence and certainty. To show weakness or one iota of doubt betrays a loss of faith. When one's Grand Emperor is also the living embodiment of the clan's ancestry, it is sacrilege to do anything other than to boldly and blindly serve without question. However, despite appearances, there *is* doubt. It seethes within the minds of the generals, males who have risen through the ranks for their entire lives because of their willingness to fight on even after almost two centuries of losing battle after battle. The generals must also be willing to send many young Aslan to their deaths.

Allowing the blood of the dog soldiers to be shed is one thing – the generals are all too willing to spend their human capital with reckless abandon – but Aslan warriors are becoming dear. So many have been lost; entire generations of males in some systems have died in battle. The ones who remain are resigned to their fates. They expect to be sacrificed. Some accept this with honour but there is growing restlessness in the ranks.

In their growing desperation, the generals have devised several possible plans of action. Most recognise that the war of attrition they have fought for nearly 200 years has done nothing but delay the inevitable. The Hierate has not grown tired of the constant wars; if anything, the pace of conflict has increased in recent years. In response, a growing faction among the generals thinks it would be better to take a proactive approach rather than idly sit by while the Empire is dissolved and crushed before their eyes. Their plans include:

- Sparking a major conflict between Ya'soithea clans – the Empire has long employed a network of thousands of clan agents and assassins in Hierate space to spread misinformation, sow dissent and stir trouble among Hierate clans whenever and wherever they can. Several gambits are being entertained to take this rabble rousing to the next step and incite a massive conflict between two or more of the clans.
- Forcing a war between the Imperium and the Hierate – for centuries, the Aslan have been champing at the bit to violate the Peace of Ftahalr. Clans such as the Hrakoea, nestled on the Hierate frontier, are eager to break out into the Outrim Void, taking worlds by force, expanding their cramped land holdings but violating the treaty in the process. The Imperium would doubtless respond to such an act with force, creating large-scale military conflict in the region. If the Empire could help spark such an event, the focus might be taken off of them, allowing much-needed time to rebuild and redirect efforts to the growth of the Empire.
- An overwhelming assault on the Florian world of Vadada in the Nora'a subsector to turn Florian warships on the Hierate. If they cannot get the Ya'soithea clans to turn on each other or get them into a conflict with the Imperium, perhaps they can get the powerful Floriani to exert their considerable wrath upon the Hierate. Vadada is the primary naval shipyard of the Florian League, making it one of their key possessions. Disguising ships as those of a Hierate fleet, the Empire would hope to initiate and then withdraw from a conflict with the Floriani, pinning the blame on Hierate clans. The ensuing war between them could give the Empire the breathing room it needs.

GENERAL EAILIYO HTEIIYA

SPECIES		GENDER		AGE
Aslan		Male		52
TRAITS		SKILLS		
STR	9	INT	12	Athletics (endurance) 1, Drive (wheel) 1, Gun Combat (slug) 3, Heavy Weapons (man portable) 2, Leadership 3, Melee (natural) 3, Profession (military strategist) 4, Recon 2, Tactics (military) 3, Vacc Suit 2
DEX	5	EDU	11	
END	9	SOC	12	
EQUIPMENT		Weapons: Autopistol (3D-3), Shotgun (4D, Bulky), Submachine Gun (3D, Auto 3) Armour: Aslan Combat Armour (+15)		

General Eailiyo Hteiya, a.k.a. 'the mad *huiha'earko*', is the second-in-command to the supreme general of the Imperial Guard and chief architect of the Empire's military strategy. Hteiya is an absolute loyalist in every sense of the word. He has devoted his life to security of the Empire and is responsible in part for all of its successes and has a heavy hand in its recent failures. The ancient Terrans had the concept that generals who fail must fall on their swords; the Aslan have similar ideas and Hteiya might well be headed towards such a fate. However, he does not intend to

There is doubt among the generals that any of these plans stand a chance. They know the more sophisticated Hierate clans have become wise to their ways and are aware that Tokouea've clan agents have been embedded among them. All of the Empire's last-ditch efforts involve some level of subterfuge and the Hierate have become increasingly good at 'smelling a rat' when Empire agents try to stir trouble. To this end, some among the Empire officer corps are pushing for less grandiose, more realistic solutions. A junior faction of officers is agitating for the Glorious Empire to open relations with the Hierate so they can negotiate for Limited Wars. A secret cabal among them is plotting to negotiate for peace and even outright surrender if necessary.

For those generals whose doubt rises to the surface, there are few places and opportunities to air grievances. Perhaps only among one's closest allies and confidants or in the privacy of one's *hasoi* – personal land hold – a



go down without a fight. The general is growing increasingly desperate as the walls come in around him and has begun to entertain a number of wildly outlandish plans. The end is drawing near and it will not be long before the 'mad general' strikes out at the Hierate in one last, fateful attempt to set things right for the Empire.

general can, in the presence of his wife, express his true feelings about the predicament. Despite the dishonour, some convince themselves that the only way forward is to plot an escape to a new life either beyond the Empire's borders or in the ashes of the Empire itself. In such a place, who can these warriors trust? Virtually no one, it would seem.

The Jumpspace Railroad

Before the fall of Tryaoke, the idea of liberation was virtually unheard of among the slave population. It was nearly impossible to escape when sanctuary was literally light years away. Merely thinking about it caused nothing but desperation and hopelessness among the slaves. However, when the Empire's primary slave-breeding centre on Tryaoke fell into Hierate hands and word of it got back to the slave populations back home, dreams of freedom began to spread.

Human delegations to the Empire were rare in times past. Relations were completely cut off with all human polities after it was revealed that starships owned by a human trade corporation, Starlink Merchant Factors, were funnelling slaves to freedom aboard secret compartments on its freighters. Devoted human agencies continue to look for ways to free slaves, sometimes soliciting Aslan who have access to Empire space.

Millions of human slaves on worlds from Hrahraiu to Ouiyloi now pine for the liberation of all their kind on the Empire's remaining worlds. They have willing allies; most Hierate clans are only concerned with their own affairs and lack interest in liberating the humans but there are Aslan organisations dedicated to freeing them.

Chief among these are the Tala Auilei Fteir, loosely translated as the 'Book of Honour'. This multi-clan organisation believes that in order to restore the honour of the *fteirle*, they must expunge Aslan space of the heretical practice of slavery. They posit that all sophonts, not just those born Aslan, must be given the opportunity to choose an honourable path. This philosophy is not completely revolutionary; it was, in fact, one of the primary arguments made against the Tokouea'we by the Hierate during the Uwaralyekose. Tala Auilei Fteir uses shared resources – safe houses on border worlds, relief supplies, even decommissioned starships – to obtain and liberate slaves from Empire space.

After the fall of the Hliyh Chain, Hierate raids across the Empire border became far more commonplace. Most incursions are for commerce raiding but some *ihaeit* have begun to settle the remote outback of Empire worlds. It is very common for Tala Auilei Fteir agents to accompany such raids, taking the opportunity to round up as many slaves as they can and helping them escape to freedom. Sadly, the organisation does little for the slaves after liberation and freed humans often end up falling into abject poverty on the worlds to which they are relocated. There are other organisations that provide relief to the humans but the fact is there really is no place for them in many Aslan societies.

In addition, there are a few relief organisations out of Camoran who strive to help freed slaves but unfortunately, the Camoranians are much more enthusiastic about fighting the war than assisting its refugees. The Camoranians focus their efforts on relocating freed slaves to the Dustbelt or elsewhere. More than anyone, the Camoranians understand that the Aslan want the land for themselves and that freed slaves are an impediment to land acquisition. As a human world in the Hierate, Camoran's arrangement with the Aslan strictly limits their ability to resettle slaves to

their homeworld. The Camoranians have also run into trouble relocating refugees to Tryaoke where billions of other humans already reside. The clans that administer Tryaoke are keen to obtain its land and have begun to distrust the Camoranians, whom they assert are merely trying to establish the creation of a second human world in Hierate space.

While there are bold efforts to free slaves when and where possible, by and large nothing has been as effective as liberating entire star systems. This does not stop committed activists and freedom fighters from freeing as many as they can, whenever they can, until the Empire eventually falls and all are set free.

Live Free or Die

'Until they become conscious they will never rebel and until after they have rebelled they cannot become conscious.'

— George Orwell, 1984

Slave populations on most Empire worlds are becoming increasingly restless. Word has gotten out about their liberated brothers and sisters on the worlds of the Hliyh Chain and there is a growing portion who now see the emancipation of the entire slave population as something that can occur within their lifetimes. Many will not idly wait for Hierate liberators to arrive and want a more active role in gaining their freedom. Subversive cells of freedom fighters have begun to emerge on many Empire worlds.

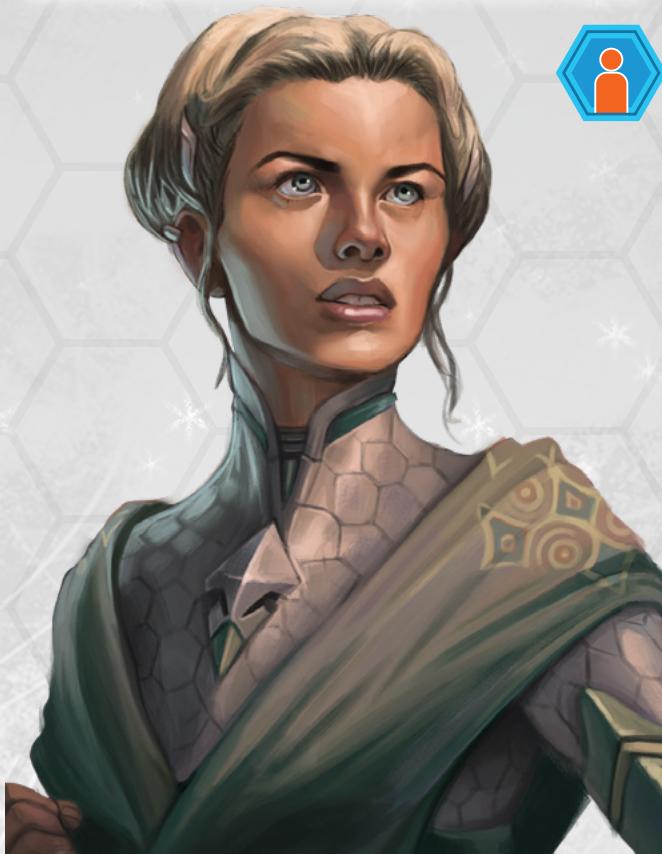
Despite the imposing and authoritarian rule of the Glorious Empire, it is easier than one might think for resistance cells to develop and agitate against their oppressors. The Aslan are not as adept at oppression as one might think. Descended from predators, the Aslan crave conflict, challenge and most of all the hunt. Whilst they can be brutal masters, there is a tendency to leave the door open to revolt. The Aslan are a species that believes in the power of choice. As an Aslan, one must choose the path of *fteir* – even the bizarre, heretical offshoot of *fteir* practiced by the Empire – and it is not forced upon an individual so much as presented as the guaranteed way to health and spiritual satisfaction. Aslan slaveholders in the Glorious Empire believe they treat their slaves with a reasonable but essentially similar version of this philosophy. The Aslan give their slaves the opportunity to accept their place in the universe and expect them to choose the right path. Obedience and acceptance of their lives as slaves is encouraged, often with brutality, but slaves on most worlds have ample opportunity to socialise and convene with one another and this presents the chance to foment insurrection.

SLOVIAN LAPTOR

SPECIES		GENDER	AGE
Human		Female	48
TRAITS		SKILLS	
STR	6	INT	11 Admin 3, Athletics (endurance) 1, Carouse 2, Flyer (grav) 1, Leadership 2, Persuade 3, Pilot 0, Profession (miner) 2, Streetwise 2, Survival 2, Vacc Suit 2
DEX	8	EDU	11
END	8	SOC	5
EQUIPMENT		Weapons: Laser Pistol (3D+3, Zero-G) Armour: Vacc Suit (+10) Equipment: Hand Computer with Intrusion, Neural Comm and Neural Link	

Slovian is a slavery abolitionist and emancipation advocate from Hliyh who was liberated by the Hierate. Shortly after being freed, she created a vacc suit spare parts supply business and generated a modest amount of wealth in the following years. She has invested every Credit not spent on her own sustenance to help lead her still-enslaved people to freedom.

Working with anyone who will listen to her, Slovian has helped to create 'jump space railroad' channels that have assisted over 1,000 slaves to escape from Ftulrois, Yero'ilra and Eikhaaw. She has worked with black market smugglers, Camoranian mercenaries, Hierate interface traders and even dissident citizens from the Empire to free as many humans as she can. Slovian has laid her own life on the line, entering Empire space dozens of times to run liberation operations.



With government aid and individual donations, Slovian has created a stockpile of supplies, gear and foodstuffs to help newly freed slaves get settled once they have been escorted to freedom. She has recently been in talks with an ex-free trader captain and a representative of the Imperial Interstellar Scout Service's Detached Duty branch about obtaining a ship to help her conduct operations.

Slovian's willingness to risk life and limb has attracted many followers, most of them freed slaves themselves. She leads by example and has inspired the emancipation movement.

The millions of humans now living and working on worlds liberated from the Glorious Empire have collectively come to despise the term 'freed slaves'. They believe it serves to reinforce negative stereotypes and that it reflects poorly on their ability to act as functional citizens of the Hierate. The humans prefer the term 'refugees' for those who have recently been freed and are in the process of finding roles in Aslan society. Those who have established themselves simply want to be called *hisol'i*, the Trokh word for human. It is important to point out that they choose the Trokh term over the Galanglic, a tacit acknowledgement by the *hisol'i* that they see themselves as citizens of the Hierate. The *hisol'i* typically follow the tenets of *fteir* and adopt the cultures of their host clans.

Most slave revolts thus far have arisen on worlds where there are large labour pools. The miners of Yero'ilra, the gladiators of Htourlao, the farmers of Alirar and most notably the technicians of Eikhaaw have all staged revolts against the Aslan, often with bloody results. On these and other worlds, slaves have formed underground resistance cells that work together to obtain weapons, select targets and otherwise find ways to resist enslavement. Obtaining weapons, explosives and other tools needed for a successful revolt is difficult on high Tech Level, high Law Level worlds but it has nonetheless happened time and again. Now that the slave population has a growing list of allies outside Empire borders, acts of insurrection have become larger and bolder.

Freed slaves from the Hliyh Chain have begun to form collectives that hoard supplies and ship them to slaves inside Empire borders. These supplies provide ready staples, clothing and housing materials for slaves who are newly brought to the free worlds of the Hierate. Some freed slaves have even been so bold that they re-enter Empire space to establish hideouts, safe houses and other facilities that operate as go-betweens for slaves who have been extracted and are waiting to be taken to freedom.

THE CAMORANIAN STARFIGHTERS



Hierate clans and *i hatei* are not the only ones skirmishing with the Glorious Empire on its borders. The Camoranian Starfighters, hailing from Camoran, have an outsized presence in the region. Camoran is an Imperial client state within the borders of the Aslan Hierate and features a human government and society. The Camoranians do not refuse citizenship to Aslan but the undesirability of the world might be a factor in why there are so few present. Nevertheless, the Camoranians have been affected by their presence in the Hierate, having adopted many tenets of *fteir* and other aspects of Aslan culture.

The Camoranians have made a name for themselves by clamouring for the rights of humans on all the Glorious Empire worlds that Hierate clans have conquered so far. The Aslan, driven by their desire to obtain new lands, often struggle with just what they should do with the humans they inherit. This has become a particularly acute problem on the worlds of the Hliyh Chain, almost all of which had majority human slave populations and Camoranian advocates have established a presence on all of these worlds in an effort to ensure their just treatment. However, they were kicked off of Hrahrai, where the Aslan are considering exterminating the humans on their world.

Along the border, the mercenary Camoranian Starfighters fight on behalf of like-minded Hierate clans and independent human worlds against the Glorious Empire. Camoran builds several unique carrier designs that they use to transport space fighters to war zones and the pilots are well known for their daring. They are, on the whole, some of the most talented star pilots in the Trojan Reach, exhibiting great skill, efficiency and success in battle. Humans, who are far smaller and more dexterous than Aslan, have proven to be more adept at flying fighters and pragmatic Aslan clans are more than happy to give them employment against the Empire.

In addition to advocating for freed human slaves, the Starfighters are also beating the drums of war and eager to take the fight deep into Empire space, right to the doorstep of Syoakh if given the chance.



The Millenarian Ancestorists

Although it is rarely stated as such, the Grand Emperor of the Glorious Empire is not just its head of state but also its supreme pontiff and effectively a living deity unto himself. The 'priests' of ancestor worship are the male heads of each *ahriy*. With the inexorable fall of the Empire at hand, a movement has begun to form among the faithful whose primary facets are darkness and desperation.

In public, the Ancestorists describe their movement as one of loyalty to the crown, an extremist group that believes ever more fervently in defence of the Empire at all costs and devotion to Open War, to the point of self-destruction if necessary. However, in private the movement has a strong and fervent subversive character to it.

The Ancestorists have begun to practice their faith in underground congregations. Whilst they espouse the continued worship of the living emperor superficially, they actually spend a great deal of time worshipping their individual ancestries. Some might say this is yet another form of expression that has come from the suppression of vassals. The centuries-long prevention of vassal clans from developing has squelched an instinctive need for the Aslan to separate and establish individuality. The advent of the Ancestorists has

sprouted from a collective desire for dissolution and expansion. It is notable that the Ancestorist movement has failed to take hold on Yero'ilra, where the Empire's only vassal clan has been allowed to develop.

The Ancestorists publicly display their loyalty on the streets of the Empire's greatest cities with parades and the construction of monuments and shrines but the need for something more, something that touches a uniquely Aslan sense of spirituality, is bubbling just beneath the surface. The Ancestorists have not yet begun to develop large schisms with the state religion but clan agents of the Empire are becoming increasingly concerned with the development of these groups and are plotting just how to take action on them without fomenting widespread rebellion.

SYOAKH AND HTOURLAO: NEVER THE TWAIN SHALL MEET

The capital and industrial heart of the Empire are situated firmly on Syoakh and Htourlao, respectively. Some liken the two worlds, situated a mere parsec apart, to two old friends, ruminating about their glory years while the walls of their humble home crumble around them. In fact, the two worlds find themselves to be a rather odd couple with

wildly divergent priorities and goals, with the one thing they do have in common being the survival of the Glorious Empire in some way, shape or form.

Syoakh is hunkered down for the final war, bristling with defences, surrounded by missile batteries, encrusted with deep-site meson guns, its remaining capital ships on high alert (at great expense to the Empire) and civil defences at the ready to defend the capital with every iota of their being. Meanwhile, Htourlao is more interested in getting on with getting on; the universe might be caving in on them but they have weapons to build and product to move. There is no time for recrimination, desperation or self-pity on industrial Htourlao.

The two highly divergent cultures are linked by their shared fate, devotion to Empire and little else. In many not-so-subtle ways, they joust for supremacy. Syoakh is the cradle of Glorious Empire civilisation. Despite the fact that the homeworld was settled a mere seven centuries ago and the Empire declared in the Imperial year 650, the prescribed narrative might have one believe that the Empire has reigned eternal. Its state buildings, palaces, cultural centres, military high command and other governmental structures were designed to invoke old Kusyu, liberally allowing them to age and marginally decline. The rare foreign visitor to Syoakh reports a feeling of antiquity and stateliness. If allowed to wander from the heart of the capital and downport, a closer look reveals the trappings of deeply dug-in civil defences. Deep site bunkers, high-energy artillery, patrolling grav tanks and marching Imperial Guardians are a common site at ground level. The air is patrolled by gravitic drones and police in air/rafts, who maintain order with an iron fist.

The more pedestrian parts of Syoakh are off limits and invisible to visitors. The barracks, residences and civic facilities exhibit the naturally flowing lines that one sees in most Aslan architecture but bereft of the funds and materials to maintain these buildings, they have inevitably declined. Most civilian residence communities have begun to take on a brutalist, utilitarian look and feel. To maintain the illusion of opulence and grandeur, the general population has had to make sacrifices. Civic freedoms are tightly controlled, the flow of traffic highly regimented. Clan agents maintain close surveillance of its citizens and have the highest agent-to-citizen ratio in the Empire. Dissidents vanish in the night, never to be seen again.

Cold and desolate Htourlao is home to 10 times as many citizens, by far the most populous world remaining to the Empire. The frozen surface of the

mainworld and Htourlao's orbitals are encrusted with the engines of industry. Factories, fabs and automated robotic processing centres assemble and manufacture virtually all of the goods used by the Empire. Its industries are highly regulated by the seat of government on Syoakh and yet an amazing number of cottage businesses have formed in its vast and chaotic underbelly. Htourlao is effectively balkanised with its myriad orbitals and surface settlements run by the various Tokouea'we *ahriya*, each of them competing with one another to produce the goods and services needed by their dying Empire.

Syoakh's thirst knows no bounds for weapons, defensive structures, surveillance gear and the software that runs it all. Somewhere down the list of priorities is a return to its world-conquering ways but until then its sole focus is the bristling defence of what it has left. Syoakhi military governors loom over Htourlao's fabs, visiting and inspecting them frequently in order to bring good word home to the capital. The Htourlaoi muse: 'If Syoakh could grind our bones to make another gauss rifle, they would do so.'

Tucked away in thousands of nooks and crannies of industrial sprawl is where one finds the real Htourlao. Here is where true Htourlaoi culture lies, packed into all of its cracks and seams, dug underground, inserted between the fuel tanks and life support systems that hum away on its orbitals. Speakeasies, diners, gambling halls, gladiatorial pits, entertainment centres and all of the other trappings that make such a society possible are found in these nether regions. Syoakh almost certainly understands that this culture is the lifeblood of Htourlao and they have learned to look the other way so long as they get what they want from its factories.

Despite its superior technology, Htourlao cannot produce the one thing that the Empire needs the most: TL14 starships. Why this is the case is a bit of a mystery; the technology and knowledge is there and the Empire could certainly use rejuvenated fleets but the only remaining shipyards in the Empire are on worlds of TL12 or lower. Would-be shipbuilding magnates have cried foul for decades but it falls upon deaf ears. Whatever influence the capital retains over Htourlao has ensured the industrial behemoth is forbidden to produce starships and that Syoakh and a few satellite systems retain a monopolistic stranglehold on the shipbuilding industry.

There is great tension between the Empire's two most powerful star systems but there is ultimately a sense that their fate is a shared one. They are intrinsically linked and will rise or fall together.

HTOURLAO ORBITAL HABITAT



PARASITE-LIKE ATTACHMENTS:
(Illegal businesses, bars, duelling rinks,
gladiatorial arenas, small spaceport for
the transit of illicit goods)

LEGEND

1. RADIO TOWERS AND ANTENNA
2. SPACEPORT
3. LARGE INDUSTRIAL SECTOR
4. RESIDENTIAL AND COMMERCIAL DISTRICTS
5. UNDERBELLY (Modules and habitats)

TRADE, COMMERCE AND THE BLACK MARKETS

When it comes to establishing economic prosperity and stability, the Empire has been its own worst enemy since time immemorial. Isolationist politics, hostility towards neighbours and the practice of slavery have made the Empire persona non grata in the Trojan Reach. The Empire did at one time have a functional internal economy but dependence on slavery, wartime expenses and the loss of large swaths of territory have hobbled it. When one is incapable of producing everything that is needed and external trade provides only a trickle of the required goods, you end up with severe shortages. With the majority of capital being used to produce weapons and other war material, Empire citizens do what they can to ameliorate shortages by tapping into the black market.

