

CORVUS BELLI INFINITY

THE ROLEPLAYING GAME

MÖDIPHÖUS™
ENTERTAINMENT

YUJING

FFFO™

ORDER AND UNITY

Yu Jing. The StateEmpire. Governed by the Party and policed by the Emperor, the balance of the two makes this powerful G5 nation greater than the sum of its parts. Late as they were to the great space race that led to humanity proliferating amongst the stars, the people of Yu Jing have worked doubly hard to ensure they step beyond the long shadow of their nearest rival and rise to eclipse it.

Viewed all too often with misunderstanding and mistrust from without, the Yu Jingese view themselves as a powerhouse nation that has the best interests of its citizens at heart. Wholly committed to spiritual and economic betterment so that they might serve as a beacon for the entire Human Sphere, the StateEmpire strives hard to be at the forefront of every arena it enters into. On the battlefield, innovative servopowered armour designs are providing the StateEmpire Army with a superior advantage, while cutting-edge technology such as the Sù-Jiàn Immediate Action Unit is changing the face of Remote-led warfare.

Not all is as harmonious as the Party's propaganda would lead you to believe, however. Citizens slip through the cracks of society, instead turning to crime to boost their status. The fractured ninja clans, who of course do not exist, now fight a shadowy war for dominance in the wake of the Uprising. And the Emperor of Great Japan has torn his citizens free of an oppressive regime that treated his people as second-rate at best. Offering never-before-seen insights on the Jade Empire, this sourcebook will take you far beyond the Yu Jing's veil of mystery.

- Details on the two key planets that have become the foundation of the StateEmpire: Shentang and Yutang.
- Focused Lifepaths that allow players to immerse themselves in the diversity and duality of the StateEmpire, including Imperial Agents, Ninjas, and Those Without Name.
- Additional armour, equipment, and adversaries specific to Yu Jing, including the deadly Neokatana, the ground-breaking Sù-Jiàn Immediate Action Unit, and stats for several unique adversaries.
- Various discourses on the far-reaching effects of the hard-fought Uprising that led to the recent secession of Great Japan, plus several Lifepaths that provide an opportunity to play an agent of Emperor Hiroshi's will.

QIHAI
OCEAN

YUANYE
OCEAN

Chengjiang
Sea

PIANLI

Jichangyi

ZHOU
ZHONG

Miao Chan
Monastery

SEN SUN

Tian Chi
Lake

Jia Yan

Feng Chi Lake

Lian Quan
Lake

Shichang

WEI CHANG

Zhongzhu
Archipelago

Shencang

Maque Dao
Archipelago

SHIZHUKONG
OCEAN



Tié Heng
Island

Xuanzhong
Archipelago

Bèi Mèn

Chéng Pài

Kufang

Shí Huò

BÈI TŪ

YUNMEN

Shào shang

Kǎn Zhū

HAI LIU
SEA

Chéng Tū

ZHI TŪ

ZHAOHAÏ
OCEAN

Tiān Dì Jīng

Zǐ jīn chéng
(Forbidden City)

Shuǐ qān
Mountain

Hǎi mén

Yŭ Hú

Qí hǎi
Sea

Wéi
River

Jǐn

Jǐn

Jǐn

Jǐn

g Chi
Sea

YUTANG

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MODIPHIOUS
ENTERTAINMENT

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

THE GREAT EMPIRE.....	2
-----------------------	---

CHAPTER 1

THE GREAT EMPIRE.....	4
The Early Years.....	4
An Empire of Balance.....	4
Yu Jing Factions.....	4
Universities.....	8
Religion In Yu Jing.....	9
Penal Regiments.....	10
Organised Crime.....	11
The Japanese Issue.....	12
The Ninja Clans of Yu Jing.....	17

CHAPTER 2

SHENTANG.....	19
Climate and Geography.....	19
Flora and Fauna.....	21
Economy.....	22
The Oceans.....	24
Gandakpur.....	26
Dailing.....	27
Henggu.....	28
Hou Tu.....	28
Kambu.....	29
Karkorin.....	30
Koguryo.....	31
Luang-Sokeo.....	33
Lac Viet.....	33
Kuraimori.....	34
NakonThai.....	39
Thaton.....	41
Ya Lang.....	43

CHAPTER 3

YUTANG.....	44
Climate and Geography.....	44
Flora and Fauna.....	45
Economy.....	47
The Oceans.....	47
Bèi Tù.....	50
Pianli.....	52
Sēn Sūn.....	53
Wei Chuān.....	55
Yunmen.....	58
Zhǐ Tù.....	59
Zhōu Zhōug.....	64

CHAPTER 4

STATEEMPIRE ASSETS.....	66
Sol.....	66

CHAPTER 5

YU JING GEAR.....	71
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CHAPTER 6

YU JINGESE CHARACTERS.....	84
Decision Four: Yu Jing Status.....	84
Decision Five: Youth Event.....	86
Decision Seven: Yu Jing Adolescent Event.....	88
Decision Eight: Yu Jing Careers.....	88
Decision Eight: Japanese Careers.....	90

CHAPTER 7

ADVERSARIES.....	98
Where Tradition Meets Modernity.....	98
Sù-Jiàn Immediate Action Unit.....	103
Yuriko Oda.....	104
INDEX.....	113



INTRODUCTION

THE GREAT EMPIRE

Yu Jing, the StateEmpire. The great balancer and bitterest rival. Every aspect of society in the great Asian power is ordered around equilibrium and the scales of power and influence. At the highest level, control of the StateEmpire is shared between the Party and the Emperor, both balanced against the other for the benefit of all. Thus, each aspect of religion, politics, economics, and society is carefully crafted to be counterbalanced against an opposing force within the same sphere of influence, all equating to a sense of harmony and purpose for both Yu Jing and its citizens. Even in the great sphere of interstellar politics, the StateEmpire acts as a fierce and powerful counterpart to its closest competitor, PanOceania.

As evidenced by the recent Uprising, however, life beneath the jade umbrella is not as seemingly beneficial as the Ministry of Information would have

you believe. At great cost to its people, Great Japan fought free of the StateEmpire and established itself as an independent power within the Human Sphere. The repercussions of the schism have yet to fully play themselves out, but you can be sure that Yu Jing will have a hand in events as they do so. Rarely does one cross the Dragon and the Party and survive.

WHAT'S IN THIS BOOK?

Stepping beyond the bounds of an expansion, this book goes into detail about the Yu Jingese people and their ever-fluctuating interstellar nation. Serving as an all-encompassing scrutiny of the StateEmpire, this sourcebook includes everything you need to create characters, run campaigns, and immerse yourself completely in your character's faction.



CHAPTER 1 – FACTION: YU JING

This chapter provides an in-depth treatise of the StateEmpire, its turbulent history, component parts, and future hurdles – of which there promise to be many in the aftermath of the recent Uprising. Learn more of the ruling Party and its power-sharing relationship with the Emperor, as well as other organisations such as the Imperial Court, various religious sects, nefarious criminal groups, and the enigmatic ninja clans.

CHAPTER 2 – SHENTANG

Wide-ranging information on the Divine Palace of Yu Jing, Shentang, climates, economies, political scenes, and significant locations. As the planet that houses Kuraimori, the former seat of power for Great Japan, this chapter also takes a look at how much life has changed for the Nipponese still living there in the wake of the Uprising.

CHAPTER 3 – YUTANG

This chapter takes a comprehensive look at the Jade Palace, Yutang, which is the primary seat of power for both the Party and the Emperor. Geography, climate, political nuances, and major locations are again explored. Yu Jing's shining jewel, the utopian megalopolis known as Tiān Di Jing, is also examined in detail – from the lofty heights of the Zenifi Tower to the hidden depths of Zijinchéng.

CHAPTER 4 – STATEEMPIRE ASSETS

A whistle-stop tour of the StateEmpire's assets across the Human Sphere, from Sol to Human Edge and beyond. Each area of interest is provided with an overview, with a particular emphasis for the current state of affairs in the Uprising's aftermath.

CHAPTER 5 – GEAR

Technologically savvy and able to draw upon centuries of experience concerning the mass production of goods, Yu Jingese equipment stands as a natural rival to PanOceania's on the open markets of the Human Sphere. New weapons, armour, remotes, programs, tools, and vehicles from across the StateEmpire can be found within this chapter from the *Cihuái* rifle, to the *Yáozaó* remote and more.

CHAPTER 6 – YU JINGESE CHARACTERS

Players can customise their characters with unique lifepath options and careers, crafting distinct characters from diverse backgrounds exclusive to Yu Jing. A career can be constructed as an operative in one of the StateEmpire's expansive espionage organisations, a keen-witted member of the Imperial Service, a hero from the daring regiments of the StateArmy, or a shady member of the Triads and their many branches. Alternatively, more civil-minded characters might prefer to gain experience in the Imperial Courts, or instead operate as a skilled artisan or engineer working to build up the wonders of the StateEmpire.

CHAPTER 7 – ADVERSARIES

Finally, GMs are able to challenge their players with several adversaries drawn from both within and outside Yu Jing, allowing them to populate their adventures with thematic villains and infamous personalities. The Yu Jing Ministry of State Defense has a vast array of units to draw upon when entering into military action, from Troops of the Banner and Invincible Troopers, to the power-armoured *Hac Tao* and *Zhenchá* regiments. Dire Foe adversaries from both sides of the Uprising round out the chapter, providing unique allies or adversaries that can help or hinder a group.



CHAPTER 1

THE GREAT EMPIRE

Yu Jing, the Rival, the Jade Empire under the Dragon. Born in the ruins of the post-United States global economy and tempered with stringent cultural reform, the titanic conglomeration of China and its neighbours stands as the second most powerful human nation, and maintains its claim as the oldest in history with no shortage of pride. Yu Jing survived the collapse of the global 21st century economy through its conservative mindset and expansionist methods, bringing the majority of Asia under its control. Countries such as Japan and Korea, who had grown to depend on the United States economy, were easily bought and annexed when the country fell to ruin following the first space-faring incident. With Asia in its grip, Yu Jing was able to establish a strong economic base and survive the storm.

THE EARLY YEARS

In the years following its formation in the 21st century, Yu Jing has expanded at an explosive pace, exceeded only by PanOceania. Despite Yu Jing's initial hesitance to invest in space exploration, which left them years behind in the space race, Yu Jing boasts a strong economy built on the backs of a hard-working populace assured of their superior culture, a fusion of Capitalism, Confucianism, and Collectivism with traditional values applied to a modern sensibility. These are the things that make Yu Jing the titan it is, a formula mastered over millennia, honed to near perfection in the present.

When the StateEmpire finally reached out to the stars, it was with the full force of their economy and scientific might. Yu Jing would not be outdone by the upstart PanOceania, and soon enough they discovered a system with two habitable planets, tidally locked together. This was an incredible discovery, as the boon of having two neighbouring planets helped the Yu Jingese allay their overpopulation concerns. A mass exodus of Earth began as the majority of the Yu Jing population made their way to these newly discovered planets, Shentang and Yutang. Yu Jing was finally back in the race, and they planned to win.

Other discoveries followed as Yu Jing continued to grow. Settlements were established on Svarlarheima despite protests from PanOceania. The joint discovery and settlement of Paradiso were pursued with dogged determination to ensure the ascendancy of the StateEmpire. Even the

NeoColonial Wars, Japanese Uprising, and the conflict with the Evolved Intelligence hasn't stopped the nation of Yu Jing, which continues to flourish amid adversity.

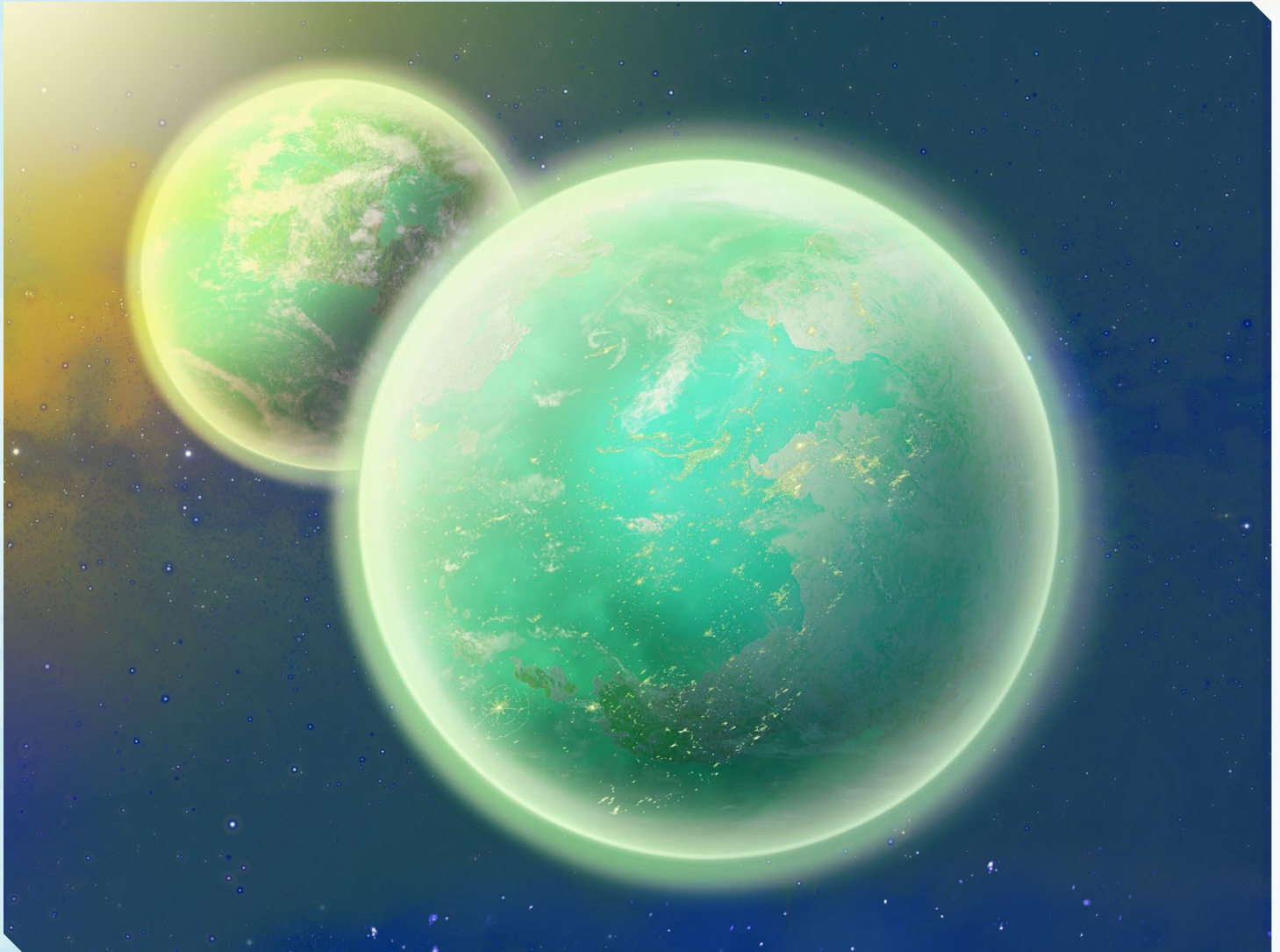
AN EMPIRE OF BALANCE

Within Yu Jing, all things are kept balanced to ensure that no single force, not even the Emperor, can overwhelm the Party. Religious and social values are weighed against social needs to ensure a strong culture and happy populace carefully educated to be devoid of blind zealotry or rampant progressive values. Economic power is prudently distributed to ensure that corporations don't become too dominant, allowing for centralised control free from greed. Power is worth more than money within the StateEmpire, but power makes money. Yin and yang, all things in balance is the cornerstone of Yu Jingese philosophy.

Nothing exemplifies this balance so much as the homeworlds of Yu Jing's people, Shentang and Yutang. The two planets are locked in a constant dance and represent very different aspects of Yu Jing. Shentang is the planet of industry, the home of Yu Jing's pure economic might. On Shentang, farms and factories produce incredible quantities of materials and technology, from simple comlogs to advanced suits of powered armour. Yutang houses the minds of Yu Jing, both the government and the innovators. The house of the Party, who guide the direction of the Yu Jingese people, sits on Yutang. Scientists living in cutting edge cities develop the next wave of Yu Jingese technology, another step towards the dominance of the StateEmpire. Without Shentang, Yutang would starve. Without Yutang, Shentang would stagnate. This balance fosters power and drives the StateEmpire ever forward into the future.

YU JING FACTIONS

The StateEmpire is made powerful by its components. The Imperial Civil Service, the bureaucracy of the StateEmpire, and the Imperial Service, the hand of the judiciary and talons of the Emperor, contain a plethora of organisations, divisions, and units that enforce the will of the Party and the Emperor for the good of the Yu Jingese nation. The professional military of the Yu Jing empire, the StateArmy, exists



alongside these civil and paramilitary forces. Made up of highly dedicated and well-trained troops who are outfitted with some of the best technology in the Human Sphere, the warriors of the Jade Empire will fight and die without regret to further their homeland's cause.

THE PARTY

The Party claims to be the oldest, most enduring political structure in the Human Sphere. Regardless, it has continued to grow and change over its two and one-half century rule. Despite being one single political body, it is rife with factions, subfactions, and overarching meta-factions that can largely be encompassed in a split between the New Wave and the Old Guard.

These byzantine titles are transitory, and students of history point out that the Old Guard of the star tide were identified as the New Wave during the years of Asian unification by an Old Guard of

economic liberals, who had themselves been the New Wave at the turn of the prior century. Despite their differences, all the factions agree that change must be managed correctly. While there are some radicals who claim to support the New Wave, they are commonly disavowed to reinforce Party unity and protect the political body from the dangers of rapid, unchecked change.

THE HẢO LÙ: YU JING CITIZEN METRICS

Prior to the economic disasters of the 21st century, the Chinese Government began the process of instituting a Good Citizenship metric to reward loyal, honourable citizens with status, prestige, and financial gain. Following the crash and subsequent annexation and consumption of the Asian nations, China was unable to sustain the metric due to the intense fluctuations of cultural norms, expectations, and dissent. After the Second NeoColonial War, the Party reinstituted this measure in the form of the *Hảo lù*, or Good Way.



CHUNG KUO

The holdings and peoples of Yu Jing in the Sol system continue serving the StateEmpire and their holdings on Shentang and Yutang. Consisting of most of the Asian continent, much of the Martian surface, numerous asteroid mining operations, and considerable Jovian assets, it is a significant contributor to the glory of Yu Jing. The people of Chung Kuo, however, do not view their valuable input as a source of pride and power, but as a burden and vulnerability. Mines and factories continue to operate, and the Yu Jingese spirit of dominance and divine right are ever-present, but there is an undeniable feeling of separation from the heart of the StateEmpire, which is ultimately where the decisions that shape their lives are made.

THE IMPERIAL CIVIL SERVICE

If the Imperial Service is the Dragon's Claws, then the Imperial Civil Service is the Dragon's Languorous Web of Misery. The Civil Service serves as the bureaucracy that manages the aspects of civil law that do not fall under the auspices of criminal or military enforcement, requiring some degree of interface with the public and other factions. Like the Imperial Agency, the system and workers within the Civil Service are organised according to the Confucian hierarchical structure that results in a highly stratified, complex web of personnel that must be negotiated carefully for contracts to be drawn, wills to be honoured, and building and business permits to be attained. The uninitiated may spend months, years, or even decades moving amongst this morass, attempting to appeal to its various members to complete their work. The initiated know that there are those within the system, the *cōngmíng de hóuzi* (clever monkeys), who can expedite the process tenfold with a bit of credit and deference.

Similar to the nascent metric created in the 21st century, the purpose of the *Hǎo lù* was to recognise and reward citizens with status and increased freedom. In theory, citizens are rewarded for participating in civil rituals, promoting the public good, volunteering, giving of time to their home community, reporting those who are engaging in antisocial or dissident behaviour (especially crime), and rewarding public expression of gratitude, appreciation, and love for the Emperor and Party. A citizen's *Hǎo lù* rating decreases when they break the law, have poor attendance or performance at work, publicly speak out against the StateEmpire, show poor attendance to cultural or State events, or refuse to contribute to the community. A strong *Hǎo lù* rating can be leveraged for privileged placement at sporting events, theatrical performances, and public celebrations and ceremonies, as well as access to lower interest rates on mortgages and loans, expedited assistance in times of emergencies, access to advocates and relief in the Court system, travel permissions, and the highest reward of all: Resurrection.

In practice, *Hǎo lù* somewhat meets these ideals, although rewards can be arbitrary and inconsistent. There is a distinct diminishing return on pursuit of a high *Hǎo lù* rating, and punishments are significantly more severe than the rewards. The result is a gamified system of prosocial behaviour and cronyism. Cliques form within communities of people who consistently support and report one another for positive citizenship in the hopes of improving their own ratings, with fallings-out within these cliques resulting in massive losses in ratings for virtually all involved. While some citizens righteously pursue the highest *Hǎo lù* possible for the ultimate end of Resurrection, very few achieve this due to the relative scarcity of Resurrections and the necessity for Party affiliation to achieve it.

THE IMPERIAL SERVICE

The Emperor is the figurehead of the Yu Jing empire, serving as a central point of authority and cultural representation. While much of the power within the StateEmpire rests in the hands of the Party, the Emperor wields significant influence in the judiciary branch and its Imperial Service. The Imperial Service is the tactical wing of the Judicial Corp and is made up of paramilitary, civilian, and criminal organisations, including some clandestine assets. They are maintained by the Emperor towards the execution of Yu Jingese law. The Imperial Agency with its Imperial Agents serve within the Imperial Service to use all means necessary to project force into Yu Jing and the Human Sphere.

RECRUITMENT

The Imperial Service recruits agents from all walks of life and sorts of character. Most who wish to enter into the Imperial Service have an obvious path in, usually as one of the Judicial Police. They are rigorously vetted and trained within one of several academies, focusing on academic subjects such as law, cultural heritage, and technological operations while also being subjected to physical and combat training. Those who excel may find themselves either in the Celestial Guard or the Imperial Agency.

Perhaps more noteworthy than those who deliberately join the Judicial Police or similarly legitimate fronts of the Imperial Service are those who are brought in unknowingly or unwillingly. The Imperial Service maintains several different paramilitary and criminal organisations within its structure for the sole purpose of operating with plausible deniability. Criminal elements are often brought into the aptly named *Róngyào shǎo zhǔjiào* (honourless thieves). This underground information network directly provides blackmail, activity logs, and further sources for exploitation to the Imperial Service. Recruits are often those who have been caught operating within *Tián dí Jing* or other large cities directly under the observation of the Imperial Service. Presented with the alternatives of a lifetime enduring servitude aboard orbitals or on one of the asteroid mining operations either in system or back in Chung Kuo, many of those incarcerated agree to serve. Unfortunately, the indoctrination process frequently involves several years of brutal re-education, training, and imprisonment that reintegrates the mole in the criminal element. When this is completed, they are released into the community, where they are given specific tasks with dire consequences should they not be successful.

Other military and paramilitary units of the Imperial Service are similarly assigned of those who are trying to avoid terrible consequences. Units like the *Wú Míng* and the *Kuang Shi* are extensive penal military units composed of military criminals and other undesirables assigned for re-education (see "Penal Regiments," p. 10). While some penal units are comprised of genuinely repentant individuals who have taken up service to achieve atonement in the eyes of their fellow Yu Jingese and the government, others require more 'convincing,' leading to the formation of the more controversial units as the *Kuang Shi*. In the end, all serve and die for the StateEmpire.

Every Yu Jing citizen knows the Celestial Guard is the military police that enforce the Emperor's Law. Many do not know of the numerous military assets that are maintained by the Service, including bounty hunters, assassins, and even ninjas. One

small unit, *chénmò sǐwáng* (silent death), is primarily made up of veteran troops of the banner and the Kǎnrèn Counterinsurgency Group. These special operatives work outside of the primary StateEmpire Army command structure, although they are still answerable to it and receive direct orders. The covert *chénmò sǐwáng* solely operate off world in squads and small units working against other factions or operations that threaten the will of the Emperor. Naturally, this often places them in direct opposition to the Yǎnjīng.

ADVANCEMENT

Advancement within the Imperial Service generally occurs in one of two ways, meritorious conduct or attrition. Those serving within the official realm of the Imperial Service, including the Judicial Police and Imperial Agency, can anticipate the usual politics and seniority to climb the ladder, while maintaining excellent field performance and superlative citizenship. Imperial Agents may find themselves confronted with “field tests” that evaluate their decision-making and resolve when presented with morally ambiguous or challenging situations. These tests are rarely staged in a closed environment and frequently have real-world consequences both for the agents and their unwitting participants, frequently ending in the proposed persecution or even execution of supposed innocents or bystanders.

Less common, except for the impatient and those in more clandestine aspects of the Imperial Service, lies the route of the schemer. This is a matter of hard-fought political scheming, learning where bodies are buried and uncovering well-hidden skeletons.

INTRIGUE

The clearest point of complication and intrigue within the Civil Service is the obvious confounding factor of the Party. The office of the Emperor is a construct that serves at the will of the Party, but the Imperial Service gives legitimate power and force projection to that office. As such, the Party works to put into place covert agents and representatives with the hope that should the Emperor attempt to overstep his bounds they will be able to quickly dismantle the military and legal power that the Emperor wields. This creates a somewhat self-defeating – or at the very least inefficient – scenario, as resources are allocated within the government to monitor and oppose other factions within.

Beyond the scheming of the Party and the Emperor is the true function of the Service, well understood by both parties, which is to sustain the status quo. In order to do this, the Imperial Service tolerates the existence of organised crime. The State knows

that to keep the people focused, unified, and productive, there must be external threats. PanOceania, the Combined Army, and all the other boogeymen stalking the good people of Yu Jing serve towards that end. The State also knows that to maintain power, they must control and manipulate those who seek it. To crush all those who seek illicit means of control is impossible, and it will only temper the fiercest and most powerful of those towards action. Therefore, to prevent disharmony and unnecessary expenditure of paramilitary resources, the actions of the Triads and other crime entities are permitted to a degree. This is far from pacifism however, and the police force readily crush any criminal groups that begin to get cocky and misunderstand their place within the StateEmpire's carefully cultivated society.

THE IMPERIAL COURT

The Imperial Court is an amalgam of anachronistic ritual practice and modern technological scheming and political action. Those unfamiliar with its structure and unspoken rules find themselves quickly overwhelmed as they are subjected to scrutiny about their citizenship and ethnic heritage, with off-worlders being treated with great disdain and dismissal. Within the structure of the Court, there are Civil and Criminal institutions, each with their own culture and etiquette.

The Civil Court is facilitated by the Imperial Civil Service and housed within municipal centres throughout Shentang and Yutang. Judges and court officers are those of the *zhāměng* (grasshopper) rank within the Imperial Civil Service and are impatient with those who do not know the rituals and expectations of court. Those who wish to attend to Civil Service matters should expect to spend at least a full day within the confines of a court compound, as each plaintiff, defendant, or petitioner is expected to be present at the convening of court, which begins with a ritualised prayer to The Emperor and to the State, followed by a reading of the honorifics of each of the officers present. The proceedings continue apace, with interruptions, protestations, and points of order brought throughout. Those caught amidst the archaic and esoteric process cannot help but wonder and despair at the events themselves. Those who know it, or can view it from a distance, understand: To get things done in the Imperial Court, all parties must be satisfied well in advance of the proceedings. This is accomplished in the *mìmi tiāntáng*, or secret haven.

Not so much a physical place, the *mìmi tiāntáng* consists of a process where the agents of the Civil Service including the legal advocates, cultural advisors, and delegates for the State all convene in concert to resolve matters. This process is



obfuscated to reinforce the strength of office for those involved while disempowering outsiders and the ignorant. In a sense, it is an oligarchical extension of the ubiquitous court systems found worldwide in the 20th and 21st centuries, with a veneer of pomp and circumstance for cultural necessity. Naturally, participation in *mìmi tiāntáng* costs a significant amount of resources and results in participants owing various favours to virtually all levels of government.

The Criminal Courts are almost a mirror opposite to those of the Civil Courts, as expediency and efficiency are valued over political machinations and process. Those who go before criminal court do so without advocacy unless they can afford one or status demands one and can secure a competent advocate in time. While the basic ritual of acknowledgement of State and Emperor begins the proceedings, the Criminal Court proceeds briskly. Lower level courts for less grievous offences are officiated by *zhànměng* or *fěi* (kingfisher) level officers who tend to impose fines rather than prison sentences. Violent or grievous offences are heard by retired Judicial Police or Imperial Agents, referred to as *fenghuang*, or phoenix. These cases usually carry significant prison sentences, often off world in terrible conditions. Capital level cases, which may result in the defendant being sentenced to death or service in the penal regiments, are overseen by officiants of the highest level, known as *māotóuyīng* (owls). A Yu Jingese criminal can expect to spend no more than two or three weeks at most from time of the commission of a crime until sentence is passed, unless a ranking Imperial Civil Servant intervenes.

OTAKU

The term Otaku stretches back to 20th century Japanese Earth as a means of describing the youth subculture fixated on the Internet, technology, and social isolation. Used as a derogatory term by their Japanese peers, the subculture itself adopted the term readily. Following the Greatest Leap, Otaku culture re-emerged as a form of protest and dissidence, with hackers and agitators operating directly against the StateEmpire as a direct attempt to further the separatist will of the Nipponese government. The Otaku were fully responsible for the limitations on Maya access that the second-class Japanese citizens were subjected to.

Modern Otaku are different creatures than those who worked to subvert, expose, and disrupt the functions of the State. While the term still carries a massive negative stigma with it, it now reflects any person who commits themselves to Maya culture and infatuation with technology to the point of isolation from everyday life. Furthermore, the term

has spread beyond the Japanese ethnic group, with many off-worlders donning the mantle rightfully by virtue of obsession and isolation. Otaku culture is as diverse as Maya content, and so defining the group is challenging, but not impossible.

Since the Uprising, the term Otaku has taken on a darker meaning. Japanese culture has become a source of sour resentment amongst the Yu Jingese people, and the term Otaku has come to be used as an aggressive slur used by the citizens of Shentang to refer to the residual Japanese population who are 'leeches' living off the mercy and good will of the StateEmpire. The term's appropriation has sometimes gone further to refer to any kind of outsider or geek, but it is rare to see a Yu Jingese citizen call a non-Japanese Otaku. The term still finds use within Great Japan, as self-proclaimed Otakus are determined to retain the title and free it of the poisonous influence of the StateEmpire's racism. A resurgence of Nipponese hacktivism has begun to lend a sense of pride to the title of Otaku, though few admit to it.

The Otaku frequently make use of a specific section of Maya known as the Shibuya Carnival, where collaboration and competition occur behind a veil of semi-anonymity. Here one might find entire VR museums dedicated to Maya personalities and shows of days past that allow for complete immersion into any character. Otaku can also find deeply detailed files on various government agencies or personnel and even attempts to build and facilitate communication with the alien EI. Naturally, ALEPH monitors this closely and frequently disrupts efforts surreptitiously. The Imperial Service watches this section of Maya closely, attempting to counter the activism of foreign Otaku and track any potential threats amongst the StateEmpire's populace.

UNIVERSITIES

The StateEmpire has pride in many of its traditions and holdings, but few of them carry as much weight or significance as those of their universities. These higher institutions of learning can be found throughout Yu Jingese holdings, but the most prestigious are located on Yutang with the notable exception of the University of Shinme, the war-college of the Nipponese Army. It is here that the technological and social machinations of the Empire are initiated, where social programs begin and die, and where the juggernaut of the StateEmpire sustains its momentum through research, development, and espionage.

ADMISSIONS

While admissions procedures vary based upon the general theme and type of university that an applicant would attend, the requirements are similar for all. Students that pass their standardised tests are subjected to verbal examinations by professors and faculty to determine any exceptional minds from amongst them. A recent epidemic of suicides amongst students across Yutang necessitated more rigorous screening for mental fortitude, and the resultant process is similarly ruthless. Therefore, the primary purpose of these examinations is more to ensure that a student can endure the strenuous results-driven nature of advanced education. Students are limited in the number of universities that they can apply for. Those who apply and fail to secure a position in a prestigious school find themselves allocated to a trade school or apprenticeship and a less lucrative career path.

STUDENT LIFE

Life at the university is rigorous and stressful, seldom allowing for the more bohemian experiences that other nations might allow for in their institutes of higher learning. The school year is continuous, with only brief breaks for State and cultural holidays and an annual ten-day break known as *Hūxī* (the Breath). On average, timetables consist of six-day weeks with six classes per day, totalling thirty hours or more of lectures, plus an additional twenty or so hours of lab work or participation in faculty-directed research. In order for all but the most brilliant student to be successful, most students will study an additional forty or more hours a week outside of the classroom. Additionally, students are expected to maintain a high citizenship metric by participating in cultural activities and Citizenship clubs that emphasise one or more elements of Yu Jingese values. Most students belong to at least two of these clubs which might involve debate, athletics, architecture, public service, tactical and military representation of historical events, and academic competition. Given the gruelling pace of schooling and activities, it is no wonder that an epidemic of stimulant abuse has been making its rounds in the University system for years.

UNIVERSITY TYPES

There are several different kinds of universities within the Yu Jingese system. The most prestigious of these, the Imperial College, focuses entirely on law, ethics, and political sciences. A Yu Jingese citizen who wishes to have a position high within the Civil Service, Judiciary, or Party must attend the Imperial College or a similar law school. Following the law schools in general prestige are the military

academies and universities, such as Cheng Tô, where advanced war technologies are researched. Following those are universities focusing on other scientific applications, such as the smaller universities in Zhōu Zhōug where dedicated pursuits into agricultural and physical sciences advance architecture and food production. The least reputable universities are those that are cultural in nature, such as the University of Kuraimori in Tomari, where psychological and sociological studies are seen as useless at best, or subversive at worst.

RELIGION IN YU JING

As the Greatest Leap brought Asia's constituent cultures away from their homesteads and places of ancestral familiarity, a resurgence of religious and spiritual practices began to occur throughout Shentang and Yutang. A result of The Great Nostalgia, this spiritual renaissance initially caught the Party off guard. Steeped in the Communist and Confucianism practices of old, religion was generally viewed as being a character deficit and point of personal weakness by the Party. But, as with the other cultural visitations that were occurring along with the Great Nostalgia, this return to older ways was permitted and even encouraged in accordance with the *Hǎo Lù*.

NEOMODERN BUDDHISTS

The concept of the middle path changes little in consideration with the moving to a new land, but the underpinnings of enlightenment and tranquillity become somewhat more involved. As one considers the abandonment of desires in a new world of plenty and abundance, the necessity to abandon passion and therefore suffering is somewhat limited. For these reasons, Neomodern practice emphasises the integration of technological purity as a means of gaining peace and enlightenment. In practice, Neomodern Buddhist enlightenment may emphasise technological meditative isolation through sensory deprivation at many of the temples and in the homes of practitioners. Maya Alternative Environments allow for meditative practice in virtually all environments, resulting in the phenomena of widespread mass meditation in a seemingly isolated environment.

DAO

With the changing of the understanding of the material world, so too must the Dao adapt to the new world and its way of being. Quantronics, neomaterials, and the discovery of wormholes all represent mysteries within a spiritual practice so intent on mystical analysis of the physical forces. Modern observations include these technological

STUDYING IN YU JING

The Yu Jing University system emphasises the obligation of educating its people but also allows other factions to apply for admission. The rationale for allowing outsiders into universities is simple enough: admit those who have knowledge of your enemies, and in turn demand reciprocation so that your agents can study within other factions. Students from other G5 nations are closely observed, both to determine if they themselves are spies (all are assumed to be, even if proven otherwise) and to learn as much about them as possible for the purposes of exploitation and potential use as assets after graduation. In turn, practically every Yu Jingese student that is sent abroad does so with the expectation that they are spying on their host nation for valuable and actionable information.



advances as an explanation of the advancement of humankind towards a fundamental enlightenment. Evidenced by the discovery of Shentang and Yutang and their symbolic intertwined relationship with one another, the manifestations of the Tao and the Te and the mystical forces channel all towards a fundamental truth.

PENAL REGIMENTS

Conscription and required service are not unfamiliar concepts throughout the military of the Human Sphere. Yu Jing is one of the only military forces that engages in conscription to fill its ranks. What distinguishes this act when compared to contemporary or historical penal forces is that Yu Jing's penal regiments are trained and integrated into coherent regiments, instead of being used as backfill and replacements within the support structure of other contemporary armies. These distinct regiments have their own military traditions, be they somewhat dubious and disreputable, and the men and women who fight within them are unique in their lifepath, training, and history.

THOSE WITHOUT NAME: THE WU MING

The StateEmpire demands a high standard for conduct and behaviour of its citizens, with those who choose to engage in criminal activity treated strictly and experiencing tremendous social stigma. Criminals within the military – which includes murderers, rapists, thieves, saboteurs, and those who are truant in their duties to name a few – are sentenced to the worst of all punishments, the loss of their name. Stripped of their identity and assigned a number, these criminals and dissidents are impressed into the service of the *Wú Míng*. Some conscripts are so ashamed and enraged with their new lot in life that they choose to commit suicide immediately after sentencing or seek further reprimand by assaulting an officer during their first days in the regiment. Those who stay on serve with one of the most notorious Heavy Assault units in the Human Sphere.

The training of the *Wú Míng* is a harsh, gruelling process that breaks down the conscript's identity and will through constant humiliation and degradation as they labour in the foulest tasks

in the sewers, abattoirs, and hospitals of the Yu Jingese training camps. Those who show the will to persevere are then trained in harsh urban combat, knowing that they will be used as the veritable battering ram of the StateArmy, knocking down doors with the corpses of their comrades and taking bullets from well-defended positions.

Their uniform consists of deep urban prints with distinctive lines broken by long, large strings of numbers bearing their identifiers. It is by this distinctive uniform, the camouflaging ruined by the stencilling of their names, that their enemies know them as the merciless *Wú Míng*. Once blooded, the warriors of this penal regiment are thrust into a complicated hierarchy of conscripts, with status being designated by seniority, seriousness of their crime, and their reputation on the battlefield. Their actions are viewed as oxymoronic by outsiders; they resent the StateEmpire for stripping them of their names, but over time, the *Wú Míng* adopt their new names, their numbers, as badges of honour. They fight with tenacity for their Emperor, while cursing his name at every turn, so long as an officer isn't around.

THOSE WITHOUT HONOUR: THE KUANG SHI

The *Kuang Shi* are a controversial penal unit named after the zombies of legend derived from South Pacific myth. While there are relatively few of them within the operations of the StateEmpire Army, their reputation is heavily publicised and well known. Culled from the dungeons of Zijincheng and the prisons of the Celestial Guard, these unfortunates are political prisoners, Corporate saboteurs, seditionists, and traitors. Most are repeat offenders, having been given numerous chances to re-educate and rehabilitate, refusing to do. There are even a few members of the *Wú Míng* who continued their murderous ways off the battlefield, earning them condemnation.

The purpose of the *Kuang Shi* is simple. They are given a target, a chain gun or similar weapon capable of supporting their way to that target, and an explosive-laden backpack that is enabled with a remote trigger. A handler observes the progress of the *Kuang Shi* soldier as it moves to its target, tracking it via network and satellite, and when the *Kuang Shi* is close enough, its trigger is activated and the target and the soldier are blown to pieces. The use of the *Kuang Shi* is often reported by State Media, broadcast over Maya with great applause; another traitor is dead.

Training of the *Kuang Shi* differs significantly from the *Wú Míng* and other units. Traditional squad-based training emphasising teamwork and

physical conditioning is minimal, with individual advanced operant conditioning taking precedent. The integrated networks and sensory inputs of a *Kuang Shi* are altered and subdermal sensory stimulators are implanted throughout the body in crude, cheap lattices that provide painful and pleasant stimulation. Using a modified HUD, a *Kuang Shi* is trained to rapidly pursue paths that are plotted for them, rarely given agency to select their own paths. When they deviate from the paths, they are punished. When they succeed, they receive pleasure. Their handlers often begin their careers as animal handlers, zookeepers, psychologists, and teachers of all variety, and frequently have fallen in their own right. Their personal failures forcing them to work as suicide coaches.

ORGANISED CRIME

History and time have taught us that regardless of how harsh the punishment or oppressive the regime, crime thrives everywhere. While the StateEmpire might balk at the term “oppressive,” crime and dissent within the Yu Jing territories are treated harshly, with perpetrators being scorned and derided. In these conditions, clandestine groups have arisen that exist comfortably within the structure of Yu Jing, calling upon reputation from ages past.

TRIADS

Upon the settlement of Yutang and Shentang, the Triads of Yu Jing found themselves resuming their historical roles prior to the influence and colonisation of Asia during the age of Western Imperialism. As settlers struggled to adapt to their new homes on Yutang, and StateEmpire resources were tied up in the massive Greatest Leap efforts, the Triads served as a resource for the communities that they served – for a price. The first operational Triad on Yutang was the *Sun Yee On*, who quickly moved into Tian Di Jing and began to operate brothels, gambling dens, and all the familiar services of Chung Quo. While they engaged heavily in graft and blackmail, they were unable to avoid a response from the StateEmpire, who demanded that they “make themselves useful” or be eliminated. They quickly added community housing, facilitation of labour and transportation, and internal community policing to their racket. The *Wo Shing Wo* were quick to recognise their role and return to their roots, providing contraband and creature comfort to the settlers in Zhongting while facilitating advanced development of infrastructure to those who paid for their services.

During the transition from the Greatest Leap to the modern status quo, the Triads largely returned

THE SECOND NAMING

The leaders of the StateEmpire know that condemning a person to eternal fighting with no chance of redemption is a sure-fire recipe for revolt and mutiny. It is possible, therefore, for a *Wu Ming* to earn a second name enough, glory, honour, and deference to the state are displayed. Their unit provides such a person with a new name, then discharges them from service to rejoin the world.

THE PENAL CAMPAIGN

Both the *Wú Míng* and *Kuang Shi* present unique opportunities for dedicated campaigns. A *Wú Míng* campaign might focus heavily on the internal politics of a squad collectively dreaming of honour and the restoration of their names. A *Kuang Shi* campaign might focus on a training role, dealing with the psychological toll of training men to kill themselves on the battlefield. Such a campaign might even focus on the *Kuang Shi* being used as puppets for political and Corporate ends, with the PCs in the middle as expendable pawns.

DANHUI

Despite the prevalence of the Triads, Yu Jing is also host to its share of *Thai chao pho*, Korean *Kkangpae*, and other organised criminal syndicates competing for turf. While your local Triad might be all smiles so long as you pay your protection fees, that changes the moment you mistake them for another crime family. Thus, unless affiliation is known with certainty, most citizens refer to such groups as *Danhui* (丹會), a name meaning ‘red conference’ used to refer to secret societies with criminal ties, rather than risk calling a resident gangster by their ancestral enemy’s name.



TONGS

The Chinese-American tradition of the Tong, or secretive gathering place, has also found a renaissance on Yutang, with most sizable communities harbouring at least one of these clandestine organisations. Smaller, more insular, and less criminal, Tongs oftentimes serve as venues for political debate, societal criticism, and business networking. The Imperial Service keeps close tabs on the Tongs, as they are often a source of information about political dissidence and social issues that might not normally filter through official reports.

to their old form of criminal and clandestine enterprises. In addition to their past methods, they also began to function as unofficial operators for corporations, facilitating corporate espionage and sabotage. Currently, most Triads are affiliated with one or more corporations, with the 14K Triad being notorious for double-dealing and working for many agencies at once. The only reason they haven't been quashed is, despite their duplicitous actions, they frequently accomplish seemingly opposing goals simultaneously, earning them acumen and regard.

In addition to the older, traditional Triads, newer organisations with progressive agendas and technological niches have come to power. The Plasma Dragons, with numerous secretive cells throughout the Zhongting continent, operate almost solely in Maya and on augmented reality networks, trading information, software, exploits to sensitive corporate and State resources, and illicit pornography.

While Triads have adopted technological advances with acute ability, their structure and rites are still immersed in occult and religious history. The hierarchy of a Triad may vary, but oftentimes the head of a Triad is given a title such as Dragon or Mountain Walker. The facilitator of ceremonies is referred to as the Incense Master, and frequently wields significant power. They are the figurehead that facilitates new member's inductions, with the Dragons and Mountains removed from the process. Initiates swear many oaths, offer up a burnt offering (or in some cases, animal sacrifice), and swear their allegiance before the Gods.

Triad operation is carefully regulated and monitored by both the Triads themselves and the State. So long as they serve a purpose to the StateEmpire, kick in the graft at the various levels of the food chain, and keep body counts low and limited to themselves and lower-class unfortunates, they are not bothered. Occasionally, the Imperial Service will make use of Triads as cats-paws or informants and very frequently as vectors for infiltration into corporations or other organisations.

THE JAPANESE ISSUE

PRIOR TO THE REBELLION

Ever since Yu Jing's formation, the people of Japan felt trodden on by the superpower. Japan's incorporation into the StateEmpire was something its citizens felt was a surrender. Their strong national identity and resistance to cultural uniformity led to conflict with Party elites and was seen as petulant

at best, and as openly rebellious at the worst. While this might have been mitigated through more inclusive politics, the Party was always on the cusp of being openly hostile to the nation. The Japanese people, despite their impressive industrial force and large population, were at first treated as second-class citizens and later politically designated as such. The mistreatment of the Japanese manifested itself most openly in the treatment of the Japanese Emperor. Normally a position worthy of respect, the Emperor was reduced to a mere trinket within the collection of the StateEmpire, another jewel for its crown. The monarch was forced to become a vassal of the Yu Jingese Emperor, accepting a subservient status as a symbol of Yu Jingese control.

Despite this, Japan retained its pride and drive, and remained a powerful force behind Yu Jing's ascendancy. Within Kuraimori, the archipelago granted to the Nipponese people, industry thrived, and warriors trained. Culture flourished again, even under the watchful eyes of the Imperial Service. The Japanese Sectorial Army carried the resurgent *bushido* traditions of martial pride and honour, inspiring the populace to remember who they were and where they came from, even as the StateArmy used their heroes as fodder in wars abroad.

Innovation also flourished in Kuraimori, as intelligent youths and passionate thinkers helped advance the technology of Yu Jing and Japan as one. Cutting-edge technology in fields such as transport, quantum technology, and war assets poured out of the Japanese homeland to Shentang and abroad. Even with the treatment of their people, the Nipponese people showed their loyalty at every step, determined to rise above the prejudice. But as time passed and 'unfortunate incidents' occurred time and again, it became harder for the people of Kuraimori to justify the effort. Disharmony grew, fuelled by racism and oppression, and soon Kuraimori was a powder keg ready to blow. It was the *Báijīng* Consulate incident that lit the match.

THE UPRISING

The *Báijīng* Consulate incident occurred just before the Uprising itself. During an engagement with the Nomad torpedo vessel *Silence, Please*, the StateArmy High Command elected to use an indiscriminate naval bombardment on the vessel, which was docked with the *Báijīng* Orbital Consulate close to the end of the Wotan conflict. Doing so endangered the lives of the Japanese Sectorial Army defensive garrison who had fought hard to ensure the civilians on the ship could evacuate despite being outnumbered. The High Command proceeded with the plan, barely flinching at the tremendous loss of life.

Originally, this decision was spun as a deadly mistake that had exacted a heavy toll on the commanders of the operation. The garrison had been unintentionally fired upon. History would have remembered it as just that, if not for the efforts of reporter Bianca Chen, who had acquired recordings of the High Command's communications, revealing their knowledge of the garrison's plight and their contemptuous dismissal of the lives about to be lost.

The reaction was almost instantaneous. Demonstrations and protests erupted across Yu Jingese territory as the Nipponese inhabitants voiced their outcry. Several authority figures amongst the population, including disgraced Japanese Sectorial Army general Aoi Tanemura, brought the situation to its breaking point. What the majority of politicians within the StateEmpire didn't realise is that the situation was about to escalate further, as the *kuge* aristocracy had been carefully planning their people's next bid for independence for years.

After the occupation of Japan by Yu Jing, the *kuge* industrial empire had been suppressed by integration measures including restrictions on materials

and mandates to outsource production within the wider Yu Jing StateEmpire. Proud families of the Japanese elite lost much of their fortune, and so they banded together to ensure that one day, they could rise from the ashes. Using Citizenship metrics, they fostered a powerful tradition of service and sacrifice within the heart of Nipponese culture. This was modelled on the path of the old *bushi* of Japan's past. Service to the one, true emperor, and the willingness to lay down one's life in service, ensured that when the bid for independence came, the Japanese Emperor, controlled by *kuge* advisors, would have an army of fanatical loyalty and determination. The *Báijīng* Consulate incident offered a perfect opportunity for the *kuge*. They convinced Emperor Hiroshi, the sitting Emperor of Japan, that the time for independence was now.

In cities across the Human Sphere, the newly named Japanese Secessionist Army rose up and quickly took territory from the unprepared StateArmy. These locations included the Japanese archipelago on Earth, the island of Kuraimori on Shentang, the city of Kaseitoshi on Mars, Kurage Station in Dawns subarctic region, Kōritawā on Svarlarheima, locations across the Human Edge system, and Fukaitani on Paradiso. Battles of





varying success were fought in each of these locations, but even with the dogged drive of the JSA, it would take more than determination to defeat the larger and stronger StateEmpire.

Aid came to the people of Japan from the most surprising places. Internationally, the plight of the Japanese was received with outrage. The Mayaseries “The Incredible Adventures of Candy Double” informed the Human Sphere of the mistreatment the Nipponese people had suffered, and their concerns carried over into their nations’ political scenes. The decision was easily made by several governments; a chance to please their people and weaken an interplanetary enemy was too good a chance to pass up. Economic and political support flowed in from PanOceania, Haqqislam, and the Nomad nations. In addition, several of the nations provided military support in one way or another, smuggling weapons and support to help the Nipponese secure their independence. These nations also helped the young nation secure a voice in the *Öberhaus* to teach Yu Jing a lesson.

Perhaps the most decisive support came from PanOceania during the later stages of the six-month conflict. As the StateArmy prepared to level its largest retaliation, moving forces from Paradiso and other conflict zones to crush the rebellion within their borders, PanOceania implemented the Steel Wall strategy alongside other methods of open military support. Guarded as they were from an overwhelming counter attack, the JSA were able to finally capture and secure several locations and establish the nation of Great Japan within the Human Sphere.

THE AFTERMATH

The Uprising has taken a heavy toll on Yu Jing, morale in the upper echelons is low, entire swathes of its territories have been lost, and retaliation is thwarted by PanOceania’s heavy naval and military presence. For the Japanese, Tokyo once again serves as the capital, and many of the cities caught up in the Uprising are Japanese colonies. While several heroes of the Uprising such as Asuka Kisaragi and

General Tanemura have fallen, their names are now synonymous with honour, duty, and the rise of Greater Japan.

Unfortunately, Kuraimori, the new homeland of the Nipponese people, was shattered during the Uprising. Due to its location deep within the Yu Jing home system, it was impossible to send any meaningful support. The inhabitants of Kuraimori were forced to fight a war of attrition they were doomed to lose. Communications and supply lines were cut off quickly, but Nomad support ensured the secessionists were able to access Arachne. One by one, each of the cities of Kuraimori fell, savagely torn apart by the vengeful StateArmy. Tomari was the first, followed by Kofuku, Kume, Murasaki, and finally Sakuramachi and Motobushima. Despite brave defences by the JSA, casualty rates amongst the Nipponese citizens were appalling. Motobushima especially felt the brunt of the StateArmy’s aggressive tactics, with tens of thousands of civilians lost and the city reduced to rubble. Other cities didn’t fare much better. The heavy assault methods utilised by the StateArmy caused incredible amounts of damage to the infrastructure of the archipelago. Most of the damage has yet to be repaired, and many suspect that the Japanese cities will simply be left to fall apart in the next big earthquake.

With the StateEmpire firmly in control, the archipelago was put under martial law and became a living hell for the Nipponese populace trapped within. Passive racism escalated to overt hatred, with the citizens subjugated under cruel and uncaring overlords. Ever since, the smallest infractions are treated with zero tolerance and civilians are arrested for any perceived act of resistance.

To help their imprisoned people, the *Kempeitai* – now part of Great Japan’s intelligence force – launched resistance measures within the archipelago. The goal is simple – keep the spark of rebellion alive for any future attempts at reclamation. The StateEmpire responds to any violent action fiercely and immediately with tactics that vary in brutality, creativity, and application, making the calculus of resistance difficult to

THE PARTY LINE

Outside the internationally accepted version of events, the people of Yu Jing often tell a different story. A sad story of a people who preferred to serve their own vainglory rather than the interests of the whole. Yu Jingese everywhere swear by the eyewitness testimony of other citizens who were present in Kuraimori during the initial Uprising, blaming PanOceania’s bias and propaganda for the lies and misrepresentations told around the Human Sphere. The Party is quick to remind the Human Sphere of their re-education camps and their attempts to reintegrate the Japanese into their society. Due to martial law and the terrorist threat, restrictions on travel to Kuraimori are a safety precaution that nobody can dispute. To the Yu Jingese, the issue lies with the Nipponese lashing out and refusing to come to the table, instead relying on terrorist organisations to make their point.

justify. Old guerrilla strategies of hiding amongst the population simply grant the guards yet another opportunity to deploy dubious measures in crowded areas. To make matters worse, similar intervention by the Tatenokai has led to deaths amongst the Japanese populace with violent methods causing collateral damage. To the uninformed Nipponese citizen, there are few telling differences between the two organisations.

While liberation is certainly on the forefront of Great Japan's agenda, even the most optimistic general questions what will be left to liberate in a year's time.

THE NIPPONESE ARMY

ONCE SECOND-CLASS CITIZENS

The annexation of the Japanese people into the political body of Yu Jing was by no means approved of or accepted by the common people or its military. Following years of perceived oppression and dismissal, the Tatenokai formed and began a bloody campaign of terrorist attacks primarily on the Chinese citizens of Yu Jing. The StateEmpire responded by making citizens of Japanese ancestry second-class citizens, resulting in limited Maya access, loss of rights to protest outside of cultural expression, and increased taxation. This only served to increase the resentment amongst the Nipponese populace and would eventually help fan the flames of the Uprising.

