**The Zhodani Language and Cultural Institute (ZLI)**

**Basic Pejoratives, Epithets, and General Terms of Abuse in Zdetl**

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As a living language, spoken primarily by Humans, Zdetl is not without its ‘declasse’ vocabulary. Given their full range of emotions, Zhodani express surprise, anger, discontent and angry outbursts with a commensurate vocabulary of pejoratives, epithets, and more general terms of abuse.

***Definitions***

**Pejorative**; pe·jo·ra·tive /pəˈjôrədiv/

*Adjective*. Expressing contempt or disapproval.

*Noun*. A word expressing contempt or disapproval.

**Epithet**; ep·i·thet /ˈepəˌTHet/

*Noun*. An adjective or descriptive phrase expressing a quality characteristic of the thing or thing mentioned.

**General Term of Abuse**; Either of the above (a **Pejorative** or **Epithet**), or an adjective or adverb, expressing contempt or disapproval when used to verbally abuse a person or thing.

Zdetl itself has a long history, its roots going back over 8,000 Standard years to Zhodani substrate languages spoken on pre-Space Zhdant. The development of psionics and the earlier Great Plague (‘Dzagtlas’) had a great deal of influence on the paradigms underpinning what Zhodani think of as objectionable, disgusting and otherwise unsavory.

The earliest paradigm of disgust in Zdetl, and thus in Zhodani culture, is that of disease and contagion. The ‘Dzagtlas’ wiped out most of the population of Zhdant early in the Zhodani space-faring age and also annihilated the Chirper populations of the planet and its inhabited moon. Prior to the binary plague the Zhodani had not suffered much from the depredations of disease. This relative lack of virulent and devastating illness was an artifact of their settlement on Zhdant by the Ancients.

The Dzagtlas wiped out most of the Zhodani and all of the Chirpers (‘Qiknavrats’) in the Zhdant/Viepchakl subsystem, and it remained a scourge that, like the Terran Eurasian Bubonic plague in -3200, revisited the stricken Human population for centuries and kept the Zhodani from returning to space for nearly a millennium. As at first a novel and then a recurring terror, it imprinted itself on the early Zdetl language and let to the first and deepest paradigm of disgust, outrage, and revulsion; *contagion*.

With contagion comes the concepts of *contamination*, *contagion*, *infection*, *disfigurement,* and *disfavor*. Older religious concepts of divine disfavor and offence became wrapped up in the Industrial and Early Scientific terminology of the period and remain in Zdetl to this day. Even with the advances in medical science that have long reduced infection and transmissible ailments to occasional and accidental outbreaks of de novo diseases, the basic terms and their usage in Zdetl abide as epithets and pejoratives, especially those related to disfigurement and contamination. Many Terran languages also retain terms related to these concepts used as insults and descriptors, held over from the pre-scientific eras. The only terms related to divine disfavor (whether inherent or earned) in Zdetl come from these roots.

The other primary basis in Zdetl used for pejoratives and epithets is closely related to the first one, mental health and aberrations of same. With the advent of psionics, especially telepathy, mental illness and the management of same became a society-wide issue and remains so to this day. In most circumstances mental illness and aberrations are treated with dignity and respect for the patient undergoing readjustment, but the stigma of having a ‘dirty mind’ or being ‘demented’ or ‘contaminated’ still remains in the culture and is used to describe things and people that are objectionable, stubborn or vexing regardless of any actual mental ailment.

***Word List***

*Basic Terms*

Contamination (n);

Contaminated (adj);

Contaminate (v);

Contagion (n);

Contagious (adj);

Infection (n);

Infect (v);

Infected (adj);

Disfigurement (n);

Disfigured, to become (pv);

Disfigured (adj);

Disfavor (n);

Disfavored, to become (pv);

Disfavored, unlucky (adj);

Mental Aberration (n);

Mentally Aberrant (adj);

Mentally Aberrant, to become (pv);

Mentally Unhealthy (adj);

Mentally Unhealthy, to make (v);

Filthy / Dirty Thought / Thinking (n);

Filthy / Dirty Thought, to think (v);

Resistant to Cure (adj);

Psionically Inept (adj);

Psionically Untrainable (adj);

Psionically Disrespectable (adj);

Willfully Insane / Demented (adj);

Think insanely (v);

Antisocial (adj);

Antisocial behavior, to willfully commit (v);

Recalcitrant (adj);

Recidivist (n);

Barbarian / Uncultured (n); e. g, ‘***Baz***’