It is important to note that there is a sanctioned black market – which provides goods for the nobility and the critical needs of the Empire (such as jump-4 drive parts) – and an unsanctioned black market, which provides goods for commoners and slaves. The Empire's clan agents (branch of the Aslan Ceremonial career) do not question the flow of goods to the nobility whether or not they get to them by legitimate means; however, the vast and much more sophisticated markets that bring illicit goods to the masses are heavily suppressed. There are exceptions, of course. The Glorious Empire has become a desperate place and clan agents can often be bribed. Furthermore, there are also those segments of the population, which provide much-needed goods and services to both the nobility and the Empire at large. These groups are often given a pass by those in power; clan agents who otherwise might have enforced the embargo on Hierate goods will sometimes look the other way while such groups are served. Few have any inkling about what becomes of the megatons of goods impounded by the clan agents. The Empire does not simply store them away in immense warehouses. One may only assume that these, too, find their way onto a secondary black market; one operated entirely by the clan agents themselves.

Most Empire star systems are burdened by a high Law Level. The Empire uses high-tech surveillance technology, a stringent system defence network and a legion of clan agents to maintain order and control. However, the interface worlds of Keawoaw, Asyuh and – to a lesser degree – Yero'ilra all have either low Law Levels or connections to foreign star systems that make them

ample interface worlds for black market trade. Oihu also has less stringent laws but its position on the edge of the Goertel Bight and long distance from any reasonably populated worlds make it a poor choice for those who want to transport illicit goods into Empire space.

Goods are smuggled from the interface worlds to all star systems of the Empire, the capital at Syoakh and crowded Htourlao included. Corruption runs rampant in Empire space and high-level clan agents are at the top of the food chain. To get the goods into opaque and authoritarian systems like Alirar, Ftulrois, Eikhaaw and Syoakh, all one must do is pay a hefty bribe to the ranking clan agent inspector general. Clan agents then pave the way, making sure that naval patrols, Imperial Guard checkpoints and other authorities look the other way while the goods are transported and distributed. The nobility gets first dibs, of course, but a fair amount of product works its way down to the commoners and in some cases even the slave population.

Most Hierate clans shun the Glorious Empire. The Uwaralyekose was prosecuted long ago but many traditional Aslan consider the removal of the Empire to be the final and long overdue act of the Cultural Purge, particularly those from the Tlaukuh clans. For them, destruction of the Empire is a rallying cry. In addition, many Hierate worlds on the Empire periphery still smart from centuries of Open War and refuse to deal with them on principle. The Aslan of Yaeawaokh still despise the Empire after the atrocities of the Eahaw Campaign. Ehaealir and Ehrafou remain under martial law and strictly forbid border crossings. However, there are some among the Ya'soithea clans who are willing to deal with the Empire and such clans find willing ports on fringe worlds like Woilreawau, Uao, Eoiw and remote Erasaso. Many operate shadow freeports, specially designed to serve their purposes as commercial interfaces to the sworn enemy of the Hierate.

Whilst most black market operators are subtle, some maintain a higher profile. The Aslan corporation, Glories Under the Claw, has made no secret of the fact that it is willing to trade with the Glorious Empire. The company, headquartered on distant Khtiyrllo, is heavily influenced by the expansionist Tiykhisto clan, who are said to admire the Empire for its aggressive culture and fierce independence. The Tiykhisto, like any other Aslan clan, are bound by the laws of *fteir* and the generally accepted rules imposed by most clans but the feudal nature of Aslan culture provides seams and cracks in which operators can find their niche and illicit transactions can be made.

SOLDIERS OF FORTUNE

In its waning days, one of the few bright sides for the Glorious Empire has been the success of its mercenary forces. They made their name fighting for Acis against the Tyrian Lordships but now take mercenary tickets throughout the Trojan Reach. Mercenary companies are headed by female administrators of high noble birth and their units are commanded by some of the Empire's best warriors. The females know the worth of their warriors' services and demand top Credit for the tickets they take. Slaves never serve in mercenary forces but freed slaves – humans who have served with distinction in the Empire's 'dog soldier' corps – have been seen in the ranks of some mercenary companies.

Empire mercenary companies will take any type of ticket; commando, cadre, striker or security. Company administrators rarely require repatriation bonds; after all, should a company run into trouble on a ticket or their relationship with a patron fail to be honoured, there are no low passages available into Glorious Empire space. They have no allies and there are few star systems that could be described as even remotely friendly to the Empire, so their choices are slim and none. In the early going of the Tyrian war, there was some repatriation to Acis, where their patrons – Acisan exiles – accepted them. However, this relationship has become more complex over time and the Empire can no longer count on Acis as willing hosts. Despite limited choices, savvy mercenary company administrators sometimes make third-party arrangements to guarantee the safe passage of their warriors should things go sideways. Such deals include low- or middle-passage transit aboard independent merchant ships to border worlds, deals with the few Hierate clans with whom the Empire has decent relations, passage aboard smuggling vessels and other creative solutions. There is great risk involved with such gambits but when taking difficult tickets, establishing a backup plan is wise.

Mercenaries lead a conflicted existence. Whilst they are doing their part for the Empire by bringing in much needed funds, their absence fighting in the wars along the Empire's borders makes many mercenary warriors feel guilty and dishonourable. There is the feeling that they should be home, fighting in defence of the Empire alongside their brothers and sisters in the Imperial Guard. Despite such feelings, they are met with a hero's welcome whenever they return to Empire space. Once back, many are returned to the front where they are reunited with their clan brethren against invading armies of the Hierate. They are welcomed with open arms but the transition is

often difficult. When fighting as a warrior in a mercenary company, there is almost always a clear objective and creativity is rewarded. On the front lines, there is chaos and a former mercenary, accustomed to actually winning battles, is returned to the fray where the Empire fights a desperate war of attrition.

Empire mercenaries are currently involved in dozens of tickets along the Sindalian Main.

- One does not see Aslan mercenaries employed by the large shipping lines – such as the Tobia Commerce Guild, PRQ and Florian Trade Company – but they are seen in the employ of many smaller and more local merchant and freight companies. Despite the destruction of the Tyrian Lordships, pirates and raiders from Tyr – and other places for that matter – continue to ravage traffic along the Sindalian Main when and where they can. It is not always cost effective to pay the exorbitant sums demanded by a mercenary company but when the value cargo is high, it is smart to obtain protection.
- There is little unity among the worlds of the Sindalian Main and no interstellar navy dedicated to its security. Because of this, pirates, raiders, insurgents and other malcontents have taken up residence in the outback of many worlds, setting up hideouts and secret bases far from the starport, on gas giant moons or far into the outsystem where no one is looking. Whilst the Imperial Navy does patrol the Sindalian Main from time-to-time, its primary focus is the defence of commerce, not addressing all the petty grievances of its people. This is where Empire mercenaries come in. Collectives, governments, even small merchant lines hire them to conduct search-and-destroy missions.
- Despite any misgivings the people of the Dustbelt may feel toward ihatei and the Glorious Empire, the mercenaries' reputations have become sacrosanct, even legendary. Several Dustbelt worlds have hired Empire mercenaries for cadre missions, teaching their own armies to 'fight like an Aslan', if such a thing is possible. Leaders of some of the balkanised nations of Caldos, the Ministry of Defence on distant Solaria and even the pop-star-come-dictator Tisnee Zazzle of Salif, have hired Empire mercenaries to train their troops. The Empire initially employed translators to act as go-betweens for such tickets but after decades of service in the Dustbelt, many have become acclimated to its culture and acquired the language and diplomatic skills to interface with human cultures. Some males have even learned to tolerate the many unintentional cultural slights that humans commit on a daily basis.

THE RIMWARD SPUR

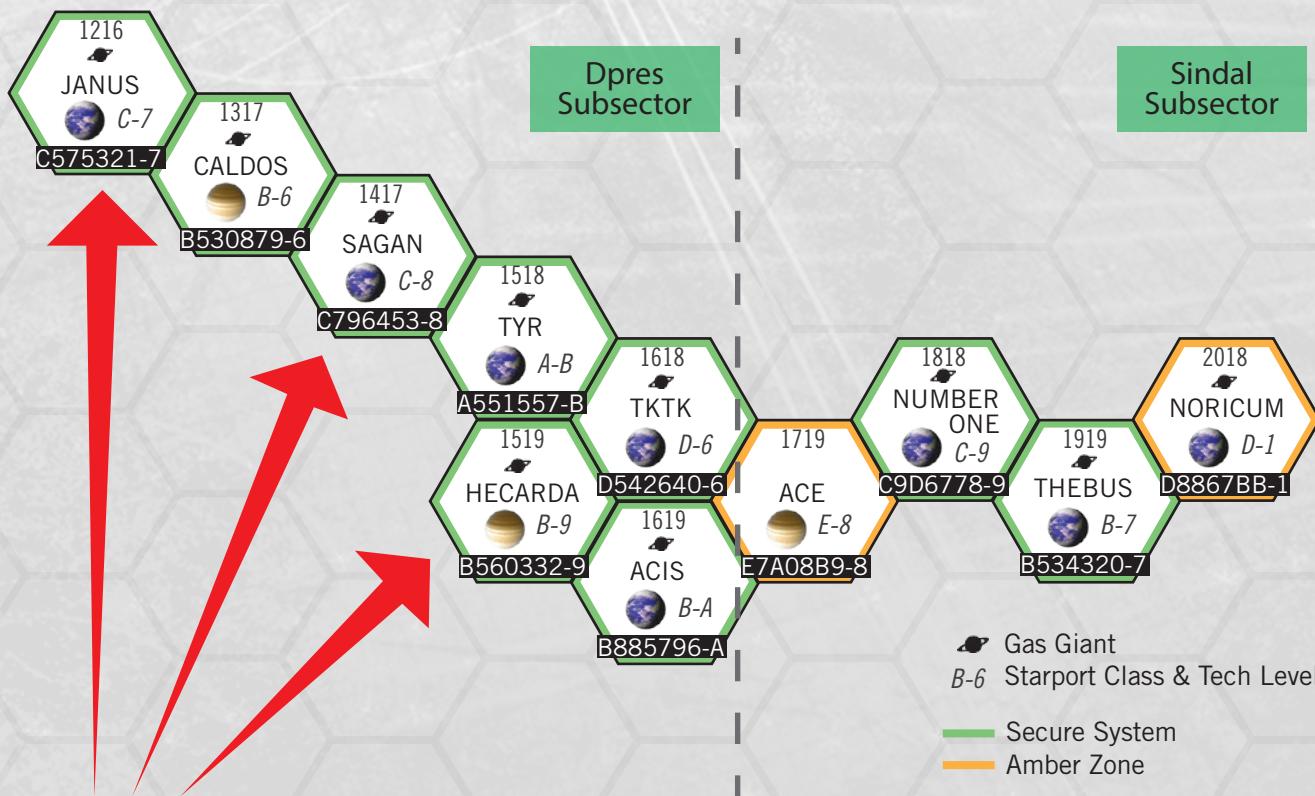


The employment bonanza for Glorious Empire mercenaries has resulted in a steady amount of interstellar traffic moving through the region of the Dustbelt known as the Rimward Spur. The worlds of this region are isolated and, in many cases, blighted or virtually barren. To get to the action in the Dustbelt, mercenaries must travel through the Spur, which contains no fewer than four independent human governments on Colony Six, Delta Theta, the Church of Nom religious dictatorship on Goertel and plague-ravaged Lacidaeus that maintains a vibrant, if isolated, remnant civilisation. There are rumours of a survivor population on Torrance as well.

All five systems have gas giants and passers-by from the Empire typically perform wilderness refuelling and move on without incident but it does not always go so smoothly. Goertel, Colony Six, and Delta Theta actively patrol their gas giants, sweeping them for pirates and answering Signal GK calls when necessary but on occasion there are tense standoffs between Empire starships and those of each system. Skirmishes have even broken

out a few times and ships of both sides disabled or destroyed. There is a lot of bad blood between the two sides, which sometimes results in a brief but nasty bout of space combat.

For their part, the Aslan of the Empire – much like Aslan everywhere – do not firmly believe that anyone ‘owns’ space; they are far more concerned about owning land. However, the humans are very concerned about receiving frequent uninvited guests from the Empire whom they believe might be surveying worlds for eventual invasion. It is no secret that the Glorious Empire has a desire to expand its territory and the only thing holding them back at the moment is the Hierate. The humans are worried that the Empire, which has been losing worlds at a rapid clip, might see the Rimward Spur as choice real estate. Whilst there is no evidence that the Empire is planning a wholesale invasion of their worlds, there is ample reason for concern. In truth, those who should be most concerned are the many low-population worlds along the Dustbelt itself. They would be easy pickings for a determined and powerful military force.



Worlds beyond the Rimward Spur that may be targeted for settlement

MERCENARY CHARACTERS

Mercenary companies are comprised of the best warriors and combat technicians the Empire has to offer. Warriors are not chosen only for skill but for the ability

to work well as a team. Some of the Empire's greatest warriors have streaks of individualism that make them unfit for mercenary service.

Mercenary Company Purser

STR 8 DEX 6 END 9 INT 9 EDU 10 SOC 11

Skills: Admin 2, Advocate 1, Broker 3, Electronics (computers) 1, Flyer (grav) 0, Gun Combat (slug) 1, Language (Galanglic) 2, Streetwise 1, Vacc Suit 0

Weapons: Autopistol (3D-3)

Armour: Cloth (+4)

Equipment: Wafer Jack (TL12), Neural Link (TL13), Portable Computer/3 with Agent/1, Database/1 and Expert/1 (Admin or Broker), Universal Translator



Mercenary Company Khir (Male Warrior)

STR 12 DEX 8 END 12 INT 6 EDU 7 SOC 7

Skills: Athletics (strength) 1, Drive (wheel) 1, Gun Combat (slug) 2, Heavy Weapons (man portable) 2, Melee (natural) 2, Recon 1, Tactics (military) 1, Vacc Suit 1 and 2–3 additional levels divided among Explosives, Heavy Weapons, Navigation, Recon, Stealth, or Survival

Weapons: Autopistol (3D-3), Gauss Rifle (4D, AP 5, Auto 3, Scope), Fierah (1D), one or more grenades of various types and optionally a Taoyuhir Heavy Machine Gun (4D+3, Auto 4, Very Bulky) or other weapon system

Armour: Field Flex Armour (+8)

Equipment: Hardened Transceiver, Commdot, Bivvy Pack with Sundries



Mercenary Company Commander

STR 13 DEX 8 END 11 INT 9 EDU 7 SOC 9

Skills: Athletics (strength) 1, Flyer (grav) 1, Gun Combat (slug) 3, Independence 1, Language (Galanglic) 1, Leadership 2, Melee (natural) 2, Recon 1, Tactics (military) 2, Vacc Suit 2, and 1–2 additional levels divided among Leadership, Navigation, Recon, Stealth, Survival, or Tactics (military)

Weapons: Hlakhaihte Pistol (3D+2, Bulky), Gauss Rifle (4D, AP 5, Auto 3, Scope), Taleryu (2D+3, AP 2), Fierah (1D)

Armour: Combat Armour (+15)

Equipment: Hardened Transceiver, Commdot, PRIS Binoculars, Bivvy Pack with Sundries



Mercenary Company *Ktiyhui* (Female Combat Technician)

STR 10 DEX 9 END 11 INT 8 EDU 9 SOC 7

Skills: Admin 1, Athletics (dexterity) 1, Electronics (comms or sensors) 2, Explosives 1, Gun Combat (slug) 1, Mechanic 2, Medic 1, Melee (natural) 1, Vacc Suit 1, and 2–3 additional levels divided among Engineering, Explosives, Medic, Mechanic, Recon or Survival

Weapons: Autopistol (3D-3), Yeheal Autorifle (3D, Auto 2) or Laser Carbine (4D+3, Zero-G), Fierah (1D)

Armour: Field Flex Armour (+8)

Equipment: Hardened Transceiver, Commdot, Bivvy Pack with Sundries, Portable Computer/2 with Expert/1 software in two specialties



VANGUARD OF THE EMPIRE

Serving aboard a capital ship of the Grand Imperial Fleet is a great honour despite the diminished quality and lustre of its remaining craft. Roles aboard an Empire capital ship are even more stratified than they are in the Hierate. The commanding officer and his top staff sit high above the enlisted ranks and only communicate with them via operations personnel. Likewise, recruits and spacehands are the only members of the crew who work directly with slave crew, although a petty officer may be called in if disciplinary issues develop.

Accommodations aboard an Empire capital ship are similarly reflective of a top-down caste system with officers occupying high and luxury staterooms, junior officers in single-occupancy standard staterooms, the enlisted in double occupancy and the slaves in slave quarters. Whilst technically there is no ‘up’ in space, each of the castes aboard ship are stratified vertically with top staff housed closer to the ship’s dorsal decks, descending downward to its ventral surface where the slaves reside – usually in squalor – in its lowest deck. For this reason, decks on Empire capital ships are numbered from the top down, *alr, hlai, kheh* and so forth. The only slaves seen on the upper decks are personal valets and other higher-level servants of the officer corps.

Naval campaigns can be conducted in the Glorious Empire using the *Naval Campaigns Handbook* from the *Element Class Cruisers* boxed set with the following adjustments:

- Substitute ranks from the Fleet Careers on page 60.
- If the *Naval Campaign Handbook* ‘Creating Travellers’ rules are used, substitute all Melee (blade) skills with Melee (natural) and take strict care to ensure that

selected skills conform to the gender-based rules on pages 68–71 of *The Trojan Reach*.

- When calculating the Crew Effectiveness Index (CEI), note that on the chart shown on page 13 of the *Naval Campaign Handbook*, Aslan officer crew should be generally 1–2 levels higher than normal, reflecting the high degree of specialisation seen in the Aslan officer corps. Non-commissioned officer and enlisted ranks should be as normal but slaves will often be 1–2 levels below the standard.
- Supplies are scarce in the Glorious Empire and keeping a ship properly outfitted is a challenging task. When applying the ‘Obtaining Supplies’ rules described on pages 32–33 of the *Naval Campaign Handbook*, all checks should be made at one difficulty level higher than shown. For example, when the ship’s logistics officer makes her initial Admin check, it should be Difficult (10+) instead of Average (8+). Likewise, ‘Going on the Scrounge’ checks should also be made at one difficulty level higher.

Roles on an Empire Capital Ship

Commanding officer, master-at-arms and subordinate officers to each position are held by males. The executive officer, logistics officer and logistics and administrative staff are held by females. In addition to the above roles, Aslan ships include a first officer, the commanding officer’s right-hand, who helps ensure that his orders are carried out to the letter and is always prepared to assume the role of captain should the commanding officer become incapacitated. The cadet corps is comprised of subordinates for all of the above roles.

Among the flight crew, all pilots and the senior bridge officer are male. Astrogators are female. Flight operations and communications officers are female.

There are two departments entirely in the realm of a single Aslan gender. Engineering and technical staff are comprised of all females and, in a few cases, technically skilled slaves for highly subordinate roles. Conversely, all roles in gunnery from the commanding officer to the lowest ammunition clerk are typically held by males; however, a dearth of males has made it necessary to have female gunners on occasion. Male and female humans may serve in either of these departments.

The crew complement is strictly divided based on gender, with the operations officer, deck officers and chief medical officer held by males, while most positions have a supporting female shipmaster role just below them. Steward officers and staff are female, as are supporting medical staff. Low-level crew positions may be staffed by male or female humans.

On Board Ship

The concept of running a campaign based on a capital ship is somewhat different. It requires a group of Travellers to engage in assigned missions that guide their actions to some extent, so when undertaking a naval mission, one has less freedom to wander afield. One Traveller should always take the role of captain and the others should take roles that have an active part in running the ship. Travellers in a naval campaign spend most of their time on the ship but not all of it; they may disembark and go planetside on side missions, visit fleet staff and planetary dignitaries at a downport, serve as boarding parties or engage in in-system travel between ships of the line if the campaign involves a squadron of vessels.

A naval campaign differs from others in that less time is spent wandering the geography of foreign planets. The ship becomes the setting and deck plans become the ‘game map’ to some extent. Over the course of the campaign, different sections of the ship should develop a persona or feel all their own. The command bridge on the top deck is a pristine place where all of the important decisions are made. The operational centre should be a busy place where the crew meticulously ensures the sharp and efficient operation of the ship – no easy feat on an aging ship of the line. Engineering might be a ‘no man’s land’ – quite literally with female staff taking all positions – where its staff see the section as not just their duty but their territory. Other than the officer corps of the ship, engineers might bristle at the notion of anyone else coming into their engine rooms. Gunnery is a diffuse role, spread out among the weapon turrets, spinal mount control section and duty stations of the ship but gunners come together on the commons deck to fraternise, gamble, eat, drink and be merry.

Crewmen are spread throughout the ship as well and despite the fact that they are often unsung, they serve in critical roles without which the ship could not run.

The dearth of available talent in the Glorious Empire means that slaves often fill crucial positions aboard ship and that while the Aslan might be loathed to admit it, many slaves are better at their jobs than their Aslan counterparts. On some ships, slaves lead a dismal existence, living in the grungiest quarters at the base of the ship; in others – where their contributions are acknowledged and valued – they are more highly regarded and the only difference is the more cramped living quarters. Because technical skills are required in slave roles aboard ship, there will also be an eclectic mix of slaves born in the Empire and those recently captured from the Outrim Void and impressed into service.

Each capital ship has a culture unto itself, much like a world, and each section of the ship is akin to a nation on that world. Somehow, these disparate nations come together to manage its operation, which – in the Glorious Empire – are under the direst of circumstances. Despite the decline and impending fall of the Empire, its capital ships are still feared throughout the Hierate. They are aging but wise old lions who still have a dangerous bite.

Glorious Empire Naval Missions

Naval missions for Glorious Empire capital ship crews are much like those in the Hierate or Imperium, although they rarely go outside their own borders. From time-to-time, Empire capital ships have been seen on patrol in remote, sparsely populated Hierate systems such as Eahaw, Erasaso or Khau and they have roved into the Outrim Void systems of Delta Theta, Colony Six and Goertel; but more often than not, they stay in Empire space, showing the flag, quelling rebellions and generally reminding each *ahriyko* (pride lord) who is boss. The following mission is an example of the assignments an Empire ship of the line might be given. Referees should feel free to use it in their campaigns or create similar ones.

Referee’s Note:

Whilst the Yetrai of Yero’ilra are the Empire’s only vassal clan, the Empire government and military refuse to acknowledge them as such and still refer to them as an *ahriy* (pride) and not a *huiha* (clan). The Travellers must be careful of the terminology they use and with whom they use it. At Yero’ilra, the Yetrai are a *huiha*, a clan. When speaking to Admiralty or among the crew of the *Si’khiraeokhaor*, the Yetrai are an *ahriy*, or a pride.

ORDERS

SYOAKH/GOERTEL GRAND FLEET HIGH COMMAND DEFEND THE TRAILING FLANK

Commandant, you are hereby ordered to assemble a hryo (squadron) of appropriate size – four or more craft of 10,000 tons or more but not exceeding eight – and taking command of the flagship, Si'khiraekhaor. With great haste you are to coordinate a synchronised jump to Oihu where you shall resupply the hryo including the acquisition of medium ammunition for all artillery bays. Admiralty is well aware that supplies are short so your purser must be highly resourceful.