The military traditions of the Yu Jingese Japanese population were represented by the Nipponese Army and its various regiments, including the *Keisotsu Butai* shock troops, the *Aragato Senkenbutai* bike teams, and the samurai-like *Haramaki Zensenbutai* armoured warriors. Under the banner of Yu Jing, the warriors of the Nipponese Army served well in battle despite the contempt they were treated with. Now that the Nipponese Army has split away from the StateEmpire Army military complex, their dedication has become awe inspiring. Given the opportunity of serving their true emperor and their kinsman rather than a foreign government, they fight with exceptional enthusiasm.

RECRUITMENT

The Nipponese Army is a strictly voluntary force, even before its separation from the StateEmpire, with enlistment being a sign of status and honour. Even the lowliest *nitōhei* is superior to most successful salarymen and virtuous citizens within the societal hierarchy of the Japanese. Because of this, recruitment is undertaken in the same light as applications to prestigious universities, with applicants engaging in rigorous academic and physical testing for a chance at enlistment.

The testing process, known as the *meiyo sheiken* or honour tests, begins with cultural examinations testing the applicants understanding of Japanese military tradition, the bushido code of honour, and Japanese cultural principles. A familial evaluation is executed in parallel to this process, with reviewers examining the potential recruit's lineage and familial history for inclinations of treasonous or dishonourable behaviour. If a potential enlistee passes the first portion of the exams, they are then subjected to rigorous academic evaluations in simulated stressful conditions. Testing centres integrate visual overlays of graphic battle scenes, distressing auditory commands, and even olfactory simulations of battlefield environments. It is not uncommon for potential applicants to fail this portion of the examination due to vomiting or disorientation to the point of utter confusion.

The final portion of the *meiyo sheiken* is a three-day excursion, which was conducted on the Onibutai peninsula whilst the Nipponese Army was a part of the StateEmpire, and is now held in various locations across Greater Japan with one of the most popular being Yakushima, an island south of mainland Japan. Here, the remaining youth are subjected to gruelling physical exertion, combat training, and tests of both mental and physical fortitude. Deprived of sleep and food, the tests are designed to determine ability to adapt and learn, and so prior training in martial arts or survival will only carry one so far. Those who can learn and adapt to the trials are then accepted into the ranks of the Nipponese Army.

OPERATIONS

The leaders of the StateArmy have always viewed the soldiers of the Nipponese Army with a mixture of contempt and admiration, even after their rebellion. The pride and tenacity of the Japanese soldiers, and their prowess on the battlefield, is unmatched by most other sectorial forces. As such, Yu Jingese leadership saw them as a military asset and a backfield liability. An armed body of potential traitors that seeks revolt and independence is a concerning element indeed. In hindsight, they were absolutely correct.

Japanese forces were frequently employed as frontline shock troops and were treated as expendable by StateEmpire Army agents. This use of the Nipponese Army only served to lend more legitimacy to their claims. The veterans who survive the bloody engagements in the vanguard of the StateEmpire Army campaigns return as heroes, spreading word of the strength of the Nipponese Army and strengthening the sentiment of warrior pride amongst the Nipponese people.

Even with their tendency to be deployed in an expendable fashion, the Nipponese forces were



highly valued due to their tenacity and superior *esprit de corps*. After becoming independent, the Nipponese Army has retained the tactics they used during their days as pawns to the StateEmpire, despite the unsustainable casualties these tactics bring on. A change in combat doctrine is required, or the young nation's warriors will die out faster than they can be recruited.

COMPLICATIONS

The Nipponese Army faces unique challenges compared to other sectorial armies from the legacy of the *Tatenokai* regarding the oppression experienced at the hands of the StateEmpire. Internal politics threatened the integrity of regiments as they were manipulated by high-ranking officers into defiant or bellicose stances when integrated with other Yu Jingese forces, resulting in tension and occasional disruptions in combat readiness.

YAKUZA

Just as the Triads arrived from Earth and old Chung Quo, so too did the Yakuza from Japan. The ancient origins of the Yakuza were as merchants, peddlers, and proprietors of gambling facilities given legitimacy through the Japanese government in the form of being able to arm themselves. Modern Yakuza have expanded their role greatly and are primarily criminal operators who work within the shadows of Japanese society. The Nipponese government has quietly turned a blind eye towards this group, with the tacit acceptance coming more from cultural pride and reverence and less from graft and corruption. However, while the Triads benefited from the StateEmpire's unofficial policy to live and let live, the Yakuza were not so fortunate. Yakuza gangs were given elevated priority by the Imperial service, and members who attempt to leave Shentang had been known to simply disappear.

Presently, the Yakuza have returned their primary operations to the new capital of Great Japan, Tokyo. Their traditions and methods continue to be tolerated by the new Japanese government due to their efforts to assist the Nipponese citizens trapped on Shentang, arming Tatenokai and other revolutionaries, and acting as an impromptu information and smuggling network with the few members remaining in Kuraimori. This relationship is tenuous at best, as the Yakuza are motivated primarily by their own gains. Few can predict how the organisation will act after the business of revolution becomes an act of charity. The Yakuza commonly feature as a common pop-culture villain in StateEmpire police dramas. Their reputation likens to terrorists as well as criminals, bogeymen that intend nothing but the worst for good, hardworking Yu Jingese citizens.

BŌSŌZOKU

Direct acceptance of the Yakuza into mainstream Japanese culture is obvious through the *Bōsōzoku* and the military units, the *Aragoto Senkenbutai*. *Bōsōzoku* culture refers to the high-speed, dangerous lifestyle of the motorcycle riders that once sped through the cities of Kuramori, and who have recently sprung up once more in Great Japan's new holdings. While civilians dabble in the lifestyle, the hardcore groups are backed by Yakuza and receive some degree of deference from the government of Great Japan. The *Aragoto Senkenbutai* are a military unit drawn from the ranks of the most outrageous and dangerous *Bōsōzoku* riders, who serve as advance units, renowned for their swift terror tactics and domination of the battlefield through audacious action.

ORGANISATION AND OPERATION

The Yakuza is broken into syndicates operating under rigid hierarchical structures that emphasise relationships formed over ritualised consumption of sake and a sort of familial role. There is some separation between layers, as the *saiko-komon* (administrators) interact primarily with legitimate – or, at least relatively lawful – professionals who ensure effective business practices. The *saiko-komon* report to the *oyabun* (boss), who in turn controls the criminal elements of the syndicate through relationships between *shateigashira* and *wakagashira* (lieutenants), *kyodai* (big brothers) and *shatei* (little brothers). These “families” are part of larger syndicates that are similarly structured, with *oyabun* from a family being within the lower or higher structures of a syndicate at large. Honour, sake, and money flow up and down this hierarchy, within and between families.

Like similar organisations, families are often given territories and other families within a syndicate respect those territories. While organisations might dabble in other illegal activities, the primary sources of income and exploitation for the Yakuza is smuggling and gambling. Almost all illicit goods pass through the hands of a Yakuza family upon arrival to Great Japan's territories, whether it is Silk from Bourak or O-12 tech stolen from Concilium. Smuggling operations can be found in virtually every Nipponese city and even on Shentang by a few daring members of the remaining Yakuza families.

MARK OF HONOUR

The Yakuza have a complex code of honour that, when breached, demands blood. Specifically, those who have broken Yakuza code are expected to cut off finger tips, joints, or even entire fingers. Prior to the settling of Shentang, these wounds were often concealed through prosthetics or gloves. As the Yakuza have again resumed an accepted place in Japanese culture, these scars are now being seen out in the open more frequently.

THE NINJA CLANS OF YU JING

The Meiji restoration prior to the World War II resulted in the cultural death of the ninja. While the martial arts practices of the ninja, numerous cultural representations, and fantastic stories continued on, all records of ninja activity had ceased. This was true up until the formation of Yu Jing following the annexation of Japan. Around this time, as competition within Yu Jing resulted in Chinese and Japanese hostilities coming to a fevered pitch, the ninja began a resurgence, engaging in corporate espionage, political assassination, and subterfuge within the Human Sphere. Following the secession of Great Japan from the Yu Jingese nation, a divide was formed between clans loyal to the Japanese Emperor and people and clans dedicated to their own power and profit.

Ninja clans operate with structure and method. While any given ninja's skillset is equally formidable and deadly, different clans display unique skills and methods in the field. Originally the greater clans of Fukurō, Kōsetsu and Ōnishi used businesses as fronts, and the Oniwaban functioned as the contact person within these organisations. While having legitimate holdings, these organisations tended to function on a smaller scale as to escape notice. Following the departure of the Japanese and, by extension, the three clans, a number of minor clans expanded to take their place. These clans utilise the same method of operation, but lack resources and truly skilled personnel that the major clans could claim. Without Oniwaban and Shikami to monitor and distribute contracts and a small core of personnel, the minor clans scoop up whatever contracts come their way, lacking the power to pick and choose assignments. A lack of truly experienced ninja like the Oniwaban has led to organisational disarray in some of the clans. Now that these clans aren't suffocating under the power of the great clans, they have room to improve and prosper.

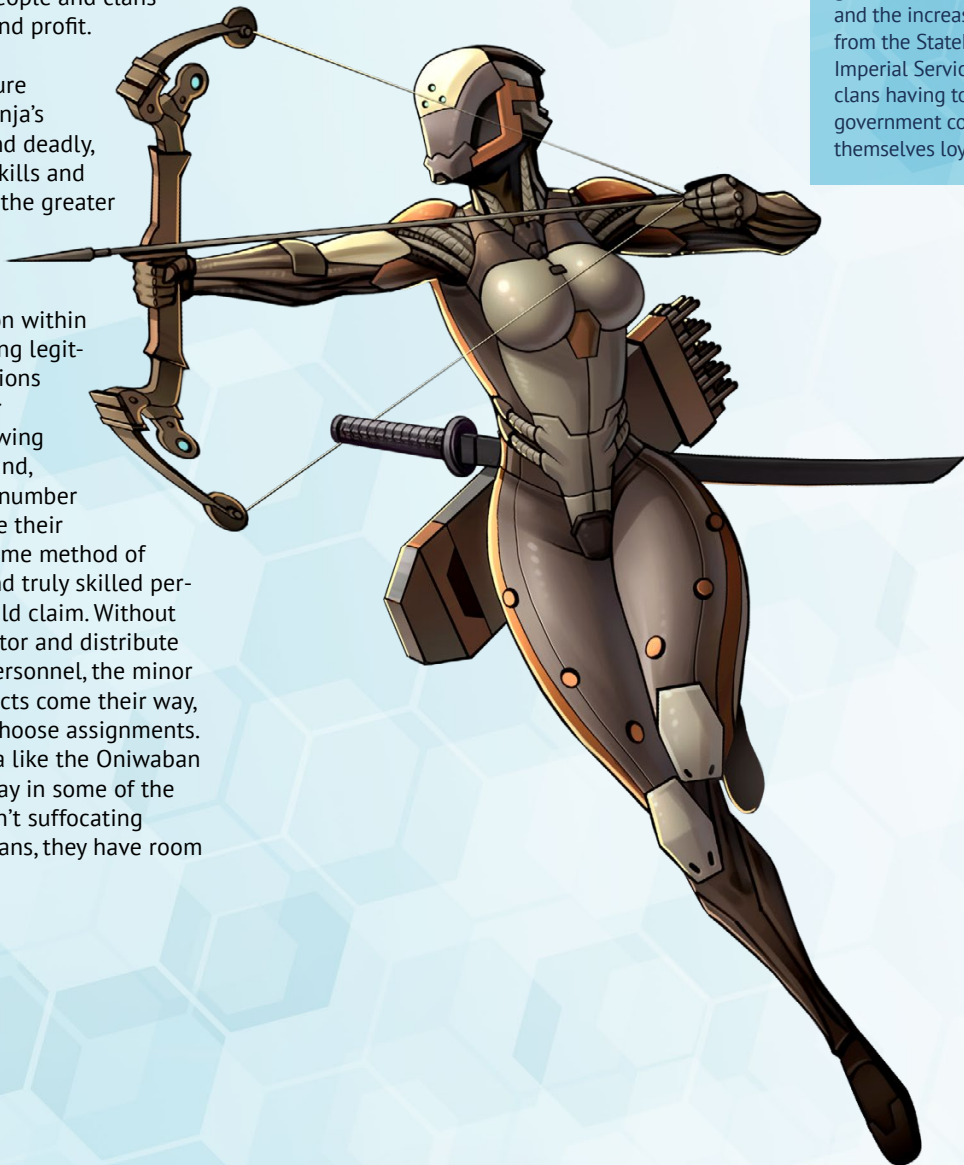
THE OLD BLOOD

FUKURŌ SECURITY

A small firm once located in Kume but recently relocated to Tokyo, Fukurō operates above-board as a security asset that protects the interests of the numerous research and design outfits that function within the city. Elite technological operators, Fukurō agents are not likely to be seen in uniform patrolling the halls of their charges, but rather lurking in the Maya space that surrounds the information platforms run by this institution. When called upon to act, the Fukurō clan ninjas prefer hacking, technological trickery, and indirect subterfuge to gain access to their targets, and make use of lingering backdoors and well-nested scripts to steal information. They tend to wait until the last possible moment to engage in violence, preferring to shore up resources and act only when necessary.

WHO REALLY CONTROLS THE NINJA CLANS?

Following the events of the Uprising, control of the Yu Jingese loyalist ninja clans has become a grey area. Some argue that they are puppets of the StateEmpire, an opinion held close by the loyalist clans of Great Japan. The truth is much the same as it was before the Uprising. Historically, each clan operates autonomously, acting in their own best interests and in accordance with their leadership. In practice, the ninja are somewhat mercenary in their exploits. Regardless, various factions within the government know of them, and the increased scrutiny from the StateEmpire and Imperial Service has led to the clans having to adopt more government contracts to prove themselves loyal once more.





TENCHŌ INVESTMENT SERVICES

This small-scale investment firm manages assets for many upper-middle class citizens as well as several smaller corporations. The business used to be located in the outskirts of Sakuramachi but now operates in the outer districts of Kaseitoshi. This unassuming business has connections in numerous larger scale corporations and physical holdings. While the Fukurō clan operates through technology and isolation, the controlling Kōsetsu clan makes use of social and financial connections to accomplish its means. Specializing in corporate sabotage, theft, kidnapping, and interrogation, the Kōsetsu maintains human assets that operate with little or no knowledge of what they are doing. It is only when the ceremony of the event itself, the final closing moments of an operation or the execution of a target, does the ninja reveal themselves, striking and operating with celerity and subterfuge to accomplish their end.

RANTAN SERVICES

The Ōnishi clan operates Rantan Services, a manpower operation once working out of Kofuku, recently relocated to Kōritawā. It provides labour and management to industrial businesses and warehouses throughout the region. The most overt of the ninja clans, they are unafraid of direct conflict. The Ōnishi clan will often engage their marks with proxy warriors culled from their legitimate business for their physical, and violent, talents. These minions serve as distractors or second fronts, allowing for the actual ninja operative to engage in rear-echelon action, attacking from flanks and behind or avoiding conflict altogether while allowing the “muscle” to do their work. They also are apt saboteurs, labour instigators, and demolitions experts, making their work more noticeable.

NINJA CLANS OF THE STATEEMPIRE KŌGA GROUP

The front of Kurokawa clan, the Kōga Group operates out of the Tomari as a small chain of traditional bathhouses. Clients usually find their go between amongst the steam rooms of the saunas, told to look for the black flower on the shoulder of a young man or woman. From there, negotiations begin. The Kurokawa are famed for their extractions, always disappearing without notice or capture. Through a strong foundation of hacking and patience, if a client wants their job done without a shred of evidence, they go to the Kurokawa.

SANADA OUTCOMES

The private investigation firm of Sanada Outcomes within Sakuramachi hides the Miyoshi clan, an unorthodox group of ninjas that pride themselves not in their traditional skill as excellent assassins and saboteurs, but also in their mastery of the information networks that permeate the Sphere. The Miyoshi web of information is second to none amongst the Yu Jing loyalist groups and surpasses even a few of the major clans for intricacy. With their control of information, they can easily work their marks, bribing, extorting, and blackmailing them to act as grim-faced puppeteers. Their ninjas are skilled in discovering information through any means necessary, employing torture, espionage, and hacking to find the edge they need to win the day.

KUNAI SOLUTIONS

The Takemura clan are the masterminds behind Kunai Solutions, a small private security firm that runs out of Kume. The ninja of the Takemura clan are world class snipers and marksman, preferring to keep their distance and eliminate their targets with precision aim. From grizzly, public spectacles to quiet deaths during a trip through the streets, the Takemura clan have elevated their marksmanship to a form of art, achieving with one bullet what a cadre of ninjas couldn't achieve with days of work. Their reliance on ranged murder has made them the butt of some jokes within the ninja community, the few jokes that are spoken within the clans at any rate. But few are the ninjas of Great Japan that relish the idea of taking on one of the Takemura clan's eagle-eyed killers.

CHAPTER 2

SHENTANG

CLIMATE AND GEOGRAPHY

When the first settlers of Shentang immigrated from Earth, it was a terrifying experience. A new life on a new planet. How would the world be different from their homes? What strange creatures would dwell there? When the first settlers arrived to find a world startlingly akin to their home, they were pleasantly surprised.

Shentang, like Yutang, shares many similarities with Earth. Both are slightly larger than Earth, and days on the planets last two hours longer. Shentang is littered with all kinds of environments, including deserts, swamps, plateaus, savannahs, and forests.

These emulate conditions on Earth with little deviation, beyond the differences in local plant life and animals. The planet's terrain tends to be hilly and mountainous, with about sixty percent of the planet's land surface covered by such regions. To ensure the swift adaptation to the planet by those moving to Shentang, the Yu Jingese government made sure to draw on specific ethnic groups and cultures and place them in terrain that was most similar to their home.

When discovered, Shentang already contained habitable levels of oxygen and a thriving ecosystem. Due to this stable weather, crops were able to be imported directly from Earth and grown in the soil of Shentang with little genetic adaptation required. Without the need to rely on imported foods and excessive terraforming, the settlement of Shentang





was rapid and effective. Within a few years, the people had become accustomed to the planet, and the population boomed.

The weather of Shentang functions in seasons that vary depending on the location of the planet. In the northern and southern reaches of the planet, the climate is stable and functions in four phases, similar to the earthen summer, winter, autumn, and spring. Across these seasons, the temperature fluctuates from location to location, but the standard tends towards the low single digits to the high thirties. Snow can be found in the extreme north and south as well as the high mountains of the planet. Along the equatorial band, the seasons blend into two seasons, dry and wet. This seasonal variation usually only occurs in provinces such as Lac Viet and Kambu with higher than usual concentrations of humidity.

Shentang comprises of four major landmasses, each divided into several provinces. While the primary landmass is the continent of Zhongting, there are also several other landmasses on the planet: Henggu, the southern polar cap; Dōng

Bù, the eastern landmass; Saisei, the western continent; and the Thatonese Archipelago, south above Henggu.

STORMWATCH

Natural disasters on Shentang are a serious threat. Despite the planet being tectonically stable, periods of intense, dangerous weather activity manifest as powerful cold fronts and hail storms in the winter season and as hurricanes during summer and autumn. The summer and autumn seasons are referred to as the *'lùfēng jijié'*, literally hurricane season. These storms lash the edges of the Zhongting continent and have been known to affect Shentang's islands as well. Occasionally the storms move inland, at which point they have the capacity to damage the infrastructure of population centres. It isn't unheard of for small villages and towns to be wiped away by these storms, requiring resettlement of the survivors.

However, thanks to the size of the Zhongting continent and the oceans surrounding it, the storms travel a great distance before reaching the shores and population centres. This gives the people of Shentang time to prepare, reinforce their cities, and evacuate if necessary. The weather bureau of Shentang ensures the safety of the people with its dedicated storm watchers. This expansive team of climatologists and meteorologists maintain a constant watch on any storms that form over the oceans, using a network of watch points to observe any fluctuations off the coast of Shentang's landmasses. By using predictive algorithms and matching the effects of previous storms with present ones, they aim to ensure that the public is well prepared for any violent weather event. Considering the low number of fatalities and low figures of irreparable property damage, they have been successful so far.

MOUNTAINOUS RESOURCES

Although Shentang maintains a sizeable amount of flat, even ground to grow crops on, effective use of the mountains and hills of the planet ensures that maximum resources are available for exportation to other Yu Jingese territories in the Human Edge system and on Paradiso and Svarlarheima. Fortunately, many of the farmers who had immigrated from Earth had experience in terrace farming.

At present, the mountains of Shentang are as arable as the valleys below. Farms are built into the mountainside with large, carefully constructed terraces. This has effectively doubled the amount of land Shentang can use to farm, leading to a sizeable increase in food production and ensuring

THE SHENTANGESE LIFE

Though Shentang supports a vast variety of cultures drawn from Asia, the lives of its citizens are similar at the core. A majority of the population works in either agriculture or the industrial sectors of Shentang, but there are also specialists in a variety of fields.

The consistent truth for workers on Shentang is early mornings and long hours. The rural population tends to wake up early, especially farmers in the villages that lay between the mountains. Crop farmers must tend to their fields, many of which are large enough to warrant a person's attention for an entire day.

The industrial worker's schedule is much the same as the farmers. Most wake up early to work in the vast factories. Some supervise the enormous automated lines that produce technology or refine raw materials into packaged foods. Others are mechanics and delivery drivers.

The people of Shentang pride themselves in their hard work and dedication to achieve ever greater feats in their work. To support this drive, the people of Shentang are constantly bombarded by the StateEmpire's propaganda. Posters on the walls of buildings, advertisements from the government, and word of mouth carry the claim of Yu Jing's superiority and how it has earned this ascendancy thanks to the labours of its people. The StateEmpire's citizens are taught to dislike the empire's rival PanOceania and its 'lazy' claim of being the most successful superpower. The government suppresses information on the superpower's advancement to bolster the morale of its people.

This propaganda is used judiciously to inspire the morale of the citizenship and to promote a competitive spirit. Just as Yu Jing struggles to prove itself better than PanOceania, its citizens are matched against each other to prove their culture and region the greatest. The StateEmpire's politicians are skilful in their use of propaganda, maintaining a spirit of competition whilst also encouraging unity throughout of Shentang.

the StateEmpire has an effective surplus of food to draw on for expansion efforts. In addition, the terraces are among one of the beauties the planet has to hold. Carefully groomed crops and aesthetically pleasing climbs make the cliffs and mountains look like vibrant gardens, a point the StateEmpire is happy to boast about.

The mountains are also rich in ores, which has led to extensive mining. When a series of seams is discovered, the mountain is slowly and steadily harvested from the top down, to allow for careful removal of metals. After a seam is exhausted, procedural reinforcement of the mountain takes place. Packed earth and large supports are placed inside the mountain to ensure stability. This approach is used over conventional methods in the interest of safety and productivity, avoiding instability in the mountaintops by hollowing out their foundation. This method of mining also has the dual benefit of providing more land for use in farming or industrial construction. Several farms have been built into the sides of mountains that have been mined, building additional terraces into the crevasses left behind.

FLORA AND FAUNA

The ecosystem of Shentang is rugged but possesses an incredible element of mythology. Animals found on the planet bear striking resemblances to legendary creatures from across several Asian cultures. Many amongst the Yu Jingese population see this as proof of their destiny to be the greatest power of humanity; the legends of their past walk amongst them, and the world of Shentang is divine. Of course, the government is all but happy to capitalise on this coincidence. The Ministry of Science catalogued these creatures to share the names of the creatures they resemble.

Most numerous of these creatures is the Ki-rin, a horned equine creature known for its beauty, especially that of its mane. The Ki-rin was one of the first creatures to be domesticated on Shentang and is valued as a working animal, companion, and source of food. Some Ki-rin breeds are strong and fast, making excellent riding animals, and others are bred for endurance, so they are able to pull farming equipment and other devices. Most breeds are edible, and it is common for Ki-rin at the end of their working life to be put down humanely and eaten. In the rural areas of Shentang, this is normally carried out by the Ki-rin's owner, but larger farms are known to have a faster turnover, so they produce a steady supply of Ki-rin meat to package and sell. Several herds of wild Ki-rin are known to live in the countryside of Shentang, and

these herds are met with good will. The Ki-rin is considered a lucky animal by the communities of Shentang, and festivals are held during the herd's passing to ensure a splendid harvest season.

The flora of Shentang is a remarkable collection of strange and durable plants. Due to the slopes of the mountains and hills of the planet, creeping vines and winding trees are extremely common. These plants grow into and out of the cliff sides like large pieces of thread. Their sturdiness allows them to be used as handholds for climbing, but special care must be taken that vines and trees don't forcefully grow into the terraces on the mountainsides and destabilise the terraces.

The natural bushes and undergrowth of Shentang are durable and fast growing. Many species are deeply rooted, allowing their leaves, stalks, and fruits to be consumed by the wildlife but continuing to survive deep below the surface. This evolutionary quirk can be attributed to the intense storms of Shentang that require stability to survive.

Most of the plant life near the cities of Shentang is grown from imported species and include many culturally significant species of trees and flowers. Although these species spread with the population centres, they are still mostly confined to the areas of human cultivation across the planet.

APEX PREDATORS

Shentang's ecosystem contains many wondrous creatures, but not all of them are benevolent or tameable. Several majestic and sometimes horrific predators also call Shentang home and several of them fight for dominance in the unclaimed areas of Shentang's oceans, forests, and open plains. Safety is a priority when dealing with these animals, and deaths from them are low due to careful monitoring and managing methods as well as a strong citizen education system.

The Fenghuang is a large bird with a wing span reaching up to four metres wide. Its body is serpentine with plumage that has several different colours splashed across its body, and its tail feathers bearing a striking resemblance to the peacock of Earth. The Fenghuang mainly hunts smaller creatures but will occasionally scavenge food from the carrion from larger animals. A very territorial creature, all attempts at domesticating the bird have met with failure, although the bird is notably peaceful and rarely attacks humans unless provoked, which is a dangerous proposition considering the creature's razor-sharp talons and beak. It is considered a sign of good fortune if a Fenghuang roosts near a town or home, and it is common to offer small portions of food to earn the creature's



protection. Graceful and beautiful, the Fenghuang takes its place as a symbolic representation of the planet's spirit and beauty on the exterior of numerous official buildings across Shentang.

The monarchs of the oceans, kaliba are the undisputed top of the aquatic food chain. These enormous creatures can grow to be ten metres long and resemble whale sharks; however, the kaliba aggressively establishes its dominance by actively hunting and killing other predators before turning its attention to its more common prey. The kaliba is noticeable for its bright white and blue skin, four large fins, and barbed tail, which it uses as a kind of natural mace when it must defend its rear. Though the kaliba is known for its brutality, the creature is quite docile when not engaged directly. It prefers to conserve its energy for battles with both territorial and mating rivals. During mating season conversely, the leviathan will aggressively attack fishing vessels and any swimmers that approach its territory.

The fearsome Kuraimori Oni is native to the inland rivers and shores of Kuraimori. These massive, reptilian creatures have scales ranging from dark grey to pitch black, large mouths filled to the brim with jagged teeth that rip through prey with ease, and large horns to gore rival predators. They normally travel on all four of their legs but have the capability to stand on their hind legs and use their surprising manual dexterity to manipulate their surroundings with their claws. Most species of the Kuraimori Oni grow to be between two and three metres long. While many do not grow any larger than this due to the violent lives the species live, a rare few that survive have been known to grow to five metres in length. Their aggressive, territorial nature leads them into conflict with other Oni, and their infrequent hunting forays into deeper waters sometimes bring them into conflict with kaliba sharks while hunting in the ocean, sometimes leading to the hunter becoming the hunted. Thanks to careful observation, animal control, and their slow, dull nature, Kuraimori Oni do not pose much threat to humans. Occasionally though, a clueless human stumbles into the path of one of these brutish monsters and is unable to get away.

KIZUTSUITA Ō

An urban legend on Kuraimori, Kizutsuita Ō is reportedly the largest Kuraimori Oni ever seen. Witnesses speak of an Oni reaching the length of seven metres long, its smoke-coloured scales covered in enormous scars, and one of its horns snapped in two from some intense battle in its past. The creature was commonly adopted as the symbol of many young *Bōsōzoku* biker gangs in Sakuramachi and Kofuku.

destiny with its citizens for the StateEmpire's dabbling in crossbreeding. Several species of plants and animals on Shentang have desirable traits. By using a strict combination of genetic modification and interspecies breeding, the scientists of Yu Jing have improved the natural resources available to its people. The most notable success of this program is the Ki-rin.

Originally the species was lanky and inedible, but through careful modification several new branches of the species were created. Shentang designed a diverse number of breeds for strong working animals, useful methods of transportation, and an excellent food source. This success has driven the scientists of Yu Jing to expand their search for potential subjects to improve for the benefit of Shentang.

TRADITIONAL HERBALISM

Although the cities of Shentang boast intricate medicinal and scientific institutions, the rural areas of Shentang occasionally suffer from lack of medical attention due to seclusion and distance. This isn't purposefully done by the StateEmpire; development of infrastructure takes time to achieve. The small villages that dot the valleys of Shentang must make do with what they can, and in places where doctors are few and far between, a culture of traditional medicine has taken root. In the early days of settlement, traditional medicine practitioners found that the odd plants that surrounded the villages lent themselves so well to the old arts that they were almost magical in their applications.

One plant in particular, orange weed, is infamous in the cities for its deadly sap concentrate. Some villagers believe the flower can be used in correctly administered doses to 'kill' the sickness within a person. This tale has a grain of truth to it. Whilst the sap of the orange weed can accelerate the functions of a person's immune system, this is due to the state of stress and shock that the poison throws the body into. After the body has fought off the infection or sickness it was afflicted with, it is common for the immune system to be compromised due to overwork, which then leads to an almost-guaranteed follow-up sickness.

CROSSBREEDING AND HETEROGENEITY

To ensure the 'mythic' status of Shentang, the StateEmpire quietly encourages experimentation with crossbreeding to create a diverse number of species. The results achieved with this approach ensure each creature is unique, further enforcing the mystique of Shentang's wildlife.

There are reasons beyond reinforcing Shentang's

ECONOMY

The relationship between Yutang and Shentang is a special one, as each planet handles a basic need of Yu Jing. While Yutang handles the technical applications of the empire, Shentang is almost entirely focused on providing the raw materials needed to fuel Yu Jing's rise to ascendancy within the Human Sphere.

SINGULAR FOCUS

Almost all of Shentang's manpower is aimed at agriculture and industry. Within the cities of Shentang vast factories churn out hundreds of vehicles, devices, and building materials to be used across the empire. Efficiently spaced and carefully maintained, the factories are almost entirely automated, ensuring a constant stream of products make it out on a timely basis at a high standard of quality.

The tireless pace set by Shentang's automated assembly lines is supported by the people that maintain them. Most factories on Shentang operate on a carefully constructed schedule of shift workers. These comprise of quality testers, mechanics to ensure the machinery maintains functionality, programmers to maintain the virtual element of the facilities, and foremen to orchestrate the efforts of the variety of workers. Whilst this method would normally decrease the number of workers required, it is a testament to the sheer, monolithic nature of Shentang's industry that unemployment, even in industrial areas, is incredibly low. The size of factories and the rotations of the workers encourage a healthy economy.

Outside of the cities, the vast collection of farming towns and villages work to feed the billions of Yu Jingese people across the Sphere. Thousands of kilometres of farmland are built around collection

and processing centres that are linked to the spaceports of Shentang. Food is then either shipped off world or redistributed across the planet.

The unique distribution of Shentang's ethnic populations into provinces means that differing skill sets and farming techniques are allowed to flourish. Each province excels in the production of a specific kind of crop. Through a carefully managed planetary network, this individual focus and assignment of particular regions' strengths allows for the highest standards to be reached, ensuring the best quality in foods and resources.

WAR EFFORT

Shentang is also the centre for Yu Jing's military production. Yutang handles the cutting-edge weaponry and devices that allow Yu Jing to equal its opponents in the field, but it is Shentang that produces the vast standard armoury of the Yu Jingese military complex.

Yu Jing's mastery of power armoured warfare stems from their ability to produce the suits *en masse* from the factories of Shentang. Hundreds of suits and their armaments are completed each day, guaranteeing that Yu Jing maintains superiority through sheer numbers. Each suit is built to a masterful standard, and it is due to the careful construction and planning put into the industrial complexes of Shentang that such a monolithic enterprise is possible.





Although PanOceania's TAG technology is objectively greater than Yu Jing's, the TAGs of the StateEmpire are not to be underestimated. As with the power armour and weaponry, the TAGs of Yu Jing are built quickly, efficiently, and to the highest standard achievable.

Through the efforts of Shentang's industrial grind, the armies of Yu Jing are kept well equipped and ready for war. New technologies are seamlessly integrated into the standing forces due to rapid construction and superior logistical networking, allowing the Yu Jing army to remain at the cutting edge and a close second for the Human Sphere's most powerful force.

The recent engagements with the Evolved Intelligence and its Combined Army on Paradiso has created an even greater demand for technological advancement and weapons production. Yu Jing refuses to be on the side-line of the war for humanity's fate, stepping up the strength and size of its army. Recruitment drives and propaganda have become common in the cities of Shentang, increasing the standing army and the armaments for it by leaps and bounds. The StateEmpire is careful to maintain regulation on this output however, to preserve its economy's strength rather than drain it.

THE OCEANS

Shentang's oceans that cover the planet are compositionally similar to Earth's own oceans. The oceans themselves are unremarkable in this regard, featuring few standout elements as opposed to Yutang's slightly higher alkalinity. The contents of these oceans – the plants, animals, and microorganisms – are by and large the more interesting facet of the waters. The underwater geography of Shentang tends to be shallower than other planets in the Human Sphere. The deepest point of Shentang's oceans are the Yinjiao Deeps, a large cluster of crevasses and underwater canyons that reach a depth of 9,786 metres.

CHENQI OCEAN

The Chenqi Ocean covers the further northern hemisphere of Shentang and contains brisk waters compared to the warmer regions of the equator. Though the waters are cold, they are nowhere near as cold as the far southern regions. Ice core dating of the few tiny ice drifts that sit in the centre of the ocean suggest that Shentang once had a second polar cap aside from the Henggu shelf. Of all the oceans, Chenqi tends to be the calmest, as few storms develop in the northern reaches of the ocean. There are few edible fish in the Chenqi

Ocean due to the low temperature of the waters and large populations of aggressive predators; fishing is undesirable much to the frustration of northern Kuraimori.

Despite the lack of fishing efforts on the ocean, it is no stranger to ships and boats. Chenqi is the playground to sailors of all walks of life and wealth. Everything from cruise liners to speed boats finds the Chenqi Ocean the perfect place to relax and enjoy the art of sailing. This popularity previously stemmed from Motobushima, a small town in the north of Kuraimori, but due to the Uprising, Motobushima is a hotzone and sore spot for the StateEmpire, and very few foreigners are allowed near the town.

LANG HAI OCEAN

The Lang Hai Ocean covers the ends of the southern hemisphere. Unlike the Chenqi Ocean, the Lang Hai Ocean is frigid and unforgiving, owing its brutal temperature to its proximity to the Henggu polar cap. Fishing is also rare in these waters, as they are the territory of an arctic subspecies of the kaliba, which is far more aggressive than its northern cousin due to scarcity of resources. The few fish that survive in this climate are either eaten by the kaliba or are not plentiful enough to sustain a large population. The region is ideal for the testing of naval weaponry developed in the Henggu region, as the scarcity of natural resources and distance from any major population zones ensures safety.

QINGLENGYUANG OCEAN

The Qinglengyuang Ocean sits to the east of Zhongting and makes up the largest ocean of Shentang. Unlike the northern Chenqi Ocean and southern Lang Hai Ocean, the Qinglengyuang Ocean sits close to the equator, offering warmer waters, plentiful fish, and harvestable aquatic plant life. The fishing industry is strong in the Qinglengyuang Ocean, drawing fishers from Thaton, Nakhonthai, Koguryo, and Kuraimori. Factories are commonly built on the shores of these provinces to capitalise on ocean industries, though efforts have been put in place to ensure that all fishing done is sustainable. The StateEmpire took to heart the negative effects of overfishing from Earth.

This effort has done little to stop illegal trades from exploiting the natural resources, however. Unlicensed fishing is common in the Qinglengyuang Ocean as off-world poachers and lawbreakers seek to catch and peddle the rarest fish species of the planet, even if they are approaching endangerment and extinction. The StateEmpire works tirelessly to curb this illegal industry by offering harsher and harsher

punishments for those caught, though some believe this is more to establish dominance than protect the ecosystem.

YINJIAO OCEAN

The Yinjiao Ocean lies between the continents of Zhongting and Dōng Bù. Home to the deepest points on Shentang, it is also the birthplace of many of Shentang's storms. The ocean's width is enough to maintain cool winds across its surface, and the landmasses surrounding it allow warmer air to be swept out into the ocean. This fusion makes the formation of storms much more likely over Yinjiao Ocean compared to anywhere else on the planet.

To safeguard the population and industry, watch points on the coast maintain a constant surveillance on the ocean to ensure it is safe to travel and work on each day, and regular bulletins are posted by the Ministry of Science to the citizenship. While the storm danger is low, fishing vessels and cargo ships travel between Zhongting and Dōng Bù, delivering constructed technology and food to the hubs on Zhongting.

Many mining operations have taken place in the Yinjiao Ocean in recent years, as deep-sea exploration and surveying missions reveal untapped resources in ever deeper points of the ocean. It is becoming more and more common to find organisations willing to deploy teams to these depths, though it remains to be seen whether an industry will form out of the underwater reserves.

BENSHEN ARCHIPELAGO

Benshen Archipelago sits at the bottom of the Zhongting continent, separated by a strait of water and sitting side by side with Tianjing Island. The islands of the archipelago are recently believed to be a former part of the landmass of the super-continent, submerged by rising water levels and low terrain. Samples of the wildlife and ecology of the archipelago match the same genetic markers present on the mainland.

For the most part, the archipelago's ecosystem mirrors the rest of Shentang. There are slight genetic divergences noticed in the animals of the island, most likely from insular evolutionary trees. One famous example of this is the strange subspecies of *planti* rattler that has grown on the island. Normally an airborne attacker, the lack of tall trees and cliff faces on Benshen's islands led the rattlers of the archipelago to favour small nests inside the trunks of these shorter trees. Dubbed the Benshen rattler, they lurk in these tree dens and crevasses, using their rattle-like tail as bait, until an

unsuspecting bird or small, climbing animal tries to eat the bait. They then strike and drag the animal into their burrow to feed on.

Benshen currently remains largely unoccupied, holding a minuscule amount of Shentang's population. However, the settlements that have been constructed on the islands of the archipelago are beginning to congregate into large towns with equally large factories. But the number of settlers and places available for settlements is disproportional to the amount of manpower needed to properly conduct farming and industrial efforts.

TIANJING ISLAND

Home of the Renying settlement, Tianjing shares many similarities with its neighbouring islands. The temperature is fair, erring on the side of cold, and supports a diverse range of species. Unlike the Benshen Archipelago, however, the island is well adapted to the growth of crops and animals. For this reason, it was selected as the location for the farms that will one day fuel the twin settlements of Zhubin and Renying.

The island currently supports a population of just a few hundred, working to survey and catalogue the land so that it might one day be carefully made arable. There are a few challenges in this process, however. Though the land on the island tends to be flat, the centre is host to a collection of small mountains. These mountains are oddly shaped, some bearing deep pockets within them. The resulting instability is an issue for any future settlers, as farming and mining would be hazardous within the ranges.

Surveyors have attempted to discover what made these deep holes within the mountains, as each hole seems artificial. At present, the few expeditions sent haven't been able to discover either what made the holes or how deep within the mountains they go. Settlers around the range report hearing loud roaring sounds in the night, which scientists believe to be the sound of the wind passing through the mountains holes and dislodging earth. Superstition has led some to believe that large, tunnelling creatures might dwell in the caves.

ZHUBIN AND RENYING SETTLEMENT

The first of the self-sufficient communities built on Benshen Archipelago, the twin settlements of Zhubin and Renying were constructed with economic stability in mind. The settlements boast far-reaching farms that support a large assortment of crops. The fields are carefully arranged and managed to ensure efficiency and ease of use, as if they have been prepared in case of an under-skilled workforce. Large, automated factories produce the



necessary equipment and technology for these growing communities. Like the farms that surround the settlements, the factories have been designed with advanced programs designed to ease new workers into their roles, handing over small portions of the facility's functions until the average human labour capabilities expected of a factory of Shentang have been reached.

Large habitation complexes make up the core of the settlements, featuring housing for hundreds of thousands of citizens. These complexes are carefully arranged to allow the construction of more facilities either vertically or laterally, permitting simple expansion. At present, a vast amount of these homes lay unoccupied, with more being built each day. The government of the StateEmpire describes these facilities as preparation for the additional workers who will man the ever-expanding farms and factories, which are already beginning to produce results. The government, when questioned on the timetable to begin the settlement process for additional workers, always responds by confirming that they are still vetting the next wave of citizens to move to the settlements of Zhubin and Renying. The circular pattern has thrown the public off so far, only earning slight confusion. The people trust their government, and they surely wouldn't waste money and resources on a pair of settlements they don't intend to use. And so, construction goes on.

The transient population of the two settlements is mainly made up of builders, engineers, project managers, farmers, and foremen for the factories. These men and women form carefully managed skeleton crews that ensure the automated processes continue to work, granting the illusion of a fully functional pair of settlements. These operations are carefully overseen by the military police of the StateEmpire who ensure that the narrative of a bustling new expansion to Shentang's community remains the public truth.

Rumours abound amongst the planet's conspiracy theorists as to the precise nature of the settlements. Some believe the islands are secretly the home to military facilities in the process of being built. They attribute the low number of 'civilian' personal and high number of state sanctioned officials as evidence. Others think the settlements are for the next wave of settlers from Earth, or at least the redistribution of others from Shentang and Yutang. The more excitable of their number believe that the settlements and constructions funded by either criminal organisations or terrorist groups that have infiltrated the governments, or that even the government is creating a new kind of top-secret prison to house 'political dissidents'.

In truth, the settlements were built on the recommendation of Sun Tze. Unknown to most of Yu Jing's population, the war for positioning on Paradiso isn't going as well as the StateEmpire Army had hoped it would. The advanced technologies of the Combined Army steal a bit more ground each day. Sun Tze recommended the construction of the twin settlements to have a location to resettle refugees in the case of the Combined Army's victory.

Viewed with this knowledge in mind, the location of the settlements makes more sense. They are distant from other populous areas of the planet, allowing for suppression of details about the Combined Army. The StateEmpire would be able prevent panic over the incident of Paradiso. Adding this to the large facilities, many of which are geared towards the production of weaponry and defensive measures, a recently displaced people with a grudge to settle sounds like quite the productive workforce in the race to rearm and retaliate against an alien menace.

GANDAKPUR

In the northern stretches of Zhongting lies the vast mountainous province of Gandakpur, the home of modern Tibetan Buddhism. The terrain of Gandakpur is harsh, including both the highest points on Shentang and some of its coldest weather outside of Henggu. Naturally, this land was considered the best land for the Tibetan people to settle, because the sheer climbs mirror the ranges of Tibet. The people of Gandakpur are humble, hard-working folk, content in the tried and true methods of their ancestors.

SHAMBHALA

High in the sacred mountains of Ohaunati sits Shambhala, the capital of Gandakpur. Built on a plateau hidden in the mountains, the city is an architectural masterpiece, an incredible fusion of modern construction and traditional methods. The outward appearance of the city is deceptively simple, but within, one finds carefully planned structures that intersect with lovingly crafted temples and monasteries built in the traditions and styles of the Gelug sect of Buddhism, which currently is the dominant school of the religion in practice.

The city is built into the mountain it rests on, giving the city the appearance of a man-made mountain. Because of the city's dedication to the Buddhist faith, there is little room for agriculture and industry, a rarity for a city of Shentang. Instead, Shambhala serves as a spiritual centre for the Buddhist faith, as well as a place of learning. Large

schools and universities sit alongside the monasteries, and the brightest of Shentang's students mingle with the monks of the holy city.

Shambhala also hosts the current Dalai Lama, Nyima Dhama, who remains a figure of intense respect and reverence, especially amongst the villages of Gandakpur. The monks make frequent trips around the Human Sphere, participating in peace talks, humanitarian efforts, and occasionally lecturing in history and politics. Though they maintain official loyalty to the Party, they are often amongst the first to criticise their actions.

TING AND THE PEOPLE OF GANDAKPUR

Nestled in a valley beneath the capital of Shambhala, the village of Ting is named for the shape of its surroundings. The walls surrounding the town resemble a cup, with a natural lake within the centre. Reminiscent of the bowl used in the *yonchap* water offering ceremony, the name stuck amongst the locals.

The people of Ting are amongst the most devout of the many towns and villages of Gandakpur. Farms spread throughout the valley, and each day the farmers draw water from the central lake to water their crops. This practice has been followed from the first days of the Tibetan settlement and represents the staunch dedication to tradition that many Gandakpurians maintain.

As in Ting, all of the villages of Gandakpur maintain a strong dedication to tradition, normally eschewing new technologies to maintain their practice of the old, tested ways. This, combined with a small

base population, means the economy of Gandakpur is slow but stable, most of the food being grown within the province being used to feed its people. The rest is exported out to the rest of Shentang and beyond.

DAILING

Home to the Uyghur people, Dailing is a dream come true for the minority. On Earth, they were a speck in the vast population of China, but on Shentang they have gained the room to grow into a powerful community. Dailing is home to a strong logging industry that clears room for plantations and fields to be raised.

SHAN YU

The province's capital and the heart of Dailing's industrial and mining force, Shan Yu's city centre is dominated by the presence of the monolithic Gang Tie corporation's factory. The colossal facility handles the construction of a vast array of vehicles including cars, farming vehicles, logging trucks, maglev carriages, and more. The corporation is known for the production of their signature Guija TAGs, but the facility in Shan Yu is dedicated to civilian and corporate vehicles.

Most of the city's citizens find work in the factory or the mining facilities surrounding it. Housing blocks are commonly built beside said facilities, acting as low-cost residences for the workers. These apartments are cheap, surprisingly luxurious, and an excellent place to live, provided one can ignore the endless grinding of the factories and mining equipment.

THE MODERN BUDDHISM

The Human Sphere has advanced in leaps during the past hundred years, and the practitioners of Buddhism have been faced with an evolving understanding of the human condition. Cubes are a controversial topic within the Buddhist faith and scholars have argued about their function almost endlessly since their inception. Some view them as an escape from *samsara*, whilst others argue they are a false reincarnation that leads to chaos, creating a false mirror of the person they are imitating whilst the true soul passes onto a new form. The advent of transhumanism, the rebirth of oneself into digital form, has also sparked intense theological debate within the halls of Shambhala. The process of self-digitisation represents an ascendance from mortal worries and suffering, but to date no Buddhist has attempted the process. The common belief is that the process will simply trap the soul in a state of perpetual emptiness. Rumours are that the current Dalai Lama intends to attempt the process of self-digitisation to settle the debate once and for all.

THE NEW UYGHUR HOMELAND

The Uyghur people were surprised when they were selected for the immigration process to Shentang. Out of the multitudes of China's minorities, why them? Upon arrival to Dailing, they quickly discovered why.

Within the centre of the Dailing desert laid vast mineral deposits ready for the taking, and the Uyghur people had the most experience with arid conditions thanks to their former homeland of Xinjiang. Early on, the conditions were intense. The desert was harsh but habitable due to the presence of the massive inland sea of Lüzhōu.

After desalination facilities secured a constant influx of water, the Uyghur people began excavation. During this time, the city of Shan Yu grew into the industrial capital it is today, a testament to the perseverance of its inhabitants. Settlements sprouted up outside the desert, and deforestation commenced to ensure a constant supply of food reached Shan Yu. Soon after, the province of Dailing grew a strong population to support its industry.

Dailing is a jewel in the crown of Shentang, a remarkable achievement only made possible by the hard work of the Uyghur people. They hold great pride in their works and aspire to ever greater heights in the Yu Jingese community.

THE SACRED MOUNTAINS OF OHAUNATI

The peaks of the Ohaunati range are the tallest on Shentang, reaching 9,121 metres in elevation. This incredible height attracts many kinds of visitors, most who wish to attempt scaling the range and enter the list of those who have stood at the top of Shentang.

It is common practice amongst the monks of Shambhala to attempt this climb themselves. The belief is that the climb brings one closer to the inner self, allowing for greater focus in meditation and introspection.



SIBAI ISLAND

Sibai Island serves as the heart of Shentang's Bureau of Meteorology, the home to the Sibai Watchpoint, and the centre of the storm watchers' web of information. Each watch point on the planet reports in to Sibai and its team. From Sibai Island, the watchpoint is able to observe the Yinjao Ocean, which is the most common point of origin for storms on Shentang.

The Uyghur people have remained predominantly Muslim through the years and retain strong ties with the people of Haqqislam. When Haqqislam requested to build an embassy, it was their request that the facility be built in Shan Yu to be closer to their brothers and sisters. Because of this, Shan Yu has access to some of the best medical options on Shentang. The StateEmpire is careful to monitor the people of Shan Yu for any dissension due to this bond, ensuring that Dailing remains in their hands.

HALA BASHI

The city of Hala Bashi is a symbol of great pride and patriotism to the people of Dailing. Named for the Uyghur general who served during the Ming dynasty, the city serves as the hub for the Uyghur Regimental Combat Force (U.R.D.F), a regional branch of the Shentang military. Hala Bashi maintains the training facilities for the regional force, and their weapons and armour are supplied from Shan Yu's own factories. The city is also close to Mubalik and its renowned Instruction Centre, which is where ardent Uyghur travel to take their Invincible vows.

Within the city square, sitting across from the centre of governance, stands a statue of the famed general Hala Bashi. The young hopefuls of Dailing look to the statue to remind them of their duty to Yu Jing and their part in the StateEmpire's glorious destiny. It's no small surprise that the Party commissioned its construction.

HENGGU

Henggu is the singular polar cap of Shentang and a mystery to most of the inhabitants of the planet. The ice shelf is plagued by rumours of all sorts; every kind of explanation is given, from the mythical to wild conspiracies, to every kind of question asked by the Yu Jingese people.

The secrecy of the location can be explained simply. Henggu has been given over to military training and scientific pursuits. Each of these pursuits is classified and restricted to ensure privacy for the personnel that occupy the arctic shelf, as well as the safety of any classified documents and research.

The Yu Jingese army uses Henggu for training its soldiers in the climates of foreign planets, most notably Svalarheima. They are taught basic survival skills, endurance, and trekking to ensure they are able to operate in the adverse conditions of arctic zones without constant support. As the conflict on Svalarheima increases and de-escalates every few years, the garrison on Henggu grows and shrinks in

similar fashion. More military boots on the ice shelf usually equates to a higher probability of hostilities.

In the way of scientific discovery, many military technologies are created and tested out in the open spaces of Henggu. The adverse conditions lend well to stress testing, and power armour is routinely tested on the shelf to ensure it is able to withstand intense temperature whilst keeping its wearer alive. Incredible leaps have been made on Henggu for pilot survivability, including the standard of heat regulation lining that all power armour comes equipped with in Yu Jing. The emptiness of Henggu also allows for live fire exercises when a new firearm or explosive requires testing whilst ensuring secrecy.

Beyond military science, several state-sanctioned scientists and engineers find their home and work on Henggu, researching and developing everything from transportation and spacecraft to biological manipulation techniques. Protected by a garrison of fine soldiers and the information blackout imposed by the government, Henggu is one of the safest locations on Shentang, deadly cold weather aside.

HOU TU

The overpopulation of Singapore became a dangerous issue in the late 21st century. Commercial building couldn't keep pace with the population explosion on Earth, leading to mass homelessness and overcrowding. Hou Tu was Yu Jing's solution to the problem. Seventy-five percent of Singapore's population was relocated to the province of Hou Tu in the first years of Shentang's settlement, alleviating the beleaguered city and rapidly enabling Hou Tu to become the successful province it is.

LANG GANG

The capital of Hou Tu, Lang Gang was built in the image of Singapore and its virtues by a homesick people. Lang Gang is situated on the coast and is a massive port city and commercial giant in the economy of Shentang.

The centre of Lang Gang is a forest of sleek skyscrapers, each the residence to one of the many businesses that make their home on Shentang. Industrial giants such as the Gang Tie Corporation built the heart of their enterprises in Lang Gang before spreading across the planet. Immense stock markets and travel companies bring incredible amount of business people to the capital to invest in the future of Shentang. Many call Lang Gang the largest market in Yu Jing, as any man or woman with money, connections, and the necessary drive can buy and sell anything within the city to places across the Human Sphere.

For all its glamour and cleanliness, Lang Gang is also home to a large illicit network comprised of several criminal organisations. Immense amounts of money pass through Lang Gang, and the Triads consider it their business to use and take from the stream as much as they can.

WANHOU

The sister city to Lang Gang, Wanhou houses a specialized but important market, the production of quantronic technology processors. This vital resource ensures that Wanhou is an economic goldmine, as the city produces more processors per labourer than any other city within Yu Jing's empire.

Specialised factories dominate the landscape of Wanhou, each dedicated to quantronic development. The largest of these facilities, the Changhe Dynamics factory, works at all hours of the day, stopping only when raw materials cease to flow in or on mandated holidays of the StateEmpire. Even on these days, it isn't uncommon for the Party to grant permission to the facilities to continue work in order to maintain the supply for an ever-increasing demand.

The competition in Wanhou is always high, which is something actively encouraged by the Party. It isn't uncommon for a worker to arrive at their factory to discover it under new management. The government is a major shareholder in many of the enterprises and uses the competitiveness to not only keep the industry strong, but also reap financial rewards from the stock fluctuations. As long as the factories keep working, the Party sees no reason to intervene.

Wanhou's quantronic market has been known to attract espionage and intrigue like flies to honey. Contingents of the StateEmpire's best police forces are constantly on alert in the city, to dissuade sabotage, theft, and laundering.