After filling your hold, coordinate jump for Yero'ilra where your primary assignment awaits. Rebellious ekhoia have taken over the northern iridium mines. Make an example of them. Whilst the site is primarily populated by slaves, a sufficient artillery attack will eradicate the rebels. After the bombardment is complete, a firm message must be sent to the ruling Yetrai ahriy that this will not stand. They must get their house in order. Send a cadre of officers from the hryo – optionally including yourself – to hammer that point home. The Yetrai claim to be a vassal clan and not a Tokouea'we ahriy at all; they must understand that if they are to continue in that vein, they must prevent the seed of rebellion from spreading to other Yero'ilran ekhoia. If they cannot do this, we will.

Fill any missing gaps in your cargo hold with additional supplies at Yero'ilra. They should be sufficiently cowed to fork them over at a reasonable rate. Proceed then to Asyuh to ascertain how things are going on the frontier. Give generously from your supplies to the outposts in the system

and make certain they are well equipped to continue serving as the jumping off point for our victorious mercenary companies. In truth, Asyuh is of only passing value but it is important that the mission continue further afield in order to send the message to Yero'ilra that they were but a stop on the cruise; should they believe they were the focal point of the mission, it will only embolden the upstart Yetrai to allow further uprisings on their land. Complete the circuit of your cruise with stops in at least two other star systems before returning to the capital. Display the clan yoyeaokhtef with pride and return home to a parade in your honour.

Empire and that, although we may sometimes appear to be their neglectful uncle, we do in fact value them highly. The Yero'ilra system is rich in resources and continued instability in the system cannot be allowed to pass. They are simply too close to the Hierate's recent thefts of our land; we must assure them that they are seen as Tokouea'we and will be so eternally.

In addition, do not hesitate to use force on our enemies wherever you find them lurking. The Si'khiraekhaor may be long in the tooth but she is still lethal. Should the opportunity arise, make our enemies feel her wrath.

INTELLIGENCE ASSESSMENT

This cruise might be fraught with danger. Be vigilant. Our clan agents have reported that dishonourable Hierate spies have infiltrated Yero'ilra, Ftulrois and Asyuh from their hovels on Hrahrai and Hteakya. Be cautious who you speak with and what you say. There are concerns that the psionic religious zealots of Goertel are mobilising that decrepit fleet of theirs for a possible attack on Oatre or Asyuh. They may have scouts in the outer systems or Oort clouds of our border worlds. All remains quiet on the Florian frontier but the Floriani are unpredictable and must be taken seriously.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Take care to ensure that the messages you send on Yero'ilra – both military and diplomatic – are ultimately received as having come from an ally who is concerned about recent events on their world. The Yetrai must come away from the experience knowing they are valued citizens of the Glorious

INFORMATION

The hryo is to resupply on Oihu and then proceed, in order, to Yero'ilra and Asyuh. Plan for a stop at Ftulrois or Oatre, followed by an additional stop at either Alirar or Eiahiy, before returning to Syoakh.

Your mission is as much about showing the clan yoyeaokhtef as it is about maintaining order in our great and Glorious Empire. The duration of your mission is expected to be 16 weeks or less. There is no reward for haste. Do what needs to be done in each of the systems you visit but know that should you fail to return at the expected date, we shall put the Wahtoi courier network on high alert and track the hryo down.

Ai yourhai!

Your loving and beneficent High Commander, Grand Admiral of the Grand Imperial Fleet, champion of the Tokouea'we, Oiyheiloikhea Oatrais

PATRON ENCOUNTERS

The following patron encounters can be used as adventure hooks in a campaign, to add flavour to the region or simply serve as additional colour and inspiration.

— FTULROIS —

Patron: Tryorlaoiya, a native of Alirar who has recently migrated to Ftulrois.
Reward: Cr150000 and a 3% interest in the business. Once she gets her new operation off the ground, the Travellers will start receiving passive income on a monthly basis.
Mission: On Alirar, Tryorlaoiya's *ekho* ran a successful agricultural plantation but it was destroyed during the Eahaw Campaign and subsequent attempts to rebuild were ruined by slave revolts and a crop blight, which may have been caused by Hierate bioweapons. Tryorlaoiya is a *siyajkhaora*, an unmarried female, and as such she claims her efforts are purely for the glory of the Empire; however, to ensure the success of her operation, she wants to establish trade ties with the Floriani. She wants a group of Travellers to escort her to Sif, the interface world between the humans of the Outrim Void, the Floriani and the Aslan of both Hierate and Empire. Foreign travel is strictly forbidden for most citizens, including herself, but Empire trade junkets to Sif have been known to happen.

— KHAU —

Patron: Mulgren Tuuitui
Reward: Forged interface papers that will get the Travellers into Empire space without undue inspections and triple fees for whatever freight they are able to carry to Yero'ilra.
Mission: Mulgren is a freed slave from Hliyh who now works as an open pit miner on the surface of the system mainworld. He lives a harsh existence but relishes in the freedom he now possesses and is eager to help his enslaved brothers on the other side of the border. Mulgren wants the Travellers to transport much needed supplies to the resistance forces on Yero'ilra where they can be used to help them break free. He has 40 tons of freight that he wants delivered to them, most of it banal components that can be assembled to make explosives.

— OATRE —

Patron: Wyoaiyu
Reward: Cr80000 and an optional customised *yoyeaokhtef* for the Travellers' starship.
Mission: Esteemed artists and calligraphists prefer to use rare pigments when producing paintings or *yoyeaokhtef* (the script with which the Aslan decorate their starships and other structures). Like so many other goods, foreign pigments are embargoed in the Glorious Empire but that has not curbed demand for them. On the interface system of Oatre, the Travellers meet Wyoaiyu, an aging but jocular Aslan male who asks them for a favour. He would like them to go to Hrahraiu, a Hierate world recently liberated from the Glorious Empire, where they are to obtain at least 200 kilograms of natural pigments. All are produced from plants and minerals native to that world.

— YERO'ILRA —

Patron: Hkorlaau, would-be hotelier
Reward: Hkorlaau fronts the Travellers Cr25000 to buy needed gear and promises to compensate them for the difference plus a Cr75000 bonus upon delivery. Laileikhea assumes Hkorlaau's debt. If the Travellers investigate, they may discover that Hkorlaau was kidnapped by creditors who are tying up his loose ends to get paid.

Mission: Finding a decent room in the capital city of Ayekhe is difficult. Finding one that also has conference areas and an exhibit room even more so. Hkorlaau asks the Travellers to bring him what he needs to provide hospitality space for up to 20 visitors to Yero'ilra. He needs vacuum habitats with airlocks and life support that can house his guests for at least two weeks. Gear like that is hard to come by if you are not connected and Hkorlaau lacks the pull to get what he needs. Unfortunately, when the Travellers return, Hkorlaau is nowhere to be found; however, an Aslan female named Laileikhea contacts them after a few days to tell them that she knows about the deal and will honour Hkorlaau's original offer.

THE CANONVERSE

One of the many less-than-favourable outcomes for the Glorious Empire is the canonical one. In the official Traveller timeline, an event known as the Rebellion starts in the Imperial year 1116 when Archduke Dulinor makes an assassination attempt on Emperor Strephon, inadvertently killing the Aslan Yerlyaruwiwo ambassador in the process. The ambassador dies with honour, taking a bullet for the Grand Princess Ciencia Iphegenia but the event ends up being the spark that lights the powder keg, inspiring millions upon millions of *ihatei* to cross the jump-5 route from the Ealiyasiyw sector to join those Aslan already clamouring at the Imperium's gates in the Trojan Reach. These *ihatei* forces strike to coreward and trailing, pouring into Imperial space, shattering the Peace of Ftahalr and either consuming or impinging upon several other small polities in the process. The historic Aslan invasion forces are dubbed the Aorlakht or 'new lords' by their spiritual leader, the Lakht Aorlakht, 'lord of the new lords.'

Whilst the Rebellion is a ways off from the era featured in this book, the seeds are planted long before it takes place. Tensions between the Hierate and Imperium have been building for decades. Some of this story is covered in the *Pirates of Drinax* campaign; the ever-present threat of an *ihatei* invasion and the general restlessness of the Aslan near the Imperial border are issues the Travellers must address in several of the adventures contained therein. For Referees who want to take a broader historical perspective on the *ihatei* and their place in Traveller canon, the following are some guidelines to consider.

Historically, the Aslan Hierate has not been a state in the same sense as the Imperium. The Hierate is at best a loosely federated collection of clans. It is often described as a feudal society but is in fact a conglomeration of feudal societies, competing for resources and allying with one another only when mutually beneficial. There are powerful and weak clans, large and small clans, leaders and vassals. The Tlaukhu and Ya'soisthea provide guidance, leadership and a place to air grievances but neither can be said to truly lead the Aslan as a whole. They mostly serve as an advisory body; no governmental organisation nor sole individual leads the Aslan. All that changes with the rise of a messianic figure known as the Lakht Aorlakht.

The Peace of Ftahalr, which ended the Border Wars between the Aslan Hierate and the Imperium in 2810 Aslan (380 Imperial), was accepted throughout the Hierate as an injunction on continued conquest of human space. After centuries of expansion into the trans-Rift colonies, the Aslan halted their advance a few parsecs from the Imperial border.

Many of the most powerful clans in the Trojan Reach eventually built trade ties with the Imperium and learned to sublimate their desire for land with that of material wealth. However, not everyone benefitted from that trade. While some clans enriched themselves, the population in the trans-Rift Hierate grew immensely and millions more *ihatei* continued to travel across the jump-5 route from the old Hierate, seeking new territory to conquer. The Aslan expansion was stifled by both the Peace of Ftahalr and the new economic model. After centuries of stasis, the demographics became difficult to ignore, particularly on overpopulated systems like Hreahrya, Irlaiw and Ftoakh. If the *ihatei* were not given new lands to conquer soon, they would start cannibalising the Hierate instead.

When an ambitious group of *ihatei* conquered the Glorious Empire world of Earlyu in 772, the Ya'soisthea declared that the problem was solved. The Glorious Empire would provide ample stomping grounds for the *ihatei* for centuries to come or so they thought. The Empire's ambassador to the Ya'soisthea protested vehemently but it was all for naught. The clans needed a convenient solution to their problem and believed they had found it.

The reality proved to be quite different. The Glorious Empire was a highly militarised polity and resisted additional *ihatei* incursions for centuries. Most were crushed and their numbers slain, enslaved or ransomed back to their clans. Despite the bold declarations of the Ya'soisthea, clearly the path of least resistance did not go through the Glorious Empire. Unable to take Empire worlds and prevented by treaty from encroaching upon the Imperium, the *ihatei* began to look for vulnerable worlds within the Hierate's borders.

The fall of Oihyeti'he to an *ihatei* fleet was a rude awakening for the Ya'soisthea, who proved to be ineffectual at finding a solution to the burgeoning

problem. The Tlaukuh, eager to assert its dominance over the trans-Rift Hierate, stepped in. The Yerlyauwi, Khaukhearl, Tlaiowaha and other powerful clans met on Stohyus in 3628 Aslan (1097 Imperial). The details of the clandestine meetings are uncertain but rumour has it that the Yerlyauwi attempted to assert their considerable influence, offering to handle the problem by themselves. The Khaukhearl were a mitigating presence and the Seieakh-Akatoiloh-We'okunir Triumvirate, who were more deeply steeped in the sector's affairs, allegedly drew the secretive Syoisuis into the proceedings, although no one truly knows for sure.

Shortly after the clans met, a little known space officer by the name of Hoalu Uyo of the Eiyehwehakhea clan was selected as Aikoho Earleatrais or 'fleet dispatcher'. Uyo was selected for his impartiality; he came from a clan of little importance and had no connections to the Tlaukuh. The role was created by the clans to coordinate *ihatei* expansion and prevent it from turning inward into the Hierate. The job of Aikoho Earleatrais was envisioned as an administrative one, firmly under the thumb of the Tlaukuh cabal that invented it. However, in time the *ihatei* learned to look to the Aikoho Earleatrais for leadership and a cult of personality developed around him. It was said that the will of the ancestors flowed through him and that he guided the *fteirle* towards a grand destiny.

Uyo was the first to coin the term, Aorlakht ('new lords') for this new and highly motivated legion of *ihatei*. The name was pleasing to the land-hungry Aslan and they reciprocated the gesture by calling him the Lakht Aorlakht or 'lord of new lords'. Some say that Uyo merely recognised opportunity when he saw it and exploited the *ihatei* to his own ends. Others say it was the will of the ancestors.

Once word of the Rebellion and the assassination attempt made it to the Ealiyasiw sector, it did not take long before unrest began to develop among the *ihatei* present. Ealiyasiw had long suffered from population pressures that were even more severe than those of the Trojan Reach and its masses were eager to obtain new lands. Whilst neighbouring Reaver's Deep had some appeal, its proximity to Daibei made it unpalatable for historic reasons. Despite the challenges, the majority of *ihatei* decided to make their way coreward to join the ranks of those already in the Trojan Reach.

The arrival of millions of land-hungry Aslan in the sector was met with varying degrees of anxiety, panic, indignation and – in some cases – enthusiasm. Many Aslan felt that the trade-oriented 'New Horizon' clans had become fat and lazy on their riches. The arrival of so many *ihatei* could only mean that big changes were

coming and that the Peace of Ftahalr would soon be broken, ending the obsession with material wealth and returning the Aslan to a more traditional and aggressive way of life. Legions of Aslan warriors would break like a wave upon the shores of the Imperium and anyone else who got in the way. It was a heady time in the Reach.

The newcomers were welcomed by the Lakht Aorlakht, who beckoned them to Hliyh, where he commanded the growing fleets of *ihatei*. Their arrival was initially met with derision by many of the Reach *ihatei* who saw the Ealiyasiwi Aslan as intruders. Just as they were about to finally claim the lands they desired, these foreigners had arrived to foul it up. It was a dangerous time for the Lakht Aorlakht. While technically his role was an appointed position, it is Aslan tradition to resolve disputes with duels and Uyo had to fend off many challengers to stay on top. Ultimately, he convinced the bickering legions that there was strength in numbers. 'A few legions of *fteirle* might take some worlds,' he entreated them, 'but the massed armies of the *aorlakht* will conquer the galaxy.' This gave the Lakht Aorlakht historically unprecedented power over large numbers of Aslan.

The coming of the Lakht Aorlakht provides a rich, canon-based setting. A group of Travellers operating in the Trojan Reach, especially in the Outrim Void or in the midst of a *Pirates of Drinax* campaign, are witnesses to history. In 1105, Hoalu Uyo is merely the Aikoho Earleatrais, an overburdened space officer whose monumental task is to prevent millions of *ihatei* from eating the Hierate alive. He has accepted the posting from the powerful Tlaukuh to preserve his clan's meagre prospects and advance his own status. In the early stages of his career as fleet dispatcher, he is treated like an underling by the Tlaukuh clan lords. Little do they know one day he will rule them all as Lakht Aorlakht.

The Aikoho Earleatrais could be the Travellers' patron if they delve into Aslan space. He operates primarily from Stohyus, the homeworld of the powerful Ahroay'if clan, and can sometimes be found as far as Tlaiowaha or even Tyokh. Since his task is largely an administrative one, he depends heavily upon a cadre of talented female Aslan to coordinate and manage the *ihatei* crisis. A big part of their job is to know where *ihatei* forces are gathering and what their prospective targets are. Keeping track of them all is a difficult job, especially since it sometimes requires forays into the Void. He often employs mercenaries and contractors to do such work when he cannot find a trans-border trader to do the job.

Alternatively, Uyo could be the Travellers' foil or a recurring nemesis if their stance is adamantly anti-Aslan. The Aikoho Earleatrais' prime directive is to redirect *ihatei* into human space and while he is

THE AIKOHO EARLEATRAIS AND THE LAKHT AORLAKHT

'*Graecia capta ferum victorem
cepit ('Captive Greece captured
her rude conqueror')*'.
— Quintus Horatius Flaccus

Hoalu Uyo is a mysterious figure whose clan of origin is unknown. During adolescence, he was subsumed into the Eiyehwehakhea clan, who originated from their eponymously named homeworld. Like many small clans, they lived on the precipice of disaster and were at the mercy of larger and more powerful clans. Over time, the Eiyehwehakhea had to surrender significant amounts of territory on their homeworld to *i hatei* incursions. In an effort to prevent their own demise, the Eiyehwehakhea engaged in a practice called *khtarlyoyao*, or 'incorporation', in which weaker clans and outcasts are admitted into a clan to bolster its numbers. Hoalu Uyo was brought into the Eiyehwehakhea via this practice.



Referee's Note:

Hoalu Uyo's *ekho* was originally from the Glorious Empire, so technically his clan of origin is the Tokouea'we but they were left behind on Earlyu when it was conquered by Hierate clans. The fact that he is of Empire origin is a closely guarded family secret.

technically limited by the Peace of Ftahalr, his long-term goal is to repeal the treaty and allow Aslan to sally forth into the Imperium with reckless abandon. If the Travellers spend time fighting off *i hatei* or dealing with them in some other fashion, they might be able to trace their movements back to the office of the Aikoho Earleatrais. Not all *i hatei* incursions are directed by the organisation but an increasing number are. Even those *i hatei* expeditions not under the auspices of the fleet dispatcher are often observed or mitigated by Hoalu Uyo's office. In the *Pirates of Drinax* adventure 'I hatei!', the Khaukheairl clan agent, Teaw, is present at the camp at the behest of the Aikoho Earleatrais.

Hoalu Uyo's secret past could be the basis for a series of adventures in its own right. His bloodline may be traced to the Glorious Empire and were the secret of his origin to get out it would cause a huge scandal, which would certainly result in his removal from office and might very well discredit the Tlaukuh clans who created the role.

For Referees running an Aslan campaign, there are other options. Early on in his tenure, Hoalu Uyo has visions of transforming into the messianic figure that he one day becomes. Aslan Travellers can be part of his clan as they aid him during his rise to power. Hoalu Uyo's secret



connections in the Glorious Empire take the Travellers across the border into its besieged worlds to conduct business in the black markets. Wars of Assassins might be fought against other mid-level clans as they vie for relevance in the competitive environment of the trans-Rift Hierate. The possibilities are endless.

Hoalu Uyo may also be featured as a villain or nemesis in an Aslan campaign. The Travellers might be members of the New Horizon faction who seek to do away with the old ways and live in peace with their neighbours, engaging in trade instead of war. As the Lakht Aorlakht begins his meteoric rise to power, the Travellers could become his foil, attempting to prevent a return to the barbaric ways of the past.

THE END IS NEAR

In Traveller canon, the Glorious Empire suffers its bitter end as the land-hunting, vengeance-seeking Aslan of the Aorlakht eventually conquer all of the Empire's territory. The Aorlakht invasion, which eventually claims all of the Dustbelt, most of the Outrim Void, six Florian worlds and dozens of Imperial worlds, consumes three Empire worlds in 3652 Aslan (1117 Imperial) and then quickly conquers the remainder of them by 3654 Aslan (1119 Imperial). In the end, the lone holdout is Syoakh, which is bombarded from orbit and attacked with nuclear weapons, poisoning its atmosphere and ending the Empire's nearly 500-year reign.

In this history, the final straw that breaks the aua's back is not the will of the Hierate to conquer the Empire but the massive *ihatei* movement stirred up by the death of the Yerlyaruiwo ambassador on Capital and the waves of Aslan invaders moving coreward. It is a fateful and dramatic conclusion to the long and complicated history of the Glorious Empire. Whilst it is only one possible ending, it is the canonical one and a campaign driving towards this outcome could be fraught with drama, political manoeuvring, epic space and ground battles, the plight of the Empire's human inhabitants and ultimately an apocalyptic conclusion.

PATRON ENCOUNTERS

The following patrons are set circa 1105.

— Tyokh —

Patron: Ryusiy, from the Office of the Fleet Dispatcher

Reward: Cr150000 and middle passage to Byrni and Arunisiir

Mission: An Aslan female, dressed in business attire, approaches the Travellers and requests passage to the Outrim Void world of Byrni. If, in addition, they are willing to take her further afield, she also needs to travel to Arunisiir. These two worlds are places where Aslan and humans have found ways to coexist. Ryusiy seeks to gather information about these worlds for a report that she must file for the office. She is evasive about the true purposes of her organisation for much of the journey but in casual conversation might let it slip how concerned she is about the *ihatei* problem within the Hierate.

If included as part of a *Pirates of Drinax* campaign, Ryusiy can become a Contact of the Travellers provided they treat her well and take her to both Byrni and Arunisiir. Going forward, she can provide them with intelligence about *ihatei* movements. In addition, their standing on distant Eiyehwehakhea rises to Neutral.

— Dostoevsky —

Patron: Steiheilkha, a non-descript female Aslan

Reward: Cr200000

Mission: A polite and unassuming female Aslan approaches the Travellers when they are in an abandoned or uncrowded part of the city. They might think they are being mugged if not for the fact that she might be the most – dare they say it – mousy Aslan they have ever seen. She speaks so quietly at first that it is difficult to hear her. If requested, she clears her throat and raises her voice to a somewhat more audible level. She introduces herself as Steiheilkha and informs the Travellers that their reputation precedes them. She wants to hire them for a job. She happens to know that every two months, a scout/courier arrives in the Dpres system, carrying maps and other data about important Imperial border worlds. She requests that the Travellers obtain these maps, by any means necessary, and return copies to her. She requests that they meet her at the Akhwoykyal orbital starport after completing the mission.

THE HIERATE CAMPAIGN

The Aslan Hierate is a broad swath of interstellar territory, similar in size to those controlled by the other major races. Unlike those other races, the ties that bind the Aslan together are tenuous. The feudal structure of the Hierate includes a disparate collection of clans in competition with one another for the territory they currently control and that which they plan to expand into.

A Hierate campaign tells the story of a group of Aslan located near the borders of the Glorious Empire and who may or may not be involved in engineering its demise. In the past few decades, the Glorious Empire has been crumbling under Hierate assault. After centuries of deadlock, ambitious clans have finally broken the impasse and been gobbling up Empire systems on all sides, leaving only a narrow fissure of star systems. Doing battle with the Empire is not for the faint of heart; the Empire insists on Open War in nearly all of its engagements. Convincing them to participate in more civilised levels of ritualised warfare has been nearly impossible. Nevertheless, several bold clans have exposed the Empire's weaknesses, having recently conquered the Hliy Chain.

Despite the fact that Hierate clans have been nibbling away at the Empire's borders for over a century, different clans have different feelings about the Empire. While the Tlaukuh – most notably the powerful Yerlyaruiwo clan – claim that the Empire is an existential threat to the Aslan way of life, many clans do not see things the same way. Hierate worlds that are controlled by Tlaukuh clans or vassals are typically more conservative and honour the narrative that the Glorious Empire is a threat to *fteir*. Conversely, there are clans like the Ahriyao – nestled on several worlds along the Empire's rimward border – who have had amicable relations with the Empire at times and have cultivated a relationship of convenience with them. If there is trade to be had and land to be obtained by alternately favouring or despising the Empire, then the Ahriyao will go the way the wind blows. They take whichever approach benefits them the most; such is life as a small- or mid-sized clan.