KALLANG

Nestled by the headwater of the Seletar River, Kallang is far removed from the stress and bustle of Lang Gang and Wanhou. A successful and popular resort town, Kallang caters to Shentangese and off-worlders alike. The town is comprised of a series of resorts and travel companies that are built into the side of the mountains. The views are splendid, and the majestic looking fish caught in the Seletar River dazzle and amaze tourists.

Kallang is also famous for the underground streams and creeks that flow beneath the nearby mountains, which are full of strange creatures and

plants that seem alien even when compared to the mythical standard set by the rest of Shentang's wildlife. Tourists delight in observing these oddities, which are, for the most part, harmless. Access to the deeper sections of the mountain is restricted due to strange reports of dangerous creatures, though the owners of the resorts are adamant that this is nothing to fear.

KAMBU

A province covered in heavy jungles, Kambu is the home of some of Yu Jing's best weaponsmiths, and its settlers were drawn from the highlands of Cambodia. Kambu's factories accounts for a quarter of the StateEmpire Army's weapon production and half its munitions production. The arms industry is a specialty in Kambu, though the province also holds strong investments in chemical and mineral refinement as well as agriculture.

KAMPUBANG

Kampubang is a pragmatic city built into the deep jungles of Kambu and the new homeland of the Khmer Loue, the native people of highland Cambodia. Of note is the city's architecture, carefully designed to be protected from the damp conditions of the jungle, utilizing raised buildings, reinforced walls, and intricate dehumidification systems. It was here that the Khmer Loue led the efforts in developing the methods used by the rest of Kambu in protecting fragile technology and facilities from moisture exposure.

Although Kampubang was the first city to be founded in Kambu, it isn't the capital of the province. Kampubang fights a constant battle with the surrounding jungles and has found it difficult to expand over the years. To the descendants of the settlers that founded the city, however, it will always remain an important piece of their history.

KOMPONG MERA

A distance from the shores of Kambu and deep in the jungle's heart lays Kompong Mera, the city of agricultural commerce and bioresearch. Using the lessons learnt from Kampubang, Kompong Mera was built as a joint action between several provinces' workers to create an inland city in Kambu capable of sustained growth. Dedicated teams of 'gardeners' keep the carefully established highways free of overgrowth to ensure trade continues hassle free, while renowned research scientists push boundaries in the areas of biomedicine and bioindustry. A series of maglevs and an airport also allow a constant influx of traders and businesspeople.



Kompong Mera holds a reputation as the nexus of Zhongting's agricultural market. Crops and plant species from across the continent are on display in the vast markets of Kompong Mera, where provinces from across Shentang can share the latest discoveries in new species and growing techniques. Modern biomedicines and bioindustrial techniques that have not yet become commonplace can also be appraised at the various bioresearch labs spread across the city.

The diverse research collection has spawned several corporate-sponsored laboratories to spring up within the city, each dedicated to studying the strange hybrids and super plants that emerge from Shentang's diverse ecosystem, before refining and distributing them through Kompong Mera's markets. This method of dispersal keeps the agricultural efforts of Shentang modern and dynamic, encouraging growth and profit.

SAMBOR DUK

Sambor Duk, the city of guns and ammunition, holds the status as the largest manufacturing collective of firearms on Shentang. Incredible amounts of firearms and ammunition are made in Sambor Duk, which houses a proud tradition of expert weapon crafting. Some of the best armourers and weaponsmiths in the StateEmpire make their home in the city.

Sambor Duk is easily recognizable for the vast chain of factories and development facilities that stretch along the coastline of Kambu's western shore. Each facility is dedicated to the production of military equipment and is carefully overseen by contingents of the StateEmpire Army. The facilities themselves are surrounded by dense jungle which hides the rest of the city.

The downtown and residential areas of Sambor Duk are carefully built into the jungle. This large collection of buildings is designed to synergise with the jungle rather than overpower it. The architects of the city drew their inspiration from the *wats* of Cambodia, Thailand, and Laos, building their city to harness the natural splendour of the jungle. This method of building serves to hide the majority of the city for a variety of reasons. The thick jungle helps to block the sound of the factories and protect the city from invaders through virtue of density. An unprepared attacker will find their ordnance prematurely detonating in the dense forest canopy over vital population points, allowing the citizens to retreat to safety at designated shelter points.

Due to this city's status and function as the heart of Yu Jing's military, it is a source of pride and trepidation for the StateEmpire. Defences are judiciously

built in Sambor Duk to prevent foreign forces from capturing the vital factories.

KARKORIN

Home to the Mongolian immigrants from Earth, Karkorin is a region mainly comprised of large plains and forests. In the centre of the province stands an impressive mountain range. Though these mountains can't compare in height to the mountains of Ohaunati, the minerals within them are dense and rich, leading to mining efforts on several of the mountains.

Some of the population still practice and master horsemanship and, true to their nomadic ancestry, travel across the province with the Ki-rin herds that dwell on the continent. These Ki-rin are prized steeds for recreation and sporting, possessing a personality and drive uncommon amongst their kind.

SUFBAATAR

Sufbaatar is a small port city found on the eastern edge of Karkorin's coast and handles nearly all of the export needs for the Dōng Bù continent. Timber, mining goods, food, and vehicles produced in Karkorin and Dailing are ferried to the ports of Sufbaatar and shipped across the relatively safe northern reaches of the Yinjiao oceans to the port of Lac Long Quan.

The city possesses a relatively small population, as much of the Karkorin population make their home inland to pursue agriculture and mining. This small presence of locals is bolstered by the transient population gained from Dailing and Lac Viet sailors and traders.

Of particular note in Sufbaatar is the military facility that harbours the Blue Wolves, an elite TAG operation unit in the StateEmpire Army. Famed for their nomadic manoeuvres, the unit excels in long-range operations with minimal support. Such is their fame that the members of the unit are idolised and treated as celebrities by the inhabitants of Sufbaatar and Karkorin. The unit's drills commonly attract several unauthorised viewers, something the soldiers secretly relish. To be accepted into the ranks of the prestigious unit is the dream of many young Karkorinian, and the Blue Wolves have inspired generations of soldiers to join the StateEmpire Army.

KOGURYO

Upon arrival to the province of Koguryo, the Korean settlers assigned to the province were faced with an issue. The land provided many counterintuitive problems for the construction of cities. Dense forests and marshlands offered an unstable and unpredictable geography. It was only through perseverance that Koguryo was moulded into the industrial giant it is today.

Koguryo stands as one of the most industrialised locations on Shentang with vast swathes of land dedicated to factories and other facilities. The cities of the province tend to be smaller than other locations on Shentang but are consistently comfortable and luxurious, catering to a thrilling nightlife and a recreational culture.

KORYO

Koryo is the capital of Koguryo, and one of the most enjoyable places on Shentang. The city can only be described as a perpetual party, with nightclubs, casinos, red-light districts, and everything in between to offer a place to play for the high rollers of the Sphere's society. There is never a moment that the city is truly sleeping; the guests of the city rage through the night with hard alcohols and drugs. The sheer amount of money that passes through Koryo is incredible, both legal and not.

Due to the large exchange of money via gambling and tourism, there is a natural order of competition and crime to be found in Koryo. The monolithic casino companies and the crime lords that benefit from their earnings engage in a secret war for control of the city's cash flow, employing every underhanded method at their disposal. Corporate espionage, robbery, and violence are common occurrences in the city, perpetuated for the purpose of superiority by the stakeholders of the industry.

Most of this violence occurs in Dungii, better known as the Nest. The Nest is the central neighbourhood of Koryo, a dense complex of housing, casinos, and businesses. Here the Triads, who rule from Yutang with an iron fist, once battled against the Yakuza for control of the city. The two gangs held interests in the businesses of Koryo, many of them serving as laundering fronts, drug dens, or simply drawing in revenue from gambling. Both of the organisations sought to lay claim to the immense cashflow in Koryo. With the suppression of the Nipponese population, and by proxy the Yakuza, the streets have fallen into the hands of the Triads and opened the door for the return of the Jopok, the Korean mafia, who are pushing hard to regain credibility in the Koryo underworld.

Despite its bloody reputation, Dungii is quite the affluent place to live. Befitting a city of Koguryo, the standards of life are high, enhanced by ready access to the latest in lifestyle and entertainment





technology. This opulence has drawbacks; the populace tends to be complacent and easily exploitable. To say the Nest has a problem with the drug trade and loan industry would be an understatement. It is common for a poor soul to owe money to the wrong people before disappearing into the night. But in a city where the drunk and disorderly drop off the radar every day, there is little anyone can do to find them.

Due to the nature of Koryo, protection is a vital institution. Money and secrets must be hidden from the wandering eyes of law enforcement and rivals. The private security industry in Koryo has grown to prominence because of this. Hackers work with software developers to develop ironclad security networks protected from all manner of cybercrime. Locksmiths and hired guards create secure vaults that some consider second only to Tunguskan quality. The standard of protection in Koryo is such that it isn't uncommon for all manner of Yu Jingese politicians and career criminals to hide their secrets in the facilities located in the depths of the city.

Successful heists are rare in the city because of this. It would take more than a simple team of robbers to crack the layers of defence. Weaponised assaultware burns the quantronics of would be hackers, advanced REMs stalk the trap filled halls of the deepest vaults, and identity scanners sit at the entrance of each corridor. Only the best of the best could crack the shell of Koryo's greatest vaults and secure the vast wealth of money and secrets that lie within.

PAEKCHE

Paekche forms the centre of the industrial works of Koguryo. Each of the vast number of companies caters to a specific kind of device or technology. For the most part, these companies compete with the technology companies of Kuraimori and are struggling for a dominance in an already saturated market.

Though the factories of Paekche mostly develop small, everyday devices, the speciality of the Korean companies is communications technology. Comlogs and all manner of quantronic communication devices are constructed here. The expertise shown in this field has led to many military contracts within Paekche and the subsequent development of several small facilities dedicated to the expansion of military-class communications technology.

Paekche handles a large swath of the StateEmpire Army's internal communication needs, leading to its classification as an important location, similar to the city of Sambor Duk. Secrecy and defence are

taken very seriously in the centre of the city where the facilities are based. A Yǎnjīng operations base has been constructed to defend the factories and a permanent contingent of Municipal Police has been stationed there. These combined forces work together to ensure the classified technology of Paekche makes it into the hands of the StateEmpire and no one else.

SILLA

The spaceport of Silla is commonly mistaken for the capital of Shentang. A vast, sprawling nexus of activity, the city of Silla handles an incredible amount of interplanetary traffic, serving as one of the vital links between Shentang and Yutang.

Originally, the city of Silla served as a simple fishing community. Built on the coast of the inland sea of Zhongting, the community of Silla achieved an acceptable amount of success. As the infrastructure of Shentang expanded, so did the demands required of its import and export capabilities. A spaceport was deemed necessary, and due to the stable geometry and proximity to the equator, Silla was chosen as the location for the undertaking.

After being linked in geosynchronous orbit with the space station of No-Dong 3, Silla experienced a sudden influx of people. Travellers and traders used the elevator at Silla, and the town exploded into life. It wasn't long before the town became a city, supporting its own economy. Large shipping yards and warehouses sprang up across the shoreline.

To accommodate for the immense influx of residents, the people of Silla had to improvise. Temporary housing could be found in the small fleet of watercraft that the low-income earners of Silla used. More and more ships found themselves docked with the ports, waiting for the housing to be built. But the economic needs of the town always came first; housing took a back seat to storage facilities and supports for the elevator. Eventually, the ships became a necessity as the influx of citizens became too great to control, and so the companies decided to build outward.

The result of these efforts is the neighbourhood of Hamdaes, a small floating city and home to the people of Silla. Life on the water has fostered a different existence from that found in the other cities of Shentang. Fishing is a vital part of Hamdae, with many facilities built into the floating city that allow for easy access to the inland sea for fishing to sustain the community. The people of the floating neighbourhoods that dot Koguryo are closer and more insular than other places on Shentang, and none are more so than Hamdae.

This insular community hasn't become a negative aspect to the government, however. An intense loyalty to the community has also translated to an unease of foreign powers. The StateEmpire's politicians are sure to exploit this fear to turn the people of Hamdae and the other floating cities towards loyalty to the Party and the Dragon.

LUANG-SOKEO

Settled by the Laotian people of southern China, the province of Luang-Sokeo is dominated by fertile soil and temperate hills. The workable terrain allows the province to act as a strong agricultural hub, growing a wide variety of crops that have difficulty growing in the harsher climates of the planet.

LANE XANG

The town of Lane Xang is built near the central mountain ranges, far from the verdant inland of Luang-Sokeo's western reaches. The town handles the unpleasant task of chemical and refined substance production. Pesticides and other chemicals used by farmers to protect their crops from Shentang's strange wildlife are all produced in Lane Xang.

Due to the hazardous and unpleasant nature of the work in Lane Xang, it is rare to see children or other vulnerable people in the town's limits. Most of the population is made up of young workers looking to save enough to start a life in one of Shentang's more opportunity-rich cities or late middle-age workers waiting for retirement in their last stable position.

NAM LOUEY

Nam Louey is a national park, one of the few on Shentang. As the mission statement of Shentang is to continue increasing production and agriculture levels to meet the needs of the ever expanding StateEmpire, there isn't much ground considered sacred enough to warrant protection beyond holy sites and natural wonders.

The volcanic and geothermic activity of Nam Louey is one of those natural wonders. Of particular note are the Dragon's Teeth, hundreds of obsidian projections that sprout from the earth to form a rough triangle. In addition, the earth commonly spasms and changes in the areas within the park, offering a unique chance to study what the effects the naturally occurring process has on the terrain for the purposes of terraforming technologies.

LAC VIET

Lac Viet is a mysterious province, dominated by fog-wreathed forests that roll over hills and into long valleys. Home to the new generation of Vietnamese settlers, Lac Viet reflects their old home with the warm climate and dense vegetation.

Though Lac Viet has practical specialties in the agricultural industry, particularly rice, there is a technological current unseen over the rice paddies and tall trees. Lac Viet houses an immense AR infrastructure that blankets the province, providing virtual communities a space to call home.

LAC LONG QUAN

The port of Lac Long Quan sits opposite of Sufbaatar, acting as the point of ingress for the continent's contribution to the StateEmpire's economy. As a port hub, a large amount of physical goods pass through the city, requiring a large workforce to maintain the flow without causing a bottleneck. To speed things along, many of the employees of the customs teams that work in Lac Long Quan are experienced veterans from across Shentang, and this allows the employees to deal with the immense load of potential hazards the relatively isolated continent of Lac Viet can produce.

Despite its status as a port, the city of Lac Long Quan has grown into the giant it has today due to its numerous informatics companies. Researchers from across Yu Jing come here to study the effects of AI infrastructure and other vital systems, hoping to contribute something to ALEPH and other important developments throughout the StateEmpire.

One of the best kept secrets of the city is the housing of a Bureau Toth facility, carefully hidden amongst the many informatics facilities of Lac Long Quan. Blending into the landscape, the facility houses one of the greatest treasures in the Human Sphere in the form of a primary auxiliary memory for ALEPH. Because of this, security around the facility is some of the most ironclad in the whole of the StateEmpire, matched only by the Imperial Palace.

The presence of power armoured patrols would certainly draw attention to the facility, so the StateEmpire provides an external web of sleeper agents to defend the facility. Workers from across the informatics district are, in fact, trained espionage agents who stand ready to protect the facility's secret at all costs. Several incursions by foreign threats, both human and alien, have been stamped out by the actions of these spiders nestled in their intricate security mesh.



The facility itself is rather deceptive in that it appears to be a simple building standing around four stories high. The true complex, however, runs deep into the earth, with access to each floor requiring identity checks under the watchful gaze of some of Bureau Toth's best counter espionage personnel. The depths of the facility houses a laboratory that studies and maintains the memory core containing the shard of ALEPH.

The information locked in the vaults of the facility is rumoured to extend beyond ALEPH. Speculation within the intelligence community alleges that some of the darkest secrets of ALEPH's interactions with the StateEmpire are locked in the memories of the auxiliary. With few infiltrators having made it as far as the first floor, however, it is unlikely the rumours will be corroborated any time soon.

KHO SIAB

Kho Siab is the cultural home of the Hmong people, the residents drawn from nearly every nation on Earth. By the time of Yu Jing's exodus of the Sol system, the Hmong people had been disseminated across a vast number of countries and cultures, and though not all of them answered the call of the StateEmpire, many did.

The result is a cultural hotbed within the city of Kho Siab. American, Australian, New Zealander, and French cultures are some of the few on display in the city. It is common for foreign diplomats to visit the city to gain tutelage in foreign manners and customs from the newly settled members of Kho Siab's society. On the other end of the spectrum, the city is used as a practice ground by the intelligence community of the StateEmpire to train its agents in the infiltration of foreign cultures, which is their first stepping stone before active deployment.

PHONG CHÂU CAMP

Located in the foothills of the western slopes of the Diem Lanh Mountains – the venerated mountain range that stretches from central Lac Viet into northern Luang-Sokeo – Phong Châu Camp serves as one of the Invincible Army's most spiritually important training centres on Shentang. Due to its status as the unofficial memorial site for all Vietnamese warriors that have died in defence of their country over the centuries, each batch of new Invincibles sworn into service in the fabled courtyard of this auspicious fortress is exposed to the full weight of the military tradition of their people. Each recruit understands that duty can weigh heavier than the mountains that shelter the fortress but also recognises that the honour of their ancestors will provide them with the strength to bear the burden.

KURAIMORI

After the diaspora, Kuraimori became the new homeland of the Japanese people. It is little more than scraps left to them by the StateEmpire, but their home nonetheless. After the Uprising and the formation of the nation of Great Japan, it has served as the prison that houses the Japanese citizens who were unable to defeat their overlords or escape their land. Named by its Nipponese inhabitants, the island of Kuraimori functioned much like any other province despite being located in the unpleasant reaches of the Chengqi Ocean. Considered to be little more than second-class citizens before the Uprising, the Nipponese citizens of Kuraimori that reside there in its wake are treated with hatred and intolerance. A burning passion suffuses the people of Kuraimori, however. In a show of defiance born of the faint glimmer of hope, they await their true Emperor who will return and liberate them from the tyranny of the StateEmpire.

KUME

Built in the centre of Kuraimori, the fortress city of Kume once stood as a symbol of Nipponese pride and tradition. Now, it is the largest Nipponese prison in the Human Sphere. The city is lined with factories and processing facilities that were once dedicated towards the military strength of the Nipponese Army, but whose industrial might now relentlessly churns to the StateEmpire's beat. Military design, testing, and production were once the purview of its citizens, but the tools of science have been taken from the Nipponese people following the Uprising. Their brightest minds now toil on the production lines to meet an ever-increasing demand.

Dedicated as it is towards development and production for the military, Kume has always maintained enhanced defences. This served the Japanese Secessionist Army well in their conflict with the StateEmpire Army by providing immediate access to immense stockpiles of materiel. The point defence weaponry, bunkers, and air defences that line the immense walls surrounding the city were all turned on the StateEmpire Army during the siege of Kume. Now, they stand ready to repel any attempts by the JSA to rescue their lost citizens. Even with the absence of its former defenders, Kume remains an imposing prospect to attack. Large, well-drilled military units that can be activated at a moment's notice now patrol its ash-choked streets, brutalising citizens as they go. Worse yet, the occupation forces are fully prepared to use the civilians as hostages and shields should the traitorous JSA attempt to reclaim their former stronghold.



Many of the Nipponese Army's most distinct pieces of arms and armour were developed in Kume, which resulted in the loss of several key projects following the pacification of Kuraimori. The war suits of the *Haramaki Zensenbutai*, designed for speed and fluidity in line with the modern samurai's way of war, were originally produced in there, but these weapons have since been lost to the war and their factories now turned to the production of standardised StateEmpire Army designs under the watchful gaze of the Imperial Service. Quick thinking by the Nipponese secessionists ensured that key armour designs made it to the new nation of Great Japan and ensured their continued legacy. The loss of a firearm from the current production line is met with an immediate accusation of treason that results in arrest and incarceration. Some amongst the StateEmpire question the wisdom of producing weapons so close to a rebellious populace, but the savagery of the Imperial Service has ensured that the dissidents amongst the populace remain suppressed and controlled.

Before the events of the Uprising, the people of Kume relied on each other for support under the uncaring StateEmpire. Unity was found within dedication to each other and above all the Emperor. This dedication served the armies of the JSA in their battle for independence, and their dedication to

the people and their Emperor led them to victory on more than one occasion. This entwined respect fostered a strong unity between the military and the citizenship. The insular nature of Kume's architecture only served to improve this relationship. The warriors of Kume lived amongst the populace, their barracks posted within the city walls alongside civilian housing. Warriors of the JSA regularly attended the proving grounds of the factories to test the new creations as well as run drills, leading to constant mingling between the workers and the warriors.

Many of the children born in Kume were caught up in the passion directed towards duty and service, exposed to the military pride and urgency to ensure that the warriors of the Nippon people stand out in the theatres of war. Early in their life, they learnt of the great heroes of the Nipponese Army, warriors such as Asuka Kisaragi and Takeshi Oyama. Many aspired to be like their heroes and join the military; others favoured a more academic life and entered the research and development scene, devising new protections and weapons. The undecided usually found their way into the factories that produced the equipment of the Nipponese Army. Following the Uprising, this pride and dedication can still be found in the youth of Kume, suppressed though it is by the Imperial Service. Many of the Nipponese



youth have witnessed the brutality of their captors, and the stories of the heroes that liberated their distant families serve to inspire the young to one day break free and join their people and Emperor in the light of freedom.

Those that joined the military found their way to the University of Shinme, the war college of Kume. The college once sat proudly in the city's centre, a few short kilometres away from the high command of the Nipponese army. Representing a fusion of tradition and modern sensibility, the college was famous for tempering the hot-blooded passion of the warriors of Kuraimori into a disciplined edge. Shinme taught them a combined course structure focused on modern engagement tactics as well as the more traditional methods of combat such as swordsmanship. Advanced courses included introductions to infowarfare, medicine, and TAG operation, though the college only accepted the highest achievers into these advanced topics to ensure a continuing tradition of excellence. The StateEmpire decided to make an example of the university following the betrayal of the Nipponese people. They destroyed this centre of Japanese tradition, turning it into the new base of operations for the Imperial Service dedicated to controlling the populace.

The college also once served as the recruiting ground for several other organisations. Some belonged to the StateEmpire, looking for the next generation of black operatives, but the most common recruiters were the Kempeitai, who sought out new radicals to join their cause and force change within the StateEmpire. Most secretive of all were the ninja clans. The warriors of shadow sought out high performing students who showed skill in a selection of suitable subjects, and occasionally a high-performing student was found to be missing and eventually presumed 'dead'. Even after the destruction of the university, it houses the remainders of a continuing effort against the Yu Jingese occupiers. The Kempeitai continue to run operations from a network of subterranean holdings beneath the faded glory of the university.

For all the focus on the military, it wasn't surprising that many consider Kume little more than a large barracks. Kume flourished in several other areas, however, particularly in the arts and culture. The soldiers trained in the college of Shinme were often taught art and literature as a part of their course load, a decision inspired by some of the greatest warriors of Japan's history. Art and poetry expanded and tempered the minds of the JSA's warriors, leading to a vast number of soldiers contributing to the artistic scene within Kume and abroad. The most famous of these pieces found their way into the galleries that dot the city but

have since been destroyed as an act of cultural suppression.

Even after the Uprising, Kume supports a strong presence of other industrial works beyond weaponry. Though it is nowhere near the intense output of Koguryo's factories, Kume builds a respectable amount of quantronic processors and systems, vehicles, and construction materials. Agriculture once again thrives outside the city's walls. The intense campaign of reclamation was launched after the combat to ensure that the land around Kume could continue to be arable. Hundreds of farms operate outside the city, delivering their crops into the walls each day at carefully guarded entrance points. Some of this food is set aside for an emergency ration centre, built in the possibility of a protracted siege. The irony that this practice, whilst useful to them in the case of an attack by the JSA, was the reason Kume was as hard as it was to capture is not lost on the Yu Jingese forces stationed within the city. The food within is stored in an immense subterranean storage facility and is enough to feed the population of the city for three months under intense rationing, leaving plenty in the case of natural disaster or assault from a foreign power.

Thanks to the availability of weapons in the capital, there is a constant threat from within the city in the form of the Kempeitai and Tatenokai. The radical organisations maintain a rather large following in the city and are dedicated to bringing more members into the fold, especially following the savagery of the Uprising. The groups are a constant threat to the few Yu Jingese officials that work within the city, and membership in either is ground for immediate execution, if they aren't shot on sight. It isn't uncommon for thefts of weapons to occur and the incidents be blamed on the civilian populace, who are constantly viewed with suspicion. Exactly how much of the populace is working for the terrorist groups is uncertain, but those who do are tight lipped, ever defiant even under threat of death.

KOFUKU

The industrial centre of Kuraimori, the city of Kofuku stretches out into a line of factories and production facilities kilometres down the Kofuku's peninsula, running alongside the ocean. This makes for some incredible views when travelling along the intercity highway, usually in a vehicle built within Kofuku itself.

While all sorts of things are built within the city, Kofuku specializes in vehicles. Everything from luxury cars to transport shuttles are built in the long production lines of the city. After the pacification of the populace, production continued without

fail. The industry is considered too important to lose. Designer vehicles are commonly found in the cities of Koryo and Sakuramachi in the hands of the rich and famous, and all of these vehicles can trace their way back to the labour of the Kofuku populace.

Although the city is famed for its luxury vehicles, they are far from the most popular within the city itself. That honour belongs to the bikes the city produces. Every kind of bike is made in Kofuku, from versatile and sturdy machines that run quietly to sleek, high-speed racing bikes. These bikes in particular are popular with the youth of the city, especially after their outlawing in an attempt to curb new gangs from popping up.

Thanks to the long hours their parents worked and the abundant lengths of road within Kofuku, many adolescents and young adults found themselves taking up riding to pass the time. This began a slope into customisation and personalisation as the riders adjusted their bikes, looking for ever greater speeds and flashier steeds. Some grew out of the hobby or found themselves satisfied with their minor customisations, and others got themselves into brushes with the law. Eventually, these youths would band together into gangs, competing and working together to reach the next deadly buzz of high-speed motoring. Sometimes these gangs would come into conflict with each other over territory, mainly the best roads to ride on. Although the practice is rarer now, some youths continue to ride bikes, even considering the danger of getting caught. It is a part of their culture, and they refuse to abandon it.

These gangs were most common in Sakuramachi, though Kofuku had an abundance of the young riders as well due to the presence of the Aragoto regiment's primary barracks. The few that continued their passion into their adult years usually gravitated to the capital of Kuraimori and fell in with the criminal organisations within Sakuramachi. At this point, they were well beyond warnings and minor punishments of the police, and harsher penalties were given. Previously many were given jail time, with a few outstanding riders being offered the opportunity to make something of themselves within the Nipponese Army as one of the Aragoto Senkenbutai, the outriders of the army. These hot-headed road warriors earned respect for their fearless attitude and ire for their impetuous attitude and bad manners. During the defence of Kofuku by the *Aragoto* and inducted riders, many of the *Bōsōzoku* gangs were wiped out, dying in blazes of glory in defiance against the Yu Jingese oppressors in great speeding battles. This final act of rebellion has cemented them in history as heroes of Great Japan, even if their past was stained by crime and disrespect.

Aside from motoring, quantronic semiconductors are also made in the city. Kofuku is host to a heavy AR scene thanks to the availability of these conductors, which enable the use of high-end computing devices. Most of the residents of the city spend their spare time drifting through the vast communities within the AR spectrum, attending chartrooms and watching Maya casts, seeking an escape from the persecution of the StateEmpire.

MOTOBUSHIMA

Motobushima rests on the island north of Kuraimori, isolated from the rest of the province by a strait of water that flows in from the Chengqi Ocean. Due to its position on the island's banks, the city supports a strong waterborne culture, and some of Shentang's best sailors are raised in the waters of the northern oceans. Following the Uprising, many of these sailors died due to the extreme measures taken by the StateEmpire Army during its assault on the city. Motobushima suffered some of the greatest damage during the Nipponese rebellion, with tens of thousands of civilians dying. The impact on culture was devastating, and some fear that the ways of the town may soon be lost.

Motobushima's heart belonged to the art of sailing, with some of the most advanced ship designs in the Human Sphere (outside of Varuna) coming from the small port city. Innovations from across Shentang once made their way to the port of Motobushima to fuel all kinds of technologies seemingly grafted into the boats produced. Party liners with advanced AR webs that produce dazzling environments, advanced Maya-sphere readers that predicted the weather in almost perfect real-time, and ships built with a wide array of Teseum-alloy hybrids were common examples of the works of art that were once built in the town.

The fusion of the old with the new was an important part of the shipwright culture of Motobushima. Often, one can find nods to the old ways whether in the shared shape of their hull or a similar name to a famous ship from the history of Japan. This practice was a way to connect with and remind the builders and artisans of the history of their craft. By tempering the new and untested technologies with the lessons of the past, Motobushima followed a code of production that regularly brought a standard of excellence. The many civilian deaths caused by the invasion of Motobushima almost ended this way of building, with many shipwrights dying to the advancing forces. The practice is quickly becoming a lost art thanks to the province-wide edict of cultural suppression undertaken by the StateEmpire.



Though the waters of Shentang are for the most part populous and fertile, the extremes of the northern and southern poles make diversity an issue. Fewer edible fish dare the waters, as the currents are dominated by kaliba sharks and the Kuraimori Oni keep watch at the inland outlets. It was said with some respect then that Motobushima was able to dredge up a small industry of aquaculture to support its primarily ship-building economy. Because the amount of fish caught is small, there had been a steady rise in the number of kaliba hunters in the port, many of them off-worlders looking for a thrill or poachers from the Inner Worlds. Though the practice of hunting kalibas is frowned upon, the capability to face one of the apex predators of the planets ecosystem and survive is viewed with begrudging respect. These hunts have died off in recent times due to dwindling watercraft and sailors, as well as the restriction of off-world visitors.

Motobushima holds secrets like any other city. Beneath the surface of the island run an intricate network of caverns, many that lead underwater. Secreted away in the bedrock, hidden away from the populace, are the former halls of the Tatenokai. The terrorist organisation used the vast network of tunnels as their home and defended the secret ferociously. Using the activity of the surface port as cover, the Tatenokai were able to smuggle goods and equipment in and out of the subterranean command without drawing attention to their activities. Each day weapons and armour acquired from cities such as Kume and Sambor Duk made their way back to the holdout, stockpiled for eventual missions launched against the tyrannical StateEmpire. These caverns served the Kempeitai and Tatenokai well during the defense of the city against the StateEmpire Army's invasion, dragging the predictions for a short campaign into a game of cat and mouse that lasted for several months. Even today there are rumours of caverns that remain undiscovered by the StateEmpire, holding the last of the defenders of Motobushima.

The influence the organisation once had on the surface was subtle. The distance of Motobushima from the mainland of Zhongting meant that StateEmpire officials rarely ventured into the town, and a strong anti-establishment sentiment had been allowed to take root. Motobushimians made up the largest portion of members for the Tatenokai, many being trained in the secret headquarters below the surface. Due to the lack of activities conducted in Motobushima, the secret of the Tatenokai underground remained a closely guarded secret until the Uprising, whereupon the hidden warriors were able to finally show their ferocity.

SAKURAMACHI

The capital of Kuraimori is a sprawling centre of concrete and steel. Sakuramachi occupies the south of Kuraimori and appears as an industrial web when viewed from above. Immense towers raise up into the sky, supported by highways that reach around each pillar, and the scars of the Uprising have done much to dampen this appearance.

The citizenship of Sakuramachi live in cramped quarters. Housing, even on the city's outskirts, is carefully constructed to ensure maximisation of usable space. In between these complexes of housing run maglevs and other public transport methods, which carry workers to their jobs within the city proper. The commute can take hours depending on the district one lives in and how much money one can put on housing.

Those that are rich enough to afford the expensive housing within the city do not buy space with their money, but rather gain efficiency. The apartments may be cramped, but hours are gained from the removal of commuting time, allowing citizens to spend more time working or engaging in recreation. Following the rebellion this is becoming more of an issue, as housing is limited due to damages sustained during the assault by the StateEmpire Army. Homelessness has risen, and the StateEmpire is doing little to curtail it, seeing it as just punishment for the betrayal.

Though Sakuramachi lacks the pure production power of other cities on Kuraimori and Shentang, the city serves as the bureaucratic heart of the province and the primary port. The few processing facilities in the city tend to construct quantronic storage devices and physical containers, which are all the better to move the products of Kuraimori out into the world.

Though Kofuku is the birthplace of motorcycles on Kuraimori and the home of the Aragoto biker units, the vast population of Sakuramachi ensured that *Bōsōzoku* gangs were remarkably common on the winding highways of the city. The immense network of roads served as the grounds for some of the most notorious gangs in the province, one of which was the *Akaoni* gang. The gang was infamous for its connections to the Yakuza, who used Sakuramachi as their primary base of operations on Shentang.

TOMARI

In the past, the liberal and progressive town of Tomari was ridiculed often by the conservative majority of Kuraimori, but some of the most fanatical supporters of the Emperor rose from the students of Tomari, granting it a new standing in the

eyes of the loyalists of Great Japan. The town served as the centre of tertiary education within the province and was home to the University of Kuraimori.

Established early in the settlement of the province, Tomari served as an educational centre, ensuring the population had enough skilled labourers to ensure a productive society. In these early days, the educational facilities tended towards industrial management, engineering, and agricultural studies. As the economy of Kuraimori became more diverse, so did the courses offered. Soon enough, arts and sciences entered the curriculum, both of which introduced the progressive attitude for which the town is known.

Almost the entirety of the students that studied at the university were Nipponese, and many of them have tales of oppression from an uncaring StateEmpire, especially following the cultural expression edict. The Nipponese are passed over for enrolment in the more focused schools on Zhongting due to their heritage, and in the present, this is taken a step further. Now they are denied education on the basis of their 'traitorous' blood, leaving the heavily monitored university as the last place a Nipponese student can go to learn in the StateEmpire. Students try to improve the standards of their people now more than ever, protesting and campaigning to O-12 for more freedom and demanding their release so that they may re-join the state of Great Japan. Many of these students meet an untimely end, however, punished by the StateEmpire. Some students have taken to seeking out and helping the last vestiges of the Nipponese resistance in Kuraimori, assisting the terrorist groups any way they can.

In either case, the two extremes are considered by the more cynical residents of Kuraimori futile at best and disruptive at worst. The consensus amongst the population is that the children of Tomari, whilst possessing a strong and noble spirit, are naive and ignorant to the workings of the world. Whether this is true or not is entirely in the eye of the beholder.

NAKONTHAI

The new homeland of the Thai people is densely vegetated and filled with life in its large swamps and rainforests. Nakhonchai is infamous for being the crime capital of Shentang and draws ire from within the StateEmpire's government for the difficulty of maintaining a constant state of surveillance on the region. The vegetation within the wild areas of the country is too dense to get reliable satellite footage, requiring teams to be sent in to maintain a constant alertness. Within the cities of Nakhonchai is a plague of corruption and

greed. Police and government officials are bribed, ensuring the criminal elements of the province are able to operate unchecked.

Outside efforts have all but failed over the years, and what was once a small criminal problem has evolved into an empire of crime that can rival the local crime syndicates. Illegal racing, protection rackets, drugs, illegal prostitution, and violence are rife within Nakhonchai, but the downtrodden civilian population remain strong and noble hearted in the face of the thugs that oppress them each day. These men and women form the crime families of Nakhonchai, close knit groups bound by blood shared or sworn.

AYUTTHAYA

Ayutthaya is the only official spaceport in Nakhonchai. The ecosystem is anything but kind to orbital landing craft and orbital elevators are out of the question thanks to the loose earth and damaging muck that covers much of the province. Ayutthaya is a small city built upon stilts in order to escape most of the dangerous ecosystem. Between the creeping species of plant life and the dangerous, toxic predators that lurk in the underbrush, the Nakhonchai people aren't willing to risk anything.

Ayutthaya's construction is quite masterful, utilising a rather revolutionary technology to combat rust and natural sinking. A two-stage stilt system holds a majority of the city up. When one of the stilts cores erode or sink too deep, the second is activated, raising the structure higher and allowing the second core to be replaced. Although this activity is a daily task requiring hundreds of workers to maintain the entire city, the revenue brought in by the spaceport is enough to warrant it.

Although Ayutthaya's spaceport is the only officially mandated port, there are several smaller spaceports in operation by the crime families of the region. These ports are carefully hidden and easily destroyed in order to prevent evidence falling into the hands of the law enforcement agencies. These illegal ports ferry all kinds of contraband on and off Shentang by blending into the small amount of space traffic that comes through Ayutthaya's major port.

BATTHA RACHA

To the untrained eye, Battha Racha is the only modest and pure city in the whole of Nakhonchai. The city is the new homeland of the Theravada Buddhist people and the new location for the Tiger Temple. The religious folk of the city conduct their duties each day with diligence and care, maintaining the temples within the city.



A strong tourist presence acts as the primary income for the city, with many coming to visit the temples and their stunning architecture. Each temple has taken to selling trinkets and baubles to ensure the maintenance of their sacred places. But there is another facet to this tourism, one not spoken of loudly in the city. In the right circles of information, the holy city of Battha Racha is known as a city of carnal pleasure, a place where any desire can be met to excess.

On the outskirts of the city, carefully hidden from the eyes of law enforcement and the average civilian, lie several brothels and drug houses. Within these seedy establishments is a surprising standard of quality considering their secretive nature, as each of these facilities has remained capable of avoiding absorption into the local crime families. The prostitutes and drug dealers of the city know that a good reputation is paramount in maintaining their business, both in warding off law enforcement, keeping their customers mouths shut, and gaining an ever-increasing series of visitors. These establishments tend to be legally owned and operated, carefully and quietly bending and misinterpreting the laws to ensure the wants of their customers are met. Battha Racha is known as a place one can go to indulge all forms of pleasure, to seek taboo experiences, and to participate in them without shame.

Cruel forces are also active in the city, gangs who abduct young men and women to force into unsavoury work and jobs. Many of these unfortunate

souls are victims of addiction or loans granted by the crime families, and after they are taken very few reappear. Thanks to the influence the crime families of Nakhonhai have with the local law enforcement, it is easy enough to covertly place the official blame with organisations such as the Yakuza and Triads. The syndicates are convenient scapegoats that allow the families to continue their dark practices without interference.

LAVAPURA INSTRUCTION CAMP

Nestled on the south-eastern shore of Lake Tanasugarn and the northern bank of the Somjit River, the Lavapura Instruction Camp is another spiritually important instruction site for the Invincible Army's Shentang recruitment programs. Surrounded by lush rainforest and overlooking serene waterways, the training grounds of Lavapura provide a mystical backdrop that soaks into each recruit's soul. A final oath ceremony under the serene gaze of a ninety-metre tall Gautama Buddha reinforces each recruit's firm belief that they are following their true calling.

SUKHOTAI

The port city of Sukhotai serves as a major food source for Nakhonhai. Fishing is an extremely strong industry in the bountiful waters of the Qinglengyuang Ocean. The hauls the fleet brings in are some of the best on Shentang, leaving plenty for the city to trade. Hundreds of thousands of fish



are gathered and sold from the ports of Sukhotai, but like its sibling cities, the port holds a dark underbelly of criminal activity.

Sukhotai serves as a trade port not just for food and resources, but also acts as the heart of Shentang's black market and the scene of high-octane, highly illegal races for the speed-driven crime lords of the city. Nearly any kind of contraband found on Shentang can be mapped back to the ports of Sukhotai, from illegal military grade weapons to exotic party drugs from across the Sphere. The families run these markets with an iron fist, representatives from each family battling for control of the wealth of illegal money that runs through the city. A perpetual gang war is the result of this, and each day it grows worse.

The families that run these ports are always able to find customers in the more unsavoury members of society. The Yakuza and Triads are forced to set aside their differences to maintain favour with the families and their extensive underground trade routes. Many of the illicit resources used by the syndicates are supplied by the families. The cannier leaders often play the two syndicates against each other, being careful to keep the scale of power constantly tipping between the two groups.

Beyond crime organisation, terrorists are also known to make use of the black markets of Sukhotai. Carefully hidden amongst the average populace, members of the Kempeitai and Tatenokai each seek weapons and ammunition to help continue their fight against their oppressive government. Though it is rare, it isn't uncommon for the groups to be able to purchase stolen experimental technology through the black-market networks. Lesser known groups also seek equipment and weaponry, such as the illegal 'good behaviour' mercenary teams hired by the extremist inhabitants of Yang Xiang's City and Village. Groups on both sides of the conflict use the dark wonders found in the black market to incite further altercations with their neighbours.

The Yu Jing government is aware of these activities and wages a constant but secret war on the docks of Sukhotai. Deep cover agents and special police alike are regularly deployed to depose a crime lord or make a family disappear. Despite these actions, the market in Sukhotai is like a weed, springing back from every attempt to cull it. As more and more experimental technologies are stolen, the StateEmpire turns to deadlier methods. Rumours hold that a deadly team of Celestial Guard and Crane Agents have begun to infiltrate the city with the intent of tearing its criminal elements apart from the inside.

THATON

The windswept islands of Thaton presented a unique challenge to its Burmese settlers. Storms are common and violent on Thaton, which made attempts at establishing small villages and towns a problem. More often than not, these places were damaged too much and too often to justify settling in several small towns. Because of this, the cities and towns of Thaton are carefully and closely constructed with durability and stability in mind. The tightly packed architecture ensures that each building has at least two points of reinforcement to other buildings so the winds don't topple them. This architecture has become common to the coastal cities of Shentang, able to face down the tropical cyclones that develop out at sea. Thaton also acts as a biotic safety reserve for the planet as a whole, as each city is built around preservation domes to guarantee the capability to repair the planet's ecosystem following a particularly damaging storm season.

THAGYARMIN

The capital city of Thaton, as well as its industrial centre, Thagyramin stands starkly apart from its surroundings. Contrasting against the island's untouched ecosystem, Thagyramin pokes out of the landscape like a man-made mountain. The city encapsulates the Thaton philosophy of densely packed architecture, the city architecture more akin to a block than a sprawling population centre. The city's name compliments the durability of its construction, the name Thagyramin belonging to the King of the Celestial Host and Protector of Morality.

Life in the capital of Thagyramin isn't so much dangerous as consistently inconvenient. Storms happen suddenly, but thanks to the advanced weather detection systems built on the coasts and mountains of Thaton, early warnings are timely enough to ensure casualties and injuries are exceedingly rare. It isn't uncommon for storm warnings to cause awkward situations, as the citizens enter specifically prepared storm tunnels to continue their commute from one place to another. These tunnels are enclosed and small, however, leading to cramped travel that slows the citizens significantly.

Thagyramin's primary industry lies in the production of construction materials, mainly advanced polymers favoured in the construction of the wind-proof buildings preferred by Thaton's inhabitants. The refinement process incorporates several alloys from across the Sphere, including trace amounts of Teseum. Local alloys mined from Anawrahta



Island are also used, notably the strange mineral known as Hkyaate, which acts as an incredibly potent bonding agent. The resulting construction materials are then shipped across Shentang to create sturdy housing and research stations by the coastlines.

ANAWRAHTA ISLAND

The island of Anawrahta is home to a mining community, which digs deep into the island's bedrock to find more of the wondrous Hkyaate mineral. The town itself is different to others of its kind on the Thaton islands, having been built partially underground. From above the town appears to be nothing more than a series of small domes poking out of the ground. These domes only open to allow cargo ships to arrive and depart, transporting the haul of the miners.

The unique settlement construction was influenced by the local wildlife, which burrow beneath the ground to avoid the raging storms. This inspired the founder of the town, Hayma Tun, to adopt the practice. At great cost, Hayma directed her mining company to establish underground burrows whilst mining before placing cheap housing into the burrows. As time went on, the burrows expanded and the facilities within them, introducing a variety of vital services including a small hospital and goods stores.

The town has continued to attract attention as the years pass, the peculiar architectural design being the most significant. The design hasn't been adopted in other sections of Thaton due to the high costs required in excavation and construction, not to mention the intense amount of effort to expand the burrows when they approach their maximum space limit. Despite these costs, the practice is still common within the town, and the oddity of their homes is a source of pride for the miners.

Due to increasing demand for the Hkyaate mineral, other companies have attempted to construct facilities on the island. Many of these facilities are not constructed with the technical requirements in mind and are abandoned within months of the start of construction. This has led to increased reliance on the burrow mines and progressively high investments in their work, and it is predicted that the town will experience a population boom in the coming years.

MIN GYI

Yu Jing's mission to supplant PanOceania as the chief power of the Sphere has many avenues. The StateEmpire battles every day to become the chief economic power, the first in technology, and

maintain the strongest military. In Min Gyi, the StateEmpire invests in the latest AI and remote technology with the hopes of taking the title from PanOceania.

Located on the southern point of Anawrahta Island, Min Gyi houses robust facilities that supply the majority of Yu Jing's civilian and military remote technologies. Everything from companion drones to high-end military gun REMs are constructed here, each featuring the finest technology the StateEmpire can supply. Unique minerals from the mining facilities on the island ensure a constant supply of remotes are researched and constructed.

The availability of remotes has led to their use becoming a sort of sport amongst the inhabitants of the island. Military and civilian groups alike compete in contests designed to test the hardware of a remote and the skills of its operator. These events include advanced drone piloting courses, combat exercises, races between different models, and so on. Although the exercises don't have enough traction to invite Sphere-wide coverage, special interest groups from across the systems find their way to the events to join in the fun. Those who visit tend to be closely observed by the Yu Jing special police in case the intentions of the visitors tend towards thievery and espionage.

Though the civilian populace is unaware, designs are delivered each day from the nearby Henggu military research facilities to be constructed and sent for testing on the arctic shelf. These exchanges are done in secret to ensure that enemy organisations and nations remain ignorant of the latest advancements of Yu Jing's remote capabilities.

WUSHU ARCHIPELAGO

Off the eastern coast of Thaton's main island, sits the two islands that make up the Wushu Archipelago. Unlike the other storm swept locations on Thaton's island, the archipelago's mountains and forests protect the islands from the worst of the storms. A lack of exploitable resources has left the island unoccupied by industrial forces however, and instead a different culture has taken root.

On the island rests small communities of people from across the entirety of Yu Jing's territories, representing an incredible amount of cultures. Each of these people considers themselves responsible to contribute a part of their culture to the Wushu Community, an artistic and cultural paradise. Established by a group of like-minded artists, the Wushu Community is a town-sized museum that collects bits and pieces of Asian culture to preserve it for future generations.

For the most part, this collection focuses on music, literature, and art. The Wushu Community is respected enough that it has received donations from well-off collectors, and the halls of the Wushu Community are bedecked with carefully protected works from across Asian and Yu Jingese history. But the community isn't content with collecting pieces.

Masters of the physical arts, such as dancing and combat, are also encouraged to attend the Community. Here they offer recordings of their work, to preserve their form and inspire future generations. Masters of swordsmanship from Kume, debaters from Shambhala, dancers from Lac Viet, all are welcome.

The StateEmpire plays its own part in preserving the Wushu Community in the way of security and defence. Yu Jing considers the past and traditions incredibly important, and the Wushu Community one of their most important reserves of knowledge on the subjects. Carefully hidden patrols and agents ensure the traditions, culture, and art of Yu Jing remains safe from those who would steal or destroy it.

YA LANG

The land settled by the Bhutanese people, Ya Lang is a province situated at the most southern point of the Zhongting continent. Despite being so close to the southern pole of Shentang, the climate of Ya Lang is quite pleasant. The province maintains a generally warm temperature year-round, benefiting the agricultural economy that operates there immensely. However, the province serves most importantly as the home of Shentang's capital city, Yian Xiang.

YIAN XIANG

The city at the centre of Shentang, at least from a political standpoint, is Yian Xiang. A bustling hive of activity despite its small population, Yian Xiang somehow manages to be void of any cultural or political atmospheres. The most prominent feature of the city is the physical division between the Village, where the Party and foreign diplomats reside, and the City, where the average citizens work and live.

Tightly clustered and securely gated, the Village has begun to grow upward rather than outward. Several districts and embassies dedicated to the comfort of visiting dignitaries are interspersed with housing for the local Party members. The whole district is carefully arranged in a pattern intended to promote harmonious energies. Some comment that the desultory compound must be diverting

energy from the frozen depths of Svalarheima as drab and lacklustre as the atmosphere here feels. The younger residents of the Village spend their time attempting to slip their familial bonds and escape into the vibrant night scene of the City. The compound as whole is serviced by those personnel drawn from the City that have passed stringent background checks.

Though the residents of the Village maintain high living standards, the populace of the City also enjoy a good quality of life thanks to their proximity to and control of the spaceports and the terms of their indentureship to the Village. Both the Village and the City understand that one would struggle to exist without the other. The several spaceports dedicated to handling the influx of visitors and resources that arrive from across the Sphere lie at its core, which means the best amenities are inflated in value by the time they arrive at the Village. Most of the populace of the City have an unhealthy fascination with climbing to what they perceive as the lofty heights of residency within the Village.

Life in Yian Xiang is relatively good, though anyone who visits leaves with the distinct impression that everyone envies their neighbour on the other side of the fence, no matter which side of it they live on. The whole experience reinforces the notion that the city is a backwater drafting for G5 ambassadors and Party members alike.

THUMINHIP

Far from the bustle of the capital lies Thuminhip, an agricultural centre, and Jivana Kō Skūla, a biological research and development facility. Thuminhip generates much of the food consumed by the city of Yian Xiang, but its services to Shentang don't stop there.

Within Jivana Kō Skūla is a consistent effort to advance the agricultural power of Shentang. Unlike the corporate laboratories of Kompong Mera, the bioresearch station is sponsored by the StateEmpire itself, working with the vast resources afforded by Yu Jing as a whole. This allows the use of high-tech experimental procedures, including the use of cutting-edge agricultural modification and genetic manipulation. The goal is the creation of strong, faster growing crops that can chip away at the required space for food production and instead hand it over to industrial use and military instillations.



CHAPTER 3

YUTANG

Promise. A simple word that embraces so much. Promise for a new home, for a place undivided and unified in purpose, for prosperity, for the future, for Yu Jing. Promise is what the space program delivered to the Party and Dragon Emperor when the Shanxing system was discovered. Promise and tireless effort will more than succeed as a nation state, but to transcend all others – to become the dominant force in the Human Sphere – is what drove Yu Jing to single-mindedly pursue their ambitions. Yutang and Shentang, the Jade and Divine Palaces, are the holders of that promise.

CLIMATE AND GEOGRAPHY

From orbit Yutang is an effusively green world, almost glowing with the abundance of life and vegetation. One vast supercontinent wraps the planet, surrounded by a luminously blue ocean. It is a glorious jewel to behold, well deserving of its name, Yutang, or the Jade Palace. Populated by 2.8 billion souls, the majority of whom live in bustling cities, Yutang's lights spiderweb brilliantly across the planetary surface on its night side. Low-planetary orbit is ringed with thousands of satellites, habitation modules, industrial facilities and stations, all moving in their delicate dance of orbital paths. Life is plentiful, that much is obvious.

The weather systems of Yutang match, for the most part, the tropical latitudes of Earth. Warm and humid, the Penglai supercontinent of Yutang stretches along the equatorial line east and west, while its northernmost tip barely reaches the polar region. To the south, the continent ranges from tropical to temperate. Water evaporated from the surrounding oceans seasonally drenches the coastlines, while a combination of plentiful inner seas and mountain ranges causes high levels of precipitation across the middle of the continent.

Tropical storms are frequent over the Hài Liú Sea throughout the year. Pressure systems moving off the surrounding mountains often push these storms into supercells, which develop into typhoons capable of causing significant damage. Much of the infrastructure of Yutang has been especially designed to deal with the planet's regular storms. Cities are carefully planned to allow strong wind movement channels and buildings that are sturdy, flexible, and designed to divert particularly strong winds into

the channels. A careful mix of preplanning and ingenious architecture means that while storms and typhoons are a regular occurrence, they cause significantly less damage than they otherwise might.

Storm cells like those coming off the Hài Liú Sea are also frequent in the tropical latitudes along the east and west coasts of Penglai. Across the tropical band, rainfall tends to be more alkaline than on Earth, and while the native flora has evolved to thrive in these conditions, much effort has gone into developing crops capable of flourishing as well.

High levels of rainfall, humidity, and heat combined with mineral rich soils make ideal crop lands for the agricultural produce of Yutang. The most common crops are marsh wheat, rice, soy, yams, corn, millet, and a range of spices, fruits, and vegetables. Crops transplanted from Earth have been genetically modified to cope with the unique mineral properties of Yutang's soil. Equatorial crops have been gene spliced with halophytes to deal with the higher than usual levels of sodium chloride present across the tropics. The efforts to genetically adapt Earth flora to the unique Yutang environment have been spectacularly successful, with native flora outcompeted across the planet's surface and now largely confined to unsettled regions and nature reserves.

Yutang is riven with tectonic activity, from low but constant levels of volcanism to regular tremors and earthquakes. The Penglai supercontinent is made up of many small plates. On the east coast, two of these create a transverse fault line moving from Zhī Tú in the south to Bèi Tú in the north. Between Wei Chuān and Zhōu Zhōng, the river systems connecting the Hài Liú Sea with the Shizhukong Ocean are growing measurably as the Zhōu and Wei plates rift apart.

Earthquakes across the supercontinent occur regularly, from almost weekly small tremors to larger and more dangerous quakes. Geological facilities across the planet and in orbit maintain a constant network of monitoring stations able to give quick and precise notification of any event. Yu Jingese scientists are increasingly able to predict when small tremors will be followed by larger earthquakes. Seismology is a well-funded area of research and has been highly successful at protecting the citizenry and industries of Yutang from the most severe events. As with the protections against storms, careful city planning and intelligent architecture has meant that the industries, people,

TOO PERFECT FOR COINCIDENCE

Yutang, and to a lesser degree Shentang, are regarded as the symbol of Yu Jing's manifest destiny. However, there have been some well-regarded scientists who believe the highly rich and successful biospheres of these planets is indicative of something more than divine providence. Conspiracy theories – ridiculed and mocked by official sources – propose that these tidally locked twins may have been subjected to a great terraforming project at some distant point in their planetary histories. The similarities in the biospheres of both are too mutual to be coincidental.