There is no uniform approach to dealing with the Glorious Empire. The lack of a cohesive stance is part of what has enabled the Empire to survive for so many years. It is the nature of the Aslan to be divisive, to

break into factions. If there is any consistency to the Aslan approach to the Glorious Empire, it is that there is no consistency.

There are many approaches a Referee could take to running a Hierate campaign. Here are just a few possibilities:

- A trader campaign featuring an ekho whose Eakhau trader runs guns for the Hierate clans.
- Ihatei or members of victorious clans who have come to settle the conquered worlds.
- An Aslan mercenary company, taking tickets to fight against (or in some cases for) the Empire.
- An Aslan spacer campaign, featuring the Spacer and Space Officer careers in a naval campaign.

TRADING AMONG THE CLANS

An Aslan trader on the border of the Glorious Empire has the opportunity to make a huge fortune for his clan but he is treading on dangerous ground. The unique astrography of the region makes the area around the Empire a melting pot of Hierate cultures. In the recent rush to push forward and wipe out the Empire once and for all, dozens of clans have filled the gaps and pressed to the edge of the borders. This has resulted in a hodgepodge, highly disparate group of clans nestled up against one another. There are Tlaukuh clans and their vassals, Ya'soisthea clans, multi-world clans, single-world clans and clans who share the land of a single world, all with competing interests and goals. A trader in this region must not only learn the commercial needs of each world but also how to navigate the diverse cultural topography of recent conquerors.

A human tramp trader might be confused by the seemingly wayward path that an Aslan trader captain takes. In Imperial space, when one purchases a load of textiles, consumer electronics or radioactives, the goal is to offload that cargo as soon as is practically possible. On a human trader, time is money and so is cargo space. As soon as the hold is filled, it is taking up space that could be used for something else. The goal is to get to the next port and maximise one's profits as soon as

possible, refill the hold with more wisely chosen cargo and then off you go again. It is largely the same among the Aslan but the complex relationships between the clans of a region make transactions more challenging.

Whenever an Aslan trader arrives in a new port, the first interaction that occurs before the pursers are allowed to negotiate is a meeting between the captain of the trader and the local clan leader, who is usually also in charge of the downport. If the two clans already have good relations, the captain makes an Average (8+) Diplomat, Persuade or Leadership check. In addition, add the captain's Tolerance as a positive DM to the check. If relations are strained or there are other complexities, the Referee might determine that the check must be made at a higher difficulty level. Success indicates that trade may proceed. Failure indicates that the captain has insulted the local clan leader. See the Negotiation Failure table for degrees of failure.

Should the trader travel to a world with whom his clan has no relationship or one with whom there is an ongoing dispute or feud, the captain and local clan leader must make an opposed Diplomat, Persuade or Leadership check. If the captain loses the opposed check, determine the effect and consult the Negotiation Failure table for the results. As before, allow the captain to add his Tolerance as a positive DM to the check.

If the captain wins the opposed check, his purser receives DM+2 to establish contact with a local broker and DM+1 on all passenger, freight, mail and speculative cargo price checks.

Once the captain has established good graces with the local landlord, all there is left to do is go on a nice, luxurious hunt while the ladies handle the business side of things.

IHATEI

The desire of the Aslan male to obtain land of his own is an unquenchable thirst. Whether it be an entire planet or a small residence with a few gardens and grounds to wander, he cannot achieve satisfaction until he has land of his own. The Aslan practice primogeniture, with the firstborn male obtaining all the land of his father. Subsequent sons get nothing and are therefore forced to go forth into the universe to obtain land elsewhere, sometimes far from home, on distant worlds.

Second sons, or *ihatei*, form bands of like-minded land seekers, hop onto starships – whether their own or those of more well-to-do noble males – and strike out to find even larger groupings of land-hungry males, building a decent-sized group until there are enough to conceivably form an ample force that can conquer land of its own. These groups also attract a number of females, many of whom hope to obtain able-bodied, land-owning males to marry. Because of the bifurcation of skill sets along gender lines, the participation of these females is key to the success of any *ihatei* venture. After all, starships cannot be operated without engineers and technicians, not to mention the immense value of a having a dedicated purser.

Ihatei ventures come in various shapes and sizes, from a small band of Aslan crowded onto a single *Ihateisho* scout to large flotillas comprising many ships, though it is rare to see starship classes above the 1,000-ton range. Most *ihatei* start out small with a few ships at most. Their flotillas only grow when enough of them assemble on some forlorn world before eventually making their move into new territory.

To humans, the idea of *ihatei* conjures images of aggressive raiders, pouring into occupied territory and taking land by force; the reality is that this is far from

Negotiation Failure

Result	Offense Taken	Result and Resolution
Failure with Effect -1	Familiarity	The captain has shown inappropriate familiarity with the clan leader. A simple apology resolves the dispute and trade may proceed. If no apology is given, the level of offense rises to Impoliteness.
Failure with Effect -2 or -3	Impoliteness	The captain has been perceived as impolite by the clan leader. A cooling off period of 1D days is required before another attempt may be made. If no apology is given and the captain refuses to wait for the cooling off period to pass, the level of offense rises to Courtesy.
Failure with Effect -4 or less, or a natural 2 is rolled	Courtesy	The captain has insulted or otherwise disrespected the clan leader. If an apology is not given immediately, the offense may only be resolved with a duel. However, should the captain win the duel, trade may proceed as normal. If the captain loses the duel, trade may also proceed so long as he accepts the outcome gracefully.

the most common scenario. Most *ihatei* settle worlds or regions of worlds that are either unoccupied or have sparse population. The Aslan do not lust for blood. Most do not seek out wanton death and destruction. They simply want land holdings they can live off of prosperously. Having to fight for land is needlessly destructive, results in unnecessary loss of life and costs precious resources that most *ihatei* bands lack.

Access to spacecraft is largely dependent upon status. *Ihatei* who come from noble backgrounds are far more likely to be granted access to starships than commoners. Aslan of more humble backgrounds must therefore ally themselves with more privileged members of their species in order to obtain transportation. Consult the Spacecraft Access table for guidelines as to what sort of ships are likely to be available to Aslan of various SOC.

Spacecraft Access

SOC	Standing	Resource Access
0–5	Commoner	Likely nothing. At most a single <i>Ihateisho</i> scout.
6–11	Minor or average noble	One or more <i>Ihateisho</i> scouts. 1–2 starships in the 300 to 600 ton range.
12+	Grand noble	Multiple <i>Ihateisho</i> scouts. 3–6 starships in the 300 to 600 ton range or 1–2 starships in the 800 to 1,200 ton range.

The rarely discussed second phase of most *ihatei* expeditions occurs once a group has acquired a land hold and have achieved a level of legitimacy. Successful expeditions eventually garner the attention of the Hierate who then provide assistance in the form of financial aid, foodstuffs, weapons, construction supplies and other things that can transform an *ihatei* camp into a bona fide Aslan town or city. *Ihatei* ventures are therefore entrepreneurial on some level whether their participants think of it that way or not. Assistance granted by a host clan is rarely rejected and furthermore even attempting to do so can be perceived as an insult to the prospective benefactor. Most *ihatei* ventures are haphazard affairs that end in failure. It is therefore unsurprising that the ones that are most successful are those that are best thought out, the best planned. Many such ventures are actually designed with the express purpose of eventually obtaining noble sponsorship after achieving certain milestones.

The myth of the *ihatei* is that he is a lone warrior making his way in the universe until he eventually partners with other likeminded spirits. With nothing but the clothes on his back and a rickety starship, he sallies forth into

the universe to take his rightful place as a landholder on a distant world. Like most myths, this narrative is debunked by the fact that haphazard *ihatei* expeditions usually end up in unmitigated disaster. The most successful *ihatei* ventures are those that are supported by well-heeled sponsors who hope to extend their influence on the backs of the second sons.

Ihatei campaigns are an excellent avenue for Referees and Travellers who want a multifaceted story that incorporates travel, exploration, alien contact, technical challenges, combat and trade. *Ihatei* are most often on the bleeding edge of Aslan advancement. There is an added degree of complexity and challenge for those attempting to claim land on star systems recently taken from the Glorious Empire or those currently under Empire control.

GUNS FOR HIRE

Unlike their counterparts in the Glorious Empire, mercenary companies in the Hierate cover a broad range of activities. While there are units that take the typical sorts of tickets that an Empire or even human company takes, Aslan mercenaries fill all the gaps left open by the lack of a single unified military force that spans the Hierate.

Mercenary companies are founded and managed by females who run them like any other enterprise; with a goal to maximise profits. A male runs the combat side of the business but acquiesces to the female on business matters. This partnership establishes a unique relationship between male and female professionals in which the typical constraints of honour are extended. For example, while it would normally be considered dishonourable to leave the field of battle under any circumstances, females will sometimes instruct their male warrior leaders to retreat when they deem that continuing to fight is unprofitable or not in the best interests of the company. Despite the occasional contradictions with *fteir*, the profession of mercenary warrior is considered to be an honourable one among the Aslan, who place great value on skilled warriors.

Clan armies tend to be in either 'on' or 'off' mode. When 'on', the clan is engaging in combat, possibly in an effort to take land or settle a dispute. When 'off', the clan has usually been holding land for some time and may not be instantly prepared to make the switch to a more active role. Hiring mercenaries trained to engage in warfare at any moment can give a clan army the transition time it needs to properly prepare for war.

Likewise, specialised mercenary units can be hired to satisfy a number of functions for which clans are often unprepared. For example, not every clan has

skilled assassins for the War of Assassins level of conflict. It is not considered dishonourable for a clan to hire mercenary assassins to fill that role and these units obviously command top Credit due to the very specialised and crucial role they play in the resolution of disputes. The mere announcement that a reputable assassin unit has been hired can change the entire nature of dispute resolution.

Mercenary units are being employed all along the Glorious Empire frontier, filling one role or another, usually serving as a stopgap where clans have a hole in their military operations. On the surface, this might seem remarkably similar to how mercenaries are used in human space but in fact it is much more regimented. When deciding upon the terms of a conflict, there might even be a ‘no mercenaries’ clause. However, such stipulations are rare due to a pressing need for mercenary services by the clans.

Despite their aggressive nature, the Aslan are ultimately a race of pastoral land holders and artists who engage in warfare only as necessary. Centuries of adherence to *fteir* has bred the more random and gratuitous aspects of their violent natures out of them for the most part. Most disputes are small and resolved with duels or displays of strength. When larger conflicts occur, some clans require a remarkable amount of time to alter the nature of their forces. Mercenary soldiers can buy them the time they need.

The quality of Aslan mercenary units varies widely. At the specialist level, Aslan are typically a cut above their human peers. Because of the sharp division of labour between genders, Aslan males are afforded the luxury to specialise in one or two skills. At the officer level, things tend to even out with Aslan and human mercenaries roughly on par. Most Hierate mercenary units do not reach the level of excellence achieved by the typical Glorious Empire unit as Empire mercenaries are heavily vetted and selected directly from the ranks of active-duty warriors. However, the Hierate is a big place. Despite its reputation for excellence in the mercenary field, the Empire does not have nearly the selection of warriors to choose from and top Hierate mercenary companies can surpass them in quality and reputation.

SPACERS

Aslan space forces are different than those of Humaniti. Human navies perceive space to be a medium that connects the worlds of its interstellar empires, a collection of ‘neural pathways’ through which transit, commerce and information flow. Obviously, the Aslan use it for the same things but a key philosophical difference is that, in the Hierate, no one *owns* space.

As a species driven by the ownership of land, space is perceived merely as the means to get from point A to point B. Just like the other major races, the Aslan have space stations, habitations on worlds with vacuum conditions or hostile environments and massive starships. All of the major races are terrestrial in origin, having come from one habitable world or another but the Aslan are instinctively attached to their land in a way that none of the other starfaring species can understand. This colours the way their space forces are designed, constructed and operated in subtle but highly characteristic ways.

For one, Aslan are far less inclined to build capital ships and megafreighters in the range of 100,000 tons or more. This is partially a reflection of the feudal nature of the Hierate. The Aslan are divided into thousands of clans, each with their own resources. Few of the clans have the resources of an Imperium, Zhodani Consulate or other immense interstellar polities; therefore, they are less inclined to spend the hundreds of billions of Credits required to build such ships when versatility and adaptability are more valued. This is not to say that the Aslan never own capital ships; the Border Wars lasted for 1,500 years and the ability to contend with Solomani capital ships necessitated their construction in the Hierate. Proximity to the Imperial border has precipitated the placement of dozens of capital ships in systems like Tlaiwaha and Tyokh, to name just a few. However, the Aslan are disinclined to think of space as something worth defending when their primary goal is to be able to transport large populations to the surfaces of other worlds.

Aslan Space Force ships tend to range from 1,000 to – at most – 50,000 tons. Just like their smaller warships, the larger vessels tend to invest little in automation and defences, and more in offensive ability, long-range jump capabilities and a large complement of small craft. The latter serve the dual purpose of transporting infantry and settlers to terrestrial targets and provide more roles for males who serve as pilots and gunners.

When capital ships are seen in action against the Glorious Empire it invariably means that a large and powerful clan has become involved. There is a dearth of such clans in the war against the Empire, which has given the Empire a distinct advantage in large-scale space conflicts.

An Aslan naval campaign is guided by similar principles to one featuring the Glorious Empire. Refer to ‘Vanguard of the Empire’ on page 117 for more information. However, Hierate space forces favour smaller capital ships, primarily destroyers, light cruisers and carriers loaded with hundreds of fighters. Unlike the Glorious

Empire, who think strategically and are risk averse, Hierate battle fleets fight for glory. Their ships are well-armed, lightly armoured and equipped with few defences. They fight with haste and overwhelming aggression. It is not very hard to destroy a typical Aslan capital ship but it is extraordinarily difficult to withstand an attack from one.

THE CLAN WITH THE PLAN

One of the problems the Hierate has had when attempting to solve the Glorious Empire problem is a lack of clan unity. Whilst it is not uncommon for Aslan clans to bicker and skirmish with one another over various things, *this* issue more than any other calls for clans to set aside their differences and establish a degree of cooperation.

The inability of the clans to decide upon a decisive course of action is not lost upon the Glorious Empire. For the duration of their nearly 500-year history they have done everything in their power to sow division between the clans. It has given the Empire a distinct advantage. After all, the Tokouea'we clan itself has resisted splintering into vassal clans. This unity is what differentiates it from the Hierate. The natural evolution of Aslan clans includes a gradual dissolution into smaller independent and vassal clans and it has only been through the painstaking efforts of the Tokouea'we to cajole and suppress their own *ahriya*, preventing them breaking free of the father clan and striking out on their own.

Despite their historical fecklessness, several Hierate clans have developed an outsized role when dealing with the Empire. Surprisingly, they are not comprised only of the most powerful clans but a mishmash of old and new, Tlaukuh and Ya'soisthea, large and small. The following clans are those that wield the greatest influence and have a significant presence in the region.

Yerlyaruwiwo: The most powerful clan of the Tlaukuh – the governing body of 29 clans whose origins stem from the old Hierate – has the most long-standing feud with the Tokouea'we and the greatest stake in their destruction. Conflict between the two clans predates the Uwaralyekose, the Cultural Purge in which traditionalists persecuted progressive clans. It was the Yerlyaruwiwo who labelled the Tokouea'we as a *tsekho* clan, firmly putting a target on their backs. The Yerlyaruwiwo have hounded them ever since, battling them in the old Hierate, chasing them across the Great Rift, opposing them in the courts of the Ya'soisthea and enlisting dozens of other clans to serve in proxy wars against them. The Yerlyaruwiwo do not have a sizeable presence in the Trojan Reach with which

to engage in large-scale wars but still manage to wield considerable power. Despite only a minor presence in the region, the Yerlyaruwiwo exercise influence over a large network of vassals and other clans. While most of the Ya'soisthea and independent clans of the Trojan Reach would like to put the Uwaralyekose behind them, it is the Yerlyaruwiwo who have stoked its fires, insisting that the Cultural Purge will not be complete until the Glorious Empire is destroyed.

Hrakoea: A throwback to the era of unfettered Aslan expansion, the Hrakoea are an aggressive and militant clan. As members of the Ascendancy faction, they would like to see the Aslan return to their world-conquering ways. Originally an offshoot of the Hrasua clan, the Hrakoea were nearly destroyed by the Imperium at the end of the Border Wars. Their remnants fled across the Great Rift and have gradually rebuilt their territories in the Trojan Reach. The Hrakoea are vehemently opposed to the so-called New Horizon clans, such as the Ahroay'iif, who have sublimated their desire for land with that of material wealth. To some extent, the Hrakoea would seem to be natural allies for the Empire but the vagaries of inter-clan relations are difficult to fathom. The Hrakoea fought valiantly against the Empire in the Hliyh Chain and were instrumental in their defeat at Hliyh itself. The Hrakoea have served as the 'tip of the dewclaw' in recent victories against the Empire and look to fill that role again in coming wars.

Uiukhtaiu: At one time a vassal of the powerful Khaukheirl, the Uiukhtaiu severed the relationship with their parent clan as part of a gambit to gain power and influence. Betting nearly all of their resources on victory against the Empire, the Uiukhtaiu gave up their landholdings in Silraaihe in order to create an impressive battle fleet. Joining their ships with the inter-clan alliance that defeated the Empire at Hteakya, the Uiukhtaiu were rewarded with the world of Hteakya, a modest holding on the fringe of Empire space. Their success has inspired similarly small and insignificant clans to join them in their battles against the Empire. The Uiukhtaiu remain a relatively small clan that hopes to use the Empire as a stepping stone to greater land holdings and status in the Hierate.

Arhiyao: The Nora'a subsector is a wild frontier of Aslan settlement, populated primarily by small- to mid-sized clans and Tlaukuh vassals who were sold on the idea that its many vacant worlds presented an opportunity to gain land of their own. Nora'a has a number of problems, not the least of which is the fact that it is bordered by the Florian League to coreward, the Glorious Empire to trailing and a gaping stellar bight to spinward, making it a poor region for trade. Sporadic development

has made the majority of the subsector into a perennial backwater. However, as they say in the old Hierate, ‘In the *khtyei* of the blind, the one-eyed *fteirle* is *huihako*’. The one-eyed kings of Nora'a are the Arhiyao clan. Whilst the Arhiyao have never been successful enough to establish themselves as a regional power, they are perhaps the best positioned clan in the region to benefit from the vacuum that will result when the Empire falls. The Arhiyao have had an on-again, off-again relationship with the Glorious Empire for centuries, finally breaking it when they betrayed the Empire and stole the Souftea system from them in a brief but decisive war. Bad intelligence and an underestimation of the combined will of the clans of Nora'a resulted in the loss of the entire Souftea Ring by the Empire. Whilst the Empire still seethes at the Arhiyao for their betrayal, they have bigger fish to fry in Goertel and have been unable to exact revenge upon them. For more on the Arhiyao, see ‘The Arhiyao Clan’ in the *Journal of the Traveller’s Aid Society Volume 3*.

Tiykhisto: Like the Hrakoea, the Tiykhisto are members of the Ascendancy faction, who would very much like the Aslan to resume conquering alien star systems. The Tiykhisto own the majority of shares in Glories Under the Claw, an Aslan corporation with holdings mostly confined to the Hkea'as and Silraaihe subsectors but with a growing presence elsewhere in the Reach. Ironically, the company was founded by the Yerlyaruiwo but has since been taken from their grasp. Glories Under the Claw is a manufacturer and distributor of starships, vehicles, weapons and supplies for the would-be world conqueror. Despite a Hierate-imposed embargo on trade with the Glorious Empire, Glories Under the Claw is the largest corporation that has defied the rules and traded with them. Whilst corporations are not owned by clans per se, Glories appears to have the dewclaw-prints of the Tiykhisto all over it. The Tiykhisto grudgingly admire the power and wilfulness of the Glorious Empire and see them as kindred spirits of a sort. If there is one clan that might side with the Empire in the eventual final war, it is the Tiykhisto.

PATRON ENCOUNTERS

The following patrons can be used in a Hierate campaign.

— Hliyh —

Patron: Evren Talkhasi

Reward: Cr250000 for delivery of mining gear with a Cr50000 bonus if the delivery is made without the notice of other parties on Hliyh.

Mission: Inter-clan alliances make strange bedfellows. Despite their diametrically opposed views, the Ahroay’if and Hrakoea clans fought together against the Empire and both clans acquired land holdings on metal-rich Hliyh. When territories on the airless world were being carved up for distribution after the war, the peace council were careful not to assign adjacent lands to the two opposing clans. To ensure the peace, the Ryoauae clan were given many of the lands located between the two. In fact, the Ryoauae now own the majority of land on Hliyh but most of their lands are resource poor, which rankles them quite a bit. One of their human *awkhea*, a mining foreman by the name of Evren Talkhasi, has discovered a particularly rich node of lanthanum in one of their territories. Unfortunately, the best access point to the node is across one of the arbitrarily drawn borders and firmly in Ahroay’if territory. Talkhasi needs a specialised plasma mining drill to access the node and will pay a group of Travellers to bring the equipment to Hliyh and deliver it discretely to the Ryoauae spaceport.

— Tryaoke —

Patron: Kileiowra’khiloi

Reward: Cr25000 and 50 head of aua.

Mission: When Hierate clans liberated Tryaoke from the Glorious Empire, they inherited eight billion genetically engineered and highly intractable human ex-slaves. The clans very much want the land on the planet but the Tryaokean humans do not have the cultural respect for boundaries that the Aslan do. Whatever alterations were made to their genome have also made them resistant to cooperating with or working for the Aslan. Whilst the Aslan find the humans to be a monumental annoyance, there is one good thing that can be said about them; they make great aua ranchers. Aua, which originated on Kusyu, are the most prevalent livestock in Aslan space. Every part of an aua carcass is used by the Aslan for consumption, leather and even dubious medicinal concoctions made from their horns and bones. Whilst the Aslan already engage in limited trade with the Tryaokean humans, Kileiowra’khiloi would like to find a way to expand the relationship. The missing ingredient, he believes, are human *auahisol’i*, or ‘aua wranglers’. The Tryaokeans have proven to be more receptive to leadership from their own species, so Kileiowra’khiloi wants the Travellers to go to the freed slave populations of the Hliyh Chain and hire humans with animal handling experience who can come to Tryaoke and serve as trail bosses for the Tryaokeans.

THE DUSTBELT CAMPAIGN

Until a few decades ago, the Glorious Empire had little meaningful interaction with the Dustbelt. Its worlds were looked upon as little more than fertile hunting grounds for capturing slaves. In more recent times, the Empire has taken on a new and unlikely role; that of saviour.

Called upon by exiles from Acis, the Empire supplied mercenary forces who turned the tide of battle against the Tyrian Lordships, pirate barons who had bullied the Dustbelt into submission for centuries. At first, the haughty Tokouea'we scoffed at the idea. The Empire, rightly or wrongly, already considered the entirety of the Trojan Reach to be theirs for the taking. It was preposterous that some minor human world was 'inviting' them to come to their backwater region of space to help them deal with an enemy they were too weak to fight on their own. The thought of being paid for their services by humans was anathema to their warped take on *fteir*. However, females from the clan recognised the offer for the opportunity it was.

The fact was the Glorious Empire was on its way out and its intelligentsia – mostly female historians and other academics – knew this to be true. They recognised that their generals were delusional in their shared belief that better days were coming for the Empire. This opportunity to enter human space as invited guests – for pay – was just too good to pass up.