So far, there has been no indication that either planet was previously inhabited by a species capable of such a feat of planetary engineering – at least, that is the formal account.



and buildings of Yutang are able to cope with such geological disturbances, preventing even large earthquakes little opportunity to wreak havoc and destruction. For a newcomer to Yutang, the regular upheavals and tremors can be a distressing and even terrifying experience, but it is something locals are thoroughly inured to.

Large yearly algal blooms provide the basis for an extensive diversity of marine life, and the seas and oceans of Yutang are bountiful and full. Much of the primary industry along the coastlines is given over to fishing, while widespread natural gas mining in the Qihai Ocean is a boon to industries and households across the planet.

FLORA AND FAUNA

When the Shanxing system was discovered, extensive analysis of the planetary bodies of the system was carried out by probes, followed by manned

expeditions, pre-colonisation staging missions, and finally, full colonisation. Exhaustive records of all of these stages can be found in the great libraries of Tian Di Jing. The transformation of Yutang's biosphere can be tracked in detail and paints a dramatic picture.

On first discovery, Yutang was already a world bursting with the green of life and home to an extensive and diverse range of ecosystems. The inner areas of Penglai were dominated by gymnosperms similar to the ferns and cycads of Earth, where the constant winds allowed widespread pollen and seed dispersal. The mountainous regions were covered by thick forests, and the outer and coastal regions, by angiosperms, flowering plants of a million varieties, competing with each other for beauty, colour, and size.

Alongside this dazzling array of native flora was an equally majestic variety of animal life. While large herbivores and a few pack-hunting carnivores dominate the popular conception of native wildlife, the real variety can be found in the smaller animals.



GUOJIA GUǑNGRÓNG JIE Rì

When the Shanxing system was first settled, the Party and the Dragon Emperor made an attempt to recraft a calendar for the Yu Jing StateEmpire. Built on the principles of the Chinese calendar from Earth, it was modified to reflect the peculiarities of the Shanxing system, and the astrological components were reworked in line with the unified principles of Yu Jing and to enshrine the Guojia GuǑngróng Jie Rì holiday period as an auspicious time for all Yu Jingese.

As with other such attempts by other powers in the Sphere, the uptake of this new Yu Jing calendar was largely unsuccessful, and it is now used mostly for ceremonial purposes. People across Yu Jing typically go by the New Calendar established by O-12 due to the ubiquity of its use on Maya. However, the founding date of the Yu Jing Calendar, the date of arrival of the first colony ship into the Shanxing system, is universally celebrated throughout the Yu Jing StateEmpire as Guojia GuǑngróng Jie Rì, the Nation's Glorious Day, which is the centrepiece of a twenty-day celebration.

Guojia GuǑngróng Jie Rì is a national holiday, and many of the traditions and celebrations that were observed for Chinese New Year have been rolled into the festivities surrounding this day. Preparations begin eight days before Guojia GuǑngróng Jie Rì and continue for another twelve after it. While work and life continue during this festival (only the day itself is a public holiday free from work), this twenty-one-day period is full of events, parties, and celebrations. It is the only time in the year when requests for personal leave and travel permits (for those regions that require them) are given without the negative social connotation they usually attract. Guojia GuǑngróng Jie Rì is marked by a speech from the Dragon Emperor himself, and many festivals and parades are held across the Yu Jing StateEmpire in celebration.

for crops modified to be infertile, producing seeds, nuts, and fruits, but incapable of germinating the next generation. It is hoped that by through these measures the crop lands can be more closely controlled, and the wilderness preserves dedicated to the indigenous stocks will suffer less impact as a result of the highly competitive introduced species.

There is good reason much effort has been taken to protect the fragile native ecosystems of Yutang; they are unique. Botanists from universities across the Yu Jing StateEmpire compete furiously with one another for opportunities to study the plants and animals indigenous to Yutang. It has been extrapolated, from studies so far, that many interesting biological compounds with a wide range of useful applications can be discovered and extracted from the local flora and fauna, but time and the preservation of those ecosystems are vital components in ensuring the bounty of this new world can be fully appreciated.

Taking lessons from the food production and distribution issues that faced Earth in the latter parts of the 21st century, the StateEmpire has taken steps to ensure that a balance is struck between land maintained for reserves and land utilised for crop production. In order to support a growing population with an eye on the future, food production has been deliberately maximised. To this end the settlements, towns, and cities of Yutang tend to focus on high density living, rather than allowing the sprawling networks of properties so common elsewhere in the Human Sphere. Cropland is further maximised through stepped farming practices, carving high-yield fields into mountain terraces and ensuring no potential land is wasted. Large wilderness reserves aim to preserve swathes of native flora, but many believe the real intention is to cordon off land that may be required as the population grows in the future.

The most common crops grown across the tropical bands are marsh wheat and Loi Po apple trees, as well as pears, oranges, limes, and other citrus fruits. Many spices are also grown across these latitudes, including cinnamon, star anise, cloves, gingers, peppercorn, and mustard. At more temperate latitudes, soy, corn, millet, and yams are common, while the terraced farms of the mountains are predominantly given over to rice paddies.

As the native flora has receded to carefully protected zones, the native fauna of Yutang has also seen dramatic adjustments. Land areas dominated by a small variety of crop plants have encouraged population explosions in the animals able to exploit them. The small mammals, gliders and flying possums, have proven persistent pests for the orchardists of Yutang. Meanwhile the huge and lumbering Dazhu and the pack-hunters that prey on

A diverse range of small mammals, many gliding or flying, and a multitude of arthropods, acting predominantly as pollinators for the flowering plants and decomposers that enrich the soil.

Across Yutang, and particularly across the equatorial band, the soil is far richer in minerals and nutrients than that of Earth. The genetic adaptation of introduced crops was essential if they were ever going to thrive in their new environment. While the northern and southern latitudes required only slight adjustment, the high levels of sodium chloride in the soils of the tropical latitudes required more extensive modification. The crops grown in these regions were genetically spliced with halophytes, plants capable of surviving and thriving in salt-rich environments.

The adaptations carried out in the gene-labs of the newly established colonies were wildly successful. In almost every area, modified crops have been introduced, they have outcompeted and supplanted the native stocks. After realising just how dramatic a shift was taking place within the native biosphere, wilderness reserves to aid in the maintenance of the indigenous flora were swiftly created. Extensive swathes of the countryside are protected reserves, and there is strict regulation on the crop seeds used each season, with preference in recent years

STATE CONTROL

Adjusting the genetic stock of crops plants used by farming communities has been received with apparent acceptance, but quiet anger. In practice, it means that for each season farmers must buy new seeds for planting, making the primary producers even more dependent on the StateEmpire. While the pretext of protecting the native wildlife is often quoted, a subversive undercurrent prevalent in many regional communities takes a darker and more cynical view of the StateEmpire's intentions in this matter. For many the unspoken reason for these changes can be summarised in one word – control.

them have receded into the reserves and dwindled in number.

In the extensive oceans of Yutang, life is in abundance. Little effort has been put into aquafarming practices at this stage, as the native marine fauna is more than palatable. Algal blooms feed a wide variety of microscopic marine animals, which in turn are preyed upon by larger marine animals. The most pervasive animals to make the oceans their home are creatures much like the squid and cuttlefish of Earth. Predisposed to high levels of intelligence, they operate in large, complex, and ever-changing marine communities, and many biologists have noted how a community will carefully balance the time they spend in one area of the coastal waters against the amount they are consuming. Some scientists have theorised that the cephalopod-like animals carefully maintain the ebb and flow of their prey like primitive farmers, but this is conjecture. Also widespread are cetaceans. The most common of which are much like the dolphins of Earth, the most recognizable and famous of these cetaceans, the Yuèqí of the Hài Liú Inner Sea.

ECONOMY

With the arrival of the first colony ships to the Shanxing system came the overwhelming drive to create a self-sustaining empire, both now and for the future. To this end, vast resources were poured into agriculture. The Yu Jingese cleared suitable land and developed genetically modified crops suitable for the soils and environments of Yutang and Shentang. As the agricultural industry grew, the emphasis shifted away from self-sustenance to the additional production of a tradeable surplus.

Yu Jing has always had a strong focus on industry and economic success. As agricultural production began exporting excess agronomic crops to the rest of the developing Human Sphere, the StateEmpire began to shift its military industries away from Earth to the Shanxing system, basing them in orbit around and on Yutang. As the system became more stable and thoroughly colonised, private and state-backed industries developed in technology, manufacturing, mining and a host of other areas. Up until recently, the technology and manufacturing sectors were poorly regarded throughout the Human Sphere. Part of this was a secondary effect from the NeoColonial Wars when Yu Jing dedicated more and more of its resources to military development. This emphasis was no doubt also influenced by PanOceania's propaganda against Yu Jing and had a negative effect on the developing industries on Yutang.

At the end of the NeoColonial Wars, Yu Jing found the space to reassess its economic foundations, and with lofty goals in mind, set about ensuring it was competitive with every other power. While the tightly controlled military industrial complex was advanced and highly competitive, the other industries of Yutang were lacklustre. The StateEmpire decentralised control of a host of military research and development firms, and relaxed the laws around developing parallel technologies which allowed these companies to start applying their research to a vast range of civilian purposes with an eye both to the local markets and exports.

These changes have had a significant and swift impact on Yu Jingese industries. New technologies in transportation, hardware and wetware, computing systems and programs, propulsion systems, and more have seen the manufacturing and industrial complexes of Yutang revolutionised and reinvigorated.

Yutang's economy and production is shifting away from the mass production of low-quality goods and towards the development and manufacture of high-end technologies. The StateEmpire encourages the development of these businesses through a multitude of government grants and tax-breaks designed to boost competitiveness and advance progress and growth. The financial markets of Yutang grow yearly, and the threat to the economic pre-eminence of PanOceania is obvious even to the most uninformed inhabitant of the Human Sphere.

THE OCEANS

Warmed by Shanxing, Yutang is a humid planet. Regular and heavy rains soak the equatorial latitudes, and in the temperate zones, it is rarely cold enough to snow. The northernmost latitudes of the Penglai supercontinent reach into a subarctic zone, and snowfall is plentiful during winter months. The oceans, as affected by geological activity as the landmasses, are dominated by strong currents that circulate around the great Penglai supercontinent. Tectonic activity and deep-sea volcanism proliferate the oceans with an abundant mix of chemicals and minerals. Algal blooms that begin in the tropics are spread north and south by the currents and provide a rich foundation for teeming ecosystems. In the shallower waters, coral reefs are plentiful and vast, stretching along most of the coastlines of Penglai. The coral reefs are home to a huge diversity of animal life, dominated by a multitude of species of arthropods, cephalopods, and cetaceans. The reefs, however, make marine travel difficult for submarines or large, hulled crafts along the coastline. Most ocean-going crafts

UBTERRANEAN MARVELS

Much of the mountainous regions of Yutang are dominated by sedimentary rocks. Due to the high levels of rainfall and the tendency of such rocks to easily weather, there are extensive cave networks. Largely unexplored, even by remotes, these subterranean networks are vast and deep, but can also be prone to collapse, rockslides, and flooding. In some regions of Yutang, there are full settlements that exist in the more stable subterranean networks of the surrounding mountains.

Throughout the cave systems, bioluminescent fungi are common and come in many varieties. Some grow in startling and wondrous fractal patterns on the floors, walls, and ceilings of a cave system; others bloom as giant mushrooms gathered in circles, stars, or stranger patterns still. These cave systems are also home to a wide variety of animals, both arthropod and mammal, most of whom live their entire life-cycles in these eerily beautiful caverns.



CONSTRUCTIVE COMPETITION

"Pearls don't lie on the seashore. If you want one, you must dive for it." An old saying, but it is one that speaks to the truth of the Yu Jingese ideal. If you want something, you must strive to achieve it, and the best a citizen of Yu Jing can achieve is an achievement for the State. In everything, Yu Jing encourages a duality, an absolute dedication to the StateEmpire and its progress, and healthy competition. The very structure of the StateEmpire, with ethnicities tied to culture and history living in different regions, energizes them to compete with those around them. Competition is healthy, and those that want success the most will push the hardest and win it. This attitude is pervasive and encouraged by the StateEmpire in many subtle and not-so-subtle ways. From award ceremonies and the attached prestige they bring, to grants, tax-breaks, rewards, and tenders, competition is everywhere.

on Yutang use a variety of hover technologies, from cheaper, cushioned crafts to larger and more advanced propulsion types.

SHIZHUKONG OCEAN

The great Shizhukong Ocean juts into the Penglai supercontinent between Sēn Sun in the west and Zhōu Zhōng and Wei Chuān to the east, lapping at the narrow mass of Pianli forming a large gulf. It also extends along the southern edge of the continent and includes both the Achongshu and Maque Dao Archipelagos. The gulf shoreline areas of the Shizhukong Ocean are particularly vibrant. The vast, shallow sea bed is dominated by corals and is also extremely geologically active. The tectonic plate movement causing the rift across Penglai extends deep beneath the waters here too, and while a majority of this portion of the ocean is shallow, the great rift is a deep trench that pours sulphur and other elements into the rich ocean above. This trench has only been explored to a small extent by submersible remotes. How deep it goes is a matter of conjecture as deep sea surveys, and satellite imaging has only been able to provide a mere slice of the full picture. The Shizhukong Ocean is gradually driving a wedge into Penglai between Zhōu Zhōng and Wei Chuān, and the slowly expanding Hǎi Liǔ Sea is a confluence of salt water from the Shizhukong and fresher waters. The flow of rainfall off the ranges and underground streams feed the Hǎi Liǔ Sea, and while referred to as 'freshwater' on Yutang, is more nutrient rich and saltier than freshwater bodies on Earth.

The northern area of the Shizhukong Ocean is positioned across the warm tropical latitude, and fuelled by the chemical outpouring of Yutang's geological activity, this shallow ocean area is a verdant marine garden, with corals stretching across the ocean floor for thousands of kilometres. The algal blooms that thrive on the high mineral content here provide plentiful food for enormous populations of a variety of arthropod species, which in turn feed the cetaceans and cephalopods that live in huge active communities. Wei Chuān is a fertile agricultural area, and ocean off its coast is no different. Many fishing communities dot the coastlines, and fishermen here have taken to the abundance of life in the oceans with abandon. Further south the ocean loses the warmth and abundance of life.

ZONGZHU ARCHIPELAGO

Three great islands and a myriad of smaller ones make up the Zongzhu Archipelago in the Shizhukong Ocean. Ostensibly, these are meant to be wilderness preserves, but the coastlines are dotted with several dozen small fishing communities the StateEmpire hasn't bothered to relocate. Inland, the archipelago remains an untouched

picture of Yutang prior to colonisation, dominated by the gymnosperms common to the mainland. The mountainous islands have a great many fissures and natural caverns and are populated by unique fungi species. Largely unmonitored by authorities, several Triads run extensive drug manufactories revolving around the farming of these fungi and their refinement into hallucinogenic drops, which are smuggled out from Zongzhu to the mainland disguised among the vast number of small fishing vessels that ply the waters. These drops, usually available in small and easily concealed tablets or disposable pipets, are widely popular across Yutang.

QIHAI OCEAN

A vast and predominantly shallow ocean stretching across the northernmost latitudes, the Qihai Ocean is a bustle of activity. Settlements along the northern shores of the Penglai continent rely on the massive pods of cetaceans that thrive in these waters. Small fishing villages dot the coastline, providing for themselves and exporting much of their catch to the restaurants and markets of the southern cities. The ocean along the coast is a vibrant underwater ecosystem of extensive rocky outcroppings home to complex webs of life. Rocky sea-beds make the use of large boats impractical; most fishing vessels are small or can hover. This natural wilderness attracts many tourists, and a marine industry exists around diving and sport fishing.

The ocean is dotted with offshore platforms into the ocean floor for natural gas up to 80 kilometres from the shoreline. This bountiful resource is used across Yutang, both for residential and industrial uses. These natural gas platforms are small towns in themselves, with domiciles and entertainment facilities, where long-contract miners work in shifts lasting most of the year. The natural gas from the wells is sent back to the mainland via a constant flotilla of small craft. The size of the vessels has made them popular targets for pirates and thieves, often extensions of the Triads. They attempt to steal the natural gas for resale or their own use, or strike against the convoys of supply ships bringing food and materials to the platforms. Pirate attacks are terrifying for all involved. With the mining transports loaded with cylinders of explosive gas, assaults are predominantly hand-to-hand strikes, quick as lightning, violent, and deadly. Analysts are concerned that the attacks targeting gas supplies help fuel underground industries of unknown size. With stolen gas, energy consumption, and therefore industry size, is difficult to monitor. Such criminal enterprises are dominated by drug and munitions manufactory.

Some effort has been exerted by Imperial Agents to infiltrate and destroy the many pirate nests that are hidden in the archipelagos and islands that dot

the coast. But, because they utilise small vessels constantly moving across the waves, it is difficult to differentiate a would-be-pirate from a fishing, transport, or tourist vessel (and pirates make regular use of such cover).

YUANYE OCEAN

Yuanye Ocean extends from the north, where arctic currents separate it from the Qihai Ocean, and down the coast of Sen Sun. It extends west, where a long continental rift and updraft of warmed water fuels a current running from the southern latitudes to the northern. Here, the line is traditionally drawn between the Yuanye and Zhaohai Oceans. A broad demarcation and no-fly zone is in place across the extent of the Yuanye Ocean. Bordering the military dominated Sen Sun, there are no fishing villages or civilian settlements of note facing out into this Ocean. The Yuanye provides the StateEmpire with ample space for testing and research, without the concern that they are operating in an easily accessible area. Planetary observation satellites are programmed to treat the Yuanye Ocean as a blackspot. No civilian flights, craft, or vessels are permitted into the Yuanye Ocean without strict clearance, and monitoring stations exist both along the shores of Sen Sun, and in orbit, ensuring the secrecy that surrounds this place is maintained.

Off the coast of Sen Sun in the Yuanye Ocean, there are an array of deep-sea platforms, with design leaning heavily on those used by private enterprise drilling in the Qihai Ocean. These provide training grounds and barracks for the Yu Jingese army. Nestled in amongst these platforms, a range of underwater facilities conduct ongoing research and development projects for the military. Most of the facilities in this ocean are government sponsored. The only corporations allowed to operate in this space must obtain permits to develop technology and wetware for the Yu Jingese army. Large empty swathes of the ocean are used for weapons and munitions testing, far enough away from land to prevent any potential ill effects on the population.

ZHAOHAÏ OCEAN

Running the length of the eastern coast of the Penglai supercontinent, the Zhaohai Ocean is the busiest on Yutang, surpassing even the bustle of the drilling platforms of the Qihai Ocean. Thriving fishing and tourism industries keep the waters close to the coast a hive bustling with large, slower-moving, flat-bottomed barges and numerous small crafts. The fishing industry is representative of the rest of Yutang. Small, shallow-hulled water craft or hovercraft are the primary vessels, each able to carry limited stock. The physical constraints on the size of the watercraft, a product of the rich coral reefs that

festoon the waters, has an overall positive effect because a great many small-time businesses can operate rather than have the industry dominated by fleets of larger craft. While some private enterprises have attempted to consolidate the industry, the government is happy to encourage a climate that allows for an array of small private operators over larger conglomerates. This reinforcement of small industry feeds the economies of the many towns and villages that dot the coast. It does come at a price, however, as smuggling and small-time pirates are rife and can easily conceal themselves in the wash of vessels that stream out at dawn and flow around the coast every day. Tourism is a large industry here, with glass-bottom barges providing diving platforms onto the myriad of reef structures below. Many other water sports, such as paragliding and speedboat racing are also very popular.

XUANZHONG ARCHIPELAGO

A mass of large and small islands clustered in the northernmost portion of the Zhaohai Ocean forms the Xuanzhong Archipelago. Like the Zongzhu Archipelago, the islands are largely untouched by terraforming efforts and are dominated by native flora and an array of small gliding mammals. Tucked away in inlets and natural harbours are a hundred or more small fishing villages, most with populations of no more than two thousand. As the archipelago reaches north, the villages thin out and stop altogether. While not cold enough to be locked by ice, these are the coldest places on Yutang, regularly buried in heavy snows. Despite the fact that the Judicial Police have their training academy close by, these villages are a haven for smugglers and the Triads, and a range of small-time illegal operations are hidden away in valleys and cave systems further inland.

TI HENG ISLAND

Most widely known of all the islands of the Xuanzhong Archipelago is the infamous Ti Heng Island. Regarded broadly as a place where criminals and dissidents go to disappear, the black reputation of the Dilao prison is encouraged by Yu Jingese authorities. This prison is said to be inescapable and is so infamous it is even featured in Maya dramas in PanOceania and fuels dark rumours among the Nomad nations.

Suǒ Zài, on Ti Heng, is the Imperial Service Special Training Academy. Agents who wish to find a place in the Imperial Service, or who wish to improve their rank, undergo challenging training courses designed to push them to the limit of their physical and mental endurance, as well as instil the virtues and skills required of their future roles. Several



LIFE UNDER THE SNOW

Beginning in autumn and running through to the end of winter, Bèi Mén is regularly layered in deep banks of snow. While this presents some difficulty in maintaining the services of the city, it has become a tradition for the first snows to be celebrated. A vibrant sub-culture bursts into motion when the snow drifts are deep enough, carving out snow caves to serve as meeting places, tea-houses, and game parlours. While much of this activity is celebratory and benign, it is also a fact that many such snow-caves are used for illegal gambling, alcohol and drug use, meeting places, and they have been linked to the spread of anti-establishment teachings and dialog.

large campuses specialise in different areas of expertise, while extensive training grounds both on Tiě Heng and on military bases in the Yuanye Ocean are also used to drill future agents through simulated missions.

Alongside the campuses of Suǒ Zài is the Academy, the training facility of the Judicial Police. While they share many training grounds, and agents belonging to both may occasionally complete the same courses, the emphasis of the Academy is much more on policing and detective work, with a large portion of their preparation revolving around understanding the Triads, pirates, and smugglers of Yutang.

BÈI TŪ

The northernmost region of the Penglai Supercontinent, Bèi Tū ranges from temperate at its most southern border to subarctic at its most northern. Bèi Tū is densely populated, and while a majority live in cities and towns along the coastline, there are significant mining industries operating in the mountains to the south. Bèi Tū is the economic centre of Yutang. A significant benefactor from recent deregulations surrounding civilian application of ex-military technology, it is also home to thriving technology, research, and development sectors.

BÈI MÉN

Situated on a wide spur of land jutting into the Qihài Ocean and flanked by an extensive archipelago to the north and east, Bèi Mén survives primarily on the backs of two key industries: mining and fishing. Bèi Mén is a sprawling city that hugs the coastline. Its extensive dockyards, ports, and quays run for kilometres and are home to an innumerable fleet of small vessels. Large storage facilities, dry-docks, and wharfs dominate the waterfront. The huge warehouses and depots are mostly dedicated to gas storage and seafood processing. The smell of the waterfront permeates every inch of the city and is a feature much commented on in derogatory terms by peoples elsewhere in Yutang.

The life and bustle of the waterfront makes comings and goings difficult to monitor. The Imperial Service has recognised that the waterfronts of Bèi Mén serve as a lively base for pirate and Triad operations but continue to be stymied in their efforts to break the back of such illegal activities due to the difficulty in identifying and rooting them out. Such activities are often buried behind the legitimate businesses dominating the industries of Bèi Mén, and the civilian population are often closed-lipped due to the investment criminal networks put back

into the community by way of financial support and, ironically, protection.

Several large airfields sit inland, fuelled by the gas-mining industry of the Qihài Ocean. These are integral to the rotation of long-shift workers on the gas platforms. These workers often fly in to Bèi Mén from all over Yutang before shipping out for their shifts. Bèi Mén also has a thriving hotel industry, again reliant on the continual traffic of workers to and from the gas mines. They are expensive given their general poor quality. Imperial agencies are perennially concerned about the frequently unmonitored movement of people to and from Bèi Mén. On several occasions, it has been discovered that large inter-Triad meetings have taken place in the city. The upper-echelons of the Triads conceal their movements among the continuous hustle and rotation of workers. Some attempts at regulating and monitoring the movement of people have been made, but nothing concrete has been implemented at this stage.

Fishing and hunting the large pods of cetaceans that dominate the coastal waters of Bèi Tū is the second primary industry of Bèi Mén. Some level of controversy surrounds this industry, as it has been widely recognised by marine biologists that the cetaceans that populate the waters of Yutang are a rare and fragile species at the edge of extinction. This has not prevented the succulent meat of these creatures from being regarded a delicacy across Yutang, however, and vast fleets of fishing vessels leave the wharfs of Bèi Mén every morning seeking to fill their holds. Once killed, the creatures are brought back to the warehouses of the Bèi Mén waterfront, where they are butchered, their meat either used to feed the city or put on ice and transported to restaurants across the planet. These warehouses have been the site of several heated clashes in recent years between organisations protesting the hunting of these animals and the industry that supports it.

CHÉNG PÀI

Sitting on the northern coast of the Hǎishì Shuǐ Sea off the Zhaohài Ocean, Chéng Pài straddles the wide, silt-rich delta of the Chōng Shé River. In spring and summer, the languid Chōng Shé River system turns into a rushing torrent from melting ice melts that pours off the Zhǎng Shān Mountains. In recent years, a series of dams have been constructed to lessen the chaotic impact of seasonal flooding on the increasingly large expanses of farmland surrounding the river. The flooding hasn't been completely arrested however, as the rising waters flowing over the farmlands brings vital minerals that have seen the farmlands around Chéng Pài grow to become some of the most bountiful in Yutang.

Chéng Pài, surrounded as it is by good quality arable land, has built up rather than waste potential space for crops. While the immediate pressure on land use is negligible – Yutang has a small overall population after all – the StateEmpire has taken a deliberately conservative approach by locking away much land for native reserves, which may then be freed for agricultural purposes as the planetary population rises. For many outsiders, this attitude seems overly conservative, but the StateEmpire has always maintained this policy that stems from experiences with food shortages and production shortfalls in the past on Earth.

Chéng Pài is a city of skyscrapers and apartment blocks, where every inch of land is put to its best use. The neo-traditional Asian architecture that dominates many of the cities of Yutang can still be seen in flourish and embellishment, but Chéng Pài is a modern city before anything else. Its towering buildings have been designed and developed to cope with the rigors of Yutang's storms and geological activity, both flexible and strong. The city is shaped to funnel and redirect the energy of prevailing winds, so tempests and storm cells that make landfall coming off the Háishì Shuǐ Sea do little damage. The super-structures of the high rises are also designed to be remarkably flexible, allowing them to move with the earth during any geological activity, and absorb the energy rather than be destroyed by it.

Chéng Pài has extensive chains of underground bunkers, built mainly in the early phases of the colonisation of Yutang, when the geological activity of the planet was less well-studied and monitored. They are still occasionally used when predictions of a major earthquake are supplied to the authorities, and the population of the city is well trained in evacuation processes, but for the most part they gather dust. It is rumoured that many of the oldest of these bunkers, linked one to the other like an underground maze, are heavily used by Triad gangs. One briefly popular Maya drama even depicted a secret war fought beneath the city between Imperial Agents and Triads, purported to be based on true events, the veracity of which have never been determined.

Most famously, Chéng Pài is home to the Chéng Pài State University, a towering edifice of three skyscrapers linked with a myriad of umbilical-like bridges. It is both a university and the accommodation blocks for the students that study there. Renowned for the courses it offers in economics and foreign studies, it attracts students from across the Yu Jing StateEmpire and even students from other nations in the Human Sphere, the latter of which pay handsomely for the opportunity. Some of the lectures on finance and economics have become standard viewing in universities around

the Sphere and are regularly used in training simulations on Concilium Prima. Tenure as a lecturer at the Chéng Pài State University is highly sought after and extremely cutthroat. Only the very best teachers are maintained, and the pressure and expectation placed on students is excruciating. Whatever magic the university has managed to capture and maintain works though, as some of the best economic theorists, mathematicians, investors, fund managers, and financial advisors are old alumni, as well, it should be noted, as some of the most infamous scammers and embezzlers unleashed on the Human Sphere!

Inside Chéng Pài's largest traditionally Chinese building, which is itself nestled within the city's central park and gardens, are the Qíng Cultural Archives. Ostensibly, these are public access records, charting the history of the Qíng branch of the royal families. In reality, they are as much about maintaining and extending the reputation of the Yu Jing StateEmpire as providing a solid historical resource. Despite the propagandistic flair to the Cultural Archives, there is much history to be found there, especially for those with academic access to the full public records. Many journalists and historians have uncovered interesting tales of the Qíng family, especially detailing the extended family and their ongoing, sometimes violent, and mostly private wrangling with the Míng royal line.

Beneath the public records are the large data banks that store the real histories – the unredacted accounts of political machinations, personal rivalries, and sometimes violent entanglements between the Qíng and Míng lines. Analysts in service to the Qíng maintain thorough and up-to-date records of all the members of the Qíng line, from their minute-by-minute location, to their personal expenditures, academic progress, social media presence, and even health records. Additionally, as much information about the Míng line, including all currently living members, is also farmed in as great a detail as is possible. From here infowar specialists extend the rivalry between the two families into quantronic space, making sure public records of the Qíng are as clean as possible, while leaking and besmirching the Míng as much as it is safe to do so. This portion of the Qíng Cultural Records is off-limits to anyone not thoroughly vetted by the family and yet is also the target of ongoing infiltration attempts, both from quantronic space and by agents attempting to gain access to the records through subterfuge.

KUFANG

Heart of the economic engine of the StateEmpire, Kufang is a financial powerhouse, a vibrant city where fortunes are made and dashed daily. The city

HÓNGSHUǐ QÍNGZHŪ HUÓDONG

Every spring, as the ice and snow locked in the Zhǎng Shān Mountains begin the seasonal melts, and the waters of the Chōng Shé begin to flood, Chéng Pài revels in the *Hóngshuǐ Qíngzhū Huódòng*: the flood celebrations. These are marked by parades, firework displays, general revelries, and a two-day holiday. Regulations were introduced five years ago on the sale of alcohol, as authorities were having a hard time dealing with an influx of farmers from surrounding regions mixing with the city population, many on both sides heavily under the influence. This led to a spike in the illegal drug market, and authorities now are looking to roll-back their regulations, although there is some debate as to whether this will impact the now-established drug market.



DID HE JUMP?

Recent investigations by Imperial Agents estimate that an unnervingly high number of reported suicides in Kufang may actually have been murders. Competition to succeed, trading of inside information, and extended vendettas are all possible motivators for such crimes. What is most concerning is the blasé attitude of the local law enforcement, who seem more than willing to write off a death as suicide, when the evidence may well suggest otherwise. Whether laziness, or the result of corruption is under investigation. Regardless, many families, companies, and business partners turn to private detectives rather than rely on the local constabulary when they feel foul play may be involved.

BEHIND THE CURTAIN

Despite Shi Huô's shining reputation, partly exaggerated by the film industry using it as the template for 'futuristic city' (sci-fi Maya shows are regularly filmed there), there is a darker side. Recent changes to legislation deregulating some military technology for development by the civilian sector has undoubtedly been a huge boon to the city's tech industry. Companies engaging in research and development have little protection, however; industrial espionage is extremely common in Shi Huô, and cases of sabotage have left larger companies reeling and start-ups in tatters. What recourse companies have for these sorts of activities is a murky legal twilight-zone, with every case making the courts seeming to set a new precedent. Rather than pursue the matter legally and place themselves under the scrutiny of Imperial Service agents, most companies discreetly seek their own justice by employing private detectives and even mercenaries.

itself was once the focal point for heavy mining in the Zhǎng Shān Mountains, where huge open cut mines extracted mineral resources to power the manufacturing sectors of Yutang. Now much of the mining industry has moved off world, and the open cut mines have been largely abandoned. Smaller mines exist throughout the Zhǎng Shān Mountains, run by private operators and following seams of minerals more common to Yutang than elsewhere. Kufang didn't just abandon the mining industry. It evolved over time. The wealth that flowed to the city as a product of its mineral trade led to the growth of a healthy economic sector, which in turn led to investment and financial trading houses. These now have become ascendant, dominating the city, and Kufang has managed to secure the position of being the preeminent heart of financial trading on Yutang. The vast open-cut mines that once fed the growth of Kufang are like great upside-down step pyramids, dug deep into the bedrock of the Mountains. The city has flowed down into them, with high-rise apartment blocks and sky-scrappers filled with financial houses and trading firms, investment bankers, and currency exchanges, the vibrant soul of the new Kufang, now filling these old mines.

Like a series of great indentations carved into the mountains, Kufang has become a city of sectors. Each district built into the cluster of open-cut mines of old Kufang is linked by tunnels through the mountains and valley sides that separate them and maglev trains that run day and night. The city never sleeps, always with a finger on the pulse of the financial markets of the Human Sphere. Geostationary satellites provide direct informational access from Kufang to the Vila Boosters that process data to and from the rest of the Sphere. Pressure to succeed is wild, and fortunes can be made and lost within hours, especially in the volatile cryptocurrency markets. Suicide rates in Kufang are disproportionately high compared to the rest of Yutang, a fact that has been concerning to the StateEmpire for some time. While efforts have been made to provide support for those suffering under the pressures of Kufang's demanding and nonstop lifestyle, little effective intervention has been implemented.

SHI HUÔ

On the western coast of the Háishi Shuǐ Sea, south of Chéng Pài, sits Shi Huô, an imposingly modern city, lit with interactive billboards that fill the busy streets with colour and movement to its very ceiling. Shi Huô is the epitome of modern Yu Jing, a technological marvel to rival anywhere in PanOceania. Here, more than anywhere else on Yutang, the ubiquitous comlog interacts with every facet of the city, from real-time maps and directional assistance,

to traffic aids, shopping platforms, and a vibrant use of social media that extends the actions and interactions in Shi Huô into Maya.

The city is famous for its technology sector, with big corporations and start-ups both forging into new territory in what is known in the city as the Big Three: hardware, wetware, and programming. Shi Huô is a city that breathes opportunity, on the very forefront of Yu Jingese civilian research and development. Small companies here have the very best of chances to gain investors and attention. Technology fairs, displays, and conventions are run regularly, and it is the dream of many engineers and programmers to create their own start-ups eventually to be acquired by one of the leviathans of the industry. Alternate work spaces and ideal corporate structures change with the seasons. Shi Huô is widely regarded as one of the most demanding, competitive, and best places to find occupation.

PIANLI

A long strip of land joining the main body of the Penglai continent to Sēn Sūn, geologists estimate it is a relatively recent upthrust of land, caused by the collision of the two great plates beneath. The slowly widening rift pushing from the south and the subduction of the plate to the north makes Pianli a very geologically active region. Hot springs and bubbling mud pools dot the landscape, and while there has been no volcanic activity, predictions suggest it could happen with any new tremor. Pianli extends across the equatorial zone, and the mix of geological activity and sodium-rich rainfall has meant that attempts to farm this area have had limited success; it is still dominated by native flora and fauna. At its narrowest point, known as the GanBu isthmus, a wide canal has been dug to allow the passage of barges to and from the Shizhukong and Qihǎi Oceans.

JIAZXHU

Not quite large enough to be regarded a full city, Jiaxhu is a low-lying town built on both sides of the GanBu canal and joined by two long bascule bridges. The population here survives on the trade moving between the Shizhukong and Qihǎi Oceans, and is home to a large itinerant population of soldiers going and coming from Sēn Sūn. Jiaxhu is home to a great number of government officials, many of these are responsible for monitoring and checking the barges that make use of the GanBu canal, as well as collecting tariffs as they move through. Many are members of the military, who oversee the movement of new recruits to Sēn Sūn and retirees from it. A small civilian population works in the services and commercial enterprises of the town.

Despite its size, Jiax Zhu is a very active town. Trade barges are lined up daily for checking by customs and tariff agents, and many investigations have been launched into suspected corruption over what goods, exactly, have been allowed through. It has been rumoured that several powerful Triads have a well-hidden underground presence in the town. Access to the canal traffic and the various permissions required of 'legitimate' merchant vessels seems a very inviting proposition for criminal elements certainly, and Imperial Agents are often sent to see what they can uncover. It is well known that large quantities of illegal goods are smuggled through the Gan Bu canal, but customs agents decry an adequate lack of personnel and funding given the amount of traffic they are meant to monitor, and there is certainly some legitimacy to their claim.

New recruits destined for the famous Three Lakes of Sèn Sùn spend their stopover in the east side of Jiax Zhu. It has grown into something of a tradition, and there are a great many more bars and nightclubs than the population would otherwise be able to sustain as a result. Bizarre and sometimes dangerous hazing rituals and reckless behaviour are commonplace, and the locals are a tough and ready lot as a result, able to defend themselves and quell trouble when pushed to do so. For the most part though, the citizenry of Jiax Zhu prefer to keep away from the locales frequented by the military, and ranking officers try to keep their soldiers from running amok too much.

On the west side of Jiax Zhu are well maintained parade and ceremonial grounds as well as a large cenotaph dedicated to the soldiers who lost their lives during the NeoColonial Wars. Here parades and rites of closure for retiring members of the military on their way out of Sèn Sùn are held. These are usually less rowdy events, more staid and sombre in comparison to the high spirited chicanery of the new recruits.

XIN QINCHENG

Bleak and barren, pounded by wave and weather, the Xin Qincheng prison city straddles a hopeless and desolate island north of Pianli. Surrounded by high, windowless walls, covered by a complex pattern of automated remotes, the mere sight of Xin Qincheng is enough to cause even the strongest willed to despair.

While political dissidents, terrorists, and those who affront the Emperor or StateEmpire might be sent to the Diláo for interrogation and incarceration, those sent to Xin Qincheng are the thugs, Triad gangers, murders, and rapists of Yutang not destined to become Kuang Shi. Inside this vast facility,

they work in sprawling and poorly maintained factories, producing engine parts, clothes, and all manner of simple goods that are then shipped across Yutang. Discipline is kept through a brutal regime enforced by iron-fisted prison guards. Disputes between prisoners are often violent, with the guards more than happy to literally pick up the pieces afterwards. Sentence expiries can be overlooked for years, and there is little hope of prisoners being released early.

This massive forced labour camp has drawn criticism from O-12, who, every couple of years, have asked permission to inspect the facilities. So far, the StateEmpire has declined to oblige, asserting their right to enforce law and order and maintain the peace, while presenting the front that conditions aren't as bad as rumour suggests. This statement at least is true; they are worse.

SÈN SÙN

Large swathes of what was a delicate tropical and temperate wonderland, all carefully moulded by terraforming processes to support a strong agricultural base, were blasted into a barren, rocky wasteland by PanOceanian orbital bombardment during the Mahisa Total Offensive of the second NeoColonial War. Now the Sèn Sùn peninsula is dominated by industrial and military concerns, its landmass either strip mined for Teseum or given over to barracks and training grounds. Gaining access to Sèn Sùn is only possible with a pass issued from the StateEmpire, something automatic for military personnel, available to mining conglomerates, but obtainable by few others.

THE THREE LAKES

Extensive barracks, training grounds, simulators, and mock battlefields surround the three lakes of Sèn Sùn. Here recruits are drilled mercilessly until they either break and drop out, or else graduate into the Zànshi Qízhì Dàdùì. Some soldiers, identified though capabilities demonstrated in their training exercises, may be selected for further training and enter the Invincible Army, Tiger Soldiers, or even the Hac Tao.

TIAN CHI

The three lakes physically represent different stages of preparation. Camps around Tian Chi deal in basic training, with batches of recruits arriving together who are assigned to one of eight specific camps. Each is proudly associated with one of the eight armies of the Yu Jing Ministry of State Defence, and each brandishes their own banner. Tian Chi is where the weak are separated from the strong, and gruelling physical exercises and strict

AN UNSPOKEN AGREEMENT

Access to Sèn Sùn is supposed to be strictly regulated and monitored. However, there is an unofficial agreement with local traders coming from the mainland or the Zhong Zhu archipelago that they may make landfall in any of the small military towns that dot the east coast of Sèn Sùn in order to trade food goods and items. To do so without coming under fire, the small water craft fly a chain of triangular red pennants, and are only permitted to land in the towns, not in the wilderness between them. It has been reported on multiple occasions that such unofficial trades have bought weapons, drugs, alcohol, and unauthorised civilians to the shores of Sèn Sùn. However, access to amenities, luxuries, and food not sourced from a mess has meant these trades have been allowed to continue regardless.



RÓNG LÙ

Almost as large as the basic training grounds themselves, the greatest training camp of the Invincible Army seems to have been strategically placed at Tian Chi for maximum inspiration to all recruits, whether their military career leads them to the Terracotta Warriors or not. Huge holosigns of the Aristeia! legend, Lei Gong, inspire recruits and extol the virtues of the Invincible Army, while addresses from Sun Tze – who always makes it a point to visit the training centre when on Yutang – boom across the parade grounds. This Invincible Army training centre is the largest and most prestigious of all for good reason.

Partly because of the associated grandeur and partly because many citizens of Yu Jing consider military service an honour and duty, applications to Róng Lù remain high. Many new recruits alter their plans and apply for a transfer to the Invincible Army program once basic training is complete



training regimes take soft-bodied recruits and turn them into fit, strong soldiers. Weapons ranges provide recruits with constant drilling, improving their accuracy, reflexes, and ability to maintain their weapons. Forced marches, tough drills through obstacle courses, mock battlefields, and simulations train the recruits to switch off their conscious selves and operate under orders as a cohesive team in the face of stress and deprivation. Many new recruits can't handle the rigours demanded by the Tian Chi camps, physically or mentally breaking down and dropping out. For the rest, after four months of heavy training, they graduate to the camps of the Feng Chi Lake.

FENG CHI

Eight camps around Feng Chi Lake continue to mould the physical and mental resilience of those that make it this far. Long, forced marches, short and intense bursts of physical conditioning, verbal abuse, threats, and mock interrogations strengthen the body and mind. Here the recruits are trained heavily in hand to hand combat, a facet of basic training unique to the Yu Jing military. Taught

in a range of fighting styles, by Shaolin monks and grizzled veterans of the Zànshi Qízhì Dàdùì, recruits learn to master the art of getting up close with the enemy. Extensive competitions and rivalries between the camps are run weekly, this both extends training and ingrains recruits with an identity strongly tied to their banner. Recruits that graduate from Feng Chi are moved to Lian Quan Lake.

LIAN QUAN

Unlike the previous stages of training, the Lian Quan Lake facility is a single massive training ground. Recruits are still barracked according to their banners, but classes and training are run in mixed groups often transported to facilities elsewhere on Sēn Sūn. By this stage, each recruit is indelibly stamped with an identity reflecting their banner, and while much of the training is in classes and on mock battlefields, competitions are held banner versus banner, with units from each pitted against each other. At Lian Quan, recruits complete the final stages of their training: tactics, strategy, field medicine, survival skills, quantronic safety,

communications, military history, enemy appraisals, and more. Many of these lessons are followed up with simulated combats, a majority of which are live fire exercises, in mock urban environments, and other training grounds built to specifically reflect the nuances of Paradiso, Ariadna, Neoterra, Acontecimiento, Varuna, spaceship and station interiors, and even in special zero-g facilities. Once training around Lian Quan is complete, and the final passing out parade held, recruits are promoted as soldiers in the Zànshi Qìzhì Dàdùì.

Further training in specialisations may continue for some recruits, and an exemplary few may be earmarked for training in specialised units. After a short period of leave, newly trained soldiers will be assigned to an area of service and commanding officer in their banner and will be shipped off. The system of banners is slowly being replaced by the rise of the Invincible Army. Where exactly this more recent development will lead is anyone's guess, but it is assumed that a more tightly controlled chain of command leading all the way to the governing body of the StateEmpire will oversee the defence of the different regions of Yutang, sooner perhaps than many suspect.

JIǎ YAN

A hollow shell of an abandoned and half-built resort town, Jiǎ Yan is like something out of a post-apocalyptic Maya drama. Perched on the eastern shore of the Tian Chi Lake, Jiǎ Yan is home to a small community of service industries that service mine workers and the occasional needs of soldiers on leave. The shops, bars, brothels, and hotels that have managed to survive are dilapidated and seedy locales set against the backdrop of a town with collapsing resorts, abandoned shopping centres, and even a rundown theme park. Dominating

portions of the town and the area surrounding it are a chain of Teseum mines and refineries. The fly-in fly-out miners that work them stay in Jiǎ Yan for their month-long shifts before the next rotation replaces them. The town's population at any given time may be in the low thousands, crammed into a series of unkempt streets and alley ways, but they are itinerant, changing regularly and always in flux.

MÁQUÉ DǎO ARCHIPELAGO

A high-security preserve, the Máqué Dǎo Archipelago is restricted space, both for people coming to its shores and entering its airspace. Largely empty, the Máqué Dǎo Archipelago has gone mostly untouched by terraforming efforts that have taken place elsewhere on Yutang. The borders of the archipelago are laced with a complex web of monitoring stations and weapons remotes. Gaining access means having high security passes the remote systems recognise. Without them, trespassers will be fired upon automatically. The Máqué Dǎo Archipelago is a legal black-space, exempt from the laws that govern Yutang.

WEI CHUǎN

Images and footage of Wei Chuǎn are widely used as part of the propaganda of the Yu Jing StateEmpire and for Yutang, particularly. Renowned as the bread basket of the StateEmpire, Wei Chuǎn is a verdant region, dominated by cropland and pastures. When the StateEmpire wants to sell itself as a power of abundance and plenty, pictures of Wei Chuǎn do more than words ever could. Terraforming has been extremely successful in this area, and the local flora has been almost completely subsumed by the crops, fruits, and grasses of Earth. Rolling

SHENCANG

In a sheltered bay on the southern edge of the largest island in the Máqué Dǎo Archipelago is the city of Shencang. This high security city exists on two levels, a façade exterior, with large, empty buildings and both the underground and the prison encampments that test and extend the training of the criminals sentenced to serve in the Wú Míng. Inside the underground a large population of several thousand scientists, military personnel, technicians, and other experts, along with their families, live in a sheltered community. For most of them, this will be the location where they spend their lives. Children are schooled here, and a whole service industry supports the population and every other need and amenity required to exist in isolation from the rest of Yutang. Shencang is the ultimate gated community. Even the data sphere that services the city is completely isolated from the networks that service Yutang, and no access from ALEPH or to Maya is possible. This is the Cultural Reserve, a vast data bank of information designed to protect and preserve the history, culture, technology, and legacy of Yu Jing. It is compulsory for all tech and development companies to make copies of their research for the Cultural Reserve. Contained here are also the fertilised eggs, seeds, and materials required to completely restart humanity should some form of apocalyptic event occur. The largest underground chamber contains eight vast spaceships, fuelled, regularly checked and maintained. They are ready to launch at any time and have space in their holds to carry the promise of humanity to other worlds, should need ever demand it.

THE BOARDWALK

Intended to be a waterfront resort, where water-sports, fishing, and relaxation were the focus, the boardwalk was never finished before the Jiǎ Yan project was largely abandoned. All that remains now is an unfinished, sprawling four-storey hotel and an extensive waterfront of jetties, a marina, and two long piers, all of which are slowly sinking into Tian Chi. This decrepit expanse is a focal point for illegal activities, with a well-concealed – but thriving – black-market, underground animal and human fighting rings, gambling rings, a strong drug trade, and a collection of unlicensed brothels. These activities have overflowed the boardwalk and also extend into the adjoining theme park. Attempts to crack down on this vice-ridden collection of illegal activities is regularly attempted, but Sēn Sūn sits in an uncomfortable legal grey zone. The Imperial Service and Yu Jingese military both claim authority and disown responsibility for those areas not specifically given over to military training. While efforts to curb the growth of illegal markets are regularly tabled and attempted, actual follow-through in any meaningful way is rare. Military police or Imperial Agents will clear a location out but fail to arrest key people involved. As soon as the next night, the same areas will often be back to hosting whatever activities they were prior to the raids. While much of this is publicly blamed on the lack of communication between the agencies involved and no clear jurisdictional control of the issue, many suspect that deals with Triads keep the illegal industry from being significantly targeted.



hills provide ample feeding ground for vast herds of livestock, all of which service the growing needs of Yutang and the StateEmpire in general. With its northern most point sitting inside the tropical band, its most southern a balmy temperate zone, and with plentiful rainfall rolling off the Shizhukong Ocean, Wei Chuän is perfectly situated to grow a wide range of crops, and wide swathes of marsh wheat are punctuated with large fruit orchards and rolling pastures dominated by grazing livestock. In the foothills and mountains, terraced fields of rice and millet are more common. Along the eastern coast, gentle foothills descend toward the confluence of the Shizhukong and Zhaohai Oceans, and much of the area has been given over to estates highly sought after by the rich and powerful. Ex-party members, Maya and Aristeia! stars, business and Triad leaders all vie for the rare opportunity to retire to this beautiful region.

QIHAI SEA

Sitting at a high altitude, the freshwater Qihai Sea is fed by heavy rainfall in the surrounding mountains. Much of the latent salt from the water and rains is leached by a concentration of underground springs and the melts from surrounding snow caps that flow through volcanic springs in the mountains. Water flows out of the sea into the Wei River, especially during the spring, when melts on the mountains give it strong undercurrents. Throughout the Wei River and Qihai Sea, pods of Moonfin dolphins, known locally as Yuèqí, prey upon the swarms of cephalopods and fish that thrive in these cold waters. The Qihai Sea, for most of the year, is a tranquil mirrored surface. Surrounded on all sides by steep mountain walls, it has become a famous tourist destination for sightseers, and many small resorts and getaways dot the coast, usually built on platforms that extend over the waters themselves. Many of these are corporate retreats, training facilities where Party Members, military COs, and executives are trained in meditation and stress relief, a theme that fits the picturesque landscape beautifully.

In more recent years, a number of custom-built house boats have been constructed or flown in to the Qihai Sea to provide a retreat for their owners, all of whom are extremely wealthy and influential members of the government, business, and entertainment world – including many with criminal ties. Isolated and beautiful, the Qihai Sea is the perfect location to find calm and respire in an otherwise hectic world.

THE WEI RIVER

For most of the year the Wei river system, fed by tributaries reaching up into the surrounding mountains, follows a lazy path down to the Penglai Rift Sea. As spring arrives and the snow melts flow off the surrounding mountains, the Wei River becomes

a torrent, swelling to as much as double or triple its normal depth and is a violent and potentially destructive rush of water.

When not in flood, the Wei River is traversed regularly by fan boats bringing tourists and those seeking to centre their spiritual selves to one of the many small meditation and health facilities that have grown in popularity over the last few years. Such facilities are usually built above the recorded flood levels and cleverly cling to the valley walls that rise up from the Wei. Every year, it seems, more and more people are caught in the floods, whether leaving too late, attempting to make a trip too early, or trapped in some latest, but poorly conceived, health spa by rising waters.

HÄIMEN

Nestled against the southern coast of Wei Chuän, Häimen is a low-laying town of two identities. The Low Quarters is where the working classes who built the town live and work. Against the coastline, the Low Quarters is pushed against the docks, shipyards and factories that service the fishing industry. It is a vibrant place of small markets and rich smells, with secrets seemingly tucked into every corner. The cause of the increasing density of the Low Quarters is the growing cost of living in the High Quarters. Here the commercial and services districts that provide for the rich and famous are located. Over the last decade, the pastorally focused highlands of Häimen have grown from a rural town to the more modernised High Quarters of today. Beyond them, in the rolling countryside above Häimen, are estates with extensive grounds, blocked from public view by small orchards, tree lines, and hedges. This has become a focal point for the higher echelons of Yutang society – an idyllic and picturesque backdrop for retirement. In truth, many of those that settle here, ex-party members, Maya and Aristeia! stars, business leaders, and all-too-squeaky-clean Triad bosses come from positions and environments that never really let you retire. As such, there is a disproportionately sized headquarters for a branch of the Imperial Service in Häimen. And while jokingly referred to as a summer camp, the Häimen branch sees far too much secret action to allow anyone to rest on their laurels.

THE STATE OCEANOGRAPHIC SERVICE

Edging the coastline of Häimen is an extensive marine industry. Here docks, quays, and warehouses service the small flotilla of fishing vessels that make their way into the choppy waters each morning. To the east and west there are two marinas; these are the locations of the yachts and pleasure vessels of the wealthier members of Häimen's High

Quarters. Nestled between the fishing docks and the eastern marina is a large, sweeping modern building, incongruent with the low-lying buildings around it. Extending well over the waters on broad pillars driven deep into the ocean floor and rising some eight stories high, as well as containing gardens, classrooms, laboratories, libraries, data bases, and lecture theatres, is the headquarters of the State Oceanographic Service.

While the Oceanographic Service has a great many outposts around Yutang, all research is redirected to the faculties in Hǎimen for further analysis and study. Well-funded, and with a broad remit for exploration and investigation, the State Oceanographic Service has been involved with key research surrounding mapping the ocean floors of Yutang, measuring tectonic activity around the Shizhukong trench, and studying the extensive biosphere of Yutang's marine environment. The last has been particularly controversial, as studies have increasingly indicated that both the cetacean and cephalopod communities native to Yutang are becoming increasingly endangered. These studies have been largely kept silent while remedies are sought, as the more extreme measures required to ensure the survival of these aquatic species will have a wide-reaching social impact due to the seafood heavy diet of the Yu Jingese.

Least well-known of the Service's personnel, yet perhaps most influential, is the marine cartographer, biologist, engineer, and polymath Wang Tao. Working from a dusty office in the rear of the institute, he has been integral to the development of the underwater military facilities of the Yuanye Ocean. One of a handful of the private citizens with deep knowledge of and wide access to this region of Yutang, he and his team have been fundamental to the extensive military research that has progressed thanks to the Yuanye facilities. It has been suspected that the State Oceanographic Institute has had some involvement with the militarised areas of Yuanye, but few even within the Party or military understand just how much.

SHICHUǍN

Calm and gently flowing during autumn and winter, come spring the waters at the mouth of the Wei River are a torrent, turning the wide delta into a dangerous mess of currents and undertows. Built high above the waters, on pillars and stilts driven into the bedrock, is the city of Shichuǎn. The city is as a focal point for trade between the lush, produce-rich region of Wei Chuǎn and the rest of Yutang. The storage pens, dock yards, and warehouses are gargantuan in scale, with many of the cattle depots stretching for several kilometres under a single vast roof. Grain silos stand like

miniature skyscrapers in row upon row, and the city is a constant bustle of activity. Keeping the produce and trade of Wei Chuǎn flowing is a colossal effort, and the bureaucracy that manages the flow of people, livestock, and produce numbers more than ten thousand. In theory, customs officers are meant to scan and check every container entering and leaving the vast docking facilities of Shichuǎn. In practice however, due to the breakneck speed at which everything moves, it is impossible to do more than cursory random checks. This high-level of activity has made the ports of Shichuǎn a focus for criminal networks, with Triads using the continual flow of trade to mask drug, weapons, and people smuggling.

While a large proportion of the Shichuǎn population is employed directly by the industries of trade that operate here, there are many ancillary businesses as well. Freezing and cold storage, cleaning, butchers, and a vast range of other industries tied to the flow of animals and produce keep the city a vibrant centre for business, as well as the many services and commercial enterprises that meet the needs of the citizenry. Shichuǎn is a city that never sleeps. It is dominated by long days of hard graft and has a strong cultural work ethic. When the day of moving produce and livestock from pens and storage into containers and barges has been completed, the cleaning crews descend on the docks making them ready for the next day of trade. The lights never go out, and amid this hustle and bustle corruption and criminal enterprise are as rife and successful as legitimate ones.

YÚ HÚ

On the western coast of Wei Chuǎn sits the port city of Yú Hú. Originally a fishing town, it has been thoroughly subsumed by the tourism industry, and an extensive area of land surrounding the city has been demarcated for this purpose. The flora and fauna around Yú Hú are carefully managed, with extensive parks reflecting both terraformed transplants from Earth and the flora and fauna native to Yutang. Tourists from across the Human Sphere holiday in Yú Hú, and the city has a deliberate neoclassical architectural style. It's a stylistic blending of the historic and modern Yu Jing, with buildings that wouldn't look out of place in ancient Beijing, mixed with all the technological amenities a modern city provides. The streets are wide and full of leafy trees, and extensive parks, fish ponds, and rock gardens make ambling through the city a relaxing delight. Many street vendors ply their trade here, as well as established restaurants, cafes, bars, and tea houses. The city is alive and ever changing, and entertainment of all varieties is widely available. From games parlours to nightclubs, watersports to hiking, there is something for everyone. Yú Hú is

THE LONGSHOREMEN

Shichuǎn, built on pillars and stilts, projects out into the Wei Sea, and vast gangplanks, ladders, stairs, and lifts lead down from the city to the docks built out on the sea itself. Here barges are continually being loaded and unloaded, empty and full. They all eventually leave Shichuǎn filled with produce, animals, or other less legitimate trade items, destined for somewhere else on Yutang. The Longshoremen are the men and women who manage the docks. They load and crew the ferries and machines that fill the barges and keep the engine of trade moving. Longshoremen have a robust cultural identity, bound up with a vigorous work ethic, and have long been strong advocates for themselves. Bonded by their work and culture, they are a powerful regional faction, and both the state and criminal elements on Yutang have worked hard to infiltrate and influence them. Even the threat of a strike could wreak economic havoc, and the Longshoremen are well aware of the power they hold. Equally aware is the StateEmpire, who do much to accommodate the Longshoremen while also working undercover among them to weed out dissidents and troublemakers.



also the location of the Ming cultural archives. This sprawling building has a public ground floor open to tourists looking to learn more about the Imperial family, as well as a heavily guarded lower floor dedicated to the archives. A new archive is currently under construction in the city.

Yú Hú is an advertisement for the Yu Jingese StateEmpire, highly controlled and policed, with a majority of agents undercover so as not to leave a sour impression on any visitors. Because of this, Yú Hú enjoys the lowest crime rate on the entire planet – something which the local Party members are quick to laud to their peers.

YUNMEN

Spanning a wide belt of land across the width of the Penglai supercontinent, Yunmen sits in the tropical latitude above the equatorial band. It is a diverse landscape, yet warm throughout the year and often soaked in heavy rains. The fertile space between the Zhōngjiān and Zhǎng Shān Mountain ranges contains extensive wilderness reserves dominated by flora native to Yutang, as well as the largest herds of Dazhu still living wild. Here, a thousand varieties of gymnosperms cover the floors of the reserves with lush browns and greens, while the larger varieties stretch their furry trunks high above the fernery below. Much effort has gone into maintaining the reserves, and several are State-declared off-limits, even to biologists studying the native life of Yutang. Speculation and rumour rears its head every few years to suggest that evidence of an older civilisation has been discovered deep in these forested regions, but the StateEmpire is quick to laugh them off as nothing more than imaginative fairy stories.

Between the wilderness preserves, rich orchards provide a bounty of Loi Po apples and pears, and a variety of spices are also grown. Yunmen is regarded as the reflective soul of Yutang, and many of its cities are strongly influenced by cultural activities, with widespread artistic movements actively encouraged as well as carefully monitored.

JICHANGYI

Prudently laid out, deliberate in its style and construction, Jichāngyī is both a statement and a highly functional city. Usually the first sight and taste of Yutang that any traveller to the planet will experience, Jichāngyī as a statement embodies everything the StateEmpire wishes to project. The city is an eclectic and curious mix of the old and new. Neoclassical architecture dominates, although the brilliant incandescence of Yutang's technologies industries are also clearly on display. Walking the

streets of Jichāngyī is a delight, and the city is very clearly designed to show off the rich panoply of Yu Jingese culture, with districts reflecting not just Chinese influences, but Korean, Vietnamese, and all the other cultures that make up the rich tapestry of the Yu Jing StateEmpire. The military is clearly on display, with Zhanshi troops guarding Starport-1 and regular displays of training, discipline, and complex marching patterns. All of the pomp is marketed as free public entertainment, but equally serving the purpose of selling the strength of Yu Jing.

Jichāngyī is home to several arenas where Aristeia! bouts are held on a regular basis. The celebrity fighter, Bixie, is a common sight here as it is home turf for her sponsor, Dágang Industries. Gūjiā duelling, a new sport where older military TAGs are outfitted with short range ballistic and melee weapons to fight across a mock-battlefield for the entertainment of roaring crowds, has also gained a following here. Occasionally, pilots from the prestigious Qilin Regiment take the field to display the might and prowess of the Gūjiā Sì Líng.

Towering over the city is Starport-1, a megast-structure at its base which includes massive trade facilities of warehousing, shipping, and customs. There is a large restricted military section, where high-security transports shuttle troops, agents, munitions, and supplies from the surface to the orbital Tiānjīn. Extensive commercial areas include tightly packed shopping malls, hotels, a service industry of restaurants, cafes, tea houses, and bars, and the lounges and boarding zones for travellers arriving at or leaving Yutang. Above the vast multi-storey Starport-1 is the glistening line of the orbital elevator, appearing like a needle piercing heaven itself. Lights and flicks of motion are a constant presence as maglev shuttles move goods and people to and from the surface.

XUAN JI

An undiscovered gem in the crown that is Yutang, Xuan Ji is a sprawling town on the coast of the Yang Chi Sea. Originally built to service a mining industry which has since folded, the old functionally designed buildings that dominated have slowly been torn down and replaced with a very classical style. Low stepped buildings with curving, tiled roofs saturate the city now. A majority are even built of wood sourced locally, something rare across Yutang. The city is quiet, a refuge for authors and artists that has managed to escape the attention of the tourist industry thus far. Xuan Ji is rustic in appearance and modern, effusive, and vibrant intellectually. There are a handful of Party members concerned that Xuan Ji has been the starting point of several subversive ideologies, but so far, the quaint artistic town has managed to

avoid too much attention, even if several Imperial Service Agents have attempted to infiltrate the artistic scene over the last few years.

Key to the intellectual life of Xuan Ji is the rediscovery of culture and identity. In this sense, it is very much a bastion of the old guard in the party, and the arts that thrive here, *shu* (calligraphy), and *hua* (painting), are natural compliments to philosophical, political, and spiritual contemplation.

SHAOSHANG

Sitting on the coast of the Hài Liú Sea, Shaoshang is a vibrant melting pot of ideas, philosophies, and artistic expression. A popular location for the rich and powerful who want as much to be shocked as entertained, Shaoshang manages, by luck and popular attention, to escape the worst of repercussions. Although classical in design, much like Xuan Ji, Shaoshang is every bit Xuan Ji's opposite. Where Xuan Ji is a quiet and reserved bastion of classical ideology, Shaoshang is cutting edge, loud, and energetic, where dancers, poets, artists, and authors debate furiously over everything that matters. Where the artistic cultural traditions of Yu Jing, from Beijing Opera to Wayang puppet plays, collide headlong with multimedia and multiplatform extensions of expression.

Shaoshang is also home to an impressive HexaDrome stadium, the Shaoshang-T Arena. Giant statues of the legendary Yu Jingese Aristeia! fighters, Bixie and Lei Gong, welcome visitors to the stadium and serve as an example of Yu Jing's dominance in the sport.

The StateEmpire maintains a branch of the Imperial Service in Shaoshang, and the city is as much afire with vibrant celebration of Yu Jingese achievement as it is with criticisms of the StateEmpire and satirical mockeries of those who are seen as apologetics of State power. Plays and performances, planned and rehearsed, are performed, at times, impromptu, disallowing a State response until the message has been disseminated or trying to get one to prove a point. Alongside the artistic vibrancy that defines Shaosheng, there is a dangerous and subversive libertarian one as well. Many of the city's playwrights, poets, performers, and philosophers have their names on State watch lists as a result of the ideologies they espouse and the calls to action they exemplify. It has not been unknown for artists to be found having killed themselves, been killed, or just disappear. It's often all too easy to allude to StateEmpire involvement, which is often highlighted and ridiculed in the theatres of Shaosheng. Authorities, however, are clear: a dangerous drug culture plays the fatal role in such last acts. (A party line that itself is mocked on stage.)

HIGH SECURITY

Security around Starport-1 is tight and run by the military. Customs agents are picky and thorough, although rumour would suggest that more than a few are in the pocket of the Triads. Scanning devices and security measures are high, and both military personnel and info-war specialists carefully monitor those arriving, especially from elsewhere in the Human Sphere. Little can get through without notice, though restrictions are less stringent on the cargo shuttles carrying trade goods from the surface. It has been suggested that Triad gangs use these to shuttle contraband and members to and from Tianjin, though some Party members scoff at the idea. For many, the belief that Starport-1 is thoroughly secure is enough. Others point out that using cargo shuttles would involve packing their men in vacuum suits, far too much effort, and far too noticeable for a criminal rabble, surely.



QIÁNG SHÀNG DE HÁIZI

With districts given over to corporate loyalties, many of the youths of Cheng Tù, too young to legally work for their company but old enough to get into trouble, belong to district gangs called The Children of the Wall, or Qiáng Shàng De Háizi. It is a unique and dangerous subculture that sees factionalised teenagers participating in risky attempts at industrial espionage.

While broadly accepted when it comes to keeping logs of deliveries, cargos seen, and the movement of people, it also veers to the more subversive and deadly. It has been known for members of the Qiáng Shàng De Háizi to utilise rooftops, catwalks, sewage systems, and all manner of other methods to gain access to rival companies in order to either record information in person or to plant low-tech bugs of varying degrees of capacity.

The more dangerous side of the Qiáng Shàng De Háizi is publicly frowned upon, but many companies secretly encourage the behaviour and activities of these youths. Many run electronics and similar programs, purportedly in the name of education, where the bugs used by the groups may be constructed, and quietly providing rewards to the families of the children who bring back useful information. There are stories of Qiáng Shàng De Háizi who stumble across truly significant finds, both legal breakthroughs and illegal activities, and the fallout from such finds can be massive.

Encounters between rival Qiáng Shàng De Háizi groups is always antagonistic and has sometimes even been violent, though this is actively discouraged by all stakeholders, from companies to parents alike.

ZHÎ TÛ

Undeniably the heart of the Yu Jing StateEmpire, and by extension the heart of Yutang, Zhî Tù is the most heavily populated region of the planet. Rolling foothills coming off the mountain ranges that straddle the northern and western borders of Zhî Tù lead into fertile crop land and extensive orchards and forested areas marching all the way to the coast in the south and west. Zhî Tù is another masterful example of terraforming, where the native flora and fauna have been completely supplanted by stock from Yu Jingese territories on Earth. The river systems running from the Zhang Shan Mountains to the southern coastline are collectively known as The Twins, or Shuāngbāotāi. The eastern river is called Dōngbù Shuāngzǐ, and the western river Xīshì Shuāng Chuáng Fáng. Together, as they reach toward the coastline, they form a vast and ever changing river delta of silt rich soil that has proven highly productive.

Zhî Tù, being both the symbolic and functional centre of the Yu Jing StateEmpire, is also the most highly militarised of Yu Jing's territories outside of active warzones. PanOceania's successful Mahisa Total Offensive during the Second NeoColonial War, which saw the orbital bombardment of Sēn Sūn, led to a keen sense of national shame. This was a feeling that the power-brokers within both the Imperial

Court and the Party could not stand to experience again. Overflowing and rare bipartisan support led to an armaments program and extensive research and development into defence systems, which would see to it that the shame of Mahisa would never be felt again. Zhî Tù is naturally defensible from ground invasion. Serious and intentional planning makes the region heavily equipped to fend off orbital bombardment. These defensive measures are due to the staggering investment poured into ground-to-space and orbital armaments, which are buried and scattered all over the region and positioned throughout the Shanxing System. Zhî Tù itself has been built into a veritable fortress.

CHENG TÛ

While many significant research and development programs that experiment with munitions and delivery systems are sequestered away in hidden facilities in the Yuanye Ocean, the majority of modern Yu Jingese military tech is developed in Cheng Tù. Cheng Tù is a restricted airspace; only vessels sending the right clearance codes will survive an approach, and a deadly array of automated weapons systems and remotes keep watch of any approach by land, air, or from the Hài Liǔ Sea.

The city is laid out in an expansive grid pattern, with small commercial districts surrounded by office blocks, accommodation, factories, and warehouses. A majority of the industries in Cheng Tù focus on military research and development. Those that don't are overwhelmingly service businesses that provide for the needs of the vast military industry. Life in Cheng Tù, even for a civilian, is military in aspect; routine, regulation, and discipline are hallmarks of the city's populace, and visitors not connected to the StateEmpire or the military are viewed with suspicion and ill regard.

With disparate commercial and housing districts surrounded by private and state-run military industries, the city itself encourages a level of factionalism. One area may be devoted to Gāng Tie Industries, another to Hǔ Enterprises. Loyalties are often quite strong, as the businesses that operate in Cheng Tù provide the jobs, income, and often entertainment and other amenities that the citizens of the different areas enjoy. Strangers to Cheng Tù might find it odd that the populace support the corporations as passionately as people in another city might follow sporting teams. But, it is a simple by-product of the unique nature of the city and the close relationship many of the corporations have built with the people over the past decades of operation. People celebrate the successes and curse the downturns in the companies they are loyal to. After all, a good year, new contract, or breakthrough often has a real-world effect for the people of that district.

TIĀN DÌ JING

If the city of Jichāngyī is a statement of Yu Jingese wealth, culture, and power to visitors arriving on Yutang from the orbital lift, Tiān Dì Jing is a true celebration of it. The spires and skyscrapers of Tiān Dì Jing tower over the city, visible for miles. Its vivid incandescence is visible clearly from orbit and dwarfs even the brightest of the other cities on the planet. It is in every sense both a symbol of ascendant Yu Jingese power and a result of it. Tiān Dì Jing is a unique gem in the Human Sphere, a cultural phenomenon drawing on thousands of years of culture and history, and a shining modern centre of wealth, prestige, and opulence.

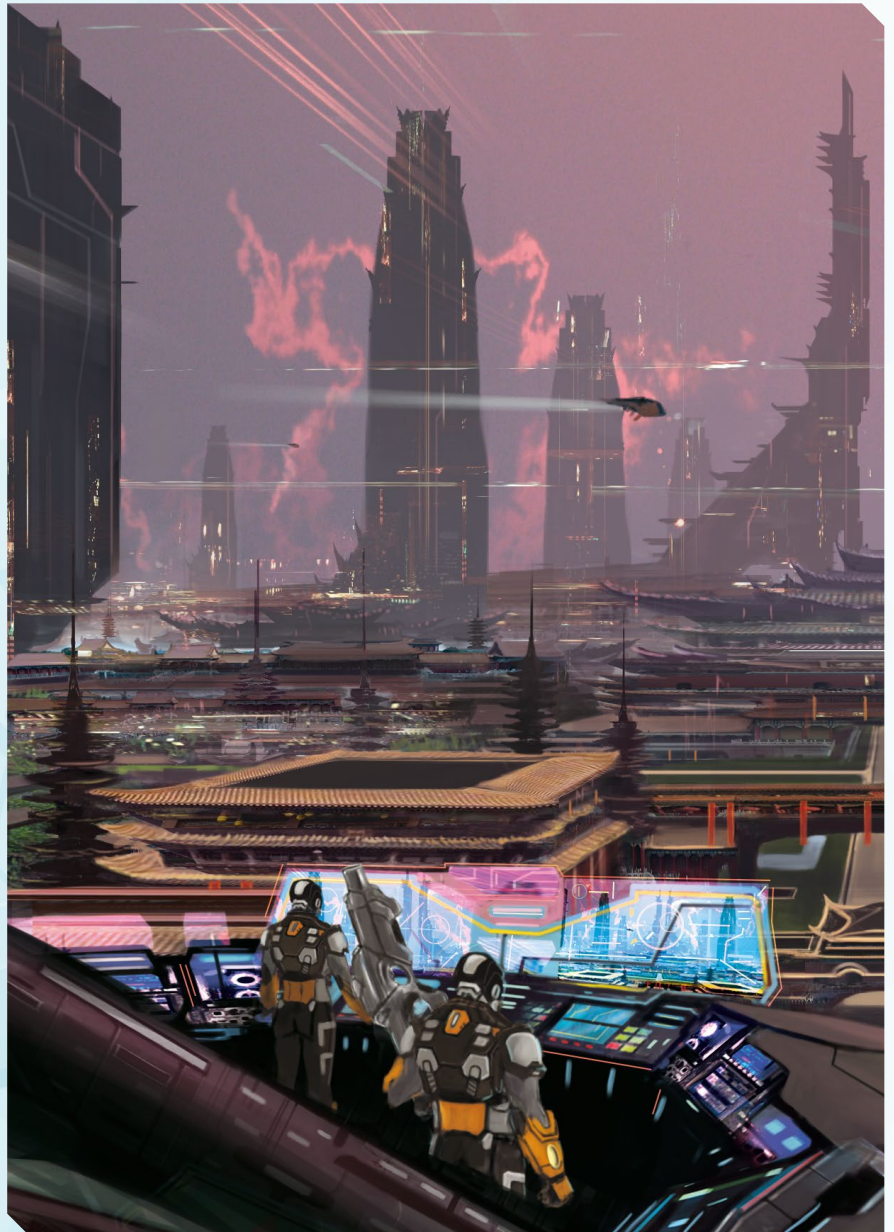
Tiān Dì Jing is a carefully planned city, broadly divided into four zones representing the cardinal directions. The city is a mix of the melange of cultures that make up the StateEmpire, and travellers often stumble across streets, alleys, malls, or markets that transform from the every-day to become distinctive of Yu Jingese subcultures. Whether Cambodian, Vietnamese, Malaysian, or any of a number of minorities, the streets of Tiān Dì Jing are effusive and full of life and vigour. Advertising is everywhere, interactive, and responsive to comlogs, encouraging passers-by to come, go, buy, taste, experience. Music and street theatre are a common theme throughout the city, from licences buskers (who must meet a State standard in order to be permitted to perform) to state-funded street performers. Everywhere there is life and movement, languages, and cultural activities, and the many faces that represent every population that makes up the StateEmpire. Tiān Dì Jing, more than anywhere else on Yutang, is a melting pot of diversity and, on the surface at least, harmonious interactivity.

The Northern Zone of the city is dominated by high-rise commercial and residential buildings and is home to the Jia Chan financial district, the largest outside of Kufang. The Northern Zone is also the seat of the Party, occupying a sprawling network of skyscrapers linked by walkways, the centre of government beyond the Imperial System.

The Northern Zone is neo-modern in aesthetic design and feel. It is where the wealthiest of Tiān Dì Jing's citizens live, close to the seat of power. A majority of the largest corporations in Yu Jing space have their headquarters in the Northern Zone, the most powerful in Zenifi Tower. Billboards, animated advertisements, large screens, and extensive use of augmented reality announce clearly which building is owned by which corporation. The streets are less lively than the other Zones of Tiān Dì Jing. Street vendors are replaced with restaurants and tea houses often residing in the lowest floors of the

skyscrapers. Entertainment is moved indoors into extravagant theatres, galleries, and art-houses. The nightlife in the Northern Zone revolves around exclusive nightclubs, positioned either in the upper floors or on the rooftops of various central skyscrapers. Access to these clubs is rare and usually only gained with the privilege that wealth, fame, and social position brings. The Northern Zone is a popular place for affluent tourists, Maya Stars, wealthy and protected Triad bosses, and visiting ambassadors, but it is not a place for a majority of the population of Tiān Dì Jing.

The Eastern Zone of Tiān Dì Jing begins on the waterfront and spreads out over series of artificial islands that extend into the Zhaohai Ocean. This extensive crescent of islands hugs the vast and





ZENIFI TOWER

The tallest of these buildings, indeed the tallest on Yutang, is Zenifi Tower. The upper floors of the Zenifi Tower are where the seats, chambers, and halls of the Party can be found. Where the Machiavellian scheming Yu Jing is famous for is played out in corridors and offices. Where wide-reaching policies are debated and put into law. Where corporations spend big money to buy the ears of Party members, even if only briefly, and where the long-term strategies that define the growth, expansion, and direction of Yu Jing are debated and put into action.

The lower floors of Zenifi Tower are dominated by the offices and headquarters of the most powerful and influential companies in Yu Jing. In between the corporate offices and the Party rooms is a middle band of apartments owned by the richest, most famous, valuable, and important members of Yu Jingese Society. Many Party members live in these lavishly appointed apartments, close enough to the halls above to never miss an important discussion and always in the thick of backroom dealings. The owners and top executives of many of Yu Jing's wealthiest companies also live here, and it is no coincidence that these companies are often awarded tenders and contracts over competitors. Who you know is a vital component of business anywhere, but especially in Yu Jing.

Zenifi Tower exudes a tumultuous status across the Human Sphere, with many stories of dirty deals, fraud, blackmail, politicking, manipulation, backstabbing, and even murder giving colour to the reputation of Yu Jingese politics as being the most dangerous and unforgiving of games.

calm Tiān Dì Jīng Bay. Occupying the largest of these artificial islands, the spaceport Lóng Cháo is a tightly packed network of landing platforms and stadium-like shuttle bays interconnected by a maze of tunnels, walkways, and transport roads. For those arriving, automated shuttle-buses feed into a massive terminus that processes thousands of travellers every day, as well as small cargos too valuable for the StateEmpire or corporations of Tiān Dì Jīng to trust to the space elevator. Celestial Guard units are on constant patrol throughout Lóng Cháo, and automated weapons systems track every vessel arriving and leaving from the spaceport.

Flowing from Lóng Cháo, across the chain of islands to the mainland is a vibrant tourist and services district. It is here that many of the popular celebrations are held. Festivals are regularly arranged on one or other of the islands, usually hosted by one of the many resorts that vie for the stream of party-goers and tourists. These are typically accompanied by vivid fireworks displays over the waters of Tiān Dì Jīng Bay.

The almost continual celebrations combined with the bustle of movement that marks the Lóng Cháo spaceport is the perfect cover for widespread Triad operations. Close to so many wealthy citizens and tourists, the traffic of drugs, illegal gambling, fighting dens, and backroom brothels are widespread and easy to access, even under the nose of the Celestial Guard. Muggings and violent attacks are extremely rare, as the Triads have more

money to make from tourists throwing Yuan away ring-side at an underground fight than they do by snatching bags and beating people. Such activities would most certainly draw the attention of the authorities, and an unspoken pact exists whereby organised crime rings are allowed some space to run small-time illegal operations as long as the streets are safe, and their goons use their fists only for recouping bad debts.

Built out onto the calm waters of Tiān Dì Jīng Bay is the Wángguān Marina, an extensive collection of jetties and quays where many thousand small pleasure craft are moored. This is a beautiful area, with the shining modernity of the Eastern Zone on one side and glistening waters and bobbing craft on the other. Many small restaurants dot the chain of jetties, sitting on barges or platforms, and the seafood available here is regarded by many to be the best available in the Human Sphere.

Traversing from the middle to the Southern Zone of Tiān Dì Jīng sees a gradual shift in architectural style. The neo-modern tendencies of the Northern and Eastern districts morphs, becoming neo-classical before it reaches the edges of Zǐjīnchéng, the Southern Zone proper. This gradual change before the actual Southern Zone is the location of many meeting houses, where unofficial business is hashed out between members of the Party and members of the Imperial Court. In many real senses it is a neutral zone, and such meeting houses are typically understated and easy to miss, a façade of a restaurant, museum, or hotel.

The Western Zone of Tiān Dì Jīng marches from the centre of the city and is a slow decline in the size and modernity of the other city districts to a more pastoral outskirts. Leafy suburbs fringe the city centre, while further out the silos, storage houses, and chains of warehouses deal with the influx of foodstuffs produced by the fields of Zhī Tú and transported overland from elsewhere on Yutang. The Western Zone is also home to extensive and low-laying barracks and training facilities for the military. Soldiers trained in these facilities are eventually posted to the city itself or to other bases around Zhī Tú.

ZǐJINCHÉNG

As the centre of Tiān Dì Jīng extends south towards Zǐjīnchéng, the aesthetic, feel, and style of the city changes. An extensive wall surrounds the thirteen-kilometre-long and eight-kilometre-wide grounds that make up Zǐjīnchéng. The main entrance faces north toward the rest of Tian Di Jing and includes a grand courtyard and pavilion. Within Zǐjīnchéng the grounds and buildings are laid out in an artistic mix of natural playfulness and deliberate

repetition. The number nine is frequently represented, whether it is the number of statues in a courtyard or the number of joining ponds that make a water feature; the number nine has long had an association with the position of Emperor. Such cultural embellishments are frequent and carefully planned into the landscape of these stunning gardens.

Within the grounds of Zǐjīnchéng are five key temples. To the south is the Temple of Lands, to the east and west the Temples of the Sun and Moon respectively, and to the north, within the courtyard entrance to Zǐjīnchéng itself are the Temple of Heaven and the Temple of Agriculture. These large and classical buildings are an edifice to the cultural traditions of old China. Mostly ceremonial in function, they are open to the public and house wonderful collections of art, artefacts, sculptures, weapons, and armour, and a great library in the Temple of Heaven celebrates the works of the old countries as well as the newer nation of Yu Jing. Here, ancient copies of *Journey to the West* and *Water Margin* are displayed alongside *The Tale of Genji* and *The Cloud Dream of the Nine*. In this way, the unification of the peoples that make up modern Yu Jing is represented and displayed for all to see. The truth of course is that in the great library of Zǐjīnchéng, and throughout the museums and galleries of the city, the focus is on Chinese art, history, and literature much more so than any other of the peoples that make up the StateEmpire.

The five great temples form the main stops on the public concourse that runs a circuit around Zǐjīnchéng. Along the public paths, many gardens, lakes, rivers, carefully manicured forests and orchards, rock gardens, and islands allow visitors a chance to pause and soak up the grandeur and magnificence of the place. The paths themselves morph too, from direct cobbled or paved roads, wide and decorated with statues, awnings, and arches, to chalk or pebbled tracks winding gently through a garden space. The flora and fauna of the gardens have been carefully selected, with the different parks along the public paths designed to represent the territories of Yu Jing. Flora native to Shentang might dominate one garden, with the leafy gymnosperms native to Yutang another. Most of the life in Zǐjīnchéng has been introduced from Earth, and a great many animals live in wide pens or roam wild in the habitats designed for them.

The architecture of Zǐjīnchéng is based heavily on the classical styles of the Forbidden City on Earth, with a mixture of buildings identifiable as Ming or Qing Dynasty in style. Throughout the city, there are salutes to the architectural styles of the other cultures that make up Yu Jing, but these are few in comparison.

Visitors coming to Zǐjīnchéng must pass through

careful and thorough security measures in the entrance pavilion. These involve physical checks and scans of a person and their belongings, as well as lightning quick and ALEPH-assisted background searches, which parse a person's Maya presence for any links, keywords, or behaviours that raise a red flag. Once inside, a person is supplied a pass, which gives them a certain number of hours grace to enjoying the delights of Zǐjīnchéng. If they dally too long, their pass will summon members of the Celestial Guard to assist their return to the entrance pavilion, and from there back out into Tiān Dì Jing.

The most well-trod way to experience Zǐjīnchéng is the visitor's concourse, a lengthy walk around

A WEB OF ALLIANCES

The political relationship between the Imperial Court and the Party is often publicly viewed as complimentary, each being responsible for different aspects of Yu Jingese law and society and generally working together for the same goal: the glory of the StateEmpire. This is true, to some extent, but the reality is that how to get from the current position to that end goal is furiously debated, much disagreed on, and the subject of controversy, fear, and parochial alliances between the New Wave and the Old Guard, and the rival Imperial families.

The Imperial Court works, as much as it can, to gain influence over those areas designated as the legal province of the Party, and they do so by leveraging the law. The Party, for its part, does as much as possible to maintain control of policy direction and governance, usually through deal making, but often by deliberately sowing discord between the Imperial families.

One of the key reasons the dual Imperial System has been maintained so effectively is the ability of the Party to keep the two Imperial families fighting one another. Many of the barbs, insults, power-plays, and even violence that has erupted over the years between the families has been the result of seeds carefully sown by the Party, which does its best to step back and not appear to be the enemy of either. The ability to maintain this level of comfortable discord often rests on the Party making deals through agents, with agents representing members of one or other of the Imperial families, and by gaining leverage over minor nobles in the courts through promises, bribes, and blackmail.

The general divide in the Party further feeds this environment of political scheming, with members of the New Wave pushing the Imperial families to falter or support their own vision for Yu Jing, and the Old Guard doing exactly the same. To paint the Imperial families as unwitting victims in the power politics between the New Wave and Old Guard would be naïve. Each family also works to manage an ever changing landscape of alliances and to keep the two sects within the Party as much at odds with one another as the Party tries to maintain with the Imperial families.

Discord between any of the factions that makes up the shifting sea of alliances between the Party and the Imperial Court is more than just harsh words and bruised egos. Power and money are involved, and the tense deal-making, breaking, backstabbing, political grandstanding, blackmail, and extortion are key weapons in the web of alliances. These activities regularly result in tattered careers, and more often than might be reported, violence and death. The web of intrigue that winds its way through the politics of Yu Jing draws in soldiers, mercenaries, Triads, and unwitting pawns of all stripes.



THE CELESTIAL RELIQUARY

In the southern Temple of the Lands is the Celestial Reliquary. Here artefacts of cultural and religious significance are stored and rotated through display. These items are the most valuable and oldest cultural items belonging to the many nations that combined to make up Yu Jing.

The Temple of the Lands has a great entry hall dedicated to the ideal of Yu Jing: unity, solidarity, and endurance. Off this great hall, several vast corridors lead to five major chambers, the centre-left and centre-right represent Yutang and Shentang, while the central chamber is dedicated to Earth. The far-left represents Svalarheima and the far-right Paradiso. The latter two chambers are distinctly laced with propaganda. The Svalarheima chamber tells of a hardy people surviving in the face of adversity, while the Paradiso chamber celebrates the heroism and victories of Yu Jingese forces against the menace of the Combined Army. None make much mention of the relatively recent NeoColonial Wars.

Most significant of all is the chamber dedicated to Earth. Here, the historical artefacts that define the very culture of the peoples that make up Yu Jing are proudly on display. Augmented reality tours bring ancient battles, art, and history to life, all culminating in the glorious enterprise that is the StateEmpire itself.

The Celestial Reliquary within the Temple of the Lands is the most visited location in Zijinchéng, with school groups from all over Yutang moving noisily among a wash of visitors from all over the Human Sphere. Security is tight and responses sudden, immediate, and deadly. Recently, a group of protestors attempted to hang a banner with the emblem of the Tatenokai in the Shentang chamber and were swiftly crippled and dragged off by Celestial Guardsmen before the tourists and school groups knew what was happening.

the outskirts of the city, which can be made easier through the use of personal mobility devices, available for a fee. Of course, many visitors come to experience the gardens, galleries, museums, or great library, stopping and spending a majority of their time in these locations, whether for research or for sheer pleasure. There are regular public displays of rare art and artefacts in the many public buildings of Zijinchéng, and regular musical and theatrical performances are held in the parks and gardens. Dotted around Zijinchéng are amphitheatres where swordplay and martial arts displays are held. Most popular of all however, are the public trials held by the Judicial Corps, where well-known cases are trialled in front of a combined jury and audience. Members of the minor nobility, or their representatives, can often be encountered on the visitor's concourse, and impromptu or pre-planned meetings that avoid the 'official' portions of Zijinchéng are a regular occurrence.

Security measures throughout Zijinchéng are famously stringent. Even diplomatic or business guests understand they are being carefully monitored at all times, although there are some black spots in security in the public and private gardens, if one knows which hidden alcoves or grottos to find. Like everything in Zijinchéng defence and security is a blend of the old and new. Buildings

with nightingale floors are also equipped with movement and heat sensors. Atmospheric measurements are taken and carefully analysed in briefing rooms and meeting halls, ostensibly to identify poisons in the air, but powerful enough to measure the breathing rates of people present. Combined with highly tuned heat sensors, the full array of data mined in real-time and made available to cleared members of the Imperial Court provide detailed and up-to-the-instant information about the emotional and stress states of the people they are interacting with, handy information when it comes to deal brokering.

Zi'jinchéng is home to a full company of Celestial Guards, as well as a number of battalions and personnel that belonging to other regiments of the Yu Jingese military establishment. The soldiers that live and work within the city are carefully selected and drilled repeatedly to ensure their loyalty to the Dragon Throne is absolute. For additional security, a full arsenal of remotes and autonomous weapons platforms are hidden throughout Zi'jinchéng.

While it is common to see squads of Celestial Guard anywhere in Zi'jinchéng, their real base of operation is beneath the city itself. They are housed in barracks, common rooms, mess halls, and training ranges built deep beneath Zi'jinchéng. The bunkers these soldiers live in are lit to reflect the passing of Shanxing, so life in the artificial world below doesn't bother their natural body rhythms. The underground bases for the Celestial Guard are spread evenly throughout Zi'jinchéng, allowing immediate and overwhelming response to almost any corner of the city by any one of the regiments that make up the company stationed there. There are also extensive underground headquarters and data analysis complexes, where operations and movements throughout Zi'jinchéng, in Tiān Dì Jing, Zhī Tǔ, and in orbit around Yutang, are carefully monitored and picked over by analytics suites and data analysis specialists. Toward the centre of the city, there is a labyrinthine complex for the bureaucracy of Zi'jinchéng, and another luxuriously appointed one for the Imperial Court. All of these underground structures are buried in layers of rock, with cement shielding laced with Teseum nanotubes in complex patterns of reinforcement. The city beneath Zi'jinchéng can withstand orbital bombardment, and enough food, oxygen, and supplies are stored here to ensure the survival of the Dragon Emperor regardless of any catastrophe.

ZHÒU ZHÒUG

Sitting squarely across the equatorial band, Zhòu Zhòug is dominated by the Tiānshān Mountain range. Despite heavy year-round rainfall, there is

a constant tropical warmth, even at high altitudes. Zhōu Zhōug is strange mix of paradigms. A deeply spiritual place, it is the main home of the Shaolin Order. It is also pastoral in bearing, with much of its economy derived from a multitude of layers of step-farmed rice and millet. Increasingly, Zhōu Zhōug is also the basis for small cottage industry style tech companies that use Maya to combine into sizeable distributed corporations. Many breakthroughs in nanomaterials have come from the tech companies of Zhōu Zhōug, most notably the Teseum nanotubes layered through defensive structures and used as reinforcement for military-grade armour.

Tectonic activity in this region is frequent but usually mild. Most structures are built with strong foundations buried deep into the earth, and bunker complexes and evacuation protocols are widely practiced across Zhōu Zhōug. Travel through the mountainous terrain can be problematic. For the lower classes, the winding roads with steep drops to one side that wend their way from point to point must be traversed in wheeled or tracked vehicles. For the wealthy, flying is the usual option, and small jets or propeller powered crafts capable of vertical take-off and landing are most commonly employed.

Due to the rains, the prevalence of sedimentary rock layers, and the frequent tectonic activity, cave systems throughout Zhōu Zhōug are deep, complex, and common. These are usually populated with species of fungi and are used extensively by Triads, who find the cave systems of Zhōu Zhōug a convenient place to conceal themselves and their operations. Regular Zhanshi patrols sweep the mountain sides using thermal scanners to try and isolate Triad bases, but the extent and depth of the cave systems works in the Triad's favour.

KĀN ZHU

Central to Kān Zhu is the Shaolin Monastery, key home of the Shaolin Order. Around this, the city spreads in a complex and well-planned pattern, falling gently down the slopes of the mountain peak on which the monastery is built. Kān Zhu is both a spiritual centre and a key port for the importation and exportation of goods, most commonly crops. Regular flights take off from the two airports of Kān Zhu, carrying rice, millet, and people to other city centres around Yutang. Often hidden in the many shipments leaving Kān Zhu is the contraband of the Triads. Despite the authority's awareness of Triad operations in the region, bribes and loyalties have kept the extent of these operations, for the most part, concealed.

MIÀO CHÁN MONASTERY

The Miào Chán Monastery and city is the Buddhist soul of Yutang. Myth, stirred to popularity by the Ministry of Information holds the site of the monastery to be one of the great holy places of the Buddhist faith, and many pilgrims travel from across the Human Sphere to experience it. Indeed, meditating in the shallow caves around the city is a dysmorphic experience, the glowing light of bioluminescent fungi and the mildly hallucinogenic spores the fungi releases combine to cause a sense of otherness, of not truly belonging to the body, of being beyond, outside, a part of something vast, and yet alien to the normality of human experience. For the devout, this perfect storm of causal factors is too perfect to be coincidence, and the out-of-body experience too close to the truths of Buddhism. The sceptical find the perfect storm to be no coincidence at all.

COURT LIFE

Court life for members of the Imperial families is a significantly different experience depending on how close to the main family line a person is. Both Imperial families are extensive, representing not just a line of father and mother to child, but also encompassing distant relatives. Regardless of how close to the Dragon Throne a noble is, their lives are dominated by a strict regime from birth. Education and personal security are key components, with both allowing a child to grow up with the capacity to operate in the murky and often dangerous political waters of Imperial court life. Children are taught key components of psychology and philosophy, both for self-analysis and for the purposes of manipulation and avoiding being manipulated. Most family members are schooled in law, and often a second field of expertise is chosen for a child based on identified talents, whether mathematics leading to studies in finance or engineering, literacy to writing and oratory, and so on.

Extended family members have some leeway to experience more of the diversity of life-experiences of a regular citizen, some even joining the military or going into business. But blood is thick, and Imperial blood holds bonds that are unavoidable and laden with heavy expectation. Pressures are immense, and the court and world beyond it are rife with people wanting to exploit any and every connection to the Imperial families possible.

Intrigue, manipulation, blackmail, and implication are all levers used regularly to coerce members of the nobility. Life is a constant chain of threats, and nobles are taught that any person who wants to befriend them wants something more than just friendship; in this environment, only family can be truly relied upon. This, of course, is a lie, as family members and their connections, actions, and associations are often used to further a political goal or score points against the rival Imperial family. Such manipulation can break a person psychologically and physically, and concealed violence is a common theme in the struggle for power between the Imperial houses.

As young men and women, nobles showing promise are often relocated to Zījinchéng, where the antagonistic and dangerous nature of their environment jumps a level in severity and immediacy. Among these young nobles, pride and headstrong impulsiveness can lead to violent clashes and subversive activities. Those that survive this harsh proving ground develop into the cunning and dangerous nobles that will lead their family in the next generation.



CHAPTER 4

STATEEMPIRE ASSETS

This chapter takes a broad look at four key locations within the StateEmpire, and how the fallout from the Japanese Uprising has altered and influenced the situation on the ground.

SOL

Home to the birthplace of humanity, the Sol system remains an important connection to the past for every interstellar nation. In separating from Yu Jing, Great Japan have once again taken to calling Earth home.

EYES AND EARS

Whilst true that Operation Steel Wall has prevented Yu Jing from undertaking effective punitive measures against Shuto, the archipelago is by no means sealed off from the world. Thanks to PanOceanian aid, the flow of goods and people flourishes. Shuto, however, is now a soft target for Yānjīng agents seeking to infiltrate Japanese society and gather intelligence. The Hexahedron also has agents working with both the military and Imperial government, making it likely that any PanOceanian citizen encountered in Shuto is either a corporate executive looking to seal a deal or a member of the PanOceanian military complex. With a hot war between Shuto and Chung Kuo largely prevented, a cold war in Shuto simmers with espionage, assassination attempts, and deadly games of cat and mouse.

SHUTO

The centre of Great Japan, Shuto, is an archipelago on Earth that houses the Imperial court and the offices of several important Japanese corporations. Protected from violent Yu Jingese reprisals by PanOceania's Operation Steel Wall, which stands steadfast despite the blockade the StateEmpire is attempting to impose, the Japanese islands are also well supplied thanks to their ally's efforts.

Shuto is the heart and soul of the nascent Great Japan. Seated in the Imperial Palace in Tokyo, the



Emperor is the fire that stokes the nation, and the closer to the fire, the greater the warmth. Location and proximity are key, and social hierarchy is rigid. Wealth is as important as familial ties, and members of the Kuge, or noble class, are ranked by both family name and wealth. Operation Steel Wall has allowed Shuto to flourish, and the Japanese archipelago is once again one of the most populace places on Earth. For Japanese citizens elsewhere in the Human Sphere, however, rising to a position of influence or earning enough to move back to Shuto is the goal, for proximity to the Emperor means influence and standing.

ZENSHŌ

Zenshō, also referred to as the Outposts or Colonies, are the territories, orbitals, and stations of Great Japan that are not a part of Shuto. From a myriad of orbitals in the Human Edge to small territories on Paradiso, Shentang, and Svalarheima, they are spread wide across the Human Sphere. Lines of communication are vital, making them a target for Yu Jing to disrupt as often as possible.

Within the Sol system the Zenshō are represented by Kaseitoshi, a key settlement on Mars, and dozens of bases, orbitals, and space stations that can mostly be found in the rings and asteroids of Jupiter and Saturn.

KASEITOSHI

Kaseitoshi, the City of Mars, survived direct reprisal from Yu Jing because damaging the red planet's terraforming systems is considered a crime against humanity. The Ten No Bushi research and development program, which operates with high level support via a critical military infrastructure housed in restricted domes and subterranean bunkers, makes Kaseitoshi a key military asset. Until recently, food exports drove Kaseitoshi's economy, but this slowed since the Uprising as closer ties with PanOceania provides cost-effective access to Acontecimento's produce. Several special heated domes once used to grow crops have since been blacked out, reinforced, and repurposed for use as training grounds for JSA soldiers. Indeed, the entire tone of Kaseitoshi has slowly changed since the Uprising. While it always felt like a frontier town of sorts, the level of militarisation has undoubtedly impacted the dynamics of the city.

TSUKUBA

Tsukuba Station, located in the Himalia group of Jupiter's moons, is owned and run by the Kiyotaki keiretsu, a collection of corporations bound together by an informal business arrangement. From the outside, Tsukuba Station is a surveyance and mining operation. However, one of the current key functions is data-farming and meta-analysis.

The station's quantronic supercomputers have enabled Great Japan to identify and exploit countless assets within the Yu Jing State Empire, especially on Shentang. Tsukuba Station was attacked during the height of the Uprising but survived thanks to intervention from StarCo.

SUPANKŌRU

Supankōru is a Station in the Trojans of Jupiter. Having declared early for Great Japan, it was attacked by light ships during the Uprising and quickly reverted to Yu Jingese control. Supankōru was a research station dedicated to the exploration of limited artificial intelligence. With these AIs that operate under restriction, learning and behavioural regulation are strict enough not to attract the ire of international law. After being hailed by incoming Yu Jingese craft during the Uprising, Supankōru quickly surrendered.

HUMAN EDGE

The Human Edge is home to a myriad of small stations and orbitals that either belong to Great Japan or are owned by a Japanese corporation or keiretsu. Three of the most significant are covered here.

YOAKE STATION

Owned by the Kiyotaki keiretsu, Yoake Station, or Dawn, is one of the richest, most influential, and most powerful of the Japanese stations in the Human Edge. The wealth of Yoake Station comes from mining in and around the Helicon belt, close to the star Astraeus. Yoake is the base of operations for a number of mining operations, and the raw materials that flow through the station are of significant strategic and economic value to the Empire. Due to its importance, Yoake Station is one of the few locations in the Human Edge to maintain a consistent fleet of the Japanese Armada.

KIBŌ STATION

With its own governing body directly answerable to Tokyo, Kibō Station is one of the few locations in the Human Edge that is not owned and run by corporate interests. The influence of the corporations that utilise Kibō Station, however, is significant, forcing the local governing body to accede to corporate demands on labour union issues, which has led to certain amount of civil unrest. Kibō Station is a mining platform, running robotic drone platforms which siphon gases from the upper atmosphere of the planet Heraclitus. The station itself is located in the Ephesian Trojans, close enough to run the platforms remotely. During the Uprising, Kibo Station was defended by the Ikari company, a mercenary operation that enjoys celebrity status on the station. With the Kempeitai struggling to maintain civil order in the face of ongoing labour issues, Ikari have had to step in and provide support in the

RESTRICTED ACCESS

Kaseitoshi's laws have changed in significant ways since the Uprising. Weapons are heavily restricted, and even those used for military training are specially designed to fire rounds that cannot damage the domes themselves. Yu Jingese saboteurs recently planned to set off a home-made explosive device cobbled together from oxy-acetylene welders, intending to cause significant damage to the life support systems of the main domes whilst leaving the power and terraforming infrastructure undamaged. The Kempeitai uncovered the plot before it could be enacted. Nonetheless, the attempt had a ripple effect that changed regulations almost overnight. The sale and distribution of materials, chemicals, and even some tools that can be used to construct explosives is now restricted, monitored, and tracked, and movement between the militarised and urban domes is heavily regulated. The illegal underground racing circuits are the only thing left relatively unchanged, as they attract tourists and media coverage. While officially prohibited, the Kempeitai turn a blind eye to the Yakuza-run enterprise. The races go on so long as 'taxes' are paid on time.

GHOST IN THE MACHINE

Unbeknownst yet to the Yu Jingese scientists who supplanted the Japanese staff, the previous owners released their research project into the computing network of the Station. Supankōru Station itself now serves as a double-agent of sorts.



A TALE OF TWO CITIES

Yoake Station is a curious place, the central Bernal sphere is a toroid which rotates to provide gravity. The upper third of this ring is transparent, meaning the 'sky' is dominated by a view into the opposite side of the toroid. This central Bernal is the corporate sector, and the rotational speed provides a gravity 0.9 that of Shuto. Housing, offices, commercial districts, entertainment, and security outposts are all present and provide an affluent air. Beyond this interior ring is a secondary ring connected by transport tunnels. This outer ring has a slightly lower gravity. Sheathed within this outer ring is a second toroid, rotating smoothly due to the use of powerful magnets. This interior toroid is where the housing, businesses, port, docking, loading, unloading, and customs facilities can all be found. Ships and transports moving from mining outposts in the Helicon belt dock with this second ring, their stowed resources unloaded and sold, supplies purchased and loaded, and the crew and shift workers rotating into time off stay, live, and entertain themselves. Yoake is sometimes called the Twins, each of the main toroid Bernals providing a home for different classes of wealth and social rank. The inner ring is for the up-and-coming and the wealthy, and the outer ring is for the merchants and workers, the miners and port staff. They are very different places, but each reliant on the other for the overall wealth, power, and influence of the station.

A SCARRED MEMORY

Despite the city being half drowned, the citizens of Fukaitani are doing what they can to rebuild the city to some semblance of its former glory. The strange pastiche of war-scarred and underwater post-apocalypse in this popular tourist attraction are an impactful and stark reminder of the violence of the Uprising. The city itself is economically strong and the population hardy and determined. Boats have now replaced cars and interconnecting bridges have taken the place of streets. The brutality of the StateEmpire's response to the Uprising in the peninsula will never be forgotten however, and every act of repair and restoration in the city seems, in part, an effort to maintain an aesthetic that will remind all who see it of the destruction and suffering the city underwent. For the citizens of Fukaitani, their memories are indelibly etched with the depredations of the StateEmpire, and the soldiers and agents drawn from these hardy folk are some of the most determined and zealous of the Japanese army.

enforcement of governmental rulings, something which has recently taken the shine of Ikari's reputation.

KINKAKUJI

As the capital of Japanese interests in the Human Edge, Kinkakuji was the base of operations for the JSA in the system during the Uprising, although the scars left by that conflict have since been repaired. While originally built for the same purpose as Kibo Station, the mining operations of Kinkakuji play a distant secondary role. The primary occupations of the station are the many commercial delegations and corporate research facilities maintained there. Within close proximity of the jump gate, with a thriving commercial engine, and so many corporations making use of the station's advanced research facilities, Kinkakuji is a bustling and overpopulated place, busy, ever growing, and never sleeping.

Due to the never-ending stream of people moving through and around Kinkakuji Station, it is the perfect place for the Tatenokai to organise, plan, and communicate. The noise and activity allow the Tatenokai endless opportunities to place agents into circulation both within the Human Edge and moving out into the Human Sphere. Indeed, the station has become a vital hub for exactly this sort of clandestine operation, agents flowing in are provided with new identities and given an opportunity to move out again, almost impossible to track or trace amid the life and movement of the station itself. Yu Jing has invested significant human resources into planting Yānjing agents into Kinkakuji Station in the hope of penetrating the Tatenokai network, but they have so far remained unsuccessful.

PARADISO

Penned in and facing the constant grinding pressure of the armies of the StateEmpire, the Japanese territories on Paradiso are poised on a tipping point which could see forces of the Human Sphere pulled, through alliance and treaty, into all out war.

FUKAITANI

Fukaitani is a city half drowned. During the Uprising, ninja of the StateEmpire blew up the Kawaso dam, and the Shimizu river raged through the streets and buildings like an apocalyptic tsunami. The dam remains a ragged reminder of this terrible event, and the city itself has been repaired into a place of canals. Nestled in the south-eastern most corner of Septentria, Fukaitani remains under constant threat. Whatever ceasefires and agreements have been signed between Yu Jing and Great Japan, Yu Jingese soldiers are still encamped in the Kohaku peninsula, making travel overland impossible and arriving by air a circuitous route to avoid Yu Jingese anti-air batteries and craft. The coastline is heavily protected by Haqqislamite naval forces, while the JSA forces remain on high-alert and stationed in strong positions along the border. More recently, in a solemn venture to repay the debt of honour owed to the Haqqislamites, the Japanese deployed some of their troops to assist in the defence of Ghezirah at the outbreak of the Third Offensive.

KOKKYŌ-3

Described by many Yu Jingese intelligence analysts as the nerve centre for the Tatenokai on Paradiso, Kokkyō-3 is still under near constant assault, with the StateEmpire regularly deploying small incursion forces against the JSA defences. Usually these attacks are little more than diversionary strikes, aiming to buy a unit or agent some space to breach the defences

and infiltrate the territory. Kokkyō-3, despite the ongoing conflict, is a vibrant economic powerhouse. Neatly positioned between Yinquang, Syldavia, and Qibilah in the Norstralian continent, it is a convenient gateway for PanOceania and Haqqislamite corporations to the Al-Hadiye Space Elevator. As such, Kokkyō-3 benefits from the attention of a number of powerful PanOceanian and Haqqislamite companies, and the advantages in terms of resources and wealth are significant. Perhaps most significant is the military support that Kokkyō-3 is able to draw upon. PanOceania and Haqqislam both expend significant resources in the defence of Kokkyō-3, and as such it has managed to weather the storm against substantial attempts by Yu Jing to breach the defences and break the city. Elements of Kokkyō-3's military assets were also sent to assist against the Combined Army's central push across Norstralia during the Third Offensive.

SVALARHEIMA

A frozen ball that has always blistered with intrigue, the landscape on Svalarheima has become even more frosty since the Uprising.

CHUNQIU

In Chunqiu, restrictions on the gatherings, movements, and labour of Japanese citizens were heavy handed, violent, and brutal, and did much to turn even those loyal to Yu Jing away and into the service of the Japanese Sectorial Army (the JSA). A snowball effect rolled through Chunqiu; every person of Japanese heritage was on a list somewhere. Agents and double agents organised acts of resistance and outed their neighbours in equal measure. Suspicion, doubt, fear, and paranoia reigned like a madness. Many were imprisoned, many went missing, and many fled the city for the hope of finding somewhere safer. "The walls have ears" was the whisper among supporters of the Uprising, and many citizens – Yu Jingese and Japanese both – acted in secret, ensuring that many Japanese citizens could escape reprisal or incarceration.

In Chunqiu, the wild reprisals of the post-Uprising madness have stopped, and a greater focus has been placed on getting the city running back to normal. Imperial officers associated with the madness have been relocated, and a garrison of the Invincible Army has been put in charge of maintaining order.

Even after a number of years, there is still a simmering fear in the hearts of the Japanese of Chunqiu. Many families keenly feel a sense of loss, of brothers and sisters, mothers and fathers who fled, disappeared, or were locked away or killed. The Japanese of Chunqiu are reminded constantly by the memories of those gone, that the face of the StateEmpire may be smiling now, but not so long ago it was baying for their blood. There is a long way to go to heal the wounds left behind, and even the most optimistic would agree that the city may never fully recover.