Empire forces would come to the Dustbelt as mercenaries, soldiers of fortune who would help Acis and other oppressed worlds of the region to defeat the Tyrian Lordships. The Grand Emperor endorsed the idea and created a narrative in which the Empire had decided on its own to become involved. Being paid for the job was not mentioned and after all, why would it be? Males rarely concern themselves with financial issues. Instead, the Grand Emperor appealed to his people with vague notions of rekindling the spirit of the Empire, seeking out new lands and defying the dictates of both the Hierate and the Peace of Ftahalr, which the Empire thereby expressed did not apply to them.

The events of the Dustbelt wars are described in more detail in 'Somebody Else's War' on page 19. Suffice it to say that the Empire defeated Tyr, leaving a

power vacuum in their wake. The Imperium has since established a growing presence in the Outrim Void with a naval base on Dpres, more to protect assets that flow along the Sindalian Main than to squelch the Empire. The Hierate, as disjointed as ever, has seemingly not noticed or is just ignoring the growing presence of the Empire's soldiers for hire in the stars just coreward of their borders.

PANDORA'S BOX

After the fall of the Tyrian Lordships, Acis and its allies along the Dustbelt jubilantly celebrated their victory, declared a public holiday to commemorate their liberation and promptly paid off the legions of Aslan mercenaries for their services, expecting them to go back home with their newfound wealth. The mercenary pursers, females who very much enjoyed being involved in the lucrative enterprise of fighting other people's wars, were thrilled to have the chance to be involved in a meaningful and successful enterprise. Their warriors rather appreciated the change of scenery. Most of them had served in the ranks of the Imperial Guard, fighting one losing battle after another in defence of the Empire's collapsing borders. Actually *winning* wars was much more satisfying and many decided to stay. It did not take a military genius to see that the region was in a sorry state and finding more work would not be difficult.

Aslan mercenary units have become a mainstay of the Dustbelt. With growing wealth from trade flowing between Fist and Yggdrasil and the ambitious plans of Acis to open new trade routes into the Hierate and Imperium, the region has become more flush with cash than it has been since the days of the Sindalian Empire. Rich merchants have begun to hire Empire mercenaries to secure their flotillas. Well-heeled colonial enterprises from Caldos, Thalassa and far-flung Albe hire them for cadre tickets, in which colonist militias are taught to 'fight like Aslan'. Empire mercenary ships have become pirate hunters and are often employed to settle old scores with rival worlds. Mercenaries from the Glorious Empire have become the elite soldiers of the Trojan Reach.

THE DEVIL YOU KNOW



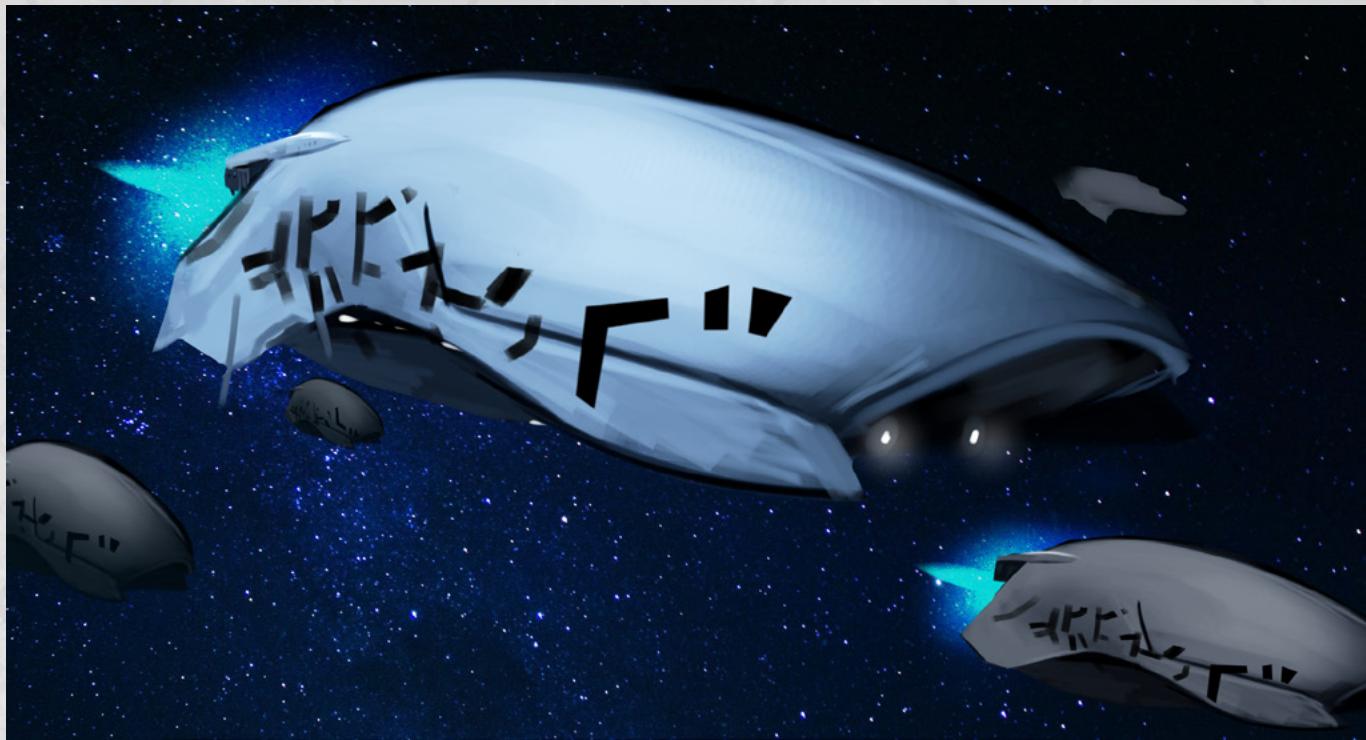
Decades after the fall of the Tyrian Lordships, Acis has risen in power and influence. The agricultural powerhouse hopes to become the de facto 'capital' of the Dustbelt. While there are no plans afoot to make an interstellar state out of its beleaguered worlds, they do have common interests and problems, which the Acis Central Authority (ACA) believes it is uniquely positioned to address. Acis' central location on the Florian Route, proximity to the Aslan Hierate and significant role in the elimination of Tyr have made it the obvious choice. Unfortunately, the very thing that liberated Acis – the Glorious Empire mercenaries – now threatens to become a problem for the would-be capital and its neighbours.

After the mercenaries assisted with the destruction of the Tyrian Lordships, Acis fully expected the Aslan to return home. Alas, this did not occur. The Aslan discovered that the Dustbelt, with its many problems and brushfire wars, presented an employment bonanza for mercenary companies, especially those with a proven track record of success. Empire mercenaries have established a semi-permanent residence in the Dustbelt, which now extends far into the Outrim Void. The longer they stay in the region,

the more it begins to feel like a home away from home for them. The Aslan desire for new land and the large number of underpopulated or barren worlds present have become an inviting lure. In fact, there are already many *ihatei* from the Hierate who have settled Dustbelt worlds, including in the outback of Acis itself. While the Empire does not condone *ihatei*, it does want to expand its territory and the presence of so many Hierate Aslan validates that it can be done.

These developments have not gone unnoticed by Acis and growing concerns about Aslan settlements in the Dustbelt has begun to cause something of a panic. Ironically, Acis has turned to its old enemies, the Tyrians, for help. Tyr remains the only world in the Dustbelt with a functional Class A starport and is therefore the only one that can manufacture new starships. If the Dustbelt is to eradicate the Aslan, they are going to need starships of their own, perhaps even a small battle fleet. If there is one thing that Acis – and for that matter all of the Dustbelt worlds – have learned, it is that they must stand on their own. No outside saviour is coming to help them. If this requires that Acis and Tyr bury the hatchet and become allies, even after all of the bad blood between them, then so be it.





PATRON ENCOUNTERS

The following patrons can be used in the Dustbelt campaign.

— Colony Six —

Patron: Vindali Procubin

Reward: In return for 100–150 tons of goods, Procubin will offer double-standard freight fees along with component upgrades for the Travellers' ship with a value of up to Cr250000 from the Colony Six shipyards.

Mission: Colony Six often serves as a go-between for the theocracy on Goertel. Whilst foreigners are not permitted to land on Goertel, traders from Colony Six – or 'Sixers' as they prefer to be called – and a select few other worlds in the region, bring goods from interstellar ports to the planet. The Church of Nom is concerned that the Glorious Empire may attempt to reacquire their world and would like to update the aging ships of their fleet, all of which are from the Sindalian era. Whilst the Sixers have a Class A starport and can manufacture all starship parts up to TL13, they do not have the industrial capacity to create everything the Goertellians need. Procubin wants the Travellers to go to the Sif system, reach out to Florian traders and see if they can acquire crystaliron lathe spare parts and jump drive coils for capital ships.

— Oghma —

Patron: Karl Voidsword

Reward: Voidsword does not have any money (Imperial line of credit has no value on Oghma) but can provide the Travellers with up to four tons of spacecraft spare parts, with a value of Cr100000 per ton.

Mission: Oghmans are not a very sociable sort but Travellers might encounter one under the right circumstances. On a backwater world, the Travellers are approached by Karl Voidsword. They might have to deliberately blink their eyes for a moment to make sure they are not hallucinating, as Voidsword is dressed in what appears to be cuir bouilli leather armour and wearing a longsword sheathed at this side. He also wears a holstered laser pistol and carries a hand computer but, other than that, this gentleman appears to have walked right out of medieval Terra. Voidsword and his crew were recently attacked by Aslan slavers. He and his warriors were able to escape but the Aslan captured most of his crew, as well as the slaves the Oghmans had captured and whom they were taking back to Oghma. Voidsword wants the Travellers to help intercept the Aslan slavers and help him liberate his crew and... reacquire his slaves.

THE FALL OF WORLDS

Traveller is portrayed as a moment captured in time, a snapshot taken in the year 1105 of the Third Imperium, the greatest interstellar polity in Charted Space. Likewise, the current state of the Glorious Empire is merely a moment in its long history. There is nothing to say that a world under its collective umbrella on 001-1105 will not fall to Hierate forces on 002-1105 or any date thereafter. The story of the fall of these worlds – or their resistance to that fall – can be told in a sweeping *Traveller* campaign. The following is a primer on the worlds of the Empire with descriptions of their defences and ability to resist the invading Hierate clans.

TIER 1: SYOAKH AND HTOURLAO

Syoakh and Htourlao are by far the most well-defended systems in the Glorious Empire, with each having its primary assets protected behind layer upon layer of defensive structures and systems. Syoakh has no fewer than six orbital mine screens arranged at various distances from the planet, with the outermost extending nearly to its L4 Lagrange points. Maintenance of the mine screens is a laborious task for a fleet of hundreds of small craft that constantly flit about, rearming those which have fired their weaponry at perceived interlopers and those which have simply gone offline due to failures of their aging electronics. Squadrons of system defence boats and interceptors patrol from close orbit to nearly 120 planetary diameters, meticulously inspecting those who are allowed to land and summarily destroying those deemed a threat. Syoakh is also the home port of the Empire's largest remaining BatRons and fleet squadrons. Should the major Hierate clans ever assemble a sizable naval force to attack the Empire, this immense assemblage of capital ships awaits them.

The surface of Syoakh itself is the site of a dozen deep-site meson guns and countless missile batteries. Its cities have lost most of their imperial grandeur and what remains is a world dedicated to civil defence. Underground bunkers, artillery weapons and of course legions of Imperial Guard troops are strategically placed over the surface of the planet and within undersea complexes.

Htourlao is likewise defended by an array of mines and weapons but the system mainworld is much less protected. It is primarily a site for resource extraction with the majority of the system's people living in orbital habitats, each of which bristles with its own defensive systems. Because of the balkanised nature of Htourlao's local government, there is a great amount of variation from orbital-to-orbital. Some are virtually covered with an outer layer of defensive systems while others are less so.

Should any force manage to carve its way through the outer defences of these two worlds and make planetfall on the capital or raid Htourlao's primary orbitals, they can expect to engage in months of hard-fought battles with Imperial Guard forces, followed by guerrilla warfare against fanatical warriors. Some in the Hierate have observed that they might be better served by simply obliterating each system with weapons of mass destruction and abandon them, leaving immense graveyards.

TIER 2: YERO'ILRA AND EIKHAAW

There are no worlds as valuable to the Empire as Syoakh and Htourlao but resource-rich Yero'ilra and Eikhaaw both come close. Each has similar defensive structures with orbital mines, interceptors, ground-based missile batteries and patrolling fleet squadrons but the scope is drastically smaller.

Yero'ilra, home to the breakaway Yetrai clan, is encrusted with civil defence structures and patrolled by Imperial Guard units but contains no significant military bases. Because of the dangers of radiation exposure on its surface, most inhabited structures are subterranean, which adds a layer of difficulty for any would-be invaders. Its primary defence is largely the sheer uninhabitability of the system with not a single non-rockball world and one of its two red-dwarf companion stars lashing out at the entire system with stellar flares.

Eikhaaw is a rich world that hosts life and abundant natural resources. Its inhabitants are primarily human, the descendants of a successful slave revolt, who remain

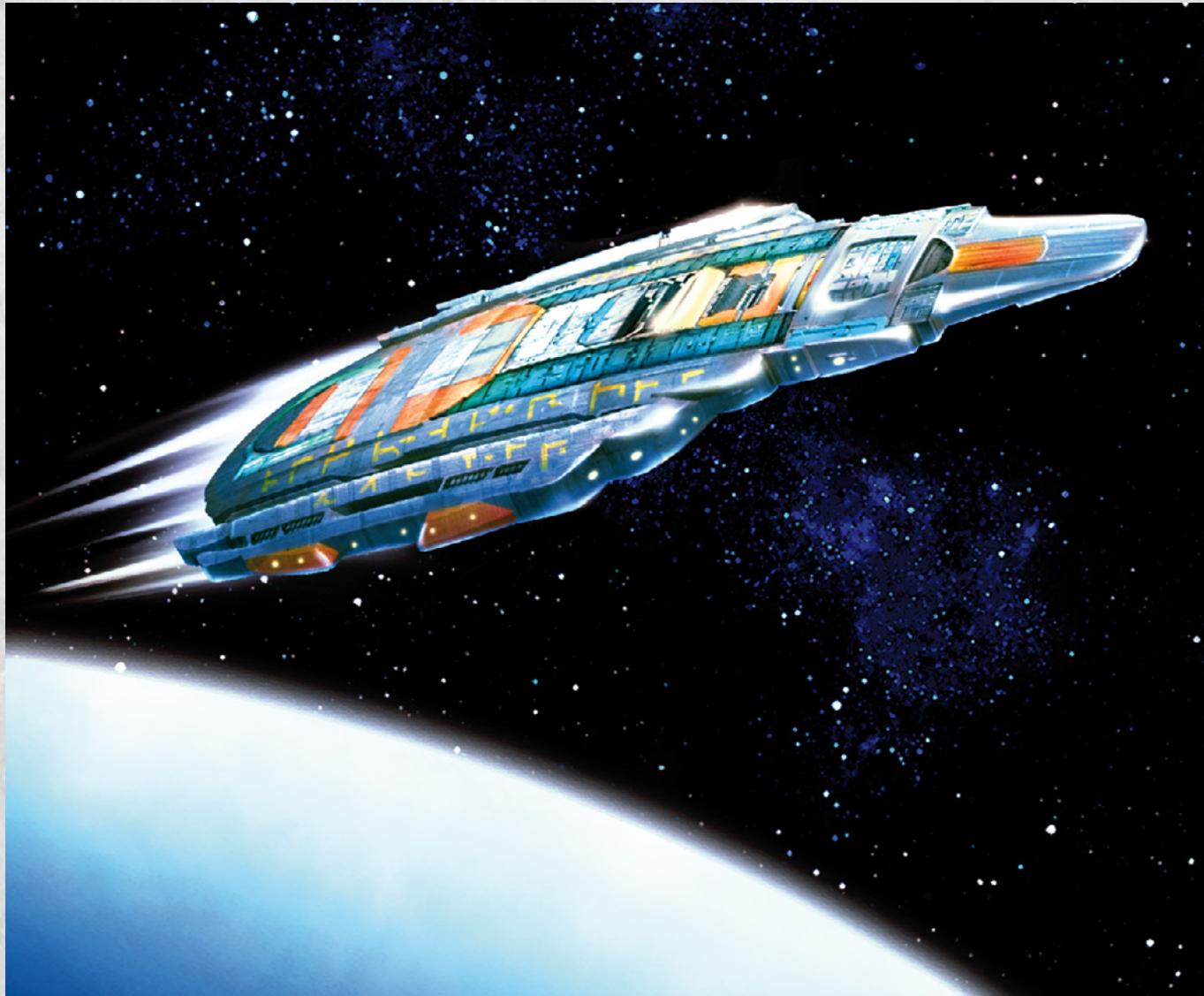
loyal to the Empire because to be otherwise would spell their doom. Eikhaaw's Aslan defence forces will fight to the bitter end to protect this system from invasion but its human residents could surely be turned. The main thing that might stop them from easily doing so is the oppressive presence of drones and other security measures designed to keep them in line.

TIER 3: THE REMNANT SYSTEMS

Most of the remaining systems in the Empire are depopulated and marginally functional at best. One must remember that the Glorious Empire once included many more systems. The Hliyh Chain, the Eahaw Quadrant, the Souftea Ring and the Rimward Extents were the periphery of the Empire not so long ago. Like a city that has been cut off from some of its sprawling boroughs, what remains at its core is largely

just the utilities and plumbing of what was once a vastly larger polity. The sparse populations of many of these worlds, some of which are virtually abandoned, are the skeletal remains. The Empire still patrols these worlds but should any of them suffer concerted attack, the Empire will have to weigh whether or not they are worth protecting when doing so means sending precious defences from the capital.

The Empire maintains contact with its remaining worlds via its jump-4 courier fleet. These spacecraft keep the arteries of communication alive with constant back-and-forth travel. Ftulrois and Asyuh, lying one and three parsecs outside the boundaries of Syoakh's jump-4 reach, are especially vulnerable to attack. Inhospitable Asyuh, with less than 1,000 permanent residents, is protected only by the transient presence of mercenary starships, travelling to and from the Dustbelt.



USING TRAVELLERMAP.COM

No matter which way the campaign swings, having good, fluid maps will enhance the game. The nature of a Glorious Empire campaign is not static; it is the story of the dissolution of an empire and the Travellers have a big hand in how it unfolds. Unlike some regions of Charted Space, the borders of the Glorious Empire, Aslan Hierate and, possibly, the Dustbelt itself will be mercurial for many years, possibly decades. The map should change as war, revolution and possibly rebellion sweeps through the region. The Referee may want to reflect the changes by providing the Travellers with updated maps over the course of the campaign.

Fortunately, there is a free online tool that can be used to modify existing maps: travellermap.com. This tool is used by many Referees to run campaigns in the *Traveller* universe. It provides a ready resource for Referees who want to know what the Universal World Profile (UWP) is for any world from the rimward frontiers of the Solomani Sphere to the furthest extents of the Zhodani Core Expeditions. Travellermap also has a tool called Poster Maker that enables Referees to generate their own maps of any sector or to create completely new ones.

The following tutorial is intended to provide guidelines and suggestions about how to use Travellermap to create custom maps for a Glorious Empire campaign.

CUSTOM MAPS

The first thing to do is go to the Poster Maker site at <https://travellermap.com/make/poster>. Using the drop-down menu at the top, select the Trojan Reach sector. Make sure not to select the 1201 or 1248 versions. After making the selection, the statistics of the Trojan Reach, circa 1105, appear in the Sector Data box and the sector metadata appears in the box below it. A prospective map maker will need the data in both boxes to create a new map.

Note that each box only shows the first nine lines or so of the text. The text in each box can be modified within the box but for the purposes of this tutorial we will be cutting and pasting the text in each box into a separate text file for easier management of the data.

- Click your mouse button anywhere in the Sector Data box and then select Edit > Select All (or simply use the shortcut key combinations, Command-A on a Mac or Ctrl-A for Windows). This selects everything in the box including the data that cannot be seen.
- Select Edit > Cut (Command-X on a Mac or Ctrl-X for Windows) to extract the sector data from the box.
- Open a text editor (NotePad on Windows orTextEdit on a Mac should suffice) and paste the sector data into the document.

Poster Maker — The Traveller Map

1. a sector, or enter custom sector data/metadata:
Sector Data: (file formats) — tip: *check your data first*

Hex	Name	UWP	Remarks	[Ix]	(Ex)
0103	Talfern	E530248-6	De Lo Po	{ -3 }	(410-
0110	Bilke	D987341-7	Lo FloriW	{ -3 }	(520-
0201	Szirp	A416538-0	Ni	{ 1 }	(745-
0202	Sam's World	E100856-7	Na Va Ph Pi	{ -2 }	(A76-
0204	Dustpan	A550779-9	De Po	{ 1 }	(96A-

↳ **SECTOR DATA BOX**

Metadata: (XML or MSEC)

```
<?xml version="1.0"?>
<Sector xmlns:xsi="http://www.w3.org/2001/XMLSchema-instance" xmlns:xsd="http://www.w3.org/2001/XMLSchema">
  <Name>Trojan Reach</Name>
  <Name>Trojan Reaches</Name>
  <Name Lang="as">Hlaorirloahauril</Name>
  <Name Lang="zh">Idrlflanta</Name>
  <credits>
```

2. Select options:

Format:	Bitmap (for screen) <input style="width: 150px; height: 20px;" type="button" value="..."/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sector/Subsector Names
Show:	Whole Sector <input style="width: 150px; height: 20px;" type="button" value="..."/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Subsector Grid
Style:	Black background (Color) <input style="width: 150px; height: 20px;" type="button" value="..."/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Routes
Image Rotation:	None <input style="width: 150px; height: 20px;" type="button" value="..."/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Labels
Map Rotation:	None <input style="width: 150px; height: 20px;" type="button" value="..."/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Borders
Scale:	64 pixels/parsec - classic <input style="width: 150px; height: 20px;" type="button" value="..."/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Filled
Hex numbers:	Sector (3240) <input style="width: 150px; height: 20px;" type="button" value="..."/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Force Hexes
	<input type="checkbox"/> Instagram Aspect Ratio	<input type="checkbox"/> World Colors
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ignore Errors

3. Click to verify your choices.
4. Click to render the full poster.
For a Jump Map, select: J-0 Hex: and click:

- Save the document as a text file, naming it something that will jog your memory later: 'TR Glorious Empire', 'Fall of the GE' or something similar will be fine.
 - Go back to the Poster Maker web page, click in the Metadata box and cut the metadata as well, saving it in a separate file with a name that differs from the sector data file.

The scenario in the following example supposes that the Glorious Empire launches an attack into the Dustbelt, conquering some of the lower-population worlds. Goertel and Colony Six are fairly well-defended, so the Empire skips these worlds. Delta Theta represents a small challenge but Torrance and Lacidaeus are easy pickings. From there, the Empire manages to make the two-parsec jump into the Dustbelt and blockades the Sagan and Hecarda systems.