KUNLUN

Kunlun is a mixed city, nestled in vast caverns in the Valhalla Mountains. It is mostly a mining settlement but also maintains a strong military presence. A large number of Japanese citizens worked in the mines, and when the Uprising exploded across the Human Sphere, the military response in Kunlun was as sudden as it was brutal. Hundreds were killed in a single violent evening, and many more died subsequently when atmospheric regulators controlling heating and airflow were cut off for a number of days and the mines sealed. In a tragic twist of dynamics, Japanese operatives seeking to eliminate Yu Jingese collaborators, and blatantly disregarding the forecast death toll to do so, sabotaged the regulators and planned to pin the blame on the StateEmpire. The Imperial Service spotted the attempt too late but did manage to record the Japanese saboteurs in the act. Citing security protocols, the Imperial Service then restricted any attempt to repair the regulators, which subsequently increased the death toll and served as a propaganda tool against insurgents.

BLOOD IN THE STREETS

While Kokkyō-3 enjoys the support and favourable attention of its neighbours, PanOceania and Haqqislam, individual operatives and small incursionary forces from Yu Jing are constantly deployed in the territory. Often able to slip the defences and make it to streets of the city, they embed as sleeper agents in deep cover. There has been a slow rise in gang-related violence in the city, and some of these attacks seem to target high-profile Japanese business people or military personnel. For the Tatenokai, it appears that the Yu Jingese military is using Kokkyō-3 as a test-bed for a new type of warfare in which agents are subtly placed in the field to sow civil unrest, train, fund, and support criminal and gang activity, and generally spread discontent and disruption.

THE YUKIRESSHA

Citizens did not need to be Japanese to feel the brutality and injustice of the StateEmpire's acts in Chunqiu, and while the network of the Tatenokai were key in smuggling citizens out of the city, so too were a multitude of silent sympathisers. It began by simply sheltering friends or neighbours and grew slowly into a network of people smugglers across Huangdi. Old-tech methods of communicating – from simple cyphers written into specials boards at restaurants and eateries to messages passed in back alleys – ensured that Japanese families were sheltered, protected, and shuttled from one hiding place to the next in the dead of night. Eventually, they were smuggled out of the cities altogether, cold-packed like frozen meats to avoid heat scans or shut inside containers built beneath the floor of vehicles, barely enough air to breathe. The methods were many, but the goal was the same: to get Japanese citizens out, and eventually, with the guidance of the Tatenokai, to Kōritawā, a safe-haven across the Yu Jingese border.



TRUST IN SHORT SUPPLY

While the atmosphere of Kōritawā is one of hope and opportunity, the mess of arrivals to the city means it is a hot-bed of infiltrated agents. Agents from the Yānjīng hoping to use Kōritawā as a stepping stone into positions within the JSA, agents from the JSA hoping to root out the Yānjīng, and agents from the Hexahedron or Bureau Noir, hoping to get the drop on both.

GATEWAY TO SVALARHEIMA

With the presence of the orbital elevator, Shidong is the gateway to Huangdi most often utilised by agents of the Tatenokai. Destruction of a Space Elevator constitutes a crime against humanity that few would consider, but security is high around the elevator amid fears it presents a valuable target for the JSA to sabotage or capture. The screening of visitors is strict, and many complain about it being invasive. In truth, though, the importance of Shidong as an access point for JSA agents is too high for them to ruin it. The Space Elevator has become something of clandestine battleground between covert operatives, stoked somewhat by the fact that the JSA operatives consider themselves to be somewhat more skilled in subterfuge than their Tatenokai counterparts.

QUANXUE

With the atmosphere of an icy frontier town, Quanxue avoided much of the troubles that plagued cities like Chunqiu. Citizens in Quanxue are a hardy lot, and while militant (a large percentage of citizens are former veterans), they also bear a rugged spirit and keep to themselves. During the height of the Uprising, there were several minor clashes between street gangs, fighting in the caverns or alley ways between spray-painted blazons of the Imperial Service or the JSA. Quanxue, like Shidong, was a key stop-over for the Yukiressha, a waypoint from everywhere else to Kōritawā, and the endless shipping consignments flowing through the city allowed it to go relatively unmarked.

SHIDONG

Shidong, a major commercial city and economic hub for Huangdi, has a relatively low population of Japanese citizens. Due to the constant flow of oncoming and outgoing shipments, Shidong was a key transfer station for the Yukiressha, although far more a dangerous one than Quanxue, as Imperial Agents were thick on the ground and customs officials far more zealous in the duties.

SHUANGDONG

Among the frontier settlements of the eastern coast of Huangdi, there are enclaves of Japanese citizens. Some were pushed out, beaten out, or chose to flee, while others quietly continue to live their lives as simple whalers for whom the politics of the Sphere mean far less than an honest day's work and a family housed and fed.

XUANYAN AND YOUXIONG

Highly militarised, Xuanyan and Youxiong detained and then transported a majority of their Japanese citizens to Chunqiu in the wake of the Uprising.

KŌRITAWĀ

Just across the border of the Yu Jingese territory of Huangdi, in the PanOceanian-held Solokov, is a small area of land belonging to the Great Japan. Kōritawā, the Tower of Ice, is a remote frontier. Originally dominated by military personnel, it is now a growing city.

During the bleakness that savaged Chunqiu, Kōritawā flourished. Attracted by the economic success of this bustling city thanks to the trade accords with the PanOceanian authorities of Solokov, transplants arrived at the Tower of Ice from across Svalarheima and elsewhere in the Human Sphere. Citizens in Kōritawā are a mixed bunch, some from the Human Edge, some from Mars, but a majority are still those who fled Chunqiu.

While Kōritawā was previously a small outpost beneath the ice and earth, new tunnels and chambers have been excavated with a vigour and energy drawn from the hope of the Japanese who have come to live there. Built into the top of a vast cliff face, the city has built down. The most sought-after housing has access to the balconies built into the cliffs themselves, with a view over the icy plains, a stunning vista unlike any other in the Human Sphere. Kōritawā is an active and busy recruiting ground for Japanese soldiers, many of those who have relocated to Kōritawā are driven to support the Japanese cause.

IN THE AFTERMATH...

With the political and military strength of the Invincible Army growing in the wake of the Uprising, a gentler hand has been gradually applied to the 'problem' of Japanese citizens within Yu Jing. It was broadly recognised, if not at the highest levels of government, that a united Yu Jing was the only way to maintain the Hyperpower's standing in the Human Sphere. Yes, the Japanese Uprising had torn open a rift like a wound, and Yu Jing as a whole has suffered for it. But, heavy-handed reprisals and violence were not a long-term solution. The brutality of the Imperial Service was a knee-jerk reaction, and the continued application of that methodology that would only lead to a widening of the rift and a weakening of the StateEmpire.

Across Yu Jingese territories, there are more and more people within positions of authority who collectively and tragically recognise that the StateEmpire could and should have done more to purge the racially bound attitudes and assumptions that provided fertile breeding ground for inequality and the mistreatment of the Japanese. With an aim to healing that rift and solidifying some sense of Yu Jing as a multi-ethnic enterprise seeking to do better by all of its citizens, a strategy focused more on hearts and minds has been invoked. How this will play out, only time will tell. There are still many entrenched in positions of power within Yu Jing who believe the 'Japanese Problem' is one that should be settled through violent suppression, and many too within Great Japan who seek revenge for so many years of suffering...

CHAPTER 5

YU JING GEAR

Yu Jing's material prosperity, second only to PanOceania, infuses every aspect of the StateEmpire's subjects' lives. Massive industrial production for military materiel and consumer goods of all kinds, ensures demotic comfort, always-on Maya entertainment and community, and easy transportation across a vast, dense, multi-system territory. Personal expression through tasteful consumerism is an endless distraction from the hard work of daily life. Individuals reflect on their heritage, patriotism, and unique aesthetic through the physical and quantronic façade they present to others.

The Party's rhetoric is rarely bluster. The nation's heavy armour is unparalleled, and recent innovations blur the lines between TAG, infantry, and remotes. Advanced technologies ranging from augmentations to Infowar, from handheld weapons to earth-shaking vehicles, and from subtle covert operations to the Celestial Guard's overwhelming force, ensure the StateEmpire's citizens can hold their heads high anywhere in the Human Sphere.

But that bold rhetoric often elides how Yu Jing's researchers and manufacturers partner with other factions, leveraging outside expertise for their own benefit. For projects that would never be palatable enough for an official budget, work continues in either off-the-books military facilities or via deniable Jopok cutouts. The Emperor's key edict is that all resulting production must be under the control of either the StateEmpire or its many deeply-entangled corporations, ensuring comparative advantage, and a steady flow of influence, knowledge, and wealth to the StateEmpire.

Despite aspirations toward a cultural mosaic, signifiers of sub-cultural belonging, ethnic background, class, wealth, Hiraeth nostalgia, and political loyalties are deadly serious sources of tension in Yu Jing's highly hierarchical society, games everyone within Yu Jing must play or be relegated to poverty, isolation, or insignificance. Ironically, there are so many differentiators that most subjects have at least a few in common, which both eases and complicates social interactions.

Acquisition issues in Yu Jing are rarely technologically limits, but rather ones of differentiation: each group zealously clings to advantage. Whether Imperial Service, Party members, Jopok, Otaku, or Dissidents, making friends is the key to reliably acquiring what one needs.

AiQ Upgrade: Yu Jing social Maya networks — such as TenTen, PingMe, and We@ — are somewhat gated by Hao Lù rating, particularly those oriented around dating and networking. While not an official policy, it's an easy way for admins to filter out undesirable members before they can lower the group's perceived value. Many of these networks accept referrals from other dataspheres, however, some of which are willing to give low-rating users admission in return for free labour or hard cash. The higher one's rating, the easier it is to gain and maintain access.

An AiQ (*ai* meaning *love* in Yujingyu) upgrade teaches a user's geist how to manage this intricate web of referrals, adding a bonus d20 to Lifestyle tests to find potential dates and contacts when the geist assists on the test. If the geist's owner has at least one rank in the Network talent, the geist also grants -1 difficulty to find Yu Jingese contacts with higher Hao Lù ratings (i.e. in a higher social class than the owner).

Akrylat-Kanone: A Nomad design quickly brought into mass-production by Gāng Tie Industries for resale, Akrylat-Kanone combines the disposability and lightweight form factor of the Panzerfaust with a (briefly) proprietary long-range anti-tank adhesive round. It includes alterations for easier disassembly when reloading. Each contains two Reloads, and after those have been used, the weapon is empty and cannot be used until reloaded. Disassembling the weapon to reload it requires a Standard Action **Tech (D1) test**. (Range L, 2+5^W damage, Burst 1, 2H, Immobilising, Knockdown, Munition, Nonlethal, Spread 1, Unsubtle, Vicious 2).

Baekdusan: These physical datasphere repositories are shaped like the revered mountain on the historical border between Earth's China and North Korea and are common in households throughout Yu Jing, particularly in Koguryo. They provide peace of mind with a single-zone Commercial HighSec datasphere (+2 Interference Soak) for protection against Otaku and other malicious hackers, and a physical switch on the base can disconnect them from Maya in case of intrusion or attack. Taesong chaebol's core product from Paekche, Baekdusans provide no protection against anyone with Hacking focus of 3 or more.

Chongqing Quantronic Security Kit: Initially developed by a Maya-cluster and inspired by the traditional guard dog's diligence, the CQSK is a

WHAT YOU'LL FIND IN THIS CHAPTER

A catalogue of new weapons, armour, programs, tools, remotes, and vehicles made in or available in Yu Jing.



HEAVY COMBAT ARMOUR VARIANT: HSIEN EMISSARY

While the Emperor's personal guard are officially posted to Tiān Dì Jīng Imperial Palace, most proactively enforce his will elsewhere, often in ways that contravene official policy. Selection for the guard is a profound honour, providing +4 Morale soak, and back-mounted transmitter spines ensure constant connectivity with Imperial sysadmins and physicians for BTS 6. A built-in multispectral visor 2 and nanopulser ensure they not only see trouble coming, but can easily handle it when it arrives.

THE CRANE GALLERY

The Crane Gallery is a small museum concealed beneath Zijinchéng's Temple of the Moon that collects the armour of agents who died in the line of duty. Many displays contain only small surviving fragments from brutal deaths. On their first night after being granted Crane rank and receiving their armour, each new agent meditates from sunset until sunrise in the gallery, pondering the dangers and sacrifices ahead.

final line of defence against would-be hackers. By generating quintillions of false proxy identities and file trees, routing suspect threads to dead-end bitbuckets, it buys a user time to formulate a response against an intruder. Kit installations activate the first time a user suffers a Breach, giving subsequent hacking attempts against the user +1 Difficulty until they either suffer a second Breach, or the attacker makes a successful **Analysis (D2) test**. Each kit comes with licenses for three installations — no more than one can be installed on a personal network at a time — and doing so requires five minutes and a **Hacking (D0) test**.

Chain-Colt: A disposable chain rifle knockoff used by Submundo smugglers, undercover officers, dissidents, and those unable to afford something better, chain-colts use an electric flashforge receiver to transform a cylindrical chain magazine into cones of red-hot shrapnel. Compact, easily-fabricated, and profoundly illegal, they are devastating at short range while they last, but if a complication is generated by an attack with a chain-colt, it melts or otherwise fails beyond repair. (Range C, 1+4 damage, Burst 1, 1H, Improvised 1, Spread 1, Torrent).

Cihuái Rifle: As a response to the Locust rifle, the Imperial Service acquired the PanOceanian schematics and granted an unpublicised contract for Hǔ Enterprises to improve the design. In addition to simplifying, Hǔ Enterprises sub-contracted with Al-Medinat experts to add a short-lived toxin-sprayer to the chamber. As a result, *Cihuái*

(locust in Yulingyu) are prized not only by Zhànyīng Imperial Agents but also by well-connected mercenary companies and freelancers.

As extensively modified Combi Rifles, Cihuái rifles fire BTS-degrading Breaker rounds, add Toxic 1 to all munitions, and have a charge-plate equivalent to a Stun Baton built into the stock for use as a melee weapon without any Improvised penalty. Tech tests to repair or modify them are at -1 difficulty, and they are often modified to combine an alternate munition with their toxic bite. (Range C/M, 1+5 damage, Burst 2, 2H, Expert 1, MULTI Light Mod, Toxic 1, Vicious 1).

CLAW-2 Monkey Trap: A nasty sysadmin trick, this program damages targets and prevents their escape. It can only be used as a Reaction when the target attempts to move out of reach in a quantronic zone, take a Withdraw action, or take a Terminate Connection action. On a success, the target's movement or action is cancelled, and the program deals its damage.

Covert Dermal Grafts: Covert dermal grafts are a complete full-body subdermal augmentation for stealthy movement. They utilize a series of overlapping absorption linings that reduce visible body heat and infrared emissions, cushion footsteps and impacts, reabsorb skin oils to prevent leaving behind noticeable prints or genetic traces, and absorb and transmit false signatures to scanning equipment. It grants a bonus d20 to non-quantronic Stealth checks, +1 Armour Soak to all limbs, and an additional +1 difficulty (beyond its Hidden quality) to detect the armour by any method, including medical scanning, sniffers, and sensor arrays.

Crane Armour: Prosecutor, detective, and inquisitor all in one, Crane rank Imperial agents have carte blanche from the Emperor to act in his name. In order to ensure their safety and enhance their efficacy, each is given a personalised set of armour, which serves as both an emblem of their office, and a means of officially recording their judgements for future precedent. A set of back-mounted transmitter spines ensure constant connection with Imperial sysadmins and physicians for BTS 6. To ensure the agent always has the necessary tools at hand, the armour incorporates a nanopulser built into



each shoulder, an x-visor, an always-on recorder, a locational beacon, and a sensor suite selected by the agent.

Fireflies: Usually delivered via repurposed grenade casings, these micro-drones blanket an area in low-grade sensors, providing quick-and-dirty telemetric data on opponents in cover. Once successfully thrown or fired into a zone, the attacker can make an **Analysis (D1) test**, then spend Momentum to reduce the effective Cover Soak of targets in the zone by 1 per Momentum spent. If a target's Cover Soak is reduced to 0, they are additionally Marked until they leave their current zone. The benefit can be shared with networked allies as a Minor Action.

Ferro-gel Ammo: Ferro-gel rounds are 3mm spheres of kinetic-diffusion gel chemically bonded with highly-magnetic iron that spread on impact, distributing their energy across a broad area of a target, stunning them and knocking them down. The Imperial Service uses them for riot control and for capturing high-value targets in approximately one piece. They require a weapon that can fire them in sufficient quantity – Burst 3 or more – but add Nonlethal, Knockdown, and Stun to that weapon. When fired from a hyper-rapid magnetic cannon, replace its modes with:

- *Precision Mode (Primary):* Nonlethal, Knockdown, Spread 2, Stun
- *Suppression Mode (Secondary):* Area (Close), Nonlethal, Knockdown, Stun.

Fúcénglóng Arm: Temperature-resistant extensible metal arms named for the mythical Chinese dragons that guard the earth's buried treasures, Fúcénglóng were popular with miners and laborers in The Greatest Leap era because the cost was subsidized by the Party to enhance their efficiency. While unnecessary in the modern era of gruntsuits and remotes, they remain popular with bravos as signs of strength and with dissidents as signs of blue-collar solidarity. They add a bonus d20 to tests that rely on the user's arm strength, 2 Armour Soak and immunity to extreme temperatures to the user's arms, and +2 damage and the Extended Reach quality to unarmed strikes. They are usually installed in pairs. If only one arm is replaced and the user has Brawn of 9 or less, they are unbalanced, adding +1 Complication range to Agility tests.

GADGET-3 Zhang Xun: Zhang Xun Supportware – named after the famous Tang dynasty general and tactician who cleverly used archers to reveal and kill opposing general Yin Ziqi – uses aim-assisting telemetry data to aid allies wearing Armour with the Exoskeleton. The hacker can use Analysis tests to assist allies' ranged attacks as a Reaction without spending Heat, and on successful

assisted attacks, the hacker or ally can spend one Momentum to determine hit location, rather than the usual two.

Gesar Augmentation: Inspired by the hero whose legend is for Central Asia what the *Râmâyana* and the *Mahābhārata* are to India and the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* are to Greece, this augmentation is available from Qing and Ming family doctors to anyone with ancestry linked to the Emperor (i.e. has the Dragon-Blooded trait). It depends on an array of DNA markers – so many that it could augment nearly anyone, though to do so is nigh-heretical – and encourages healthy gene expression, halving the XP cost for the recipient to increase their attributes to a maximum rating of 11 per attribute.

Hykaate Dome Kit: This kit allows rapid construction of a sturdy geodesic shelter using a foot-long tube of sealant glue made from the eponymous mineral found only on Anawrahta Island and a stack of hexagonal and triangular windproof panels made from local polymers. Anyone with 2 or more Survival or Tech expertise can assemble one in an hour. Each kit makes a hemispherical dome approximately 2 metres in radius and can be combined into larger or even permanent structures. They are also incredibly deadly in the right hands. In combination with a single Reagent and a **Science (D3) test**, the kit can be cooked down into the equivalent of 3 D-charges with the Incendiary 2 quality, but each complication generated adds Improvised 2. Because they were extensively used by Kempetai saboteurs during the Uprising, the charges' chemical profile is monitored in public areas by governmental sniffers. The glue's ubiquity on Shentang makes it fairly easy for local dissidents and criminals to acquire. A harsh – usually fatal – learning curve means Submondo chemists who can reliably convert kits into explosives charge a premium.

Imperial Messenger Ceremonial Kit: Yu Jing emissaries' preference for anachronistic trappings is well known, and imperial messengers often hand-deliver important messages on inked scrolls sealed with wax stamps. While an eccentric affectation to outsiders, each of their ceremonial kits secretly contain three uses of surveillance and encryption materials hidden among ordinary dumb-material papers, inks, and traditional paraphernalia. Common variations include sensors hidden in scroll tubes and inkwells, smart paper that records every word spoken in a 100-metre radius or embeds petabytes of data in nano-scale arrays, and calligraphic ink that passively records holographic imagery to sub-millimetre precision. Each use of the kit allows the user to conceal recorders or create encrypted messages that require **Observation (D3)** or **Analysis (D3) tests** to uncover.

DHARAMSALA LAND SURVEY BOARD

The small and deliberately obscure department of the Service of Terrestrial Resources is the cover for an independent Infowar think-tank staffed primarily from Gandakpur's brightest students and led by Khandro Dolma, a brilliant datasphere theoretician and teacher. Zhang Xun is their most notable creation, and they supply a surprising percentage of Yu Jing's Infowar innovations despite minimal oversight.

HYKAATE CUTTS

Stolen Hykaate dome kit glue is used by Shentang youth gangs to craft improvised knives or knuckle spikes out of bits of leftover metal, ceramic, and even polymer scraps. The technique also extends to street fashion, with jagged bricolage added in elaborate patterns or stripes to clothing, especially TF coats or jackets and tiny shards combined into jewellery or piercings. The style resists corporate appropriation through a tradition of using only items personally made or received from friends. A favour in return for a well-made item is gracious though not strictly required, and the exchange rates involved are a matter of subtle street etiquette.



Hindered – +1 difficulty on terrain tests, –1 zone when making movement actions, see *Infinity Corebook*, p. 104

YIAN XIANG'S LITTLE NEPAL

While many Nepalese are PanOceanian, a substantial portion of the country emigrated to Bhutan during The Greatest Leap. They resettled alongside the Bhutanese in Ya Lang, particularly in its capital city of Yian Xiang. The city's colourful Little Nepal district is the largest Nepali concentration outside of Nepal itself, and has one of the highest military volunteerism rates in Yu Jing despite ongoing discrimination.

Iron Turtle Suit: Dense and thick-collared but seemingly ordinary formal outfits, these smart-material suits were invented by Koryo's Gimse Chaebol and initially sold as the *G3 Geobukseon* and are worn by paranoid or at-risk executives, Imperial Court officials, and VIPs as a defence against kidnappers or assassins. When activated via quantronic command as a Minor Action, the suit encases the wearer in reinforced armour plating covered in razor-sharp spikes, with an independent air supply and 2 Oxygen Loads. Their unarmed attacks gain +2 damage and the Piercing 1 and Vicious 1 qualities, but the suit's inflexibility adds +1 Difficulty to Agility-, Awareness-, and Coordination-based tests, and the wearer is Hindered. The suit can be deactivated and returned to its formal guise as a Standard Action.

Khmoc Outfit (Lifestyle Rating): Made only by Kampubang tailor Tep Kompheak and his family, these outfits are lined with transmission threads connected to a palm-sized battery and projector at the small of the back. Once activated, the outfit distorts light around the wearer, creating an effect equivalent to thermo-optical camouflage without the Negative Feedback quality. He can create outfits to match any lifestyle rating, but is best at Yu Jingese styles, particularly party garb. A fervent dissident, Kompheak will only sell to those who he believes are enemies of the StateEmpire, and *khmoc* (ghost in Khmer) clothing is a tightly kept secret, known only to a trusted handful of contacts.

Ki-rin Ammo X: After attempts at opening hunting licenses for wild Ki-rin in rural Shentang led to widespread unrest and the murder of several *Guanxi* hunters, these non-lethal rounds were introduced as a compromise. Each license pays for a single-round Reload, which painlessly marks the target with a unique one-Rem tracking tag that lasts for X months if any damage is dealt. Official spotbots' Geiger sensors can follow the target from an unobtrusive distance. If they hit, the hunter gets the bragging rights of a live feed and curated imagery of their target's movements while the tag lasts. The funds generated cover Ki-rin habitat maintenance, and most importantly, the Ki-rin lives out its natural lifespan. Should the hunter miss, they get an ornate letter of thanks for their contribution to Ki-rin conservation, and an invitation to purchase another license.

Ki-rin Rifle: Used by *Guanxi* hunters to non-lethally hunt Shentang's wild Ki-rin, these single-shot bolt-action rifles require a Standard Action and a **Ballistics (D0) test** to reload each time they are fired, and add a bonus d20 to Ballistics tests when firing Ki-rin ammo. They are growing in popularity among wealthy Yu Jingese hunters for hunting other game as well, as signifiers of superlative marksmanship, resulting in higher mark-ups from savvy gunsmiths.

Kukri: Designed to decapitate security systems and unlucky targets, modern kukri lace the traditional Nepalese short blade with E/M pulse-circuitry for a versatile dual-use weapon. Toggling between modes via the physical slider in the hilt is a Minor Action. A shipment bound for Paradiso went missing a year ago, and can still be easily purchased from Triad fences, despite the Imperial Service's best efforts to track them down.

- **Primary Mode:** Non-Hackable, Piercing 1, Thrown, Unforgiving 2, Vicious 1
- **E/M Mode:** Breaker, E/M, Thrown, Unforgiving 1.

Kumoropu Bicycle: Lightweight all-terrain bicycles, *kumoropu* ("Spider Loop" in Japanese, after a near-mythical offroad trail on Earth) are popular with both dedicated urban commuters and serious off-road enthusiasts. They were perfected by Kofuku's Fuji-Ono LLC, but the trademark and patents were nullified by the Imperial Court, and their trade secrets leaked across Maya after they fled to Japan during the Uprising. Komorupu is now a generic term for any bicycle with collapsible smart-material construction, easy to repair electric-assist drivetrain, and a robust quantronic lock. The original construction used a proprietary Teseum lacing technology, though this reinforcement made the final product twice as expensive.

KUMOROPU BICYCLE

EXPOSED, GROUND, RUGGED, WHEELED

ATTRIBUTES

Scale	Speed	Brawn
0	2	7

DETAILS

Max. Passengers	Impact
1	1+3 (Knockdown)
Hard Points	
–	

DEFENCES

Structure	8	Firewall	10
Armour	1	BTS	3

SPECIAL ABILITIES:

- **Collapsible Frame:** As a Standard Action, the bike can collapse into a portable briefcase-sized bundle or expand into its rideable configuration.
- **Crank It:** With an Athletics (D2) test, the biker can push their speed to 3 for two rounds, plus one round per Momentum spent.
- **Struts:** An Acrobatics (D2) Reaction when falling halves any damage from the fall.

Loudcast Box X: Commonly used by dissidents during demonstrations or to expose governmental misconduct, this recording device broadcasts a high-wattage live stream via archaic radio waves to everyone within three kilometres, allowing interested parties to store its transmission without

making a potentially compromising direct data connection.

Illegal due to potential interference with legitimate data traffic, they last for Xd20 rounds, where X is the maker's Tech expertise, before melting or otherwise degrading beyond repair. Creating one requires at least one Part and a **Tech (D2) test**. The difficulty is reduced to a **Tech (D1) test** if the maker has created one before.

Lunar Dragon Head: Originally lunar exploration modules chained together for New Year's celebrations, modern lunar dragon vehicles are used year-round for mobile parties and private meetings by Yutang's well-connected and idle rich. Each is composed of an armoured "head" containing the cockpit and controls for the vehicle, followed by a series of one or more 12-metre-long independent modules connected by hinged airlocks, and an ornamental articulated tail. Propulsion methods vary, from hover skirts to broad wheels to fine articulated legs, but each is customised to suit their owner's aesthetic in hopes of being chosen to dance in Tiān Di Jing's Nation's Glorious Day parades.

LUNAR DRAGON HEAD

ENCLOSED, GROUND, HOVER OR WALKER OR WHEELED

ATTRIBUTES

Scale	Speed	Brawn
2*	2	14 (+1)

DETAILS

Max. Passengers	Impact
3*	2+6 (N) (Knockdown)
Hard Points	
—	

DEFENCES

Structure	15	Firewall	10
Armour	5	BTS	6

SPECIAL ABILITIES:

- **Earthshaking Dance:** Often performing in combination with acrobats, dancers, fireworks, and elaborate augmented reality displays, skilled pilots can bring their dragon to sinuous life via a Pilot test with difficulty equal to the vehicle's scale minus the # of pilots, to a minimum of 1. The same test can be made to attempt to run over or step on anyone in an adjacent zone to the dragon.
- ***Segmented Body:** The head is a single zone large enough for the pilot, and up to three passengers or co-pilots. Each attached lunar dragon module (see next entry) is an independent zone that can hold additional passengers. The Lunar Dragon's scale is equal to 2 plus the number of modules divided by 3, rounding up. Odd numbers of modules are considered unlucky.

Lunar Dragon Module X: The 12-meter-long modules that form most of a lunar dragon's body bear only a passing resemblance to the original mobile habitats used to explore and colonize

Earth's moon. Every module still has propulsion matching the dragon's head, its own independent life support, and accommodation for up to forty staff or passengers. They are now primarily built for comfort, hospitality, glamour, and as an all-terrain demonstration of either their owner's wealth or good taste – rarely both.

LUNAR DRAGON MODULE X

ENCLOSED, GROUND, HOVER OR WALKER OR WHEELED

ATTRIBUTES

Scale	Speed	Brawn
3	2	10 (+1)

DETAILS

Max. Passengers	Impact
1–40*	2+4 (N) (Knockdown)
Hard Points	
—	

DEFENCES

Structure	11	Firewall	10
Armour	2	BTS	4

SPECIAL ABILITIES:

- **Modular:** If a facility or weapon is incorporated into the module, it must be paid for separately, but an open architecture means no further cost is required to add it. Doing so takes a Tech (D2) test and no more than 8 hours of work, which can be halved repeatedly by spending Momentum.
- ***Only the Best:** The module has X+1 amenities from the following list, which can affect passenger capacity (+/- to passenger max, other benefits). Passenger capacity cannot be reduced below 1, to allow passage through the module.
 - Smart-material seating with luxurious demotics (+15)
 - Internal weapon or device (per item size, minimum -2)
 - Selectively opaque or one-way smart-material mobile partitions (-2)
 - Adapted to a particular extreme environment (-5, includes propulsion)
 - Heavy armour and redundant systems (-5, Armour Soak 6, +10 structure)
 - Open gyro-stabilised area for dancing or performances (-10)
 - Private conversation booths with milspec firewalls (-10, 6 BTS)
 - Opaque sleeper pods for assignments or long-distance travel (-10)
 - Half-module stage, sauna or hot tub, full-length bar, or other facility (-15)
 - Massive conference table and permanent negotiator's suite (-20)
 - Pet or animal habitat or cage (-5 if tiny, -10 if small, -25 if large)

Memories Kit: A tradition that emerged during early migrations in Earth's solar system and grew during The Greatest Leap, these kits are a small box, bag, or case containing no more than a half-kilogram of family mementos, data, fine tools, valuables, jewellery, or other precious reminders of home. When a family must move away from their kin and close friends, or a child marries and begins a family of their own, those close to them assemble a kit containing everything they will need to "craft memories" of what they've left behind and to conceptually

LIGHT COMBAT ARMOUR VARIANT: KANRÈN GATECRASHER

The Kanrèn (Yujingyu for 'bold edge') Counter-insurgency Group monitors and roots out subversives, dissidents, and radicals. Since most are too cunning to be easily tracked quantronically, the Kanrèn depends heavily on undercover infiltrators. Once leaders, members, allies, and sources of financing and support have been identified, the group's assault team eliminates the threat in a single, sudden strike. To maximise surprise and survivability, their armour incorporates a holomask, grey-market firewall reinforcement for +2 (N) security soak, a full-body Kinematika mesh of fast-twitch polymer fibres, and a low-profile silhouette for Hidden Armour 1.



"HALF A KILO OF REGRET"

Those with particularly conflicted or painful memories may lose more per Effect rolled when self-treating with a memories kit, even taking mental damage as a result. The weight of memories and pondering memories kits has been a common theme of Yu Jingese music for over a century, ranging from heart-wrenching ballads like Nguyen Van Hai's "Half a Kilo of Regret" and Guangzhong X's "Nostalgia's Scale," to the Jha Brothers' somber Martian classic "Down The Gravwell," and even Khag Tae — la's ribald drinking song "This *%\$!ng Sack."

HONEYTRAPS AND TEA

Shops that serve Ngam Drops in their bubble tea are often Tong venues after closing time, though experienced dissidents warn newcomers to the cause away from these meetings. Most are heavily compromised by Imperial Service informants and agitators, sweet traps for the naïve and idealistic. Popular b-tea chains include Hou Tu-based Likeblur and Bubable, Bêi Tû's B2 BBee's, and Shanghai's street-corner SungT stalls.

store those memories when homesickness is too much to bear.

Memories kits can only be gifted, not purchased, but lower the difficulty of remembering past events about childhood, family, and close friends by 1. With a half-hour of pondering its contents, the kit also allows self-treatment of Mental damage with the Psychology skill without penalty, recovering 4+4[Ⓝ] mental damage plus 1 per momentum spent. Each Effect rolled reduces the amount healed by 1 due to the admixture of negative memories or regrets. The listed price covers the usual costs to construct a kit, but the contents are often irreplaceable.

Milù Hovercycle X: Named for a Terran marshland deer brought back from extinction by Jivana Kō Skūla researchers and now endemic in Yutang's nature preserves, Yunmen Hoversports' motorcycle-style amphibious hovercrafts are a common sight along Penglai's temperate inner and outer coastlines. Available in a variety of sizes, from swift single-person wave- and road-runners to more sedate multi-person pleasure trikes or tandems, they are nearly as popular as their namesakes with tourists, although wide hyper-pressure skirts mean they have a significantly less svelte silhouette.

MILÙ HOVERCYCLE X

EXPOSED, GROUND, HOVER, WATERCRAFT

ATTRIBUTES

Scale	Speed	Brawn
X-1	2	*+X

DETAILS

Max. Passengers	Impact
1+X	1+2X [Ⓝ] (Knockdown)
Hard Points	
—	

DEFENCES

Structure	8+X	Firewall	7
Armour	2	BTS	2

SPECIAL ABILITIES:

- **Smooth Ride:** A Milù's low center of gravity, wide hyperpressure skirts, and gyroscopic compensators eliminate the Hasty Piloting difficulty penalty to skill tests for passengers but add +1 difficulty to Evasive Action Reactions.

Neokatana: Even with modern advances in metallurgical science, the traditional art of swordmaking remains one of the oldest and proudest Nipponese traditions. Neokatanas are — quite literally — cutting-edge weapons, rewarding skill, but proving unwieldy to those used to modern melee weaponry. Designed for traditional Nipponese Bushi techniques, they assume a wielder who side-steps blows, rather than parrying them directly, and focuses on

lethal, penetrating cuts to the exclusion of all else. A symbol of status among Yu Jing's Japanese citizens, following the Uprising, the shadow they cast has become long indeed. A Neokatana's wielder generates +1 bonus Momentum on successful social tests with Japanese characters. They increase the difficulty of such tests with the rest of Yu Jing by +1. (Melee, 1+3[Ⓝ], Unbalanced, Non-Hackable, Piercing 3, Vicious 3).

Ngam Drops: Often injected into tapioca pearls and consumed in Taiwanese-style bubble tea, *ngam* (Yujingyu for 'sweet') drops contain a mild euphoric, healing 3 mental damage over the course of a half hour and granting +1[Ⓝ] Morale soak. If an effect is rolled, the user becomes slightly more susceptible to suggestion, reducing their Resolve by 2 for two hours. Commonly taken on dates, particularly in Ya Lang and Nakonthai, they are forbidden for Imperial and Party officials due to the potential for impaired judgement, corruption, or perceived impropriety, but are otherwise both legal and popular.

Palad Khik (Ammo Type): A Bōsōzoku slang word derived from Thai good luck charms, Palad Khik are one-use grenade-launchers that are usually quick-welded onto a racer's motorcycle. Using more than one in a single race is considered tacky, though it's not uncommon. Palad Khiks fire a grenade as Heavy ammunition, are destroyed after one firing, and must be angled for either Close, Medium, or Long range when added to a bike. Range penalties for attacks outside that optimum range are doubled.

If the rider has a Pilot focus of 3 or more, or the technician who installs the launcher has a Tech focus of 3 or more, the Improvised quality is removed. If fired by hand and unattached to a vehicle, they function as a light grenade launcher with the Disposable and Improvised 3 qualities. (C/M/L, 2+4[Ⓝ] damage, Burst 1, 2H or Mounted, Indiscriminate (Close), Munition, Speculative Fire).

Qiang: Despite construction from resilient modern materials and a monofilament-tip, these StateArmy spears closely follow a millennia-proven design, with a leaf-shaped blade and a selectively-bright tassel lashed just beneath to distract opponents and absorb blood. Exploit actions can be made as a Minor Action with a Qiang provided the wielder's Close Combat focus is greater than the target's. If the wielder has a Close Combat focus of 2 or more, the weapon has only +1 complication range.

Qiang, Heavy: A scaled-up version of the StateArmy's standard-issue monofilament-tipped spear just released by Hū Enterprises, heavy Qiang grant TAGs and heavy infantry a deadly close-combat edge against heavily-armoured forces. The tassel can strobe polarization patterns akin

to flarefiltered chaff on command to momentarily distract opponents. Exploit actions can be made as a Minor Action with a Qiang if the wielder's Close Combat or Pilot focus is greater than the target's. If the wielder has a Close Combat or Pilot focus of 3 or more, the weapon has only +1 complication range.

Recall: Administered as a nasal spray or eardrops, this nanobot-laden fluid temporarily enhances the user's memory by repairing and reconstructing their synaptic pathways. Though legal, Recall's rare ingredients are primarily from Paradise, which raises the cost making it unobtainable for all but the wealthiest and best-connected students, granting an illicit edge on examinations. A dose lasts for an hour, and halves the difficulty to remember information (rounded down).

Rui Shi Remote: StateArmy doctrine treats *Yáoxiè* ('remote weapon' in Yujingyu) remotes not only as passive support or defence, but as active combat units in their own right. The Rui Shi hunter/killer prioritises speed and accuracy over heavy armour and has a serious investment in advanced optics to stalk the StateEmpire's prey. Despite their squat four-legged construction's stability, they are surprisingly swift. Their integrated repeater means they can carry loyal Infowarriors' quantronic fury into the teeth of the enemy, along with the rapid-fire accuracy of their integrated spitfire.

TROOPER

RUI SHI REMOTE

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
10	10	10	10	10	6	7

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	+2	2	Movement	+1	1	Social	—	—
Fortitude	+1	1	Senses	+1	1	Technical	+1	1

DEFENCES

Firewall	10	Resolve	8	Structure	12
Security	—	Morale	—	Armour	0

ATTACKS

- **Electric Pulse:** Melee, 1+4 (N) damage, Immobilizing, Stun
- **Spitfire:** Range M, 1+5 (N) damage, Burst 3, 2H, Spread 2, Unsubtle

GEAR: multispectral visor 2, repeater

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Common Special Abilities:** Inured to Disease, Poison, and Vacuum
- **Cutting-Edge Repeater:** Rui Shi carry Changhe Dynamics RTS-12 repeaters (Firewall 12, Security 3), which require three Breaches to disable or suborn.
- **Hunter/Killer:** The Rui Shi gains +2 Security Soak and +2 Morale when controlled by a geist or its native LAI, which increases to +3 when it is stalking a target or in combat.
- **Quadrupedal Mobility:** Can move to a zone within Long range as a Minor Action, or as a Free Action for 2 Heat.

Sensei Wrap: A Yu Jing innovation in common use throughout the Human Sphere, sensei wraps are strips of smart-material cloth laced with sensors, reactive variable-tension threading, and an integrated Close Combat expert system, designed to be wrapped as paired sets around the fists and forearms or feet and shins for protection and feedback during martial arts training and competition. They record, analyse, critique, and guide the wearer's form, and can change hardness to enhance strikes and blocks. Their Nonlethal quality can be toggled on or off as a Free Action. Sets worn on both hands and feet combine qualities but prevent the use of gloves or boots.

Shinobigatana: The shinobigatana are the weapon of choice for Oniwaban and anyone who values armour penetration over power, versatility, or keeping all of their fingers attached. These specialized blades are as difficult to come by as the mythical ninja who supposedly inspired them. Using a monomolecular wire stabilized by a faint E/M field, these monofilament blades bring a new meaning to cutting-edge technology. (Melee, 1+5 (N), Unbalanced, Monofilament, Parry 1, Vicious 1).

Skeletal Reinforcement X: Common among both Martian Yinghuo colonists who regularly visit planets with heavier gravity and fighters looking for a hidden edge, this full-body augmentation laces the user's skeleton with sculpted titanium, smart-materials, or even bands of Teseum. The resulting tensile strength allows the user to push their body beyond ordinary limits, adding +X Brawn, 1 Internal Armour Soak to all locations, and +X (N) damage to their unarmed strikes. The augmentation subtly shifts the wearer's balance and mass and can be detected with an **Observation (D3)**, **Close Combat (D2)**, or **Medicine (D1)** test.



LIGHT COMBAT ARMOUR VARIANT: YE JI INSPECTOR

The *Ye Ji* (Yujingyu for 'pheasant') are 3rd rank Imperial Agents, civil servants of the tactical judicial wing, who provide technical and tactical support to law enforcement in remote areas. Assigned a particular portfolio, such as organised crime, drug trafficking, or subversive activities, they are expected to operate independently to eliminate threats. To that end, their armour incorporates climbing plus pads, and either an X-Visor or multispectral visor 1, as well as an ornate and imposing coat of office that adds +2 (N) damage to Psywar techniques against Yu Jingese civilians and officers of inferior rank.



SWORD OF OFFICE VARIANT: NOKOGIRI BENKEI

Used by the handful of Japanese officers who managed to become Imperial Agents before the Uprising, these katana were deliberately degraded to add a ragged saw-toothed edge akin to the traditional *nokogiri* (Japanese for saw) carried by ancient warrior monk Benkai. The blades represent their determination to rip through every obstacle placed in their path. Since the expulsion of most Japanese officers from Imperial Service, they are increasingly rare. They have only Piercing 1 and Parry 1 but have Vicious 3 if the wielder has Brawn 10 or more.

SWORD OF OFFICE VARIANT: NUMBFISH

A favourite for disabling fleeing suspects who still need to testify and coercing them if they're reluctant to do so, these swords are lined with powerful shock capacitors, adding the Stun quality. When used to Parry, effects rolled while creating Cover Soak against incoming melee attacks can also be used on the next attack with the weapon to trigger its Stun quality and extend the inflicted Staggered condition's duration.

SWORD OF OFFICE VARIANT: YANDA

Many Imperial Agents assume that by the time their sword is drawn, the opportunity for non-lethal solutions is over. Using a neuro-toxic lining and a sealed sheath, once a *Yándǎ* (Chinese for "strike hard") sword is drawn, the first three attacks made with it have the Toxic 3 quality. Sheathing and redrawing the sword to refresh its neuro-toxic coating is a Standard Action, or a Minor Action with the Quick Draw talent.

Sù-Jiàn Immediate Action Unit: A remotely operated heavy infantry unit, the *Sù-Jiàn* ('Swift Sword') is the StateArmy's crown jewel and the pinnacle of their military science. It transcends heavy armour's usual bulk by removing a core component, the human inside. Unrestricted by the fragile human form, its specialized servos can radically shift its shape from a compact lightning-fast mobility mode to a humanoid combat form almost instantly. The resulting flexibility allows it to scale buildings and terrain as quickly as it can run despite its armour plating. The reclaimed internal space allows it to wield a diverse loadout of integrated weapons while remaining compact and light enough to go where TAGs can't without risking loyal lives.

SÙ-JIÀN IMMEDIATE ACTION UNIT

ENCLOSED, GROUND, HANDS, REMOTE PRESENCE, WALKER

ATTRIBUTES

Scale	Speed	Brawn
0/1	3/1	14 (+1)

DETAILS

Max. Passengers	Impact
0	2+6 (Knockdown)
Hard Points	
—	

DEFENCES

Structure	11	Firewall	10
Armour	5	BTS	6

GEAR: Climbing Plus, Kinematika

MOUNTED WEAPONS:

- **Spitfire:** Range M, 1+5 damage, Burst 3, 2H, Spread 2, Unsubtle
- **Light Flamethrower:** Range C, 1+4 damage, Burst 1, 2H, Incendiary 3, Munition, Terrifying 2, Torrent
- **Panzerfaust:** Range L, 2+5 damage, Burst 1, 2H, Munition, Piercing 2, Spread 1, Unsubtle, Vicious 2
- **Heavy Pistol:** Range R/C, 2+4 damage, Burst 1, Unbalanced, Piercing 2, Unforgiving 1, Vicious 1
- **Blades:** 1+7 damage, Concealed 1, Non-Hackable, Subtle 2, Unforgiving 1

SPECIAL ABILITIES:

- **Protean:** The *Sù-Jiàn* can shift from one form to another as a Free Action and make Reactions with the Close Combat skill for -1 Heat, to a minimum of 0.
- **Combat Form:** As a humanoid combatant, the *Sù-Jiàn* gains a bonus d20 on Ballistics and Close Combat tests, has a Scale of 1, and a Speed of 1.
- **Mobility Form:** In animalistic, swift, low-slung forms, the *Sù-Jiàn* ignores Difficult or Hazardous Terrain, has a Scale of 0, and a Speed of 3

SWORD-1 Horrorshow X: Weapon of choice for feuding Otaku, these Brain Blast variants combine disgusting and disturbing sensory stimuli with synchronised adrenaline dumps to induce traumatic waking nightmares. Incorporating personalised details and recording the victim's reaction is *de rigueur* – ego deconstruction as performance art. Pre-packaged libraries of stimuli are available, but devoted Horrorshow artistes pride themselves on customised experiences for their victims. The program can only be used against targets using Neural equipment, but for two Momentum, it can deal mental damage with the Terrifying X and Grievous qualities instead of quantronic damage. Bonus damage is based on the hacker's Personality attribute.

Sword of Office: whether a Chinese *jian*, Korean seven-star blade, Japanese katana, Bhutanese *patag*, or another battle-tested design, Yu Jing's weapon-smiths produce some of the finest blades in the Human Sphere. A select handful of those blades receive additional enhancement and are worn as signs of office by Imperial Agents and those who earn their favour. As smart weapons, they integrate with a wielder's geist to provide real-time feedback, making them excellent at deflecting blows. (Melee, 1+4, Unbalanced, Piercing 2, Parry 3, Vicious 1).

TANK AutoMediKit: An advanced back-pack-mounted AutoMediKit, the Trauma Analysis and Neutralisation Kit helps soldiers fight without inhibition – even after grave injuries – via tailored auto-injections of Serum, pain suppressants, and stimulants. In addition to functioning as an AutoMediKit, the user can ignore difficulty modifiers from Wounds for up to three hours, but their Awareness – and Coordination-based tests are at +1 difficulty until they are fully healed.

TF Coat: Short for *Tokkō-fuku* ('special attack uniform' in Japanese), TF coats are made of sturdy modern materials but still slavishly mimic those worn by Earth's *bōsōzoku* and the kamikaze pilots they emulated. Knee-length, emblazoned with gang logos and slogans in photoreactive paint or strobing neon-noir embroidery, and worn over baggy pants tucked into tall zero-g worker mag-boots, they were the height of fashion for *bōsōzoku* racers. Since their decimation during the Uprising, TF coats are worn by the officers of the elite JSA motorcycle unit drawn from their ranks.



They add +1 difficulty to discover one-handed items concealed in their broad inner pockets, grant +1 Momentum on Command tests with bōsōzoku and motorcycle units, and smart-material gussets at the shoulders and underarms allow the wearer to make Close Combat actions without penalty from Hasty Piloting or Flat Out movement.

TZ Tsurugi Motorcycle: A flexible all-terrain racing chassis wrapped around an aircraft engine, quantronically hardened against hackers, and designed for minimal fluid dynamic resistance, the preferred mount of the Aragoto Senkenbutai Advance Guard Regiment were a bōsōzoku's dream. Before the Uprising they were made by Kume's Toshō Zaibatsu primarily for the State Army with only a few dozen left over for civilian sale, making them prized gifts from well-connected Yakuza elites to favoured racers.

In Yu Jing, the same Shentang workshops still produce the same cycles, but only a handful of Japanese engineers and technicians who were unable to escape during the Uprising remain. Those who did escape have constructed new facilities outside of Tokyo and also operate under the same name, producing materiel for the civilian market. A landmark case as to who is the true holder of TZ's trademark and copyright is currently under consideration by Concilium's courts, although extended appeals are certain however they rule.

TZ TSURUGI MOTORCYCLE

EXPOSED, GROUND, WHEELED

ATTRIBUTES

Scale	Speed	Brawn
0	4	12 (+1)

DETAILS

Max. Passengers	Impact
1	2+6  (Knockdown)

Hard Points

—

DEFENCES

Structure	10	Firewall	12
Armour	1	BTS	4

SPECIAL ABILITIES:

- **"Banzai!":** With a Pilot (D2) test at +2 complication Range, the biker can push their motorcycle's speed to 5 for two rounds, plus one per Momentum spent.
- **"Mondai Nai!":** The cycle's hydraulic struts can extend and spring for ATV-like manoeuvres and sudden leaps. With a Pilot (D2) test, the Tsurugi can ignore up to Difficult Terrain 2, or vault over obstacles up to a meter tall without penalty.
- **Jinsoku-Yume Handling:** With 2 or more Pilot Focus, the biker does not take difficulty penalties to skill tests from Hasty Piloting or Flat Out movement.

UPGRADE Phoenixware: A widely exported Supportware innovation, Phoenixware devotes a significant portion of a hacking device's processing power to tracking the user's operational meta-structure state, allowing for rapid program reintegration if a reset is required. Rumours of inopportune crashes, data corruption, and Imperial Secret Service rootkits might be sour grapes from competitors, but most foreign agents and Yu Jingese Submondo stay well clear of it.

The upgrade enhances the Reset action, allowing a reset to be made as a **Hacking (D0)** Minor Action and reducing the difficulty penalty imposed after a reset by one to +3, which can be additionally reduced by one per Momentum. When in conflict with duly designated representatives of ALEPH or the Emperor, devices with Phoenixware installed are at +4 complication range.

Wushu Tracksuit: A lightweight shirt and pair of pants designed for maximum flexibility, also known as a *biao yan fu* (Yujingyu for a performance or show uniform), this durable outfit unobtrusively incorporates an elaborate sensor suite and locational beacon for precisely tracking the wearer's movements, vital signs, and other biological responses. It provides anyone with network access 1 bonus Momentum on Medicine tests to diagnose health issues, or to Analysis or Science tests to study their physiology and movement. They are worn by members of the Wushu Community when recording their techniques for future generations, by athletes so coaches can provide instruction and critique, by soldiers in basic training, and by factory workers and Diláo inmates so their warders can track their movements.

Vigour Poison X: Also known as Dailing Dust, Kofuku Smog, and Eko-Airosol, this radiomimetic compound gas was popular with terrorists decades ago. Synthesising, possessing, or selling it is now a capital crime anywhere in Yu Jingese or Japanese territories. Unlike other poisons, vigour poison variants are easily aerosolised, and a single dose can easily fill a room (or zone) in an instant. They are only truly effective against children and adolescents whose bodies are still developing, making them ideal weapons of racial or nihilistic hatred. (Inhaled, Instant 2, Vector X, X  permanent Vigour damage to children and adolescents, and X  physical damage to adults).

Vigour Poison Charge X: Only used a handful of times, most notably in Shi Huō's horrific Bayside Massacre, the design for these modified landscaping mist-sprayers is still commonly available on Arachne darknets. Only the rarity of vigour poison and constant counter-terrorist operations prevent a potential outbreak of similarly devastating



XO SUIT VARIANT: HUǍXǐNG SPECIAL

Designed to protect against environmental hazards on Mars, particularly radiation and cold, these suits are already in mass production in Yinghuo. They were sold in vast numbers during The Greatest Leap to Uyghur and Mongolian colonists who suspected Shentang wouldn't be as safe as promised. Many remain in use, particularly in the timber and mining industries, and *Huǒxǐng-zhìzào* (Yujingyu for 'Mars-made') is a Shentang byword for durable long-lasting gear.

HEAVY COMBAT ARMOUR VARIANT:

YAN HUO INVINCIBLES

Thanks to a multi-staged servo design from the Department of Military Support Technologies Development, Yan Huo Invincible armour adds Exoskeleton 1 without compromising protection, easing the use of heavy weapons in combat. Similar technology is licensed to Qapu Khalqi's Azra'il Special Deterrent Group, with subtly added inefficiencies to increase bulk and restrict agility.

attacks. When activated, the charge fills its zone with Vigour Poison X gas, and like other charges, multiple charges in a zone compound their damage and effects. For X rounds after activation, the gas spreads to any zones adjacent to those currently filled with the gas, dealing damage to anyone without protective equipment or BTS of 5 or more. If an adult suffers a Wound from the gas, their Vigour is permanently reduced by 1^(N). If an effect is rolled, they lose 1 Resolve.

X-Visor: Technological aids, augmentations, or evolutionary boons that enhance visual focus, X-Visors increase the effective range and accuracy of the user's aimed gear in combat. They are often added as a hardware and software upgrade to AR Eye Implants or armour. The user can ignore one difficulty's worth of penalties due to range on Ballistics or Observation tests.

Yangwater: Slang for stimulant powders often blended with alcohol, Yangwater is laced with compounds that accelerate the user's metabolism and bind with muscle tissue mitochondria, artificially boosting endurance and strength, along with a pleasurable warming sensation. The best night and the worst hangover you'll ever have. Yangwater adds +3 Brawn and +3 Morale Soak until the user sleeps or is rendered unconscious. For ten hours after they wake up, fatigue toxins and drug by-products flood their bloodstream, reducing Brawn and Morale Soak by 1d6 each, to a minimum of 6 Brawn and 0 Morale Soak.

Yáozao Remote: *Yáozao* ('remote flea' in Yujingyu), Yu Jing's first experiment with humanoid remotes, are an unqualified success. Under a meter tall with a chameleonwear coating, they are easy to overlook, and their fine built-in tools and precisely-machined human-like hands allow technicians and doctors to operate safely at a distance without impediment. They are designed to accompany and assist their users, and both hobbyists and StateArmy veterans find them endearing and seek them out, leading to a competitive aftermarket in decommissioned or damaged units.

TROOPER

YÁOZAO

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
10	10	10	10	10	6	7

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	+2	2	Movement	+1	1	Social	—	—
Fortitude	+1	1	Senses	+1	1	Technical	+1	1

DEFENCES

Firewall	10	Resolve	8	Structure	12
Security	—	Morale	—	Armour	0

ATTACKS

- ***Electric Pulse:** Melee, 1+4^(N) damage, Immobilising, Stun

GEAR: chameleonwear, MediKit, powered multitool

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Common Special Abilities:** Inured to Disease, Poison, and Vacuum
- **Electric Pulse:** Makes Close Combat Defence Reactions against melee attacks for -1 Heat (minimum 0). If they win the face-to-face test, they deal damage and prevent the attack.
- **Right Tools for the Job:** The Yáozao's built-in tools and advanced engineering negates the Complication Range penalty for remote control on Tech and Medicine tests.
- **Scurry:** It only costs a Yáozao 1 Momentum to reduce noisy action to sneaky, and it can move to a zone within Long range as a Minor Action.

AMMUNITION TABLE

NAME	CATEGORY	QUALITIES ADDED TO WEAPON	RESTRICTION	RELOAD COST	TARIFF
Ferro-gel	Special	Nonlethal, Knockdown, Stun, requires Burst 3 or more ¹	2	4+2 ^(N)	T2
Ki-rin X	Special	Nonlethal, target is Marked for X months ¹	X	3+X ^(N)	T(X)

ARMOUR TABLE

ARMOUR	ARMOUR SOAK				BTS	QUALITIES	RESTRICTION	COST	TARIFF	MAINTENANCE
	HEAD	TORSO	ARM	LEG						
Crane Armour	3	4	2	2	6	– Kinematika ¹	4 (Imperial 3, Crane Rank 1)	11+2 (N)	T1	2
Iron Turtle Suit	3	3	3	3	3	Heavy Armour, Hidden Armour 1, Locational Beacon1	3 (Yu Jing 2)	11+3 (N)	T2	3
TF Coat	0	2	2	1	2	Hidden Armour 1 ¹	3 (Bōsōzoku 1, JSA 2, Yu Jing 4)	9+3 (N)	T4 ²	1

¹ See Description.² No tariff for Bōsōzoku or Japanese Secessionist Army soldiers.

5 (TRAIT: DRAGON-BLOODED 1)

AUGMENTATION	CATEGORY	TYPE	QUALITIES	RESTRICTION	COST	TARIFF	MAINTENANCE
Covert Dermal Grafts	Cybernetic	Full-Body	Aug	4 (Yu Jing 3)	10+1 (N)	T4	1
Fú cáng lóng Arm (one arm)	Cybernetic	Replacement (Limb)	Aug, Reach	2 (Yu Jing 1)	6+2 (N)	T2	2
Fú cáng lóng Arms (both)	Cybernetic	Replacement (Limb)	Aug, Reach	2 (Yu Jing 1)	10+2 (N)	T2	3
Gesar Augmentation	Silk	Full-Body	Aug	5 (Trait: Dragon-Blooded 1)	10+1 (N)	T1	–
Skeletal Reinforcement X	Cybernetic	Full-Body	Aug	X	8+X (N)	T1	1

DRUGS TABLE

DRUG	RESTRICTION	COST	TARIFF
Ngam Drops	1 (Party Or Imperial 3)	4+1 (N)	T2
Recall	4 (Party Or Imperial 2)	8+3 (N)	T3 ¹
Yangwater	2 (Yu Jing 1)	4+2 (N)	T2

POISONS TABLE

POISON	RESTRICTION	COST	TARIFF
Vigour Poison X	4 (Yu Jing 5)	1+5 (N)	T3

¹ No tariff on Parsido

EXPLOSIVES TABLE

EXPLOSIVE	CATEGORY	DAMAGE ¹	SIZE	QUALITIES	RESTRICTION	COST (PER 3)	TARIFF
Fireflies	Grenade	2+5 (N)	1H	Disposable, Indiscriminate (Close), Nonlethal, Speculative Fire, Thrown, Unsubtle ²	2 (Yu Jing 1)	5+1 (N)	T1
Vigour Poison Charge X	Charge	X (N) ²	1H	Comms, Disposable ²	5 (Dissident 4)	4X+X (N)	T3

¹ Do not add Bonus Damage from attributes to explosive devices.² See entry for additional abilities.

MELEE WEAPONS TABLE

NAME	DAMAGE	SIZE	QUALITIES	RESTRICTION	COST	TARIFF
Kukri	1+4 (N)	1H	Non-Hackable, Piercing 1, Thrown, Unforgiving 2, Vicious 1 OR Breaker, E/M, Thrown, Unforgiving 1	3 (Jopok 1)	4+2 (N)	T2 ¹
Neokatana	1+3 (N)	Unbalanced	Non-Hackable, Piercing 3, Vicious 3	3 (Yu Jing 4, Japan 2)	8+8 (N)	T2 ³
Qiang	1+4 (N)	2H	Extended Reach, Monofilament, Thrown, Vicious 1	4 (Yu Jing 2)	6+3 (N)	T1 ¹
Qiang, Heavy	2+6 (N)	Massive	Extended Reach, Monofilament, Vicious 1	4 (Yu Jing 2)	10+3 (N)	T2 ¹
Sensei Wraps	1+3 (N)	–	Comms, Expert 1, Nonlethal, Parry 1, Stun, Subtle 1	2 (Yu Jing 1)	8+1 (N) (per pair)	T2 ¹
Shinobigatana	1+5 (N)	Unbalanced	Monofilament, Parry 1, Vicious 1.	5 (Yu Jing 3, Japan 2)	9+5 (N)	T3
Sword of Office	1+5 (N)	Unbalanced	Piercing 2, Parry 3, Vicious 1	4 (Imperial 1)	6+3 (N)	T3 ¹

¹ No Tariff for Nomads.² See entry for details.³ No Tariff for Japanese characters

RANGED WEAPONS TABLE

NAME	RANGE	DAMAGE	BURST	SIZE	AMMO	QUALITIES	RESTRICTION	COST	TARIFF
Akrylat-Kanone	L	2+5	1	2H	Goo	Immobilising, Knockdown, Munition, Nonlethal, Spread 1, Unsubtle, Vicious 2	3 (Ariadna 2, Nomads 2, Yu Jing 2)	9+1	T2
Chain-Colt	C	1+4	1	1H	Normal	Improvised 1, Spread 1, Torrent	4 (Jopok 1, Yu Jing 2)	4+1	T1
Cihuái Rifle	C/M	1+5	2	2H	Breaker	Expert 1, MULTI Light Mod, Toxic 1, Vicious 1	3 (Mercs 2, Yu Jing 2)	6+3	T32
Palad Khik (Ammo Type)	C, M, or L ¹	2+4	1	2H or Mounted	Heavy, Grenades	Disposable, Indiscriminate (Close), Munition, Speculative Fire	3 (Jopok 1, Yu Jing 2)	2+cost of Reload	+T1
Ki-rin Rifle	L	1+5	1	2H	Ki-rin, Standard	Vicious 1, Unforgiving 1	1	6+2	T3

¹ See entry for additional abilities and details.

³ No Tariff for Yu Jing

PROGRAMS TABLE

TYPE	RATING	PROGRAM	DAMAGE	QUALITIES	RESTRICTION	COST	TARIFF
CLAW	2	Monkey Trap	1+3	1	3	4+3	T1
GADGET	3	Zhang Xun	-	Supportware (Long) 1	4 (Yu Jing 2)	5+5	T1
SWORD	1	Horrorshow X	X+3	Piercing 1, Vicious 11	X (Otaku X-1)	4+X	T(X)
UPGRADE	-	Phoenixware		Supportware (Personal) 1	2 (Yu Jing 1)	4+4	-

¹ See entry for additional abilities.

REMOTES TABLE

REMOTE	RESTRICTION	COST	TARIFF	MAINTENANCE
Rui Shi Remote	4 (Yu Jing 3)	12+4	T2 ²	4
Sù-Jiàn Immediate Action Unit	5 (Yu Jing 4)	15+3	T4 ²	6

¹ No Tariff for Yu Jing

TOOLS TABLE

TOOL	QUALITIES	RESTRICTION	COST	TARIFF	MAINTENANCE
AiQ Upgrade	Comms ¹	1	1+4	T2	5 – Earnings
Baekdusan	Comms ¹	1	7	-	1
Chongqing Quantronic Security Kit	Comms ¹	3 (Yu Jing 2)	6+3 (For 3 Installations)	T1 ²	-
Hykaate Dome Kit	Armoured 21	1	5+2	-	-
Imperial Messenger Ceremonial Kit	Comms, Fragile, Concealed 3 ¹	4 (Yu Jing 3, Imperial 2)	8+2	T3 ²	-
Khmoc Outfit (Lifestyle Rating)	Thermo-Optical Camouflage Without Nfb	5 (Dissident 4)	Lifestyle Clothing Cost + 4	Lifestyle Clothing Tariff	1
Loudcast Box X	Recorder	X+1 (Dissident 1)	X+1	-	-
Memories Kit	Non-Hackable	1	6+2	-	-
Trauma Analysis and Neutralisation Kit (TANK)	Armoured 2, Nfb1	3 (Yu Jing 2)	9+2	T2 ²	1
Wushu Tracksuit	Armoured 1, Comms, Locational Beacon, Self-Repairing ¹	1	4+2	T3 ²	-
X-Visor	Comms	2	6+1	T1	-

¹ See Description.

² No Tariff for Yu Jing

VEHICLE COSTS TABLE

NAME	SCALE	SPEED	STRENGTH	ARMOUR	BTS	IMPACT	RESTRICTION	COST	TARIFF
Kumoropu Bicycle	0	2	7	1	3	1+3 ^(N)	2 (Japan 1, Yu Jing 1)	7+2 ^(N)	T1
Kumoropu Bicycle (Reinforced)	0	2	8	2	3	1+4 ^(N)	3 (Japan 2, Yu Jing 2)	9+3 ^(N)	T1
Lunar Dragon Head	2	2	14 (+1)	5	6	2+6 ^(N)	2 (Yu Jing 1)	12+1 ^(N)	T2 ¹
Lunar Dragon Module X	3	2	10 (+1)	2	4	2+4 ^(N)	X+1 (Yu Jing X)	10+ X ^(N)	T(X)1
Milù Hovercycle X	X-1	2	8+X	2	2	1+ 2X ^(N)	X (Yu Jing 1)	9+X ^(N)	T2 ^{1,2}
Sù-Jiàn Immediate Action Unit	0/1	3/1	14(+1)	5	6	2+6 ^(N)	5 (Yu Jing 4)	15+3 ^(N)	T42
TZ Tsurugi Motorcycle	0	4	12 (+1)	1	4	2+6 ^(N)	4 (Japan 3, JSA 2, Yu Jing 3)	13+2 ^(N)	T2

¹ No Tariff for Party or Yu Jingese Corporate buyers.² No Tariff for Imperial buyers



CHAPTER 6

YU JINGESE CHARACTERS

YU JINGESE
LIFEPATH
DECISIONS

The Lifepath Decisions outlined on p. 38 of the *Infinity Corebook* should be followed with the following exceptions for characters belonging to the Yu Jingese faction:

DECISION
FOUR—STATUS

Characters in the Yu Jingese faction roll on the Yu Jing Heritage Table, and the Yu Jing Status Table.

DECISION FIVE:
EDUCATION

Characters in the Yu Jingese faction roll on their respective Heritage Event Table.

DECISION SEVEN—
ADOLESCENT
EVENT

Characters in the Yu Jingese faction roll on the Yu Jing Faction Adolescent Event Tables.

DECISION EIGHT—
CAREERS

Instead of rolling on the appropriate Faction Career table in the *Corebook*, characters in the Yu Jingese faction roll on the Yu Jing Faction Career Table, as well as the Yu Jing Faction Career Event Tables. Their Heritage may adjust the difficulty of hazarding careers.

Those who live in Yu Jing stand atop the Human Sphere, leading it into its brilliant destiny, and have a bright future with their nation at the forefront. Or at least, they live amongst those who see things that way. Duality is a way of life in the StateEmpire, and what others would see as contradictions, Yu Jingese citizens know to be two halves of a whole. Only by embracing these seemingly incompatible elements is enlightenment truly possible.

Of course, the view is always better from the top, and in the StateEmpire, it's a long way down.

Yu Jingese characters can be created using the variant rules in this chapter, rather than those in the *Infinity Corebook*. If doing so, the entries presented here supersede their counterparts.

DECISION FOUR:
YU JING STATUS

In Yu Jing, station is largely — though not entirely — determined by the manner of one's birth. Certain doors will be opened or closed based on the character's ethnicity, lineage, and other factors. Thus, characters in the Yu Jingese faction determine status a little differently.

Before determining Social Status and Home Environment, characters in the Yu Jingese faction need to determine their background. If your heritage is not Yu Jingese, it automatically counts as *Laowai*; otherwise, roll on the *Yu Jing Heritage Table* to determine the specifics of your heritage.

HERITAGE IN YU JING

Like it or not, opportunities in Yu Jing are intrinsically tied to a character's background. And while adults are more able to chart their own path, as children different backgrounds can have vastly different experiences. In addition to Social Status, Yu Jing characters also have one of four different backgrounds, further defining their heritage:

Guanxi: Though the majority of Yu Jingese citizens are Chinese, an assortment of Koreans, Laotians, Vietnamese, Mongolians, Thai, and other Asian peoples make up a significant section of the population. These *Guanxi* (关系, a Chinese word describing a network of relationships) undeniably belong to the Yu Jing inner circle. While they might have lower average citizen metrics than the Chinese, they're still technically first-class citizens, integrally woven into the fabric of society.

In addition to the languages gained from their homeworld, *Guanxi* characters add either Korean, Laotian, Mongolian, Vietnamese, or Thai to their list of fluent languages.

Chinese: When Yu Jing formed, the Chinese were unquestionably a majority. Following the Greatest Leap, their numbers, power, and social standing have only grown. Those born Chinese in Yu Jing are at the forefront of your fellow first-class citizens, first among equals, so to speak. Depending on your status, this might afford you lucrative opportunities, or simply a clean seat at the soup kitchen. In addition to the languages gained from their homeworld, Chinese characters add Cantonese to their list of fluent languages.

Shuǎlài: The *Shuǎlài* (耍赖, to act shamelessly, or refuse to acknowledge that you lost fair and square) are a lower rung on the social ladder.

SPECIAL HERITAGE EVENTS

Imperial: In addition to being *Guanxi*, your ancestry traces directly back to the Imperial throne. Whether you're part of the Qing, Ming, or, heaven help you, a mix of both, expectations will be crushingly high. That is, of course, assuming that anyone knows you exist. Gain the trait: Dragon-Blooded, as you will find open doors and ancestral enemies, whether you will it or not. You can elect to choose Imperial Agent as your first career at no cost, though you must still determine your rank normally.

Party: While you might be of any other Yu Jingese heritage, you have close familial ties to the Party. You can reroll one hazard test over the course of your career. Additionally, you can elect to choose Yǎnjīng Agent as your first career at no cost. Characters with Party as their Heritage may simply assume their characters to be Chinese or *Guanxi*, or reroll on the table to determine if they have a more unorthodox family.

YU JING HERITAGE TABLE

D20	SHENTANG	YUTANG	SOL (CHUNG KUO)	PARADISO	SVALARHEIMA	HUMAN EDGE
1-2	Laowai	Shuǎlài	Laowai	Laowai	Laowai	Laowai
3-5	Shuǎlài	Guanxi	Shuǎlài	Shuǎlài	Shuǎlài	Laowai
6-11	Guanxi	Chinese	Guanxi	Guanxi	Shuǎlài	Shuǎlài
12-17	Guanxi	Chinese	Chinese	Chinese	Guanxi	Guanxi
18-19	Chinese	Party	Chinese	Chinese	Chinese	Chinese
20	Party	Imperial	Party	Party	Party	Party

YU JING SOCIAL STATUS TABLE

2D6	SHUALAI	GUANXI	CHINESE	LAOWAI	IMPERIAL	PARTY
2	Dissident*	Dissident*	Dissident*	Dissident*	Dissident *	Dissident *
3-4	Underclass	Demogrant	Demogrant	Underclass	Upper	Middle
5-6	Demogrant	Demogrant	Middle	Demogrant	Upper	Middle
7-8	Middle	Middle	Middle	Demogrant	Elite	Upper
9-10	Middle	Middle	Upper	Demogrant	Elite	Elite
11	Upper	Upper	Elite	Upper	Hyper-Elite	Elite
12	Upper	Elite	Hyper-Elite	Upper	Hyper-Elite	Hyper-Elite

Including Japanese, Uyghurs, and those who've have fallen afoul of societal norms (such as criminals and their families), the *Shuǎlài* face an uphill battle in Yu Jingese Society. Being *Shuǎlài* means working twice as hard for half the reward, then crashing against a glass ceiling, only to find that it's been reinforced with Teseum.

In addition to the languages gained from their homeworld, *Shuǎlài* characters add either Japanese or Uyghur to their list of fluent languages.

Laowai: The Mandarin pronunciation of 老外, a slang term for foreigners, the *laowai* might be immigrants, children of uncertain parentage, or even one of the tiny number of citizens who trace their parentage to regions beyond Asia. But however they come by it, *laowai* will always be aliens to most Yu Jingese, even if they've lived in the StateEmpire for generations. In Yu Jing, to be *laowai* is to be perpetually on the outside looking in. Note: Characters with a heritage other than Yu Jing are always considered *laowai*, regardless of their ethnicity.

In addition to the languages gained from their homeworld, *Laowai* characters roll on the *Random Languages Table* (see *Infinity Corebook*, p. 45) and add the result to their list of fluent languages.

Beyond the three primary heritages, there are two special results that can arise, though both are also usually Chinese and almost always *Guanxi*.

After determining your heritage, roll on the *Yu Jing Social Status Table* and match your result with your heritage. Consult the *Yu Jing Social Class Table* and increase the listed attribute by one point and set your Earnings equal to the number shown.

YU JING SOCIAL CLASS TABLE

SOCIAL STATUS	ATTRIBUTE	EARNINGS
Dissident*	Willpower	0
Underclass	Willpower	1
Demogrant	Agility	2
Middle	Personality	3
Upper	Agility	4
Elite	Personality	5
Hyper-Elite	Willpower	6

*Through action or circumstance, you or your family have somehow fallen from grace. Shunned from society, you gain a Criminal Record (see *Infinity Corebook*, p. 54) and gain the trait: Dissident.

ERAS: LIFEPATHS AND THE UPRISING

Depending on the era that your game is set in, Yu Jing might be in a very different situation. In particular, Japanese characters will have a very different experience after the Uprising begins.

After the Uprising, any adult Japanese citizen who was born grew up under Yu Jing's rule. As such, they still use the Lifepath options presented here, with a few variations.



DECISION FIVE: YOUTH EVENT

A character's background plays a pivotal role when growing up in Yu Jingese society. Instead of the *Youth Events Table*, characters in the Yu Jing Faction consult the appropriate *Youth Event Table* for their heritage, rolling 1d20 and 1d6 as usual.

SHUǍLǎI HERITAGE EVENT TABLE

D20	EVENT TYPE	1	2	3	4	5	6
1-5	Witnessed	police corruption	abuse of authority	a murder	Kempeitai operations	elite hypocrisy	uncommon kindness
6-10	Involved In	organised crime	forced relocation	ethnic profiling	an accident	mass arrests	Otaku subculture
11-13	Family Change	parent walks out	parents incarcerated	divorce	family member defects	family member dies	sibling goes missing
14-15	Discovered	Otaku subculture	sexual attraction	religion	Hǎo lù cronyism	street racing	corruption in local officials
16-17	Social Contacts	gained Yakuza contact	gained Otaku contacts	gained PanOceanian contact/rival	escaped the neighbourhood	had brush with opposite social class	made a university contact
18-19	Special	gain a 2 Asset debt	gained blackmail	meiyo sheiken	vigour poison 3	gain a 3 Asset debt	died!
20	Reroll Twice and Combine Results						

GUANXI HERITAGE EVENT TABLE

D20	EVENT TYPE	1	2	3	4	5	6
1-5	Witnessed	inspiring loyalty	perjury	assassination	hard work rewarded	a violent crime	backroom politics
6-9	Involved In	a scandal	a children's Mayaseries	a prestigious competition	an accident	a major news event	resurrection lottery
10-12	Family Change	divorce	+1d6 siblings	sibling kidnaped	parents promoted	family member resurrected	family member killed
13-14	Social Contacts	had brush with opposite social class	gained Triad contact	encountered a young Imperial heir	gained PanOceanian enemy	gained Party rival	made a university contact
15-16	Discovered Secret Ancestry	adopted	Japanese	Han Chinese	famous traitor	PanOceanian	criminal
17-19	Special	learned a new language	gained blackmail	vigour poison 1	gain a 1 Asset debt	defection!	died!
20	Reroll Twice and Combine Results						

SPECIAL YU JING YOUTH EVENTS

Biological/Chemical Weapon: You were exposed to some form of biological weapon. Reduce one attribute of your choice by one point.

Changed Social Class: During your youth, your family experienced a shift in their economic status. Roll on the *Yu Jing Social Status Table* and change your Social Status and Earnings to the new value.

Cube Destruction: The Cube used to store your personality has been destroyed (or perhaps you never had one to begin with). You'll begin play

without a Cube, and if you want to have one implanted, you'll need to figure out some way to pay for it

Debilitating Condition: Whether by genetics, illness, or injury, you suffer from a condition that seriously hampers your mobility. Increase the difficulty of all movement-related tests by one step. A cure is possible, but it's expensive and will cost 4+6 Assets.

Defection: You've switched to a new faction. Roll on the *Faction Table* (see *Infinity Corebook*, p. 41).

CHINESE HERITAGE EVENT TABLE

D20	EVENT TYPE	1	2	3	4	5	6
1-5	Witnessed	the Emperor	bigotry	Tatenokai attack	hypocrisy	PanOceanian sabotage	heroic sacrifice
6-9	Discovered	religion	competitive martial arts	classical artistic talent	a secret	a scandal	elite hypocrisy
10-12	Inherited	a warrior's legacy	family debts	weighty expectations	ceremonial tools	head of household status	a cabin in the Hāimen High Quarters
13-15	Social Contacts	family worked with off-world ambassador	had brush with opposite social class	befriended an Imperial heir	gained PanOceanian enemy	gained 0-12 contact	gained Corporation contact
16-18	Special	gained a 1 Asset debt	gained blackmail	vigour poison 3	gain 3 Assets	learned a new language	professional contacts 1
19	Special	gain 5 Assets	changed social class	gain 2 Assets	Cube destruction	professional contacts 2	died!
20	Reroll Twice and Combine Results						

LAOWAI HERITAGE EVENT TABLE

D20	EVENT TYPE	1	2	3	4	5	6
1-5	Witnessed	forced relocation	a murder	a kidnapping	treason	abuse of power	unearned privilege
6-10	Endured	bigotry	a natural disaster	slum housing	mob violence	systematic exclusion	bullying
11-13	Involved In	gangs	Hexahedron surveillance	corporate sabotage	drug trafficking	gifted programs	fight clubs
14-17	Succumbed To	propaganda	social exclusion	despair	isolation	untreated mental illness	terror
18	Special	gain a 1 Asset debt	changed social class	gain a 2 Asset debt	cube destruction	professional contacts 1	gain 1 Asset
19	Special	gain a 3 Asset debt	gained blackmail	debilitating condition	vigour poison 3	gained blackmail	died!
20	Reroll Twice and Combine Results						

Gained Blackmail: You have obtained proof that a person or organisation has committed misdeeds against another. Roll twice on the *Faction Table* to determine which factions the two parties belong to (see *Infinity Corebook*, p. 41). Either side will grant a favour in exchange for the evidence.

Gain an X Asset Debt: The debt you owe is worth X Assets. Note: if the number of effects rolled is greater than the total debt, then you instead gain the Assets, rather than owing them.

Learned a New Language: Roll once on the *Random Languages Table* (see *Infinity Corebook*, p. 45). If you already speak the language, roll again.

Meiyo Sheiken: You're accepted into the rigorous *meiyo sheiken* honour tests. You can freely select Military Training in Decision Six.

Professional Contacts X: You gain a contact willing to pull some strings on your behalf. During Decision Eight, you can add X d20s to a single hazard roll. Once used, these bonus d20s are gone.

Vigour Poison X : Natural or manufactured, you were badly poisoned, and your body never fully recovered. Suffer the *Fatigued* condition, and reduce your Vigour by X, to a minimum of 2. The experience may have an upside; increase your Resolve by +1 for every Effect rolled. A cure exists, but it's expensive and will cost 4+4 Assets to acquire. Even if cured, the changes to Vigour and (if applicable) Resolve will remain.



DECISION SEVEN: YU JING ADOLESCENT EVENT

Yu Jing duality is especially pronounced in adolescence; rare is the youth who isn't both saint and rogue in some measure. Characters in the Yu Jingese faction roll on the *Yu Jing Faction Adolescent Event Tables*. If the character's heritage and faction are different, then they may choose to roll on either faction's unique table on a roll of 1–3.

YU JING FACTION ADOLESCENT EVENT	
D6	CAREER
1–3	Yu Jing Adolescent Event Table
4	Adolescent Event Table A ¹
5	Adolescent Event Table B ¹
6	Adolescent Event Table C ¹

¹ *Infinity Corebook*, p.49–52

HAZARDS OF HERITAGE

Your character's heritage plays a key role. Consult the *Heritage Careers Table*. If you elect to hazard a recommended career, you may reduce the difficulty by one step. If, however, you roll a prohibited career, you must succeed at an **Average (D1) hazard test** in order to proceed. If you elect to hazard a prohibited career, increase the difficulty of the hazard test by one step.

HERITAGE CAREERS TABLE		
HERITAGE	RECOMMENDED CAREERS	PROHIBITED CAREERS
Shuǎlài	Artisan, Criminal, Jopok, Subversive	Celestial Guard, Imperial Agent, Internal Affair Agent, Police, Yǎnjīng Agent
Guanxi	Celestial Guard, Corporate, Imperial Agent, Internal Affairs Agent, Medical, Yǎnjīng Agent	Neobushi, Ninja, Subversive
Laowai	Artisan, Jopok, Neobushi, Ninja, Subversive	Celestial Guard, Imperial Agent, Internal Affair Agent, Yǎnjīng Agent

Yu Jing characters may roll on the *Basic Career Table*, spend 1 Life Point to pick a career from the *Basic Career Table*, or spend 1 Life Point to roll on the *Yu Jing Faction Career Table*. Additionally, whenever they would normally determine a career event, they roll on the *Yu Jing Faction Event Table* to determine which *Career Event Table* to roll on.

DECISION EIGHT: YU JING CAREERS

The StateEmpire prides itself on its unparalleled hand-to-hand techniques, and its citizens boast impressive determination. Compared to other factions, Yu Jing features a heavy emphasis on the Willpower attribute and Close Combat skill.

YU JING CAREER TABLE	
D20	CAREER
1	Special Forces ¹
2	Intelligence Operative ¹
3	Celestial Guard ^{1,2}
4	Bōsōzoku ¹
5	TAG Pilot ¹
6	Internal Affairs Agent ²
7	Jopok
8	Ninja
9	Zhanshi Gōngchéng Mech-Engineers ²
10	Subversive
11	Wú Míng Assault Corps
12	Artisan
13	Combat Pilot
14–15	Yanjing Agent ²
16–17	Imperial Agent ²
18–20	Roll on <i>Faction Table</i> of Your Choice

¹ Career from *Infinity Corebook*.

² Career has a prerequisite of belonging to this faction. You can't hazard this career unless your match faction. Rolling into this career means automatically failing your defection check. Override these limitations by spending 1 Life Point (you were somehow undercover while working the career).

YU JING CAREER EVENT TABLE	
D6	CAREER
1–2	Roll again on the Yu Jing Adolescent Event Table (ignore any additional trait)
3	Japanese Career Event Table
4	Adolescent Event Table A ¹
5	Adolescent Event Table B ¹
6	Adolescent Event Table C ¹

¹ *Infinity Corebook*, pg 56–58.

YU JING ADOLESCENT EVENT TABLE

D20	ADOLESCENT EVENT	SUGGESTED CHARACTER TRAIT	OPTIONAL EFFECT
1	A charismatic, forward-thinking member of The Party's New Wave becomes your mentor.	Radical Futurist	Gain 1 rank in Persuasion. Gain a rival in the Yu Jing Old Guard.
2	You are admitted to the Imperial College.	Workaholic	Gain 1 rank in Education and add 1d6 years to your age. You may freely select Internal Affairs Agent as your first career.
3	You have an intensely spiritual experience, leading you to dedicate yourself to a religion. What spoke to you so deeply?	Religious Dedicator	Gain 1 rank in Discipline.
4	You show an uncanny talent for a traditional artistic discipline.	Cultural Anachronism	Increase your Social Status by 1 step, but suffer +1 complication range on Lifestyle tests to blend in.
5	Rebuffed by your other choices, you are accepted into the University of Kuraimori in Tomari. Are you disappointed? Relieved?	Underachiever	Gain 1 rank in Psychology and add 1d6 years to your age. You may freely select Academic or Artisan as your first career.
6	Singled out by the Celestial Guard, you receive a savage, public beating. Did you deserve it?	Troublemaker	Reduce Social Status by one step, but gain 1 rank in Resolve.
7	You spend some time in an acrobatic troupe.	Thrill Seeker	Gain 1 rank in Acrobatics
8	Whether you realized it or not, you were involved with a serious criminal enterprise. Your case went before a <i>fenghuang</i> , who was reliably stern.	Convict	Gain a Criminal Record (see <i>Infinity Corebook</i> , p. 54). Spend 1d6 years in an off-world prison before starting your first career.
9	You acquitted yourself well in a youth science competition.	Absent-Minded	Gain 1 rank in Science.
10	A sagacious, honourable member of the Party's Old Guard becomes your mentor.	Rigid Traditionalist	Gain 1 rank in Discipline. Gain a rival in the Yu Jing New Wave.
11	You became involved in an underground fighting ring.	Street Fighter	Gain 1 rank in Close Combat.
12	Unable to cope with the immense pressure, you wash out of university.	Washout	Increase the difficulty of hazarding your first career by one step.
13	You fell in with a bad crowd and got caught. The <i>zhāměng</i> let you off relatively easy, but the StateEmpire has its eye on you.	Hot-Tempered	Gain a debt worth 5 Assets.
14	You discover a genuine knack for raising animals.	Backwater Manners	Gain 1 rank in Animal Handling
15	You take first place in a student competition. Everything is great, until a peer confronts you with proof that you cheated.	Irredeemable Reprobate	Reduce Social Status by one step. Alternatively, you can try to keep them quiet through bribes (or fines, for beating them senseless) gaining a 4 Asset debt.
16	You immerse yourself in the <i>Bōsōzoku</i> street racing scene.	Adrenaline Junkie	Gain 1 rank in Pilot, but gain an addiction to Nitrocaine. You may freely select <i>Bōsōzoku</i> as your first career.
17	Your first love was accepted into a prestigious university... in another faction. Do you keep in touch?	Sentimentalist	Gain an Ally (or Rival) in another faction.
18	You gain admission into the prestigious Tiān Dì Jīng Law School. You survive to graduation, though between sleep deprivation and stim abuse, it doesn't always feel that way.	Ruthless	Increase Willpower by 1, but decrease Brawn by 1. Add 1d6 years to your age, and you may freely select Imperial Agent as your first career.
19	From birth, you were taught the value of honour, of family, and tradition. Forced to choose between the three, you kept your honour – forsaking the rest.	Youxia	You defect to a new faction. Roll on the Faction Table (see <i>Infinity Corebook</i> , p. 41) to determine your new allegiance.
20	The good news is that you won a resurrection lottery. The bad news is that you needed to.	Debt of Gratitude	Your character died and was resurrected. See the rules for <i>Resurrection</i> in the <i>Infinity Corebook</i> , page 54.



DECISION EIGHT: JAPANESE CAREERS

Even before the new Cultural Revolution introduced the idea of Yu Jing, Japan's subordinate status has never sat well with its people. Over the years, this cultural divide has only widened, with a long history of mistreatment, abuses, and prejudice colouring every aspect of a Japanese national's life in Yu Jing. In the years leading up to, during, and after the Japanese Uprising, these differences would slowly boil until they could no longer be contained; these career options reflect that.

Regardless of what era the game takes place in, Japanese characters use these rules rather than those in the *Infinity Corebook* or the previous section.

Japanese characters use the *Yu Jing Adolescent Event* rules to determine an event from their formative years. Japanese characters may roll on the *Basic Career Table*, spend 1 Life Point to pick a career from the *Basic Career Table*, or spend 1 Life Point to roll on the *Japanese Career Table*. Additionally, whenever a Japanese character would normally determine a career event, they roll on the *Japanese Career Event Table* to determine which Career Event Table to roll on.

ERAS: DECISION NINE: FINAL STEPS

The Uprising has a massively negative effect on those Japanese citizens who remain in Yu Jing. Even for citizens who remained loyal, fighting against their people – often including their own family – Yu Jingese society tends to regard them as dangerous and untrustworthy.

For games that begin play after the first day of the Uprising, any character of Japanese origins has some choices to make once they reach Decision Nine, in addition to those specified in the career.

First, any character of Japanese Heritage must decide where their loyalty lies. They can choose to remain with the Yu Jingese Faction, or they can join the Uprising. If they do so, they immediately change their Faction to Minor Nations, and roll on the *Social Class Table* (see *Infinity Corebook*, p. 46) to determine their new social standing. This doesn't affect their earnings, the Attribute that they gained, nor anything else from Decision Four, but it does give an indication of their standing in the new faction.

Anyone with the Dissident status has no such choice. They're swept along in the tides of revolution, and make the above changes to their Faction and Social Status whether they wish it or no.

And while they may have expected some kind of gratitude for their loyalty, characters of Japanese heritage who remain in the Yu Jingese Faction receive very little. They reduce their Social Status and Earnings by one step and gain the trait: Suspected Rebel.

JAPANESE CAREER TABLE

D20	CAREER
1	Intelligence Operative ¹
2	Artisan ³
3	Combat Pilot ³
4	Smuggler ¹
5–6	Jopok ³
7–8	Bōsōzoku ¹
9–12	Subversive ³
13–14	Kuge Aristocrat ²
15–16	NeoBushi
17–18	Ninja ^{2,3}
19	Oniwaban ²
20	Roll on <i>Faction Table</i> of Your Choice

¹ Career from *Infinity Corebook*.

² Career has a prerequisite of belonging to this faction. You can't hazard this career unless you're of the matching faction. If you roll into this career, you automatically fail your defection check. You can override these limitations by spending 1 Life Point (in which case, you were somehow undercover while working the career).

³ Career from Decision Eight: Yu Jing Careers

JAPANESE CAREER EVENT TABLE

D6	CAREER
1–3	Japanese Career Event Table
4	Adolescent Event Table A ¹
5	Adolescent Event Table B ¹
6	Adolescent Event Table C ¹

¹ *Infinity Corebook*, p.56–58

JAPANESE CAREER EVENT TABLE

D20	CAREER EVENT	GAME EFFECT
1	You competed in a <i>Jopok</i> -run martial arts tournament. The competition was fierce, and the medical care was iffy at best.	Gain 1 rank in Close Combat, but reduce Vigour by 1, as poorly-treated injuries leave you weakened.
2	A family member commits deeply to the Otaku subculture. While they don't ask for help, you know they're at risk, and barely scraping by.	Gain a debt worth 10 Assets or gain the character trait: Cold-Blooded.
3	On their way to meet with you, your contact is killed in a riot started by Rantan Services.	Gain a rival in the Ōnishi Ninja clan.
4	In recognition of your contributions to society, your <i>Hǎo lù</i> citizenship rating skyrockets.	Increase Social Status by one step.
5	An assignment with Tenchō Investment Services blows up in your face. Literally. Through the smoke, a silhouette nods at you.	Gain Trait: Paranoid. You may reduce the cost of hazarding the Ninja career by one step.
6	Obsessed with Aristeia!, you enter an amateur tryout. It does not go well.	Gain Trait: Old Wound
7	You spot a Yǎnjīng Agent speaking with your superior. Coming in for work the next day, it's as though you never existed. What happened?	You are Fired (see <i>Infinity Corebook</i> , p. 54). Gain an appropriate trait. You may choose either Yǎnjīng Agent or, if you've taken a military career, Wú Míng Assault Corps as your next Career.
8	You run into an old friend you haven't seen in years. Their new career as a <i>Jopok</i> seems to be lucrative, if dishonorable and violent.	Gain a Submondo contact. You may freely join the Submondo faction at any time.
9	During a trip to the Wei River, you rescue a traveler caught in a flood. To your surprise, they're a prominent Party member.	Gain an ally in the Party. You can change your Heritage to Party at this time.
10	Your citizenship metric slips dramatically. True or not, you know who you blame.	Reduce Social Status by one step. Gain a rival that you hold responsible.
11	Obsessed with Aristeia!, you enter a tryout. Your gear is expensive, but it goes quite well.	Gain debt worth 5 Assets but increase Acrobatics by 1.
12	During a visit to Zijinchéng, you wander off the beaten path, overhearing some truly salacious gossip.	You acquire a piece of blackmail. Any of the involved parties will grant a favour (or 2 Assets in hush money) for your silence.
13	When your career prospects become bogged down by the Imperial Civil Service, a <i>cōngmíng de hóuzi</i> offers to make it all go away.	Either gain a 4 Asset debt, pass an Average (D1) hazard test for your current career, or be Fired (see <i>Infinity Corebook</i> , p. 54).
14	During a festival, a piece of the scenery collapses on you. The Party has ruled it an accident. What do you think?	Roll a random body location; you have an injury that hasn't quite healed right in this location. Attacks that hit this area cause +1  bonus damage.
15	Pushed to your breaking point, you snap, lashing out against the Party. What brought this on? And how big a mess did you make?	Change your status to Dissident. You may freely select the Subversive career at any point during the Lifepath.
16	A family member becomes a Kuang Shi. While you'll never be entirely sure, you've probably watched them die, streaming live to thunderous applause.	Reduce Social Status by one step. Increase Resolve by 1.
17	Summoned to the Imperial Court, you acquit yourself honourably though the cost is steep.	Gain a debt worth 3 Assets. Gain one rank in Psychology.
18	You speak out against your supervisor. You were right; they were well-connected.	You are Fired (see <i>Infinity Corebook</i> , p. 54). Gain an appropriate trait.
19	The official Party line ruled your death an accident. But you know the truth.	Your character died and was Resurrected. See the rules for <i>Resurrection</i> (see <i>Infinity Corebook</i> , p. 54). Gain a trait related to the experience.
20	Better to be a dog in peaceful times than a human in a time of chaos. Well, the Dog Days are upon you, and they herald Interesting Times.	Roll again three times on the Career Event Table for this career phase. (When spending a Life Point to choose a specific event, you may not choose this result.) If you roll duplicate events, it means some similar event has occurred. If you roll Dog Days again, add additional rolls.



CAREER PROFILE

ARTISAN

In the Human Sphere, manufacturing has been refined to allow the mass-fabrication of goods in enormous factories. Yu Jing have also ensured the personal touch is alive and well. While the work isn't always done by hand per se, Artisans meticulously craft their chosen works with an astonishing attention to detail. Whether handwoven silk scarf, pistol holster to match a formal outfit, or even custom hardware interface, an Artisan's touch can make all the difference. Though some fulfil corporate or custom orders, the most revered Artisans work independently, taking only those tasks worthy of their dedication. Of note are the swordsmiths who keep the spirit of Masamune alive. Whether nano-fine scrollwork on a Teseum-edged katana, or a list of ancestors along a monofilament dao, their blades are the envy of close combat aficionados everywhere.

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
+1	+1	+1	+2	+2	+2	+1

SKILLS

Mandatory	Education	Lifestyle	Tech
Elective	Analysis	Discipline	Hacking

EARNINGS

1+4

GEAR: Engineering Waldo or Hacking Device, Powered Multitool, Fashionable Clothing, Memories Kit

CAREER PROFILE

BÖSÖZOKU

Bösözoku is an illegal form of street racing originating in Yu Jing. It is a cutthroat competition often involving the use of violence in a no-holds barred race. The Bösözoku racers are incredibly skilled and daring. They lead a lifestyle steeped in underground fame, danger, and hot-blooded pursuit of victory set amid the backdrop of blazing neon cities. A Bösözoku racer must be tough and fast to survive, even outside the races, often forming connections with other underworld elements. Bösözoku gangs kill for one another, and a racer often adopts an "us against the world" mentality. With such a risky yet lucrative occupation, most Bösözoku racers approach life with a "live fast, die young" outlook.

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
+2	+2	+2	—	+2	+1	+1

SKILLS

Mandatory	Pilot	Thievery	Stealth
Elective	Pilot	Tech	Hacking

EARNINGS

0+2

GEAR: Motorcycle, AP Pistol (with 2 AP Reloads), Armoured Clothing (Racer's Suit)

SPECIAL: Criminal Career

CAREER PROFILE

COMBAT PILOT

Whether piloting directly or through remote presence gear, Yu Jing offers no shortage of opportunities to sit at the helm of a state-of-the-art machine, putting pilot expertise to the service of the StateEmpire. A notable example is the Japanese Forward Regiment's Aragoto Seikenbutai. As the high-octane tip of the spear for Yu Jing's immediate interventions, the Aragoto — named for a Kabuki term meaning "rude performance" — blaze to the front lines on all-terrain bikes powered by aircraft engines. Plenty of Bösözoku racers find themselves drawn to this unit. For those less caught up in the allure of speed and danger, Yu Jing provides plenty of opportunities to pilot TAGs, as well as a healthy share of remote presence operator work. The StateEmpire's military extensively uses these daring pilots in its perpetual quest for dominance.

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
+1	+1	+1	+3	+1	—	+2

SKILLS

Mandatory	Observation	Pilot	Tech
Elective	Ballistics	Pilot	Spacecraft

EARNINGS

2+1

GEAR: Motorcycle or Remote Presence Gear, Inlaid Palm Circuitry, TF Coat or Armoured Clothing (Uniform)

CAREER PROFILE

IMPERIAL AGENT

Acting on behalf of the Emperor, Imperial Agents in the tactical judiciary branch are empowered magistrates, detectives, and intelligence assets, all rolled into one. Each of the four ranks brings them closer to the Emperor's authority, with all the perks — and responsibilities — that such a burden carries.

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
+1	+2	+1	+1	+1	+2	+2

SKILLS

Mandatory	Close Combat	Discipline	Observation
Elective	See Imperial Ranks		

EARNINGS

Special

GEAR: See Imperial Ranks

SPECIAL: Cannot be selected by characters with a Criminal Record. When taking this career for the first time, roll on the *Imperial Ranks Table* to determine your rank. Alternatively, you can freely select any rank that lists your current social status as a "Free Entry" status. (If your status is not listed, you must roll.) Once you've determined your rank, you no longer roll upon taking this career, but if desired, you can attempt an Average (D1) hazard test to repeat this career in the next rank up. In any case, you can instead spend 1 Life Point to simply choose your rank.

IMPERIAL RANKS

Rank One: *Zhànyīng* – the Fighting Eagles. Enlisted rather than recruited, Zhànyīng agents clawed and scratched their way into their posts, and they enforce Imperial will in the places where other agents fear to tread.

Rank Two: *Yě Jī* – the Tactical Pheasants. Advisors, tacticians, and administrators, they lead task forces, engage in diplomacy, and spend more time representing the Empire politically than other ranks.

Rank Three: *Xiān Hè* – the Magisterial Cranes. Far beyond the detective work of Eagles and Pheasants, the Cranes have special dispensation to adjudicate decisions directly from the Emperor, cutting through red tape like a hot knife through butter. Which, incidentally, describes their swordplay when pushed into direct action.

Rank Four: *Hsien* – the Immortal Guard. While personal security for the Emperor, they are often deployed as a diplomatic or military response force. The Emperor sends his bodyguards to act in his stead, and when serving in this capacity, their voice is like that of the Dragon himself.

Each rank of Yu Jing's tactical judiciary branch provides different resources, training, and experiences to their members. Rather than navigate separate careers, each rank has a distinct set of Elective Skills that it teaches its members. When working the Imperial Agent career, roll on the Imperial Orders Table below or spend 1 Life Point to select a rank, then use its Electives. At your GM's discretion, you may also use your rank's Elective Skills in place of the standard for the Celestial Guard career, or other careers on a case-by-case basis.

IMPERIAL RANKS TABLE

D20	RANK	FREE ENTRY SOCIAL STATUS	ELECTIVE SKILLS	GEAR	EARNINGS
1–7	<i>Zhànyīng</i> (Eagles)	Middle	Athletics, Observation, Thievery	Breaker Combi Rifle or Qiang, Light Combat Armour	1+3
8–13	<i>Yě Jī</i> (Pheasants)	Upper	Analysis, Close Combat, Stealth	Sword of Office, <i>Yě Jī</i> Inspector (Variant Light Combat Armour)	1+4
14–18	<i>Xiān Hè</i> (Cranes)	Elite, Hyper-Elite	Close Combat, Command, Education,	Numbfish (Variant Sword of Office) or MULTI Rifle, Crane Armour	2+3
19–20	<i>Hsien</i> (Immortals)	Hyper-Elite	Acrobatics, Ballistics, Command	MULTI Rifle or HMG, Yándǎ (Variant Sword of Office), Hsien Emissary (Variant Heavy Combat Armour)	2+4





CAREER PROFILE

INTELLIGENCE OPERATIVE

The tense state of conflict in the Human Sphere means every agency looks for an edge over its competitors. Intelligence Operatives conduct corporate espionage, deep-cover spy missions, acts of sabotage, and other acts which risk their life and limb for agencies that would disavow any knowledge of, or connection to, their operations. An Intelligence Operative is quick-witted, highly disciplined, and often alone in a place surrounded by enemies unaware of the traitor in their midst. They trade in secrets – information that can turn the tide of small-scale conflicts, like raids on secret warehouses holding valuable experimental gear or data – and they can influence the large-scale skirmishes that take place between rival nations. The intelligence an operative collects can cause wars or end them with equal facility.

ATTRIBUTES						
AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
+1	+3	–	+2	+2	+1	+1

SKILLS				EARNINGS
Mandatory	Observation	Stealth	Analysis	3+1 (N)
Elective	Hacking	Education	Thievery	

GEAR: Fake ID 2, AP Pistol (with 4 Reloads), Breaking & Entering Kit, Recorder

CAREER PROFILE

JOPOK

Organised crime is alive and well in Yu Jing. *Jopok* from the Triad, Yakuza, *Chao Po*, and more are locally integrated and usually under the radar. They manage to remain remarkably accessible whenever their presence is required, even more so when it's least welcome. Smuggling, narcotics, illegal gambling rings, racketeering, legitimate security – *Jopok* are intimately tied to the fabric of Yu Jing's society and culture, wielding significant political influence at a local level and beyond. In a society where pop stars, crime lords, pillars of the community, and scum of the earth all interact daily, their relationships can become complicated. Even their interactions with the police, while hardly friendly, aren't exclusively combative. Rebel outlaws with deep ties to tradition, *Jopok* embrace and embody contradiction with a monofilament-sharp smile.

ATTRIBUTES						
AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	+3

SKILLS				EARNINGS
Mandatory	Close Combat	Persuasion	Thievery	0+5 (N)
Elective	Acrobatics	Hacking	Thievery	

GEAR: TF Coat, Knife, Yangwater (2 Doses)

SPECIAL: Criminal career

CAREER PROFILE

INTERNAL AFFAIRS AGENT

While *Yǎnjīng* vigilantly works to keep Yu Jing safe from external threats, potential threats can also come from within. Imperial Agents handle these at a high level, and the StateEmpire's Internal Affairs Agents meet these challenges head-on. Working deep undercover, the *Kǎnrèn* counter-insurgency group apprehends radicals before they are able to inflict damage. The bellicose *Bào* Leopard troops – sometimes called the Dragon's "rabid hounds" – ruthlessly target subversives, kicking down doors and apprehending targets with little regard for protocol, safety, or actual guilt. Other agents work with local organisations to monitor seditious behaviour. Agents are expected to hold their heads high and remain loyal beyond reproach in their often lonely and paranoid existence, for the StateEmpire would surely fall to chaos without their service.

ATTRIBUTES						
AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
+1	+3	+1	–	+1	+1	+2

SKILLS				EARNINGS
Mandatory	Discipline	Observation	Psychology	2+3 (N)
Elective	Analysis	Lifestyle	Stealth	

GEAR: Aletheia Kit, Armoured Clothing, Kanrèn Gatecrasher (Variant Light Combat Armour) or X-Visor, Sensei Wraps or Boarding Shotgun

SPECIAL: Cannot be selected by characters with a Criminal Record.



CAREER PROFILE

NINJA

Any conversation on modern ninjas must accept this fact: Ninjas don't exist. Historically, Oniwaban were the Shogun's personal gardeners, but this was a cover. They liaised with the enigmatic ninja clans, providing the Tokugawa Shogunate with access to a powerful force that their enemies could never anticipate. If they were to exist, one can assume that modern Ninjas are masters of subterfuge, technology, and the combat arts. To conceal their existence, historical clans would likely operate as quasi-legitimate front operations. They'd certainly need an Oniwaban to facilitate interactions with both Emperors in secret. The question is, of course, purely academic. Everyone knows that Ninjas don't exist.

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
+3	+1	+1	+1	+2	+0	+1

SKILLS

Mandatory	Acrobatics	Close Combat	Stealth
Elective	Ballistics	Discipline	Hacking

EARNINGS

1+3

GEAR: Tactical Bow (1 AP Arrow Reload, 1 DA Arrow Reload, and 1 DT Arrow Reload) or Assault Hacking Device, Covert Dermal Grafts or Light Combat Armour, Thermo-Optical Camouflage

SPECIAL: If the game begins play in the era of the Japanese Uprising and your character joins or remains with the Yu Jing Faction, add +1 to your Earnings in Decision Nine.

CAREER PROFILE

WÚ MÍNG ASSAULT CORPS:
THOSE WITHOUT NAME

What's in a name? Family, tradition, meaning. Life can take anything else away from you, but so long as you keep your name, you still have something. Those Without Name have lost everything. A foreign legion of sorts, the Wú Míng Assault Corps are not volunteers; to a soul, they are soldiers who've been convicted of serious crimes. Given a choice between execution and dying in service of the StateEmpire they wronged, those who answer the call serve in the most brutal unit in the Human Sphere. There is a silver lining for those few who complete their full term of service, for they are granted both a clean record and a new name. All they have to do is survive.

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
+2	+1	+3	+1	—	—	+2

SKILLS

Mandatory	Acrobatics	Ballistics	Close Combat
Elective	Athletics	Ballistics	Close Combat

EARNINGS

0+6 (max 0)

GEAR: Boarding Shotgun or Panzerfaust, Heavy Combat Armour, Painkillers (2 Doses)

SPECIAL: Gain the trait: On the Watchlist and add 2d6 years to your age. If this is not your final career, you must pass an Average (D1) hazard test in order to leave and take a different career. Upon exiting this career, your criminal record is erased.

CAREER PROFILE

SUBVERSIVE

In the StateEmpire, political dissidence is discouraged, highly illegal, and thus, extremely dangerous. Subversives, as Party media refers to them, spring up in spite of the dangers. Some begin as protest groups but turn to increasingly violent means of disruption over time. Others, like the Kempeitai, infiltrate from within. Modern Yu Jing Subversives, however, can come from any walk of life. There's no shortage of citizens willing to fight for change and recent unrest has resulted in a surge of Chinese dissidents who are dissatisfied with the status quo. Whether it's broadcasting uncomfortable truths through pirate radio, demonstrations, or guerrilla warfare, revolutionary change is rarely clean or easy.

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
+2	+2	0	0	+1	+1	+3

SKILLS

Mandatory	Discipline	Stealth	Thievery
Elective	Hacking	Persuasion	Tech

EARNINGS

1 (max 0)

GEAR: Breaking & Entering Kit, Fake ID 2, Heavy Pistol (with 2 Standard Reloads) or Hacking Device

SPECIAL: Gain Trait: On the Watchlist. Additionally, if you willingly change your status to Dissident, you can defect at this time; roll on the *Faction Table* (see *Infinity Corebook*, p. 41).

LIFE AFTER BEING
WITHOUT NAME

Having shaved years off their lives, anyone who survives their time in the Assault Corps is a different person when they emerge, in more ways than one. Free to choose a new name for themselves – pending Party approval, of course – these reborn citizens come into legal existence as a new entity at their current age, with no prior documentation. It's assumed that the Party maintains their own records on these reborn individuals.

Plenty of organisations – mercenary companies, private security firms, and even Bureau Noir – can find a use for battle-hardened troops with no documented past. Even so, many are cautious about their next step. In a legal sense, they have been born yesterday, but they're still not keen to jeopardize their second chance.



CAREER PROFILE

YǎNJǐNG AGENT

The Party's eyes, and counterpoint to PanOceania's Hexas Agents, Yǎnjǐng Agents are the field component of Yu Jing's military intelligence apparatus. Unlike Imperial Agents, they answer to the Party, and only the Party. They act with impunity both internally and across the Human Sphere. Ostensibly charged with combating foreign threats, they know their true task is stopping at nothing to secure the StateEmpire's interests and advance its destiny. Consisting of five Sections, Colonial Affairs create openings on Svalarheimia, the Communications Surveillance Section eavesdrops on the entire Human Sphere, the Corporate Oversight Section is mostly unconcerned with enforcing trade law, and External Assets arm rebels and dissidents opposing Yu Jing's enemies. When all else fails, the Special Operations Section falls like a hammer.

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
+2	+2	+1	—	+2	+1	+2

SKILLS

Mandatory	Observation	Psychology	Stealth
Elective	Close Combat	Hacking	Persuasion

EARNINGS

2+4 (N)

GEAR: Assault Hacking Device (with UPGRADE: Phoenixware) or MULTI Rifle, Armoured Clothing or Iron Turtle Suit, Aletheia Kit

SPECIAL: Cannot be selected by characters with a Criminal Record.