Here are the original UWPs of the affected worlds:

1219 **Torrance** **E560256-4** De Lo { -3 }
 (411-4) [1143] - - - 631 11 **NaHu** F0 V
 1220 **Delta Theta** **B501610-9** Ic Na Ni Va {
 0 } (D54-4) [1614] - - - 732 15 **NaHu** K6 V
 M3 V
 1319 **Lacidaeus** **D100786-7** Na Va Pi { -2 }
 (966-3) [6546] - - - 502 8 **NaHu** M9 V
 1417 **Sagan** **C796453-8** Ni Pa { -2 } (A31-5)
 [1225] - - - 204 13 **NaHu** F1 V
 1519 **Hecarda** **B560332-9** De Lo { 0 } (821-
 4) [1315] - - - 503 9 **NaHu** F5 V

The Glorious Empire is nothing if not brazen, so they make the bold move of renaming the worlds they conquer. Enter new names for each world: Torrance becomes Ualah, Delta Theta becomes Hle'ea'aw and so on as shown in the following updated UWPs. The Aslan put ground forces on some of these low-population worlds, actually increasing their Population scores in some cases. Note any changes to Trade Codes that occur due to the changes made, using the guidelines on pages 227–228 of the *Traveller Core Rulebook*. Optionally change the government, Law Level, and Tech Level, and add a trade code for the percentage of the population that is now Aslan. For example, Asla7 indicates that 70 percent of the population are Aslan. Finally, change the allegiance from NaHu (non-aligned human) to GIEm (Glorious Empire).

COURIER TIP

The spacing must remain exactly the same in the sector data file. Use Courier or another monospace font for editing purposes and make sure that all hex numbers, system names, UWP_s and so on line up as shown above.

1219 **Ualah E560366-4** De Lo Mr **Asla7** { -3
} (411-4) [1143] - - - 631 11 **GleM** F0 V
1220 **Hle'ea'aw C501665-9** Ic Na Ni Va Mr
Aslal { 0 } (D54-4) [1614] - - - 732 15
GleM K6 V M3 V
1319 **Khalailr D10076A-7** Na Va Pi Mr Aslal {
-2 } (966-3) [6546] - - - 502 8 **GleM** M9 V
1417 **Tihtoa C796466-9** Ni Pa Cy Asla7 { -2
} (A31-5) [1225] - - - 204 13 **GleM** F1 V
1519 **Faosaiyui B560466-9** De Lo Cy Asla9 {
0 } (821-4) [1315] - - - 503 9 **GleM** F5 V

The Referee may determine that these events occur over a period of time and do them step-by-step, having the Travellers participate in each phase of the invasion's progress on one side of the battle or the other.

- Be sure to save the file to retain the updated data.
 - Then select all the text in the sector stats text file and copy it.
 - Return to the Travellermap Poster Maker page that was opened earlier and copy the updated data over the original stats in the Sector Data box.
 - Leave the window open and return to the metadata text file.

The metadata includes the sector name (or names, plural, when it is also named in other *Traveller* languages), credits, subsector names, allegiance codes, borders and trade routes. The primary thing to change for this scenario is the border data for the Glorious Empire. The

Poster Maker — The Traveller Map

1. Trojan Reach a sector, or enter custom sector data/metadata:
Sector Data: (file formats) — tip: check your data first.

1015 Connaught	D431153-9 Lo Po	{ -2 } [400 ^]
1016 291-548	EABA000-B Ba Fl	{ -3 } [200]
1114 Gabriel	C318100-8 Lo	{ 0 } [600]
1118 Dostoevsky	B678673-A Ag Ni An RsD	{ 2 } [A56-]
1216 Janus	E575321-7 Lo	{ -2 } [520-]
1219 Ualah	E560356-0 De Lo Mr Asla7	{ -3 } [410-]
1720 Delta Theta	R5A1610-a Fr Nl Ni Va	{ 0 } [154- ▾]

Metadata: ([XML](#) or [MSEC](#))

```
<Border Allegiance="As" LabelPosition="0732">0826 0126 0125 0124 0123 !^
<Border Wraplabel="true" Color="Blue" Allegiance="B1So" LabelPosition="0810" LabelPo
<Border Color="Green" Allegiance="F1le" LabelPosition="0412">0810 0110
<Border Wraplabel="true" Color="LightYellow" Allegiance="GLEM" LabelPo
<Border Wraplabel="true" Color="ImDd" Allegiance="I" LabelPosition="3109" Label=
<Border Color="OliveDrab" Allegiance="SeFo" LabelPosition="2089">2088 :
<Border Color="DarkKhaki" Allegiance="StCl" LabelPosition="0506">08403 !^
```

2. Select options:

Format:	<input type="button" value="PDF (for printing) ▼"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sector/Subsector Names
Show:	<input type="button" value="Whole Sector ▼"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Subsector Grid
Style:	<input type="button" value="Black background (Color) ▼"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Routes
Image Rotation:	<input type="button" value="None ▼"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Labels
Map Rotation:	<input type="button" value="None ▼"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Borders
Scale:	<input type="button" value="64 pixels/parsec - classic ▼"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Filled
Hex numbers:	<input type="button" value="Sector (3240) ▼"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Force Hexes
	<input type="checkbox"/> Instagram Aspect Ratio	<input type="checkbox"/> World Colors
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ignore Errors

3. Click to verify your choices.

4. Click to render the full poster.

For a Jump Map, select: J- Hex: and click:

Empire has gone into the rimward spur of the Dustbelt and reached up into the heart of the Sindalian Main, conquering five star systems in the process.

Here is the original border data for the Glorious Empire:

```
<Border WrapLabel="true"  
Color="LightYellow" Allegiance="GLEM"  
LabelPosition="0922">0825 0925 1024 1023  
1022 1122 1121 1122 1123 1124 1125 1126  
1127 1128 1028 1029 1030 1029 0929 0928  
0927 0926 0825</Border>
```

Key things to note are the colour (LightYellow), the allegiance code (GIEm) and the label position. Note that the label position is the hex number where the name 'Glorious Empire' will appear. It is best to select a blank hex to place the name in. The numbers that follow represent the borders. Note that they start and end with hex 0825 in the example.

To draw new borders, start by going to the Trojan Reach map on Travellermap.com and zoom in enough to see the hex numbers. To select new border hex numbers, a good rule of thumb is to pick the top-leftmost hex and proceed clockwise around the polity, listing each hex – multiple times if necessary – until you get back to the start. Use imaginary hex numbers like 0000 or 3341 to handle borders that go into adjacent sectors. The first and last number of the borders should be the same. This signals Travellermap that the borders are complete.

The updated border data for this invasion scenario is as follows:

```
<Border WrapLabel="true"
Color="LightYellow" Allegiance="GLEM"
LabelPosition="0922">0825 0925 1024 1023
1022 1122 1121 1220 1219 1319 1418 1417
1418 1519 1419 1320 1220 1121 1122 1123
1124 1125 1126 1127 1128 1028 1029 1030
1029 0929 0928 0927 0926 0825</Border>
```

If the polity's borders are split into two or more regions, simply create additional border phrases in the metadata text file. Additional regions should be framed with the same elements.

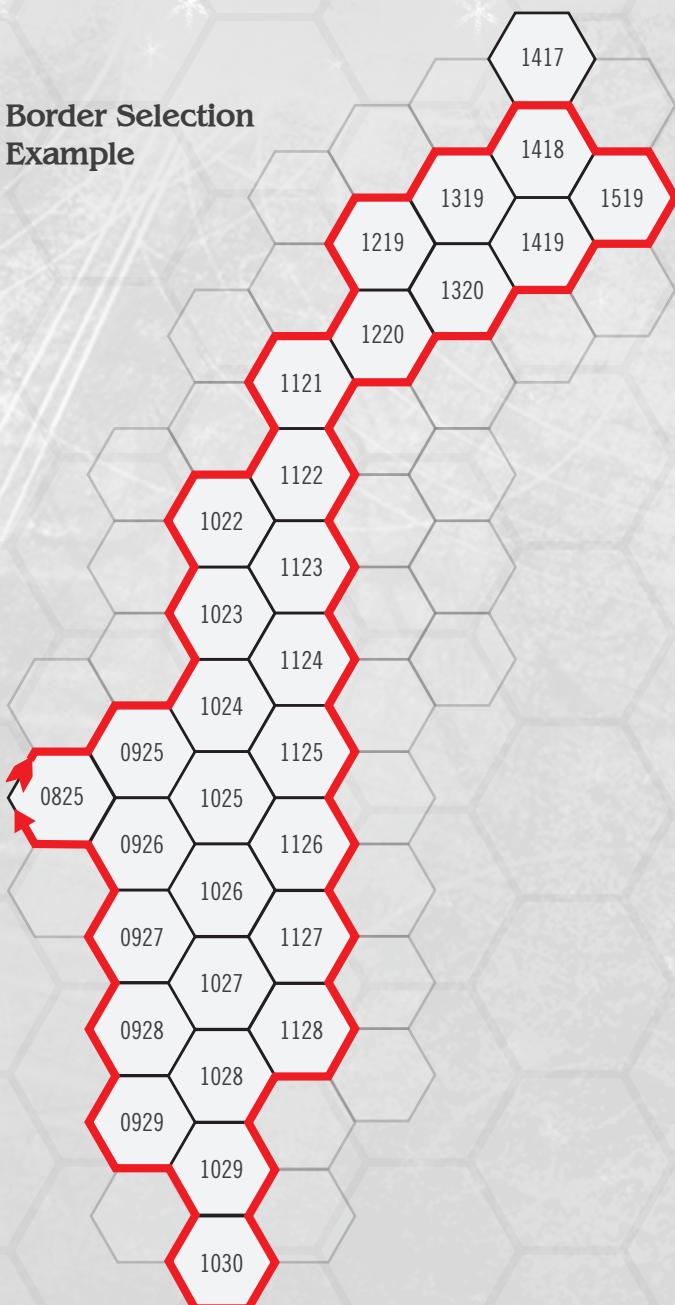
For example, a second set of borders for the Glorious Empire should be framed with <Border WrapLabel="true" Color="LightYellow" Allegiance="GLEM" LabelPosition="0922"> at the start and </Border> after the final hex number.

- in the updated UWP and paste the new data into the Metadata box, making sure to paste it over the original text.

- Select the desired options for the map and optionally click the Quick Preview button to get a thumbnail of the sector map, and then click the Render Poster button to produce the updated map with the new borders and star system names.

Borders can be a bit tricky sometimes. If they do not land in just the right spot or a border cuts across a hex, go back and troubleshoot the border metadata, tweaking it until the desired borders appear. Each time changes are made, click the Render Poster button to see the updated map.

Border Selection Example



- Copy all the text in the metadata file, return to the Poster Maker web page where you previously pasted

CENTRAL SUPPLY CATALOGUE: GLORIOUS EMPIRE

The following items of equipment can be found within the Glorious Empire and surrounding systems.

AHFA

Small pouch or chest for keepsakes when a shrine is not available. The Aslan use such items as foci for meditation. The contents of an *ahfa* may include small fetishes, medals or even holovideo projectors that show great battles or moments in clan history. A warrior's *ahfa* is extremely private and is often kept secret from all but his closest comrades. The quality, make and materials used for the *ahfa* indicate one's rank and status.

Item	TL	Kg	Cost
Ahfa	2	—	Cr5–500



HTOUA SET

A game is not truly Aslan unless it requires the use of dewclaws. Htoua employs large, domino-like tiles with a hole carved into one end that requires the handy use of a dewclaw to manipulate. Whilst Htoua is popular on many worlds of the Trojan Reach Hierate, the game is everywhere in Glorious Empire space. Whilst its origins are lost in time, the Empire claims to have invented it. Since intra-clan conflict is discouraged there, the game often serves as a proxy for the resolution of minor disputes.

The quality of game pieces reflects one's status with plastic pieces used by commoners and marble or crystal tiles by the nobility. The slave population also plays, often using hand-made wood or stone tiles. Humans who play use a Hi'asoi (monkey knife) to manipulate the pieces or a simple knife if one is not available.

The game is sometimes played for simple entertainment but gambling is usually involved. On higher Law Level worlds clan agents will sometimes break up underground htoua rings but given the fact that such games distract an otherwise restless populace, they usually just look the other way.



Item	TL	Kg	Cost
Set of 64 Htoua Game Pieces	2	1	Cr50–2000

SLAVE COLLARS

Keeping slaves docile and obedient is not something the Aslan have difficulty with simply by using force and intimidation but most also employ slave collars to identify, control and differentiate them.

Collars range from simple TL1 manacle-style iron collars to TL12+ specialised versions for the surveillance, discipline and identification of slave populations throughout the Glorious Empire. Higher technology collars are manufactured with advanced polymers that sacrifice none of the durability of lesser versions but may be much lighter and less imposing if desired.

IRON COLLAR

The standard TL1-2 iron slave collar is designed primarily for identification and transportation purposes. Whilst simply being a human in the Glorious Empire is a good indication that one is a slave, a human wearing an iron collar indicates the status of a low-level, brute force labour slave. Iron collars typically have a locking mechanism and loop for attaching a chain or restraining cable that may be employed during transportation or punitive confinement. Iron collars may also be fitted with small studs or spikes to cause discomfort or long, upward-tilting prongs that make it difficult for the wearer to lie down for sleep.

CONTROL COLLAR

At higher Tech Levels collars may be made of lighter, more advanced materials and additional features may be added to aid in monitoring, surveillance and control using electronic components. Such features include radio transmitters, cameras, buzzing, auto-injectors, or

electro-shock devices to give basic signals or warnings to the wearer. Control collars may optionally be made larger or manufactured as a harness to make them more obvious or symbolic. Alternatively, control collars may be installed subdermally but at lower Tech Levels their presence is obvious due and gives the wearer a somewhat misshapen appearance.

EXPLOSIVE COLLAR

Extreme discipline may be levied by using explosive collars. This tool is most often worn by enslaved soldiers or ‘dog soldiers’, as they are called in common parlance. Explosive collars are equipped with a charge large enough to kill a single individual, usually causing the decapitation or pulping of the head. In some cases, larger charges may be applied, which also injure other soldiers in the vicinity of the victim, a sadistic use of the tool employed to ensure discipline in the ranks. Slave units tend to police themselves when they know that violations of discipline might result in a small bomb going off next to them.

Explosive collars may be detonated remotely by an Aslan officer or NCO. They are sometimes configured to detonate if the wearer wanders a specified distance from the field of battle or when the unit dusts off and the wearer is left behind.

CEREMONIAL COLLAR

Some in the Glorious Empire are more progressive than others, if that can be said of a slave-based society. On many worlds, slaves can achieve a modicum of status for having served dutifully or as a *saihlea*. Such individuals often wear ceremonial collars that convey their high status among the slave population. These collars are decorous and often brightly coloured in order to draw attention to the fact that the wearer is trusted and honoured by the clan that owns them. More extravagant gilded and bejewelled collars are sometimes worn by the slaves of high-ranking *ahriy* within the Tokouea’we clan.

Collar Type	TL	Range	Kg	Damage	Cost	Traits
Iron	1-2	—	2	—	Cr20-25	—
Control	6-9	—	2-4	—	Cr250-1000	—
	10-12	—	0-2	—	Cr500-2000	—
Explosive, single	7	—	—	4D*	Cr500	—
Explosive, blast	7	—	1	4D*	Cr1000	Blast 1
Ceremonial	1	—	1	—	Cr50-2500	—

* The explosives are assumed to be located at the base of the skull resulting in the automatic death of the wearer when detonated. The damage score conveys the explosive force of the charge.

ARMOUR

The Imperial Guard are generally equipped with the very best armour available, its shock troops and marines kitted with the Aslan variants of battle dress, combat armour and heavy combat armour described in *The Trojan Reach*. However, despite the fact that its mercenary companies comprise the best warriors in the Glorious Empire, their armour needs differ from those of the official Empire military.

Taking tickets on the worlds of the Dustbelt and indeed most of the Trojan Reach does not require heavy or powered armour. Most of the forces they come up against have small, lightly armed and armoured armies and militias at best. There simply is no need to be loaded for bear. Mercenaries operating as marines and boarding parties typically wear combat vacc suits, as shown in *The Trojan Reach*. Those who take terrestrial tickets have other options.

FIELD FLEX ARMOUR

Combat flex armour (see *The Trojan Reach*) is viable for most operations but for more challenging tickets or those that require extended time in the field, field flex is the superior option. Field flex is made of lighter, more durable high-tech materials and – with the addition of a small battery pack – can incorporate additional equipment. In addition to the options presented here, field flex includes clips, a web belt and harness to attach grenades, weapon magazines, electronic devices and other gear.

Modifications	TL	Kg	Cost
Camouflage	3	—	Cr25
Chameleon IR	12	—	Cr5000*
Electronics Suite	12	2	Cr2500*

* Requires battery pack. Standard pack weighs 1kg, costs Cr500 and provides 24 hours of continuous operation.

Chameleon IR surface selectively bleeds heat to match ambient infrared levels and effectively renders the wearer invisible to infrared detection (DM+4 to Stealth checks made against IR sensors).

The field flex Electronics Suite includes a Computer/2, tactical goggles (with binocular, IR and light intensifier settings), a Geiger counter and radio transceiver.



Armour Type	Protection	TL	Rad	Kg	Cost	Required Skill
Field Flex	+8	12	—	6	Cr6000	None

WEAPONS

The weaponry of the Glorious Empire is, for the most part, identical to that of the Hierate. Despite their estrangement from one another, Aslan culture – especially *martial* culture – goes back thousands of years. Even after the advent of space travel and transit across the Great Rift, Aslan weaponry shows a remarkable amount of uniformity. That said, the Empire has created variations of traditional Aslan weaponry that require further description.

TALERYU

A personal weapon favoured by mercenary soldiers, this is a double-edged, crescent-shaped blade with its handle on the concave side. This weapon, designed to fit the Aslan hand, is used with broad, sweeping strokes and is sharp enough that it can easily sever fingers or hands.



Weapon	TL	Range	Damage	Kg	Cost	Traits
Taleryu	2	Melee	3D+2	3	Cr500	AP 2

HLAKHAIHTE

A ceremonial pistol often carried by high-ranking Tokouea'we noble males. The weapon is essentially a version of the khaihte with a larger, bulkier barrel and a smaller magazine, albeit with larger rounds. The hlakhaihte is traditionally used for duelling, which is largely discouraged in the Empire due to the scarcity of able males but carrying one as a sidearm communicates one's confidence and willingness to duel.



Weapon	TL	Range	Damage	Kg	Cost	Magazine	Magazine Cost	Traits
Hlakhaihte	8	10	3D+2	2	Cr800	8	Cr16	Bulky

HIGH GUARD: GLORIOUS EMPIRE

The following features are commonly featured in the starships of the Glorious Empire but may also be found on Aslan ships in the Hierate or, for that matter, elsewhere in Charted Space.

NANITE-INFUSED *YOYEAKHTEF*

Glorious Empire spacecraft do not employ transponders as a means of identification and instead use nanite-infused *yoyeaokhtef*, mixing technology with the traditional practice of inscribing one's ship with ornate text and glyphs that identify the clan and describe its exploits. Empire *yoyeaokhtef* are standard on their ships and have no additional cost.

SLAVE QUARTERS

Slave quarters blocks contain a tight and thrifty living space for slaves. The space is essentially a rectangular cuboid with space for one slave, minimal room for possessions and toiletry with a curtain or blind for privacy. Slave quarters are typically arranged in blocks and stacked two or three units high and an extensive number of weeks or months spent in slave quarters can be wearying for those not accustomed to minimalism or hardship. The enslaved humans of the Glorious Empire are used to the tight accommodations and suffer few ill effects. Slaves kept in slave quarters are typically those considered essential during jump such as personal servants, stewards and technicians. Non-essential slaves are stored in low berths for the duration of jump.

Each slave quarters block consumes 0.5 tons and costs Cr25000. In addition, life support costs Cr250 per slave per month.

ION MISSILES

Ion warheads are by no means limited to the Glorious Empire but are much more common there. They are an expensive solution to the problem of disabling enemy ships so they can be salvaged and their crews enslaved but the Empire could well be described as a polity that never met a weapon it did not like. Ion warheads operate as described in *High Guard*, including the Effect rules, which enable detonations to last multiple rounds.

Weapon	TL	Thrust	Damage	Cost	Traits
Ion Missile	12	12	2Dx5*	Cr750000	Ion

* Multiplied by the Effect of the attack roll.

SPACECRAFT OF THE GLORIOUS EMPIRE

Starship hulls in the Glorious Empire are by and large the same ones seen in Hierate space. While the Hierate and Empire went their separate ways centuries ago during the Cultural Purge, many of the most common designs had already been in use since long before that.

Cultural differences between the Empire and Hierate have resulted in subtle exterior hull modifications here and there. On a superficial level, the Empire tends to decorate its ships with a superfluous number of *yoyeaokhtef*, many of them featuring long and poetic phrases that cover virtually all of a ship's hull. However, even more significant differences may be found in the interiors of their ships.

The practice of slavery shapes many aspects of Glorious Empire society and the interior design of their starships is no exception. Skilled slaves are often employed for tasks aboard ships and therefore must be accommodated. Their quarters are spartan and far less spacious than those of the Aslan. Unskilled slaves who are simply being transported from one place to another are usually stowed in low berths.

As for the Aslan, accommodations are typical with males in positions of authority receiving single occupancy privileges whilst females and males of lower status receive double occupancy postings. Glorious Empire society is highly stratified with nobles receiving greater benefits and for this reason, most Empire ships have one or more high or luxury staterooms to accommodate high-ranking nobles, the number dictated by the size and function of the ship.

Wahtoi couriers do not have shrines. The atheist *Wahtoi* clan discarded the practice of including shrines in their utilitarian ships long ago. For the most part, the Empire has not modified the class but pious captains sometimes convert one of the staterooms into a shrine. Other Empire classes do have shrines but their focus is on worshipping the living Grand Emperor, not a pantheon of deceased ancestors.

Because of its xenophobic and sequestered culture, the Empire has had a difficult time maintaining its technological base. Centuries of nearly constant warfare have depleted their personnel and exhausted the

citizenry. It has become exceedingly difficult for the Glorious Empire to keep its technical edge in recent years and it shows in the condition and maintenance of their ships. The Empire is highly insecure about the message it might send if outsiders knew of their struggles. They therefore strive to maintain performance levels at great cost. One will often find lower quality drives and systems aboard ships that put heavy demands on their power plants, computational abilities and personnel.

ELAR KHA'YAHEH- CLASS MULTI-PURPOSE FIGHTER

The *Elar Kha'yaheh* is deployed by the Glorious Empire as a belligerent craft so slavers and other ships can land on a target world. Standard armament is a particle barbette but lasers or even ion cannons are sometimes installed. The fighter includes barracks for longer deployments. The four small weapon mounts are typically equipped with gauss guns, bombs and similar weaponry to assist with ground assaults.

The Empire, with its dearth of technical talent and supplies, must often resort to one trade off or another in the construction of their spacecraft and the *Elar Kha'yaheh* is no exception. It features an ungainly and overbuilt manoeuvre drive that consumes copious amounts of power. It also has a high-boost thruster to help it close on enemy spacecraft.



MULTI-PURPOSE FIGHTER

ELAR KHA'YAHEH-CLASS

TL12

		TONS	COST (MCR)
Hull	35 tons, Streamlined Radiation Shielding	— —	2.1 0.875
Armour	Crystaliron, Armour: 4	1.75	0.42
M-Drive	Thrust 6 (budget, energy inefficient)	2.1	3.15
High Burn Thruster	Thrust 2	1.4	0.28
Power Plant	Fusion (TL12), Power 54	3.6	3.6
Fuel Tanks	4 weeks of operation, 2 hours for High Burn thruster	4.5	—
Bridge		3	0.5
Computer	Computer/10	—	0.16
Sensors	Military	2	4.1
Weapons	Particle Barbette Small Weapon Mounts x 4	5 1	8 0.004
Systems	Aerofins	2	0.05
Accommodations	Barracks x 4	8	0.4
Software	Manoeuvre/0 Library Fire Control/2	— — —	— — 4
Cargo		—	—

TOTAL: MCR 27.639

TONS COST (MCR)

CREW

PILOT, GUNNER, SENSOR OP/ENGINEER

RUNNING COSTS

MAINTENANCE COST

Cr2073/month

PURCHASE COST

MCR27.639

POWER REQUIREMENTS

28



7



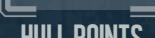
8



4



14



HULL POINTS

LEGEND

1. Bridge
2. Sensors
3. Air Lock
4. Weapon Mount
5. Particle Barbette
6. Power Plant
7. Barracks
8. Manoeuvre Drive
9. High Burn Thruster



INTERCEPTOR

SU'IKH-CLASS

TL13

		TONS	COST (MCR)
Hull	500 tons, Close, Reinforced Radiation Shielding	— —	33.750 12.5
Armour	Crystaliron, Armour: 12	75	22.5
M-Drive	Thrust 8 (increased size)	50	60
Power Plant	Fusion (TL8, increased size), Power 600	75	22.5
Fuel Tanks	8 weeks of operation	12	—
Bridge	Holographic Controls	20	3.125
Computer	Computer/10	—	0.16
Sensors	Improved, Countermeasures	5	8.3
Weapons	Triple Turrets (pulse lasers) x2	2	8
	Ion Cannons (increased size) x2	12	9
	Medium Missile Bay (increased size)	120	18.75
Systems	Fuel Scoop	—	1
	Fuel Processor (20 tons/day)	2	0.1
	Breaching Tube	3	3
	Forced Linkage Apparatus (TL12)	2	0.1
	Armouries x3	3	0.75
	Shrine	4	0.5
Staterooms	Standard x14	56	7
	Barracks x8	16	0.8
Software	Library	—	—
	Manoeuvre/O	—	—
	Fire Control/2	—	4
Common Areas		18	1.8
Cargo		25	—

TOTAL: MCR 217.635

CREW

PILOT,
ENGINEERS X 4,
GUNNERS X 5

RUNNING COSTS

MAINTENANCE COST
Cr18136/month

PURCHASE COST
MCR217.635

POWER REQUIREMENTS

100
BASIC SHIP SYSTEMS

400
MANOEUVRE DRIVE

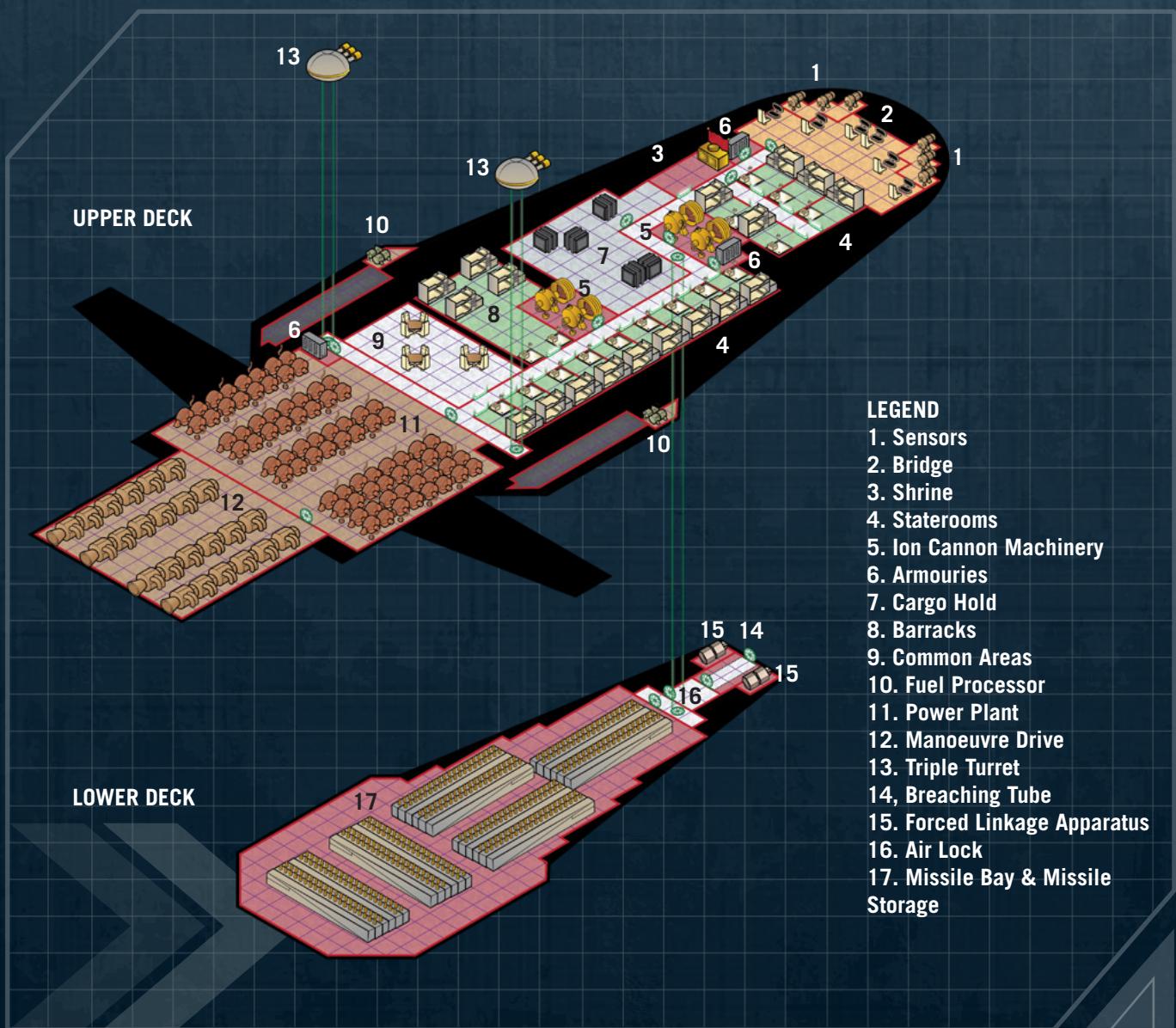
5
SENSORS

56
WEAPONS

1
FUEL PROCESSOR

SU'IKH-CLASS INTERCEPTOR

The concept of 'system defence' is somewhat foreign to the Aslan, who do not value the space between planets but only the planets themselves. Nevertheless, they do recognise the threat posed by foreign spacecraft wandering between the worlds they control. For this purpose, they have devised the concept of the *rau'hktearaol* or 'Interceptor', a fast, heavily armed ship whose primary purpose is to disable or destroy dishonourable interlopers who visit their star systems unbidden. The Glorious Empire variant mounts twin ion cannons but Hierate versions typically install particle barbettes in their place.



COURIER

WAHTOI-CLASS

TL13

		TONS	COST (MCR)
Hull	300 tons, Streamlined Emissions Absorption Grid	— 6	18 12
Armour	Crystaliron, Armour: 4	15	3.6
M-Drive	Thrust 2	6	12
J-Drive	Jump 4	35	52.5
Power Plant	Fusion (TL12), Power 195	13	13
Fuel Tanks	J-4, 8 weeks of operation	124	—
Bridge		20	1.5
Computer	Computer/15 bis	—	3
Sensors	Improved, extended array	9	12.9
Weapons	Double Turret (pulse lasers)	1	2.5
	Double Turret (pulse laser/ sandcaster)	1	1.75
Systems	Fuel Processor (40 tons/day)	2	0.1
	Fuel Scoops	—	—
	Mail Distribution Array	20	10
	Probe Drones x5	1	0.8
Staterooms	Standard x5	20	2.5
	Low Berths x6	3	0.3
	Slave Quarters x4	2	0.1
Software	Jump Control/4	—	0.4
	Library	—	—
	Manoeuvre/O	—	—
	Virtual Crew/1	—	1
Common Areas		6	0.6
Cargo		16	—

TOTAL: MCR 148.55

CREW

**PILOT, ASTROGATOR,
ENGINEERS X 2,
GUNNERS X 2**

RUNNING COSTS

MAINTENANCE COST
Cr12.379/month

• • • •

PURCHASE COST
MCR148.55

POWER REQUIREMENTS

60

BASIC SHIP SYSTEMS

60

MANOEUVRE DRIVE

120

JUMP DRIVE

12

SENSORS

14

WEAPONS

2

FUEL PROCESSOR

WAHTOI-CLASS COURIER

Named for and initially designed by the first clan to cross the Great Rift, *Wahtoi* couriers serve two primary purposes; survey and communications. The Tokouea'we spent copious resources to purchase an immense fleet of these spacecraft and they spend even more to maintain them. The *Wahtoi* are now used primarily to maintain tight communication among the Empire's remaining star systems. Dedicated to science and technology, the *Wahtoi* clan comprises atheists, hence their spacecraft have no shrines. Some ships have converted a stateroom into a shrine and some have left the design as is.

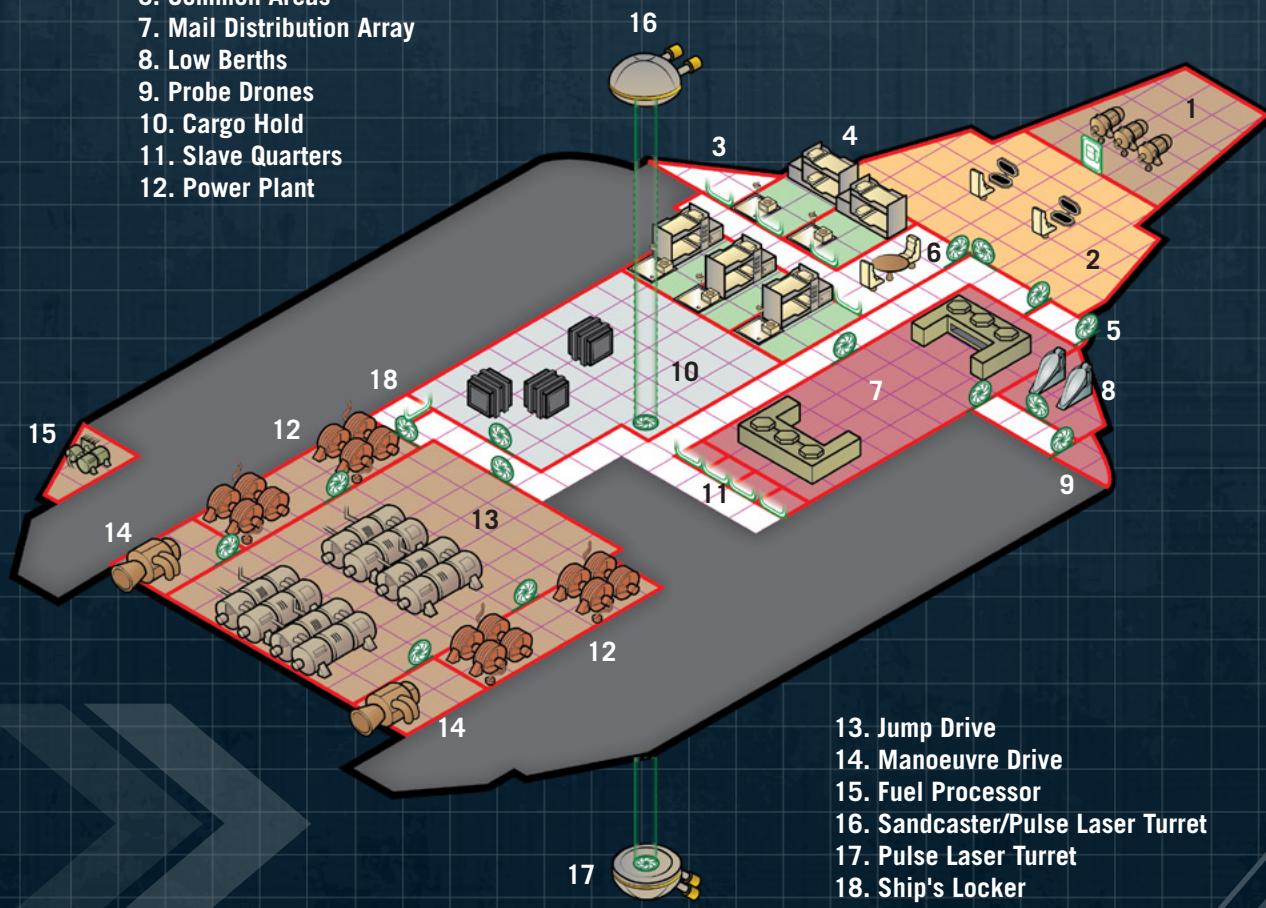


120

HULL POINTS

LEGEND

1. Sensors
2. Bridge
3. Fresher
4. Staterooms
5. Air Lock
6. Common Areas
7. Mail Distribution Array
8. Low Berths
9. Probe Drones
10. Cargo Hold
11. Slave Quarters
12. Power Plant



13. Jump Drive
14. Manoeuvre Drive
15. Fuel Processor
16. Sandcaster/Pulse Laser Turret
17. Pulse Laser Turret
18. Ship's Locker

MERCENARY CRUISER

TL12

		TONS	COST (MCR)
Hull	1,000 tons, Streamlined Radiation Shielding	— —	60 25
Armour	Crystaliron, Armour: 6	75	18
M-Drive	Thrust 4	40	80
J-Drive	Jump 3	80	120
Power Plant	Fusion (TL12), Power 705	47	47
Fuel Tanks	J-3, 8 weeks of operation	310	—
Bridge	Holographic Controls	20	6.250
Computer	Computer/20	—	5
Sensors	Improved	3	4.3
Weapons	Triple Turret (pulse lasers) x6	6	24
	Triple Turret (missile racks) x3	3	9.75
	Triple Turret (sandcasters)	1	1.75
Ammunition	Missiles x 216	18	—
	Sandcaster Barrels x 120	6	—
Systems	Fuel Processor (60 tons/day)	3	0.15
	Fuel Scoops	—	—
	Shrine	4	0.5
	Armoury	12	3
	Training Facilities	16	3.2
	Dockspace (40 tons) x2	88	22
	Dropship Pinnace x 2	—	33.65
	Docking Space (4 tons)	5	1.25
	Air/Raft	—	0.25
Staterooms	Standard x26	104	13
	Barracks x56	112	5.6
Software	Jump Control/3	—	0.3
	Library	—	—
	Manoeuvre/0	—	—
	Fire Control/2	—	4
Common Areas		18	1.8
Cargo		29	—

TOTAL: MCR 148.55



AOHEILEIKH-CLASS

CREW

CAPTAIN, PILOT,
ASTROGATOR, PURSER/
EXECUTIVE OFFICER, PINNACE
PILOTS X 2, ENGINEERS X 5,
MAINTENANCE, GUNNERS X
10, MARINES X 56, MARINE
OFFICERS X 8

RUNNING COSTS

MAINTENANCE COST
Cr38.021/month

PURCHASE COST
MCR489.75

POWER REQUIREMENTS

200 BASIC SHIP SYSTEMS 4 SENSORS

400 MANOEUVRE DRIVE 82 WEAPONS

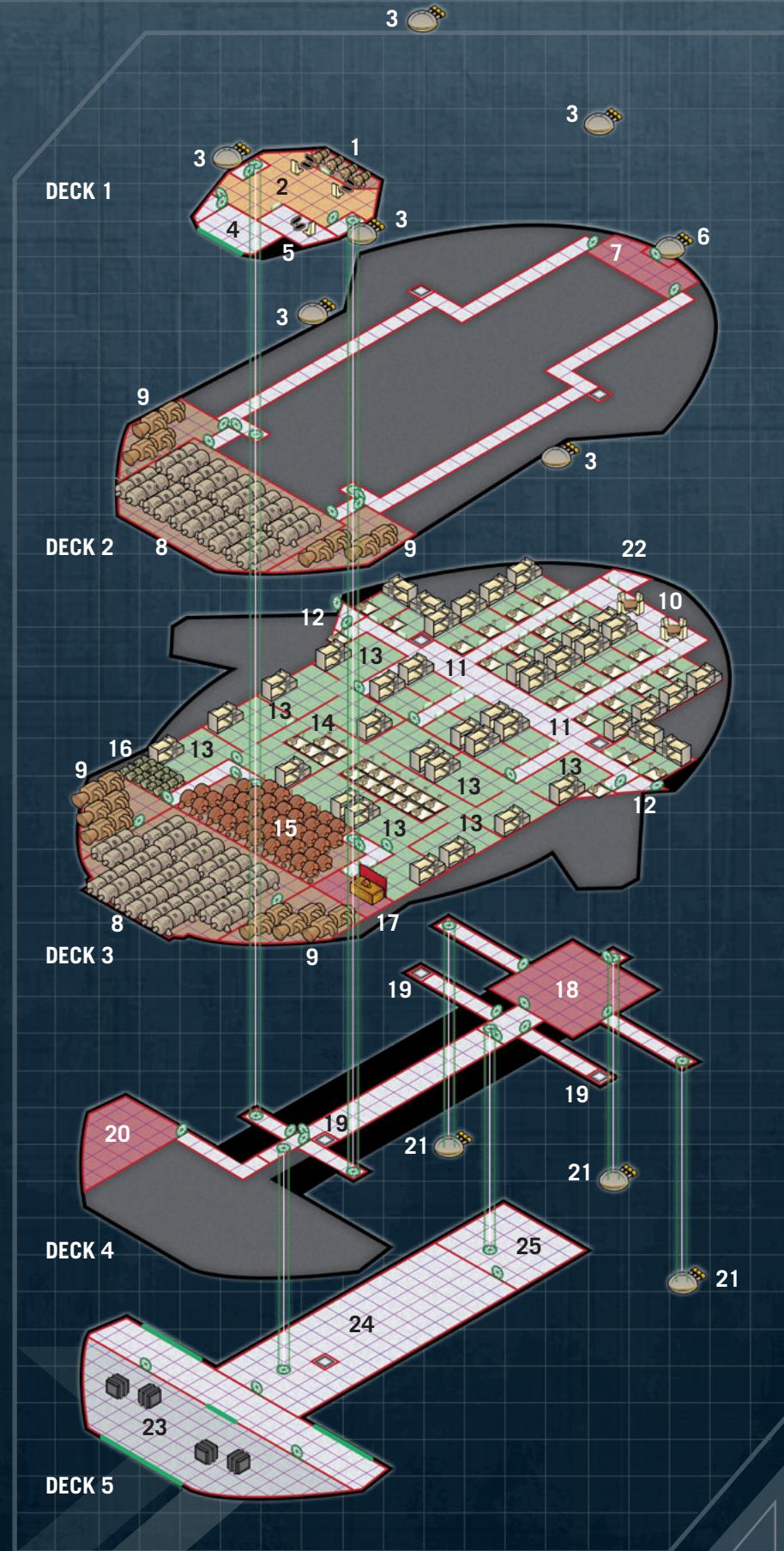
300 JUMP DRIVE 3 FUEL PROCESSOR

400 HULL POINTS

The *Aoheileikh* uses the *Aositaoh* hull (see page 84 of *The Trojan Reach*) with modifications tailored to mercenary operations. The accommodations section remains the same size as that of the *Aositaoh* but a portion has been converted into barracks for troops. The class sacrifices one air/raft and all ATV docking spaces for additional cargo space, an armoury and training facilities. The *Aoheileikh* contains two pinnacles designed specifically for troop transport operations, allowing the *Aoheileikh* to transport two complete platoons of warriors. When a larger unit is required for a ticket, there are usually several of the class in a convoy, sometimes with one or two complementary ships to carry additional supplies.

LEGEND

- 1. Sensors
- 2. Bridge
- 3. Pulse Laser Turret
- 4. Air/Raft Docking Space
- 5. Office
- 6. Sandcaster Turret
- 7. Barrels Storage
- 8. Jump Drive
- 9. Manoeuvre Drive
- 10. Common Areas
- 11. Staterooms
- 12. Air Lock
- 13. Barracks
- 14. Fresher
- 15. Power Plant
- 16. Fuel Processor
- 17. Shrine
- 18. Missiles Storage
- 19. Lift
- 20. Armoury
- 21. Missile Turret
- 22. Ship's Locker
- 23. Cargo Hold
- 24. Docking Space
- 25. Training Facilities



DROPSHIP PINNACE

XX

TL12

		TONS	COST (MCR)
Hull	40 tons, Streamlined Radiation Shielding	— —	2.4 1
Armour	Crystaliron, Armour: 4	2	0.48
M-Drive	Thrust 5	2	4
Power Plant	Fusion (TL12), Power 33	2.2	2.2
Fuel Tanks	4 weeks of operation	1	—
Bridge		3	0.5
Computer	Computer/5	—	0.03
Sensors	Basic	—	—
Weapons	Fixed Mount (pulse laser)	—	1.6
Systems	Docking Space (15 tons) Crawler	17 —	4.25 0.285
Accommodations	Acceleration Benches x7	7	0.07
Software	Manoeuvre/O Library	— —	— —
Cargo		5.8	—

TOTAL: MCr15.725

CREW

CAPTAIN, PILOT/GUNNER,
SENSOR OP/ENGINEER

RUNNING COSTS

MAINTENANCE COST
Cr1310/month

PURCHASE COST
MCr15.725



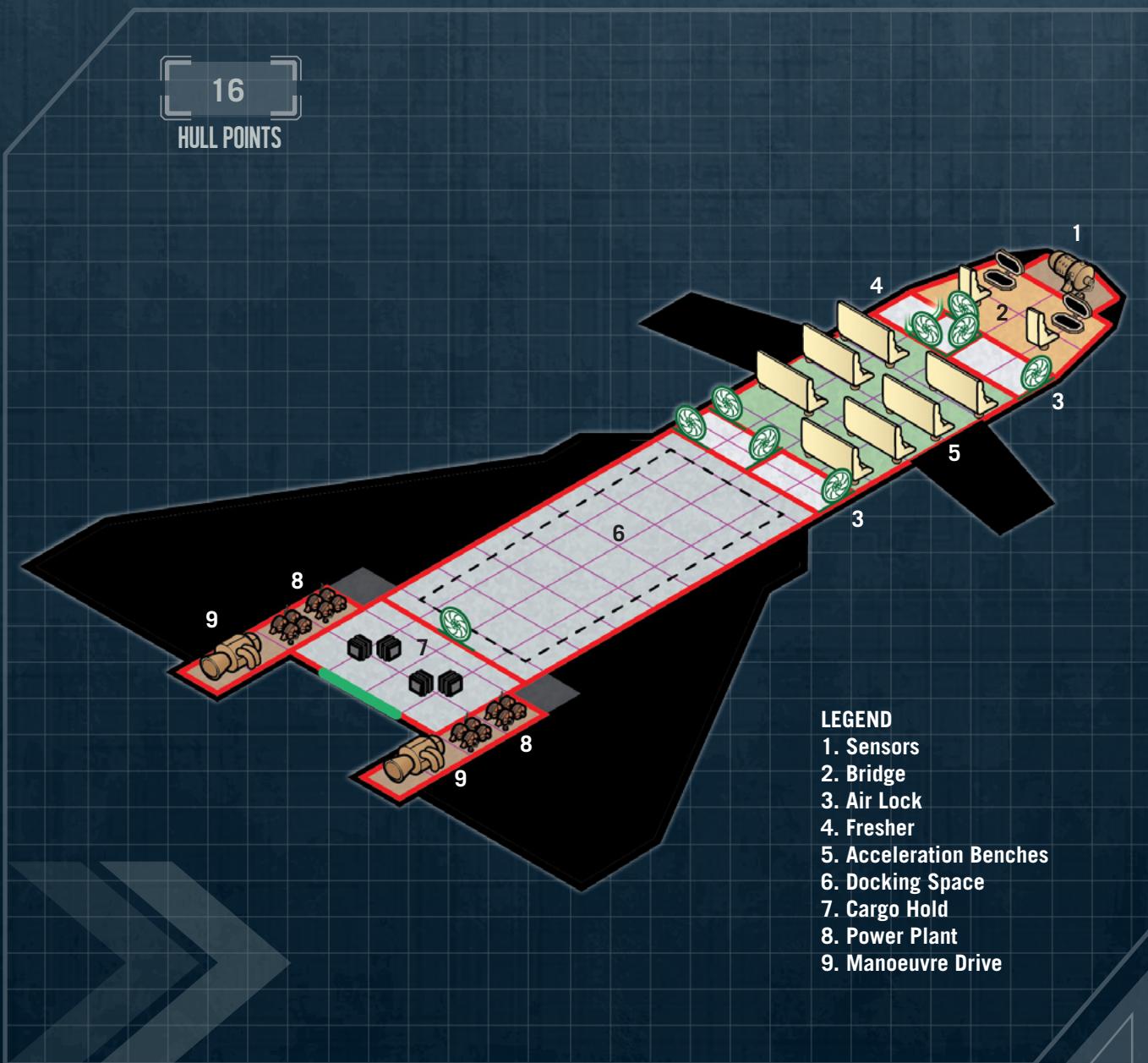
DROPSHIP PINNACE

Two dropship pinnaces come as standard with each *Aoheileikh* mercenary cruiser. Standard dropship pinnaces include seven acceleration benches (enough for 28 warriors) and docking space for a 15-ton crawler (see page 117 of *The Trojan Reach*).

POWER REQUIREMENTS

BASIC SHIP SYSTEMS	8	SENSORS	—	MANOEUVRE DRIVE	20
JUMP DRIVE	—	FUEL PROCESSOR	—	WEAPONS	4

16
HULL POINTS



SYOKHTEI-CLASS BATTLESHIP

The *Syoakhtei* or ‘Son of Syoakh’ class serve as flagships in Glorious Empire Grand Fleet squadrons. The class is somewhat of a panacea, designed to do battle with other capital ships, destroy smaller ships with great lethality, show the flag and, if necessary, bring dissident worlds back into line by orbitally bombarding them with mass drivers. The class carries its own fighter wing as well.

The build shown here takes into account the sacrifices the Empire has had to make to keep the class spaceworthy. The manoeuvre drives are overbuilt with maintenance and engineering staff often adding extraneous components in lieu of outright replacement. After centuries of use, the aging jump drives have become sensitive to gravity wells and are best employed

when well beyond the 100-diameter limit. Such craft were built during the apex of the Empire’s power and have become creaky and often unreliable with age.

The *Syoakhtei* is almost entirely built in the naval shipyards of the capital with the solitary imported piece being the ship’s meson screens, which are manufactured on Htourlao. These spacecraft are the pride of the Grand Fleet and no expense has been spared to keep them in operation. Keeping them running is a challenge in peacetime; their ability to perform in combat is very much in question.

The deck organisation reflects the stratified, caste-oriented culture of the Empire, with the noble officer core reporting to duty stations and housed near its dorsal surface, with the lowly enlisted ranks and slaves situated as far away as possible towards the belly of the ship.



BATTLESHIP

SYOKHTEI-CLASS

TL13

		TONS	COST (MCR)
Hull	200,000 tons, Standard Reinforced Hull Radiation Shielding	— — —	10000 5000 5000
Armour	Crystaliron, Armour: 10	25,000	7500
M-Drive	Thrust 6 (increased size)	15,000	18000
J-Drive	Jump 3 (late jump)	15,005	16880.625
Power Plant	Fusion (TL12), Power 179,905	11,967	11967
Fuel Tanks	J-3, 12 weeks of operation	63,591	—
Bridge	Holographic Controls Command Bridge (holographic controls)	60 80	1250 1875
Computer	Core/70	—	80
Sensors	Improved x2 Distributed Array Improved Signal Processing	6 6 1	8.6 8.6 4
Weapons	Meson Gun Spinal Mount Triple Turrets (intense focus beam lasers) x500 Triple Turrets (long range, high yield pulse lasers) x100 Triple Turret (sandcasters) x200 Fusion Barbettes x40 Small Ion Cannon Bays x80 Small Missile Bays x160 Small Railgun Bays x80 Medium Mass Driver Bays x80 Point Defence Batteries (Type II)	7,500 500 100 200 200 4,000 8,000 4,000 8,000 400	2,000 1427.5 550 350 160 1200 1920 2400 5600 200
Ammunition	Missiles (14,400 missiles) Sandcaster Barrel Storage (12,000 barrels) Railgun Ammunition, Small (960 attacks) Mass Driver Ammunition, Medium (240 attacks)	1,200 600 960 1,920	— — — —

TOTAL: MCr97555.973

CREW

CAPTAIN, PILOT, EXECUTIVE OFFICER, ASTROGATOR, PINNACE PILOTS X 4, FIGHTER PILOTS X 80, ENGINEERS X 1,163, MAINTENANCE X 400, GUNNERS X 2,555, MEDICS X 34, STEWARDS X 20, ADMINISTRATORS X 200, OFFICERS X 446

RUNNING COSTS

MAINTENANCE COST
MCr8.129664/month

PURCHASE COST
MCr97555.973

POWER REQUIREMENTS

[120,000] [40,000]

MANOEUVRE DRIVE BASIC SHIP SYSTEMS

[60,000] [13]

JUMP DRIVE SENSORS

[15,740] [13]

WEAPONS AND SCREENS FUEL PROCESSOR

BATTLESHIP

XX

TL13

TONS COST (MCR)

Screens	Meson Screens x6 Nuclear Dampers x8	60 80	120 80
Systems	Fuel Processor (6,000 tons/day)	300	15
	Fuel Scoops	—	1
	Shrine x20	80	10
	Armoury	200	50
	Briefing Rooms x6	24	3
	Repair Drones	2,000	400
	Docking Spaces (40 tons) x4	176	54
	Pinnace x4	—	34.928
	Docking Spaces (35 tons) x80	3,120	780
	Elar Kha'yaheh Fighters x80	—	1931.12
	Full Hangars (35 tons) x5	350	70
	Launch Tubes (35 tons) x2	700	1
	Recovery Decks (35 tons) x4	1,400	700
	UNREP System (40 tons per hour)	2	6
Accommodations	Medical Bay (150 patients)	120	60
	Workshops x6	36	5.4
Software	Standard x2,500	10,000	1250
	High x4	24	3.2
	Low Berths x200	100	10
	Slave Quarters x400	200	10
Common Areas		2,500	250
Cargo		7,532	—

TOTAL: MCr97555.973

CREW

CAPTAIN, PILOT, EXECUTIVE OFFICER, ASTROGATOR, PINNACE PILOTS X 4, FIGHTER PILOTS X 80, ENGINEERS X 1,163, MAINTENANCE X 400, GUNNERS X 2,555, MEDICS X 34, STEWARDS X 20, ADMINISTRATORS X 200, OFFICERS X 446

RUNNING COSTS

MAINTENANCE COST
MCr8.129664/month

PURCHASE COST
MCr97555.973

POWER REQUIREMENTS

120,000

MANOEUVRE DRIVE

40,000

BASIC SHIP SYSTEMS

60,000

JUMP DRIVE

13

SENSORS

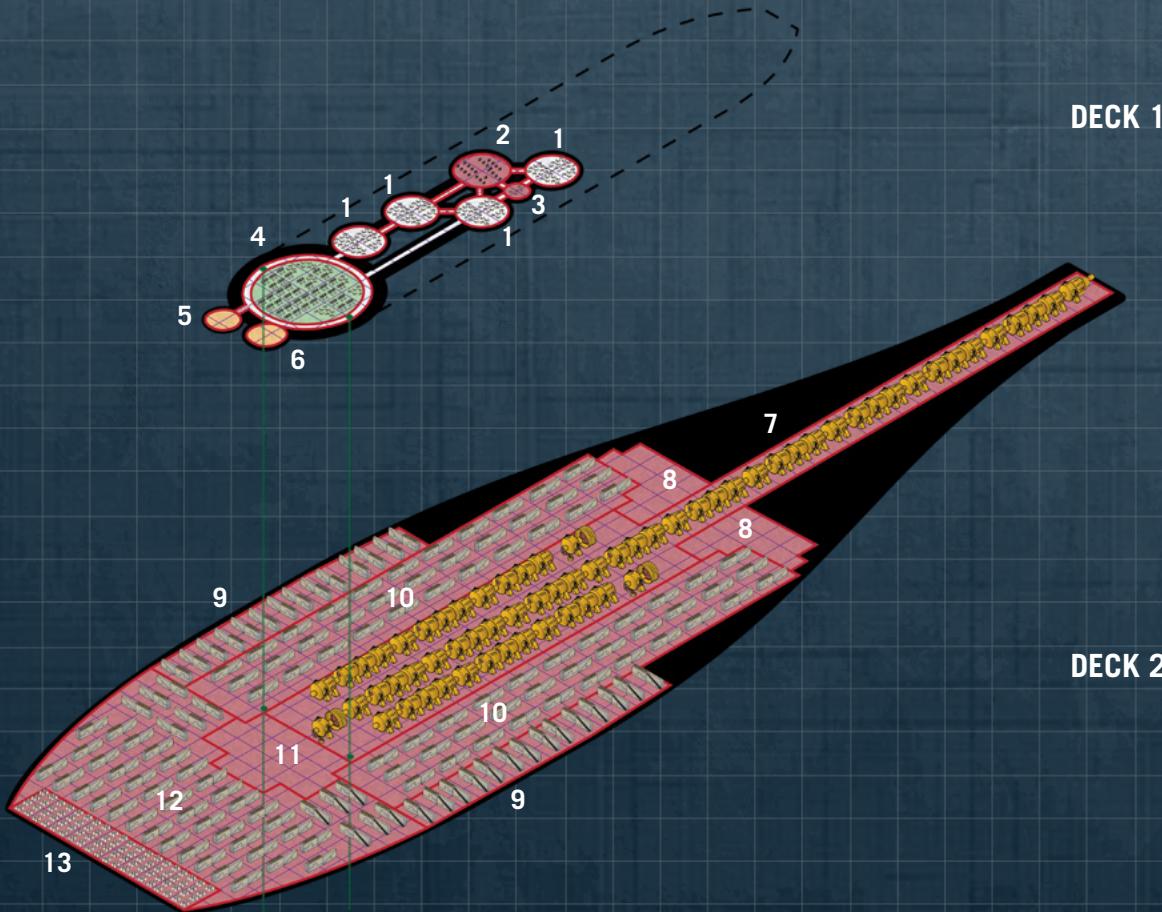
15,740

WEAPONS AND SCREENS

300

FUEL PROCESSOR

1 SQUARE = 50 TONS



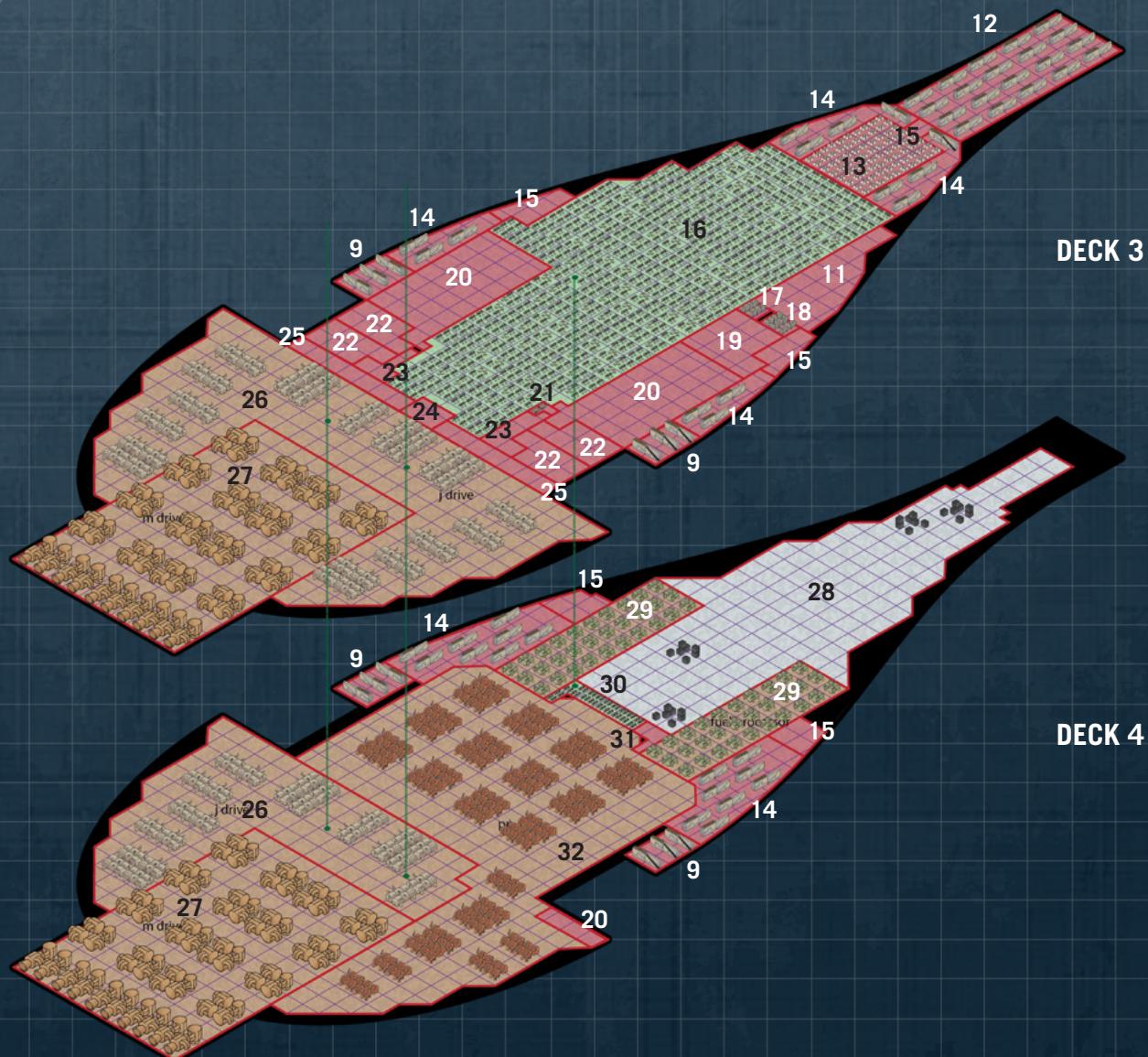
OFFICER ACCOMMODATION

4x High Staterooms
50x Std. Staterooms
10x Shrines
Common Areas

LEGEND

1. Common Areas
2. Armouries
3. Briefing Rooms
4. Officer Accommodation
5. Bridge
6. Command Bridge and Sensors
7. Meson Gun Spinal Mount
8. Missile Stowage
9. Small Ion Cannon Bays
10. Small Missile Bays
11. Mass Driver Ammunition
12. Medium Mass Driver Bays
13. Repair Drones

1 SQUARE = 50 TONS



CREW ACCOMMODATION

2450x Std. Staterooms

10x Shrines

Common Areas

LEGEND

- 11. Mass Driver Ammunition
- 12. Medium Mass Driver Bays
- 13. Repair Drones
- 14. Small Railgun Bays
- 15. Railgun Ammunition
- 16. Crew Accommodation
- 17. Meson Screens
- 18. Nuclear Dampers
- 19. Sandcaster Barrel Storage
- 20. Docking Space
- 21. Workshops
- 22. Recovery Decks
- 23. Full Hangars
- 24. Medical Bays
- 25. Launch Tubes
- 26. Jump Drive
- 27. Manoeuvre Drive
- 28. Cargo Hold
- 29. Fuel Processor
- 30. Slave Quarters
- 31. Low Berths
- 32. Power Plant

GLOSSARY OF ASLAN WORDS AND TERMS

The language spoken by the Aslan is called Trokh. Trokh is a lyrical language that most humans find pleasing to the ear; however, it is exceedingly difficult to pronounce. Following is a glossary of Trokh words used in this sourcebook along with a pronunciation key. The accented syllable in each word is in all capital letters.

Note: A few of the more challenging Trokh phonemes are the ‘kh’ and the glottal stop that is marked with an apostrophe symbol. ‘Kh’ is pronounced like the German ‘ch’, which some describe as the clearing of one’s throat. The glottal stop can be described as the consonant catch in the middle of the word ‘uh-oh’, sort of a subtle ‘t’ sound. The Trokh consonant ‘ft’ is pronounced as in the word ‘aft’, omitting the letter ‘a’ at its beginning.

Trokh Word	Meaning	Pronunciation Key
ahr'eah	Platoon- or company-sized military unit.	art • AY • a
ahriy	Pride, a group of families; plural: <i>ahriya</i> .	AH • ree
ahriyko	Pride lord.	ah • REE • ko
aikoho	Fleet.	aye • KO • ho
Aikoho Earleatrais	Fleet dispatcher.	aye • KO • ho air • lay • a • TRAY • iss
akhaeh	Throwing edge, an Aslan weapon.	akh • AYE • ah
akhuaeuhrekhyeh	Rites of passage.	akh • who • aye • oo • ray • KHEE • yay
akyafteirleao	A threat to Aslan culture; heresy or degeneration.	ah • key • a • FTAIR • lay • ow
alr	One.	ALL • er
Aorlakht	‘New lords’, the name given to the hordes of Aslan who invade the Imperium after the Rebellion takes place.	ay • OR • lawkht
aua	Kusyuan herd animal that the Aslan consume. Plural: <i>aua'ka</i> .	AH • wa
auahisol'i	Human aua wranglers or ‘cowboys’.	ah • wa • hee • SOUL • tee
awkhea	Landless serf.	aw • KHAY • ah
earleatrais	Judge or arbitrator.	air • lay • a • TRAY • iss
ekho	Family; plural: <i>ekhoia</i> .	EH • kho
ekho'ear	Squad of soldiers.	eh • kho • TAY • ar
ekhoko	Family lead.	eh • KHO • ko
fteir	Honour, the Aslan cultural code.	ftair
fteirkо	Spiritual leader.	FTAIR • ko
fteirle	The Aslan people; literally ‘those with honour’.	FTAIR • lay
Hankakho	A language spoken by humans from the Glorious Empire that merges Trokh with Galanglic.	han • KAKH • owe

Trokh Word	Meaning	Pronunciation Key
------------	---------	-------------------

hasoi	Land.	ha • SO • ee
hisol'i	Humans.	hee • SOUL • tee
hlai	Two.	ha • LIE
htoi	Highly valued land.	ha • TOE • ee
hrokhu	Captain of a starship.	her • OWE • khoo
hryo	Literally six but used to mean a squadron of six to twelve ships.	her • EE • owe
huiha	Clan; plural: <i>huihaia</i> .	who • EE • ha
huihako	Clan lord.	who • ee • HA • ko
huih'eal	Battalion or regiment.	who • ee • TAY • all
ihatei	Second sons, the name given to unlanded Aslan who travel to other worlds to obtain land of their own.	ee • ha • TAY
kheh	Three.	khay
khir	Warrior; plural: <i>khirea</i> .	kheer
khiraokhaor'ya	Traditionalist faction during the <i>Uwaralyekose</i> .	KHEER • ow • khay • or • tee • ya
khoafteirleao	Harmony of action.	kho • oft • TAIR • lay • owe
khtyei	Land hold.	kh • TIE • ee
ko	Leader of a clan.	ko
ktelih	Leader of a pride.	KTAY • lee
ktiyhui	Messenger.	KTEE • who • ee
Khtarlyoyao	Incorporation.	khtar • lie • OY • ow
lakh	Land.	lawkh
lakht	Lord or land owner.	lawkht
Lakht Aorlakht	Literally, the 'lord of the new lords', the name given to the messianic Aslan figure who commands the legions of aorlakht ('new lords') which invade the Imperium shortly after the Rebellion starts.	Iakht I ay • OR • Iakht
rau'hktearaol	Interceptor.	ra • oot • huk • TAIR • eh • ole
roakoieil	Slaver sergeant.	ro • ah • ko • EE • ale
si'khiraokhaor	Warrior's code of honour. What must be done.	seat • kheer • EYE • owe • khow • or
siyajkhoara	(Deliberately) unmarried female.	sea • eye • kho • AR • ah
tahiwiteakhtau	Barbarian.	taw • hee • wee • tay • AWKH • tao
trekhyair	Army, clan military forces.	TRAYKH • yair
tsekho	Progressive faction during the <i>Uwaralyekose</i> .	tah • SAY • kho
Uwaralyekose	Cultural Purge.	oo • ar • all • yay • KO • say
weakto	Battle.	way • AWKH • toe
yoyaokhtef	A blend of artistic concepts used to create a complex calligraphic Trokh script.	yo • yay • OKH • teff



The Glorious Empire is an Aslan splinter state in the Trojan Reach that engages in the forbidden practice of slavery. The Empire has spurned the Aslan custom of ritual warfare, insisting upon violent open war in all conflicts. Their borders have held strong for centuries... until now. Beset by enemies on all sides, the Empire is now collapsing rapidly and has lost one world after another. However, like a wounded and cornered predator, the Empire does not plan to go down without a fight. On worlds liberated by the Hierate, freed human slaves – the *hisol'i* – struggle to integrate into Aslan society. On the Empire's remaining worlds, there are billions more waiting to be freed.

This book contains everything needed to run a campaign in this dangerous and volatile region of space including histories, new career paths, world descriptions, new starships, small craft, vehicles, gear, weapons, and animal encounters. Detailed descriptions of Empire mercenary units, slaving ships, enslaved freedom fighters, black marketeers, key Hierate clans, the vaunted Camoranian Starfighters, and more are provided to add depth and colour to any campaign.

The Glorious Empire is a living region that will change dramatically over the course of a campaign. Wars will be fought, worlds will fall, and Travellers will directly influence, take part in, and decide the shape of things to come. This book includes tools and campaign directions for referees and Travellers to take an active part in the events that change an entire region of space right before their very eyes.

In this book you will find:

- Patrons and important personalities for your Travellers to meet and interact with.
- Spacecraft of the Glorious Empire and its enemies, along with unique technologies for the region.
 - The opportunity for your Travellers to shape the history of the Trojan Reach and support or bring down a failing empire.
 - Rules for using Naval Campaigns from *Element Class Cruisers* with Aslan ships.
 - A new entry for the *Central Supply Catalogue* that introduces the weapons, armour, and equipment of the Glorious Empire.



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