JAPANESE CAREERS



CAREER PROFILE

ZHANSHI GŌNGCHÉNG
MECH-ENGINEERS

The StateEmpire's Mechanized Infantry forces are the envy of the Human Sphere, largely thanks to the tireless efforts of the Mech-Engineers who provide maintenance and upkeep of TAGs, weapons, powered armour, and even augmentations of their assigned units. Each *Zhanshi Gōngchéng* is a one-stop shop for the broken, battered, and fragmented soldiers they travel with. Though all have spent time as infantry in the *Zhànshì Qízhì* (Troops of the Banner), many also come from the *Zhanshi Yīshēngs* (doctors). No strangers to live fire, a Mech-Engineer frantically repairing the shattered remains of a vehicle between bursts of suppressive fire in the middle of a firefight is a common sight. While hardly the most glorious of posts, anyone who's ever been on deployment a *Zhanshi Gōngchéng* knows there are few better people to have on your side when things hit the fan.

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
+1	—	+2	+2	+2	+1	+2

SKILLS

Mandatory	Athletics	Discipline	Tech
Elective	Ballistics	Medicine	Tech

EARNINGS

1+3 (N)

GEAR: Powered Multitool, Armoured Clothing (Uniform), Combi Rifle

CAREER PROFILE

KUGE ARISTOCRAT

Aristocracy is a delicate and fragile concept. Under Yu Jing, no Japanese title or position was officially worth the breath it took to utter its name. Unofficially, nobility isn't easily legislated away and power takes many forms. The *Kuge* know this better than anyone. Eclipsed by the Bushi in the 12th century, then rendered obsolete and all but forgotten when absorbed by Yu Jing, their power has waxed and waned. With the ascent of the *keiretsus*, they became an economic and political powerhouse once more. Equal parts corporate executive, lobbyist, courtier, and puppetmaster, they make long-term plans that are brought to fruition with deliberate patience and endless determination. Hardened by their fall and emboldened by Japan's ascension, they remain aloof and play the long game.

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
—	+2	—	—	+2	+3	+2

SKILLS

Mandatory	Discipline	Lifestyle	Persuasion
Elective	Discipline	Education	Psychology

EARNINGS

2+4 (N)

GEAR: AiQ Upgrade, Chongqing Quantronic Security Kit, Ki-rin Rifle

SPECIAL: If the game begins play in the era of the Japanese Uprising, your character's status changes in Decision Nine. Yu Jing characters set their social status to Dissident. If you are not in the Yu Jing Faction, either set your social status to Upper or increase it by one step.

CAREER PROFILE

NEOBUSHI

In Yu Jing, holding the rank of Bushi is of little consequence. Samurai mean a great deal to the Japanese, however. Embodying the virtues of Bushido, Yu Jing's Neobushi are warrior-aristocrats in a society that ignores the latter, while simultaneously prizing and dreading the former. A samurai's actions are not dictated by circumstance, but by honour and duty. Whether traditional swordfighter of the Domaru Butai, whose katana cannot be re-sheathed without tasting blood, vainglorious duellist of the Tankō Zensenbutai, who clash in *Gekken Kogyo* Aristeia! battles, or a lone Ronin wandering the Human Sphere, Neobushi hold to the tenants of bushido, living and dying with honour as their ancestors did.

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
+2	+1	+2	+1	+1	+1	+2

SKILLS

Mandatory	Close Combat	Discipline	Resistance
Elective	Acrobatics	Close Combat	Education

EARNINGS

1+2

GEAR: Nokogiri Benkei (Variant Sword of Office) or Teseum Chopper, Powered Combat Armour

SPECIAL: If the game begins play in the era of the Japanese Uprising, your character's status changes in Decision Nine. Yu Jing characters set their social status to Dissident. If you are not in the Yu Jing Faction, increase your social status by one step.

CAREER PROFILE

TOKUSETSU

From commanders to quartermasters, and all the way up the chain, the JSA's support troops have been woefully underappreciated. Medics, technicians, and search and rescue teams have all been lumped together as the *Tokusetzu Butai*, or auxiliary regiment. Conveniently overlooked for promotions, excluded from budgets, and only noticed when they can't meet the unreasonable expectations placed upon them, Tokusetzus have quietly become virtually indispensable. As the seeds of the Uprising blossomed into full revolution, the Tokusetzu were the unseen force making it all possible. Even in its finest moments, the JSA can seem like it's being held together with duct tape and prayer. And while the Tokusetzu think that's an odd way to pronounce their name, they also know that to perform their *giri*, their duty, means to be all but invisible. No glory. No renown. Just the satisfaction of keeping the JSA on its feet for another day. For most, that's more than enough.

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
+1	+2	+1	+1	+2	+1	+2

SKILLS

Mandatory	Discipline	Observation	Stealth
Elective	Medicine	Survival	Tech

EARNINGS

1+2

GEAR: Medikit or Powered Multitool, Knife, Wushu Tracksuit, Yangwater (1 Dose)

CAREER PROFILE

ONIWABAN

The Oniwaban, "the gardener", held a special role in Japanese history. During the Tokugawa shogunate, it's said that every shogun had a personal gardener hailing from a ninja clan's elite. Serving as a link between the shogun and the ninja clans, they created potent poisons and antidotes as part of their duties. Modern Yu Jing certainly has no such individuals. Neither the Yu Jing or Nipponese Emperor's many inconspicuous conversations with their servants are clandestine meetings with Ninja spymasters. The suggestion that these unassuming individuals are masters assassin is as ludicrous as the rumours of ghostly infiltrators breezing through security and leaving nothing in their wake. If they were real, they could be anyone, anywhere. But they would certainly be up to something.

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
+2	+2	+2	—	+1	+1	+2

SKILLS

Mandatory	Acrobatics	Close Combat	Stealth
Elective	Lifestyle	Stealth	Thievery

EARNINGS

1+3

GEAR: Cosmetics Kit, Sensei Wraps (2 Pair) or Shinobigatana, Thermo-Optical Camouflage

SPECIAL: If the game begins play in the era of the Japanese Uprising, your character automatically joins the faction: Independent Great Japan.





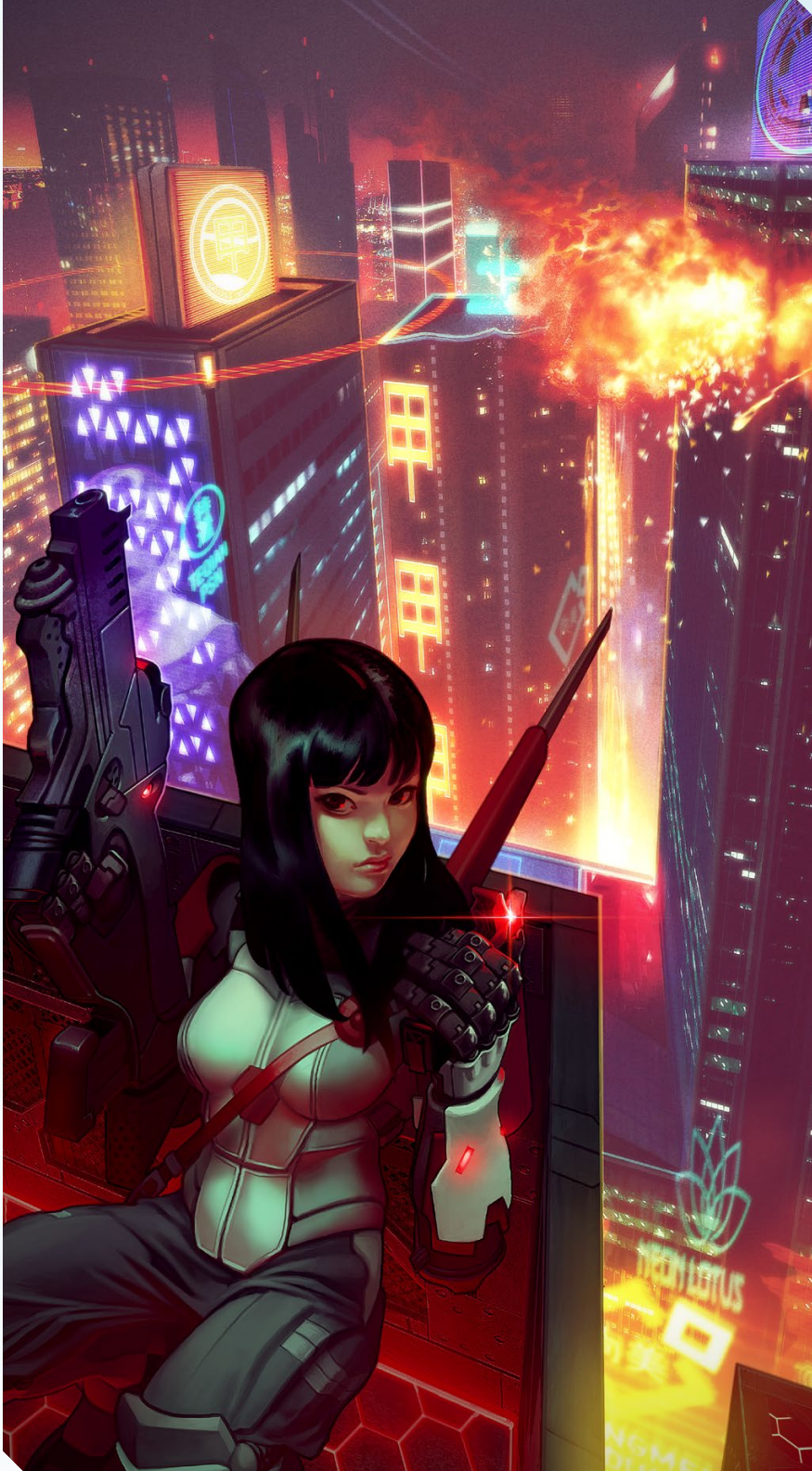
CHAPTER 7

ADVERSARIES

WHERE
TRADITION MEETS
MODERNITY

Many people describe Yu Jing as being merely *the other* Hyperpower. Because the StateEmpire was late to join the space exploration race, PanOceania's influence is more visible, and its Mega and Hyper Corps seem to be more vibrant and active on international markets. However, Yu Jing is not content with only remaining in the shadow of its competition. Under the watchful gaze of the O-12, the Emperor and the Party are strengthening their foothold through undercover means and clandestine ops, avoiding direct confrontation. They embody that one quality the various Asian cultures have preached for so long – patience. The forces employed by Yu Jing in theatres of operations will normally rely on stealth, subterfuge, and a strategy of *faits accomplis*, much like how the situation on Svalarheima had developed. If they do commit to open battle, then the forces are elite in nature and equipped to the teeth. The StateEmpire runs many research programs, concentrating its efforts in the domain of advanced exoskeletons and power armours, and has a wide array of combat drones to do their fighting for them instead of flesh and blood soldiers.

The Yu Jing adversaries are divided into three sections: *Popular Forces of the State*, *High-Tech Skirmishers*, and the *Minority Forces*. Each one of them presents a different facet of the forces that constitute the StateEmpire of Yu Jing.



POPULAR FORCES OF THE STATE

China, the entity that eventually became the backbone for Yu Jing both culturally and politically, was for many years a Communist state. Although many scholars argue that reforms enacted at the end of the 20th and beginning of the 21st centuries have effectively moved the country away from a centrally controlled economy into a capitalist market under a different guise, the military of the bloc created by the Middle Kingdom still maintains the aura of a people's movement. Defence of the common good was both a responsibility, as well as a privilege, and each citizen of the state was expected to carry out their duty. Even some of the more advanced units equipped with modern technology are still presented as being a "people's army" staffed "by volunteers." The truth is that although the propaganda machine is in full swing on the topic, service in the military is indeed seen as a prestigious and noble endeavour, and the ratio of idealistic volunteers versus those who treat it as just like a yet another job is different within the StateEmpire than the other G-5 members.

TROOPER

ZHÀNSHÌ QÍZHÌ, TROOPS OF THE BANNER

The bulk of the armed forces of the Yu Jing StateEmpire is formed by the rank and file of the Troops of the Banner, or *Zhànshì Qízhì*, as they are known in Chinese Mandarin. The units that these soldiers belong to are fairly uniform, a design only strengthened by the ideals of Communism such as equality and solidarity. The units are differentiated by their banner, and the name was maintained to emphasise the connection between the past and the present. Zhànshì corps provide the necessary troop presence during military operations. They are the backbone, the muscle, the foundation upon which the success of the StateEmpire's efforts rests. The brave men and women who serve as Troops of the Banner know that great deeds are required of them and they strive to provide no less.

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
8	8	9	7	8	7	9

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	+1	1	Movement	+1	–	Social	–	–
Fortitude	+1	1	Senses	–	–	Technical	+1	–

DEFENCES

Firewall	8	Resolve	9	Vigour	9
Security	–	Morale	1	Armour	2

ATTACKS

- **Combi Rifle:** C/M 1+5 (D), Burst 2, 2H, Expert 1, Vicious 1, Expert 1, MULTI Light Mod
- **Pistol:** R/C, 1+4 (D), Burst 2, 1H, Vicious 1
- **Knife:** Melee, 1+4 (D), damage, 1H, Concealed 1, Non-Hackable, Subtle 2, Thrown, Unforgiving 1

GEAR: Light Combat Armour

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Unrelenting Barrier:** To serve the StateEmpire is the greatest honour. These soldiers simply refuse to fail. They benefit from a Morale soak equal to their Fortitude expertise. This is incorporated into their profile.

ELITE

INVINCIBLE TROOPER

While the Zhànshì are considered the shield, the Invincible Corps are the dagger that points directly at the enemy's heart. There are several different sub-units within the Invincibles Corps, all different variants of a similar armour pattern: the terrifying *Yan Huo*, the durable *Zuyong*, and the most basic and reliable *Shang Ji*. Regardless of the type of their armour, one thing is certain, these veterans know that the success or failure of the mission is up to them. The Zhànshì are an important element, sure, but it is the Invincibles who fulfil mission parameters. They push directly against the enemy tide, eager to close the distance and make use of their superior firepower and technology to prove that Yu Jing has nothing to be ashamed of and is ready to take its rightful place among the stars.

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
10	9	9	10	8	8	9

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	+2	2	Movement	+2	–	Social	+3	1
Fortitude	+2	1	Senses	+2	–	Technical	+1	–

DEFENCES

Firewall	8	Resolve	9	Vigour	9
Security	3	Morale	2	Armour	5

ATTACKS

- **Spitfire:** M 1+6 (D), Burst 3, 2H, Spread 2, Unsubtle
- **Pistol:** R/C, 1+5 (D), Burst 2, 1H, Vicious 1
- **Knife:** Melee, 1+7 (D), damage, 1H, Concealed 1, Non-Hackable, Subtle 2, Thrown, Unforgiving 1

GEAR: AutoMedikit, Powered Combat Armour Powered (up to +3d20 on Brawn tests with +3 complication range, Kinematika)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Unrelenting Barrier:** To serve the StateEmpire is the greatest honour. These soldiers simply refuse to fail. They benefit from a Morale soak equal to their Fortitude expertise. This is incorporated into their profile.
- **Tip of the Spear:** The Invincibles are used to operating in unfavourable conditions. When they are outnumbered by the enemy, they can reroll a single d20 in any test they make, though they must accept the new result.



ELITE

ZHÀNYING IMPERIAL AGENT

Imperial Agents execute the Emperor's will outside of the Jade Palace. Of the various ranks and castes of Agents, the *Zhànying*, the Fighting Eagles, place lowest. Earning their positions through personal merits alone, they know that their standing remains volatile. Unfortunately for the *Zhànying*, this means that they must remain vigilant of those opposed to the Emperor's authority, but also remain wary of opportunistic backstabbers from within their own ranks. As extremely competent operatives able to survive on their own in hostile environments, they are often sent to observe and disrupt criminal organisations that subvert the peace and oppress the Emperor's subjects. They rarely receive praise from the common citizen, however, as the liberal media outlets are usually filled with reports about their violent resolutions. Moreover, by virtue of being the lowest rank of agent, the *Zhànying* usually perform their own dirty work, making them no stranger to both shady deals and firefights.

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
9	10	9	9	8	8	10

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	+2	1	Movement	+1	–	Social	+2	–
Fortitude	+2	1	Senses	+2	–	Technical	+1	–

DEFENCES

Firewall	8	Resolve	10	Vigour	9
Security	–	Morale	–	Armour	2

ATTACKS

- **Combi Rifle:** C/M 1+6 (B), Burst 2, 2H, Expert 1, MULTI Light Mod, Vicious 1, Expert 1, MULTI Light Mod
- **Pistol:** R/C, 1+5 (B), Burst 2, 1H, Vicious 1
- **Knife:** Melee, 1+4 (B), damage, 1H, Concealed 1, Non-Hackable, Subtle 2, Thrown, Unforgiving 1
- **Hacking Device:** CLAW-1, SWORD-1, SHIELD-1, GADGET-3, IC-1

GEAR: Cosmetics Kit, Light Combat Armour

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Common Special Skills:** Menacing 1
- **Preceded by Reputation:** Everyone within the StateEmpire knows that Imperial Agents are executors of the Emperor's will and to become an obstacle in their path would be most unwise. The *Zhànying* can reroll one d20 when making a Persuade or Command test but must accept the new result.
- **Sixth-Sense:** Whether through training or innate ability, these operatives are extremely cautious. They can make a Defence Reaction against any ranged or melee attacks, including ones they might not have any immediately apparent reason to know about. (They must still pay the normal Heat cost for taking a reaction.)

HIGH-TECH
COMBATANTS

The StateEmpire invests heavily in research and development for a variety of reasons, some of them practical, others less so. It has been a historical attitude of the various Asian cultures to embrace modern technology and research, something Yu Jing was very keen to capitalise on. Moreover, some specialists argue that it is within the field of Special Operations that new technologies can be tested in action and application before they are employed en masse. The numbers of Ateks within the StateEmpire is too low as to be considered relevant, and the proliferation of advanced domotics makes the life of even the lowliest demogrant luxurious. The military also spends lavishly on research, always keen to find any kind of edge over the other major powers of the Sphere. The early period saw a big amount of grants and subsidies to the RnD sector, which resulted in a plethora of varied Powered Armour Exoskeleton designs. However, the current focus has shifted toward hardware, new materials, and their application. The grants given to the Karakuri and Sù-Jiàn projects were the highest in modern history and have resulted in technological breakthroughs that Yu Jing now cautiously protects from their competition.

ELITE

GŪILÁNG SKIRMISHERS

It was already mentioned how Yu Jing uses the not-so-subtle method of *faits accomplis* in achieving some of its goals. Such was the case with StateEmpire's presence on the inhospitable Svalarhaima, where Yu Jing carved a part of the planet for itself by force. The *Gŭiláng* ('Ghost Wolf') corps was created through an extended training regimen for the Troops of the Banner, where prospective recruits with an aptitude for stealth and hit and run tactics were sent to the arctic tundra of Huangdi for a training programme lasting eight months. The syllabus, refined and perfected, includes espionage, assassination, sabotage, artillery spotting, and relocation under fire. A normal day of work for a *Gŭiláng* includes a twenty-mile trek through hostile no-man's-land, an assassination mission together with asset sabotage, and then extraction under fire. As expected, only the best of the best last long in this line of work, and the *Gŭiláng* are exactly that.

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
9	11	8	9	9	8	9

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	+2	1	Movement	+1	–	Social	+1	–
Fortitude	+2	–	Senses	+2	1	Technical	+2	–

DEFENCES

Firewall	9	Resolve	9	Vigour	8
Security	–	Morale	–	Armour	2

ATTACKS

- **MULTI Sniper Rifle:** L 1+8 (B), Burst 2/2, Unwieldy Heavy MULTI, Unforgiving 2
- **Pistol:** R/C, 1+6 (B), Burst 2, 1H, Vicious 1
- **Knife:** Melee, 1+3 (B) damage, 1H, Concealed 1, Non-Hackable, Subtle 2, Thrown, Unforgiving 1

GEAR: D-charges, Multispectral Visor 1, Light Combat Armour (with Chameleonwear)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **In-waiting:** The Ghost Wolves are expert sharpshooters through use of camouflage and hiding. In any encounter, the GM can spend 1 Heat to make the Ghost Wolf initially appear in the most favourable sharpshooting position. Moreover, the GM can spend 1 additional Heat to trigger prepared booby traps and mines. These function as hazards (see *Infinity* Corebook, p. 34), and they are avoided at +1 Difficulty.

TROOPER

HAC TAO SPECIAL INTERVENTION UNIT

Sporting the most TAG regiments across the G-5 nations, PanOceania have staked their claim on TAG technology. Yu Jing, however, invested heavily into improving their power armour, with the *Hac Tao* Special Intervention Unit ('Black Magic') serving as a perfect example. *Hac Tao* benefit from the latest advancements straight from StateEmpire's labs and are usually the first to test new ideas in the field. Their mighty power armour and exemplary character mean that they tower above their opposition in both form and spirit. They also harbour a mean streak, however. They train for a variety of operational parameters, including Search and Rescue, Direct Action, and Search and Destroy missions, but relish the latter most. Custom-made armaments and an aptitude with explosives mean that the grinning white helmet of a *Hac Tao* will often be the last image a TAG operator sees in their HUD.

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
10	9	10	9	9	8	9

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	+2	1	Movement	+1	–	Social	+1	–
Fortitude	+2	1	Senses	+2	–	Technical	+2	–

DEFENCES

Firewall	9	Resolve	9	Vigour	10
Security	3	Morale	–	Armour	5

ATTACKS

- **Heavy Machine Gun (HMG):** L 2+7 (N), Burst 3, Unwieldy, Spread 1, Unsubtle
- **Nanopulser (Grafted):** C 1+5 (N), 1H, Biotech, Subtle 3, Torrent, Vicious 2, 3 6+2 (N) T3
- **Knife:** Melee, 1+5 (N) damage, 1H, Concealed 1, Non-Hackable, Subtle 2, Thrown, Unforgiving 1

GEAR: Powered Combat Armour (with Chameleonwear)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Subtle to the Point of Formlessness:** The *Hac Tao* have a dark reputation. Any melee attacks they perform also inflict damage to the target's Resolve equal to half of the original damage dealt, rounded up.
- **Quiet and Mysterious (1 Heat):** *Hac Tao* units are equipped with Power Armour that includes the latest developments in the field of dampening and heat reduction technologies. The *Hac Tao* can spend 1 Heat (repeatable) to reroll 1d20 on a Stealth test, but must accept the new result.
- **Tin-Opener (1 Heat):** The *Hac Tao* often perform an anti-armour role. When fighting against armoured targets such as TAGs, REMs, or Vehicles, they can spend 1 Heat to reduce their target's Armour Soak by 1.

ELITE

ZHENCHÁ ARMORED RECONNAISSANCE REGIMENT

One difficulty the StateEmpire Army faced during the formation and integration of the Invincible Army revolved around fitting existing scout units fit into their framework. For a number of reasons, the Invincible Army is a force largely comprised of heavy infantry units with mixed capabilities. Scout units such as the *Güiláng* were too fragile for the environments the Invincibles were intended to operate in. Yu Jing High Command therefore requested the creation of a lightweight armour better suited for units operating behind enemy lines. Enter the Viper pattern – a lightweight suit with locomotive capabilities that allows the user to scale vertical surfaces while still providing adequate protection. In time, the *Zhenchá* was deployed as an initial assault unit, which led to their officers complaining that their tactical mandate had shifted from scouting to main battle formation. Regular *Zhenchá* pay no mind, however, for they are as prepared to spill the blood of the State Empire's enemies as any other Invincible.

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
10	10	9	9	8	8	9

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	+1	1	Movement	+2	1	Social	–	–
Fortitude	+1	1	Senses	+2	1	Technical	+1	1

DEFENCES

Firewall	8	Resolve	9	Vigour	9
Security	3	Morale	1	Armour	5

ATTACKS

- **Submachine Gun:** Range C, 1+5 (N), Burst 2, 1H, Unbalanced, Piercing 2, Spread 1
- **Knife:** Melee, 1+7 (N) damage, 1H, Concealed 1, Non-Hackable, Subtle 2, Thrown, Unforgiving 1
- **AP Mines 2+5 (N), 1H Comms, Disposable, Indiscriminate (Close), Unsubtle**

GEAR: Powered Combat Armour Powered with Chameleonwear, (gain up to +3d20 on Brawn tests with +3 complication range, Kinematika), Climbing Plus

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Unrelenting Barrier:** To serve the StateEmpire is the greatest honour that most refuse to fail. *Zhenchá* benefit from a Morale soak equal to their Fortitude expertise. This is incorporated into their profile.
- **Recon by Force (2 Heat):** Scouts first, they often have to fight when outnumbered in hostile environments while waiting for reinforcements. Whenever a *Zhenchá* suffers incapacitating damage, they can spend 2 Heat to perform one last immediate attack on the opponent that incapacitated them.



MINORITY FORCES

The broad umbrella of the Yu Jing StateEmpire takes its strength from many sources. One of them is the diversity of cultures, traditions, and peoples that populate it. With the recent developments, the Nipponese are no longer a substantial part of Yu Jing. However, you'd be mistaken if you thought that it means that the StateEmpire somehow stopped being diverse. Its military forces turn that feature into strength, although they pay a significant cost in the process. Some minority citizens, although on the surface completely integrated into the state, remain resentful and on the peripheries of the system. Many of the policing activities of Yu Jing are directed inwards against their own citizens, and who could infiltrate an ethnic minority better than an agent from the same cultural background? The Agents of the Emperor know that while most subjects are loyal, the necessary task of rooting out the bad apples must be conducted so that the whole society can thrive.

ELITE

KĀNRÈN COUNTER INSURGENCY GROUP

Within any system, regardless of how democratic or lenient it may be, dissidents always exist who want to overthrow the status quo for a variety of reasons. It is no different in the StateEmpire of the Yu Jing, and that's why the Party saw it fit to create a new corps of specialised agents who combat the threats within. Performing similar duties as the Imperial Agents (maintaining peace and order among the population), the activities of the Bold Edges, as the name of the unit can be translated, extend much further than just coordination and control of assets. The *Kānrèn* are individualists through and through, often operating alone and under-cover for months at a time and enmeshing themselves within a hostile structure to take it out from the inside. Patient hunters, the *Yanjing* sometimes laughingly calls the *Kānrèn* 'wolves hiding among foxes.' Indeed, they are wolves, for when they finally get the scent of their prey, they will not rest until the hunt is over.

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
8	10	8	9	9	9	10

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	+2	1	Movement	+1	—	Social	+2	1
Fortitude	+1	—	Senses	+3	—	Technical	+1	—

DEFENCES

Firewall	9	Resolve	10	Vigour	8
Security	—	Morale	—	Armour	2

ATTACKS

- **Combi Rifle:** C/M 1+6 (N), Burst 2, 2H, MULTI Light Mod, Vicious 1
- **Chain-Colt:** Range C, 1+7 (N) damage, Burst 1, 2H, Concealed 1, Torrent, Vicious 1
- **Knife:** Melee, 1+3 (N) damage, 1H, Concealed 1, Non-Hackable, Subtle 2, Thrown, Unforgiving 1

GEAR: Holomask, Light Combat Armour

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Patient Hunter:** The *Kānrèn* is patient when choosing the correct moment to strike. When making a Persuasion test, the *Kānrèn* gains 1 bonus Momentum and can reroll one d20 but must accept the new result.
- **Swift and silent:** *Kānrèn* must maintain their cover, even in the most unfavourable circumstances. Any Observation test made to discover the *Kānrèn* or his disguise increase in difficulty by one step. Additionally, *Kānrèn* gain 1 bonus Momentum on all Stealth tests.

ELITE

SHAOLIN WARRIOR MONKS

In the past, the various types of ancient martial arts such as Tai Chi or Falun Gong devolved into what was mostly understood as meditation enhancement techniques or forms of exercise. However, the Wushu practiced by the Shaolin monks was always understood as a form of combat, where mastering oneself made the practitioner a fearsome combatant. The StateEmpire apparatus, devious such as it is, eventually understood that to employ the Shaolin martial arts for its own gain was a better course of action than the exercise in futility that was persecuting the monks. Today, many Shaolin can be encountered on the fields of battle alongside regular StateEmpire troops, charging into the thick of combat while dodging bullets and cracking heads with their staves.

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
10	9	10	9	8	7	10

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	+2	1	Movement	+3	1	Social	+1	—
Fortitude	+2	—	Senses	+2	—	Technical	—	—

DEFENCES

Firewall	8	Resolve	10	Vigour	10
Security	—	Morale	—	Armour	2

ATTACKS

- **Chain-Rifle:** Range C, 1+7 (N), Burst 1, 2H, Concealed 1, Torrent, Vicious 1, Spread 1
- **Battle Staff:** Melee, 1+5 (N) damage, 2H, Non-Hackable, Extended Reach, Parry 2

GEAR: Light Combat Armour

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Water Can Flow:** The Monks move faster than the eye can see. They only pay 1 heat to make a Reaction against a physical attack.
- **Water Can Freeze:** Know yourself, and you will know the enemy. The Shaolin Warrior monk can re-roll any failed Discipline test, though they must accept the new result.
- **Water Can Crash:** The Monks are fearsome combatants, dedicated to a single purpose. To a casual observer, this might make them look reckless, but they are only focused on their opponent. During an action scene where the Monk moves closer to an enemy, they gain 2 bonus Momentum on any Reaction test needed to avoid enemy attacks.

SÙ-JIÀN IMMEDIATE ACTION UNIT

Knowing the difficulty of outpacing PanOceania in a direct confrontation, Yu Jing's research investments stepped beyond the hardware created by the Karakuri project to create the Sù-Jiàn, breakthrough when it comes to REM technology. The Sù-Jiàn is a remotely controlled exoskeleton, able to morph its size and form to better adapt to battlefield conditions. The pilot is not just the driving force behind this exoskeleton, he *is* the exoskeleton. They feel the current flowing through the artificial limbs and the wind on their face as they rush on accelerated boosters toward enemy combatants, all without ever exposing themselves to the danger of the battlefield. Despite rumours that the Combined Army possess the means to eliminate REM and TAG pilots remotely, the profession remains a fairly popular choice made even more glamorous by the attention that Maya outlets provide to these 'warriors of the quantronic age.' Whatever the case may be, it all boils down to this – the Sù-Jiàn can outpace and outmanoeuvre more traditional TAG designs, is more robust and safer for the operator, and is a true jewel of Yu Jingese engineering



NEMESIS

SÙ-JIÀN IMMEDIATE ACTION UNIT

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
11	11	11	11	9	8	9

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	+3	2	Movement	+2	1	Social	+1	–
Fortitude	+3	2	Senses	+2	1	Technical	+2	1

DEFENCES

Firewall	11	Resolve	12	Vigour	14
Security	3	Morale	3	Armour	5

ATTACKS

- **Spitfire:** M, 1+7 damage, 2H, Spread 2, Unsubtle
- **Light Flamethrower:** C, 1+6 damage, 2H, Fire, Incendiary 3, Munition, Terrifying 2, Torrent
- **Panzerfaust:** Range L, 2+7 damage, Burst 1, 2H, Munition

GEAR: Powered Exoskeleton, Climbing Plus

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Common Special Skill:** Inured to Disease
- **Mechanical Transmutation – Combat Form:** The Exoskeleton has two modes of operation – Combat Form and Mobility Form. Once per round, it can switch between them as a Free Action. While in Combat Form, the Sù-Jiàn gains two bonus Momentum on all Warfare attacks it makes. Moreover, while in Combat Form, the Sù-Jiàn can perform one Return Fire Reaction for free the first time it is attacked each round.
- **Mechanical Transmutation – Mobility Form:** While in Mobility Form, the Sù-Jiàn gains one bonus Momentum on all movement-related tests. Additionally, when using actions to move between zones while in Mobility Form, the Sù-Jiàn reduces the type of action required to move between zones by one step, i.e. a Medium zone can be reached in a Free Action, an Extreme zone in a Standard Action, etc.
- **Hardware Superiority:** Many technicians have worked night and day to bring this design to life, and it shows. The Sù-Jiàn may reroll 1d20 when making an Acrobatics test or any dice that did not generate a success on the initial roll when making a Resistance test but must accept the new results. Additionally, the Sù-Jiàn benefits from Security, Morale, and Armour soak values, all incorporated into its profile.
- **Swift Sword:** The powered exoskeleton is a highly developed tool and a weapon in itself. Its weapons are built into the exoskeleton, and it cannot be disarmed. It can draw a weapon or other item as a Free Action instead of a Minor Action and does not need to have a weapon in its hand in order to respond to attacks. As long as there is a free hand and a weapon within Reach, it can always make a Close Combat test as part of a Defense or Guard Reaction. This can only be done once per turn.

YURIKO ODA

Guǐ Fēng Yuriko Oda is a special agent in the Yǎnjīng, but also leads a secret life as an agent of the Kempeitai. She is driven, ruthless, and untrusting of anyone. She is also a consummate double agent and has only survived this long by being careful to not raise suspicions or leave loose ends. Working as a double agent for an enemy power is bad enough, but to be a double agent for a secessionist movement within your own power is an instant death sentence if she is ever caught. The Kempeitai will not pause to think before cutting her loose if she ever puts a step wrong, and if she is ever uncovered for what she is by the Yǎnjīng, death is equally assured. Irrespective of the threats she faces and the odds stacked against her, she doesn't balk at any challenge because she has seen how the Yu Jingese treat those of her ethnicity. She is a fighter, clever and resourceful, and so far, she has managed to stay ahead of the game.

In the "Ice and Fire" adventure of *The Cost of Greed* campaign, Yuriko Oda is on a mission on behalf of the Yǎnjīng to monitor and track MagnaObra shipments. However, she has recently found that one of the Yu Jingese supply depots on the outskirts of Quanxue is stockpiling explosives to be used against Japanese forces smuggling refugees from Chunqiu to Kōritawā. She plans to manipulate the characters, giving them the opportunity to uncover the information they require while at the same time striking a blow for the Kempetai.



NEMESIS

YURIKO ODA

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
12	11	9	10	12	8	10

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	+3	2	Movement	+2	1	Social	+1	—
Fortitude	+2	2	Senses	+2	2	Technical	+3	2

DEFENCES

Firewall	15	Resolve	12	Vigour	11
Security	1	Morale	2	Armour	2

ATTACKS

- **Knife:** Melee, 1+5 (N), 1H, Concealed 1, Non-Hackable, Subtle 2, Thrown, Unforgiving 1
- **Combi Rifle:** Range C/M, 1+5 (N), Burst 2, 2H, Standard, Expert, MULTI Light Mod, Vicious 1
- **D-Charges:** Charge, 2+6 (N), 1H, Anti-Material 2, Comms, Disposable, Piercing 3, Spread 1, Unsubtle, Vicious 2
- **Panzerfaust:** Range L, 2+5 (N), Burst 1, 2H, Needle, Munition, Unsubtle
- **Stun Baton:** Melee, 1+4 (N), 1H, Non-Hackable, Knockdown, Subtle 1, Stun

GEAR: Light Combat Armour

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Convincing (2 Heat):** If she has employed Persuade with the intent of maintaining her cover, concealing her history, or masking her intentions, Yuriko Oda may reroll every d20 on the Persuade test she has just made but must accept the new results.
- **Dedicated:** Such is Yuriko Oda's commitment to her cause that she has a Morale Soak of 2.
- **Demolitions Expert:** Yuriko Oda may roll an additional d20 when placing or disarming explosives.



ADAM CRUMPTON

NEMESIS

HIDEO KAWAKAMI

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
14	11	10	8	9	9	9

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	+4	2	Movement	+3	2	Social	+3	1
Fortitude	+1	—	Senses	+2	1	Technical	+1	—

DEFENCES

Firewall	10	Resolve	10	Vigour	11
Security	—	Morale	—	Armour	2

ATTACKS

- **DT Pistol:** Range R/C, 1+6 damage, Burst 1, 1H, Biotech, Toxic 1, Vicious 2
- **Nanopulser:** Range C, 2+7 damage, 1H, Biotech, Subtle 3, Torrent, Vicious 2
- **Sword of Office:** Melee, 1+6 damage, Unbalanced, Piercing 2, Parry 3, Vicious 1

GEAR: Armoured Clothing, Covert Dermal Grafts, Thermo-Optic Camouflage

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Martial Artist:** Whatever issues he grapples with, Hideo's skill with a blade is never in question. He can reroll up to 6 on melee attacks, but must accept the new result.
- **Student of the Arts:** Hideo has studied every combat style in the Human Sphere, and a few more besides. He does not pay Heat on his first Defence or Guard Reaction. If it succeeds, he adds 1 Heat to the pool.
- **"Yes, But..." (1 Heat):** Hideo doesn't take "no" for an answer, nor is he interested in giving it. When he is the target of a Psywar attack, by spending 1 Heat, he can immediately make a Psywar attack in response against the triggering enemy. Both attacks are resolved simultaneously; any damage or Metanoia effects are resolved after both attacks have been made.

HIDEO KAWAKAMI (ONIWABAN)

ROLEPLAYING

- He never says "no." He always finds a way to say a negation in a positive manner.
- He rarely sits down, unless he is completely alone.
- He hides the fact that he is missing a finger by wearing black gloves all the time.

BACKGROUND

When Hideo Kawakami swore fidelity to the Kempeitai and the Japanese cause, he never expected his first mission would be to purge his own unit of ninja. If this was a part of weeding out any Yu Jing's sympathisers or simply to test his skills and commitment, he has never dared to ask out loud. Since then, the Kempeitai was satisfied with Hideo's loyalty to the cause and has since used his skills to gather information and neutralize key elements in Yu Jing's hierarchy.

Hideo was always the perfect, loyal double agent, except for the assignment to kill Dragon Lady Zao Qing. Although the mission was successful, there was a witness, Lady Zao's niece. Hideo couldn't bear to kill the innocent child.

This mistake cost Hideo a finger, and he hasn't made a similar mistake since. Now, he has been inducted into the rank of the Oniwaban, the most dextrous and secretive of the intelligence agents of the JSA.

The constant humming of the huge docks of Section D-34 was reassuring to the Oniwaban, one of Japan's Secessionist Army most skilled undercover agents. Hideo Kawakami was on strict orders to obtain detailed ledgers of all cargo and ships of the State Empire coming and going to Svalarheima, stowing away on the Circulars gave him the perfect opportunity.

So, there he hid, in a semi-forgotten warehouse, as the impressive Circular made the rounds toward Sol system through Dawn, Svalarheima, Paradiso, and Human Edge.

This time though, it was something of importance as the frigate Kai Yuan under the infamous Captain He was en route to the Circular, rendezvousing with a mysterious cargo that Japan needed information on.

He would much rather be planetside, tracking down Imperial agents, but Hideo Kawakami had not reached the ranks of Oniwaban by being capricious. He spent hours carefully checking and double-checking the Circulars records until he finally found something out of place. A last-minute docking had taken place at Dawn, but paying all extra fees and penalties was unusual for the size of the vessel. In Kawakami's experience, an official declaration reading "Private Cargo" meant smuggling. He quickly bypassed the security locks and checked the scanner and serial numbers for the shuttle.

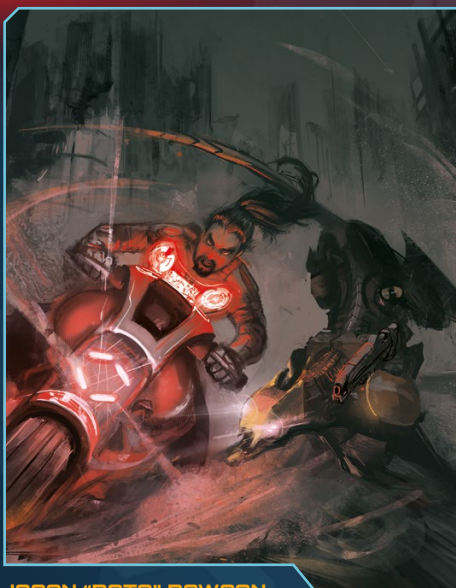
The shuttle was property of Phoenix Industries, and it was carrying classified materials. By itself, this didn't amount to much, but the fact that Phoenix had become a person of interest in the State Empire's political manoeuvring, meant that losing this cargo would certainly vex Yu Jing.

An Oniwaban like Hideo was more than ready to oblige.

He quickly sent a coded message, level Jade Tiger, to the patrolling frigate Kai Yuan. Captain He would receive the wrong coordinates this time, and the Kempeitai would be ready to catch that particular fish once it arrived in calmer waters.

APPEARANCE

Hideo Kawakami is thin, yet his musculature relays his top physical condition. He is soft spoken and friendly enough, although his presence causes people to become uncomfortable.



JASON "DATA" DAWSON

NEMESIS

DEVIL DARKWATER

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
10	10	9	12	12	8	9

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	+1	1	Movement	+3	3	Social	+1	–
Fortitude	+1	–	Senses	+2	–	Technical	+4	4

DEFENCES

Firewall	16	Resolve	10	Vigour	10
Security	–	Morale	–	Armour	2

ATTACKS

- **Assault Hacking Device:** CLAW-3, SWORD-0, SHIELD-0, GADGET-0, IC-1, +3 bonus damage
- **Combi Rifle:** Range C/M, 1+7 damage, Burst 2, 2H, Expert 1, MULTI Light Mod, Vicious 1
 - **Light Shotgun:** Range C, 1+6 damage, Burst 1, Unbalanced, Knockdown

GEAR: TF Coat, TZ Tsurugi Motorcycle

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Devil's in the Details:** Years of practice, combined with black market cranial implants, allow Devil to perform calculations at dizzying speeds. Sometimes literally. When making an Infowar attack, he can reroll up to 5, but must accept the new result.
- **Tricks of the Trade:** Devil can reroll one d20 when making a Hacking test, but he must accept the new result.
- **Punch It:** Devil messes around a lot, but when it's time to get serious, he knows what he's doing. When making a Pilot test, he can reroll any dice that did not generate a success, but must accept the new result.

DEVIL DARKWATER
(ARAGOTO SENKENBUTAI HACKER)

APPEARANCE

The young Aragoto frequently is found straddling an impressive custom motorcycle while tinkering with his comlog, ignoring everyone else. He wears an AR headset carefully arranged so it doesn't mess his extravagant hairdo.

ROLEPLAYING

- He is extremely vain and haughty.
- He rarely makes eye contact with anyone since he is absorbed in Maya and his hacker channels.
- He is afraid of the darkness.

BACKGROUND

Devil Darkwater was one of the last recruits to the 3rd Aragoto Senkenbutai Regiment before the Uprising and is currently based in Kofuku. His notoriety among the Kofuku speedsters was not due to his skills with a bike but with his ability to hack into the city's urban communication system and rig the races with either "inopportune" traffic jams or a timely tip off to the local authorities.

Of course, the weekly traffic mayhem in downtown Kofuku got old quickly, and a taskforce was organised to stop the insidious anarchist behind so much chaos.

When an experienced member of the Kempeitai arrived from Kofuku, he noticed the patterns of the Devil of Darkwater, which was the signature tag on the systems he hacked into. After pressuring a captured ex-comrade regarding his whereabouts, DD fell to the authorities. Given little option, he chose to sign up to the Senkenbutai and has become a valuable asset for the regiment since then.

On Kofuku's streets, dark and empty as the void itself, Devil Darkwater put on his helmet and revved up his motorcycle. Since the siege had started, the city was like a cemetery.

He focused on his mission, and piloted towards the Kawata Plaza security post, where he would find his objective. He stopped a hundred metres from the StateEmpire's position, while search lights slowly swirled towards him. Behind the scrambling Zhanshi infantry, he could see the imposing silhouette of the Sù-Jiàn heavy armour in combat form.

"Where is the other one?" asked DD to himself, only to hear a crunching noise behind him as the second Sù-Jiàn attached to the control post climbed down a ruined building. The enemy armour, in high mobility form, did not waste time and pounced, like the metallic panther it represented.

Swearing, Darkwater managed to throttle his bike in the last second before being crushed to death by the Sù-Jiàn. As all the enemy soldiers in the post opened fired on him, Darkwater piloted a zigzag in desperate retreat.

Grinding his teeth, Darkwater accelerated. The Sù-Jiàn had bitten the bait now it was time to spring the trap – if he somehow managed to survive the next minutes.

The race went exactly as Darkwater planned it. The Sù-Jiàn was a fast unit but no match to the modified TZ Kodachi that Darkwater rode.

He turned on his hacking device and almost lost control of his bike as he dodged an explosion in front of him. He quickly located the Sù-Jiàn's tag, tore its firewall easily, and uploaded the virus that would turn it into a motionless pile of metal. In just ten seconds, he activated the program and sent a signal to his unit that was waiting down the road to dismantle the immobilised robotic feline for spare parts and weapons. For his part, Devil Darkwater had accomplished the mission. He revved his Tsurugi once more and melted in the dark streets of ruined Kofuku.



DOMINIK FRISCHKNECHT

NEMESIS

SHIGEKI TAKADA

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
13	9	12	9	9	8	10

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	+4	4	Movement	+2	1	Social	+2	—
Fortitude	+1	1	Senses	+2	2	Technical	+1	—

DEFENCES

Firewall	10	Resolve	11	Vigour	13
Security	—	Morale	—	Armour	3

ATTACKS

- **Chain Rifle:** Range C, 1+6 damage, Burst 1, 2H, Spread 1, Torrent, Vicious 1
- **Sword of Office:** Melee, 1+3 damage, Unbalanced, Piercing 2, Parry 3, Vicious 1

GEAR: Medium Combat Armour

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Common Special Abilities:** Menacing 2
- **As Water (4 Heat):** Shigeki brooks no wasted motion on the battlefield; every step, strike, and parry is designed to flow into the next. By spending 4 Heat, he can use the Swift Action Momentum spend a second time per round.
- **Iaijutsu:** As a classically trained Bushi, Shigeki's blade is never far from his hand, nor from its sheathe. He can draw a melee weapon as a Free Action, as per the Quick Draw talent. In addition, he adds +4 damage to his first melee attack in a round.
- **Seven Breaths or Less:** Shigeki and indecision are essentially unacquainted. He does not pay Heat to Seize the Initiative, nor to use the Retaliate or Return Fire Reactions.

SHIGEKI TAKADA (DOMARU BUTAI)

The Keisotsu Butai gathered around a pitifully small fire to warm their hands. Their faces were filled despair in the small rearguard camp, as they tried to find somewhere to hide from the cold rain. A recently arrived unit of Domaru Butai were gathered around an out of the way campfire, sitting in seiza posture, to await orders from their leader Shigeki Takada. He calmly drank from a cup of tea and carefully placed the cup down to address his squad.

"This is unacceptable! There is no honor in the rearguard! We have to reach the front as soon as the rain stops, even if we have to carry these weaklings!"

"Yosh!" The squad of heavy-armoured samurai agreed in unison. Takada was about to further explain when gunfire rang all over the camp. The perimeter guards fell like sacks of rice.

One...

The rearguard was under attack by their enemy. How they had infiltrated so far was a mystery. Shigeki Takada slowly got up and adjusted his daisho before putting on his helmet.

Two...

The enemy revealed themselves, Tiger soldiers dropping into the camp, firing at the stunned Keisotsu Butai who either fled or died at the commandos' guns. Takada grunted and took three steps toward the leading Tiger.

Three...

The elite trooper, leading a five-men squad, faced the Domaru Butai as he signaled his unit to eliminate the arrogant bushi. Takada sprinted while taking hold of his katana.

Four...

The Tigers started firing at Takada who dexterously side-stepped the incoming fire while drawing his katana in one fluid motion. The front soldier shifted his weight at the last moment, falling to the ground, gurgling instead of completely beheaded.

Five...

Takada cursed and cleaved a second Tiger with a downward thrust while two more exploded in flaming bits thanks to the chain rifle fire from Takada's bushi assisting their leader.

Six...

Takada freed his katana from the falling Yu Jingese and quickly launched a two-handed thrust at the remaining soldier, who

gurgled for an instant before falling to the ground twitching.

Shigeki Takada took a deep breath, the seventh one since the skirmish had begun. The enemy's advance had lost its impulse. The Domaru Butai, called his men, "I have decided we take the fight to the enemy and we are now the vanguard!" Like Sōchō Tsukahara used to say, "A samurai must take any decision in less than seven breaths."

APPEARANCE

Built like a bull, the bushi is quite intimidating. He has a deep frown and carefully analyses his surroundings. He has several scars in his arms and face.

ROLEPLAYING

- When not in combat, he always is engaged in something proper for a bushi like drinking tea, practicing, or writing calligraphy.
- He has no sense of humour and takes offense very easily.
- Although not a member of the Kempeitai, he enjoys carrying out missions behind enemy lines, as long as it includes heavy fighting.

BACKGROUND

Shigeki Takada feels at home on Paradiso. The chaos in the Yingxian has been perfect for him and his unit of Domaru Butai. After taking control of a reserve unit of the JSA stationed near Otani Pass, he found himself in position not only to coordinate relatively fresh troops but also fight against the StateEmpire's forces that are infiltrating the Japanese lines — without the meddling of the central command. Thus, he has been carrying out a sort of guerrilla war for several weeks. He hunts down the infiltrated enemy, outsmarting and crushing Yu Jing's efforts to organise a surrounding manoeuvre on the threatened JSA fortress. So far, to Takada, Paradiso is living up to its name.



PABLO BENAVIDES

NEMESIS

ZERO

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
9	10	9	10	14	8	10

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	+2	—	Movement	+1	1	Social	+1	1
Fortitude	+2	—	Senses	+2	2	Technical	+4	4

DEFENCES

Firewall	18	Resolve	12	Vigour	11
Security	—	Morale	—	Armour	—

ATTACKS

- **D-Charges:** Explosive Charge, 2+6 damage, 1H, Anti-Materiel 2, Comms, Disposable, Piercing 3, Spread 1, Unsubtle, Vicious 2
- **Heavy Pistol:** Range R/C, 2+6 damage, Burst 1, Unbalanced, Unforgiving 1, Vicious 1
- **Kukri:** Melee, 1+5 damage, 1H
 - **Primary Mode:** Non-Hackable, Piercing 1, Thrown, Unforgiving 2, Vicious 1
 - **E/M Mode:** Breaker, E/M, Thrown, Unforgiving 1

GEAR: Armoured Clothing (Tokusetsu Uniform), Breaking & Entering Kit, Loudcast Box 4, Yaozao Remote

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **"Go, Zao-Chan!":** Whatever Yaozao Remote he's currently working with, it's extensively modified by the time he's done. Zero's Yaozao generates an additional +1 Momentum on successful Tech tests.
- **Dissident:** Zero might not come off as subtle, but when the Ryuken need discretion, he comes through. Usually. When making Stealth or Thievery tests, he can reroll 1d20, but must accept the new result.
- **Natural Engineer:** He's always had a knack. When making a Tech test, Zero can reroll any dice that did not generate a success on the initial roll, but must accept the new result.

ZERO (TOKUSETSU BUTAI, ENGINEER)

"So, the Dragon Lady wants a tour of Hamadi complex? Let's make sure she enjoys it!"

Kohei Zero, of the Tokusetsu Butai was carefully, if rather erratically, working on three sets of demolition charges. He thrust his hips to one side and with a high-pitched voice he said, "Make sure you clean this mess up! I hate those JSA traitors messing things up!"

He closed the lid of one of the bombs and handed it over to the small remote at his side. "We wouldn't want her to be offended by our dead soldiers, no Ma'am! The Invincible Army did all the work, we JSA only came there to bleed and die like cock-roaches!" Zero mumbled in his normal voice.

He slammed his fist on the table, besides the other bombs. The little Yaozao turned its head.

"Don't worry Zao-chan, I am not angry. I just hate that mean lady and her Imperial Service friends!" Zero said. "Imperial Service." He made quotation marks in the air. "Ha! What do they know of giri? Of their duty to their people and Emperor?" He finished setting up the second bomb and handed it to the remote.

"It is always up to us, the real Sons of Japan to do the hard work and clean up the mess! The Tatenokai will take care of things! Yes, we will! I can imagine the look on the faces of the Imperial Service when they learn their precious Dragon Lady and all the rest were blown to pieces along with the mines!" He mimicked a face of dumb surprise. "Ha! Can you imagine it?" He put the third and last demolition charge on the remote.

"It is going to be quite a sight, I tell you! Unfortunately, we won't be there to witness it. After all, the celebration is for the Invincible Army!" He spat.

"Go ahead Zao-chan! You know where to place the bombs, and make sure no-one sees you!"

Zero, waved goodbye to his little remote and returned to his workshop to repair a set of armor. With a smile, he began whistling a happy tune.

APPEARANCE

A dirty man in Kohei (engineer) uniform, he grins easily and has wild eyes. He carries a dirty cloth with which he unsuccessfully tries to clean his hands, and his uniform cap is crumpled in his back pocket.

ROLEPLAYING

- He has no sense of personal space.
- He treats his assigned Yaozao unit as family.
- Although slightly crazy, he is an expert on demolitions.

BACKGROUND

Kohei Zero was considered a genius during his time at academy, and he certainly played the role of an eccentric inventor. It prevented him from rising beyond field engineer, which suited him well as he likes getting his hands dirty.

With his first regiment, the "Unlucky 14th" Haramaki Regiment, he witnessed directly the Yu Jing's Ministry brutal strategies and contempt for Japanese lives. He quickly lost faith in officers and politicians, despairing at the reality of the Japanese people. After a particularly bloody action that left the "Unlucky 14th" severely depleted, he asked for a transfer note, but first carefully sabotaged the shuttle of the Yu Jingese officer in charge of ordering the deadly assault.

Zero's knowledge of the logistics of when particular weapons and explosives was how he managed to contact and join the Tatenokai and later the JSA Uprising as part of the first inductees in the newly created Ryuken Unit-9. Currently, he is assigned to the 45th Keisotsu Butai Regiment, where he supports his new family by carrying out stealthy precision attacks and sabotage actions.



ROLAND EVERAERT

NEMESIS

IKOMA MONTARO

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
13	12	11	8	9	8	9

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	+4	4	Movement	+2	1	Social	+1	—
Fortitude	+1	1	Senses	+3	3	Technical	—	—

DEFENCES

Firewall	9	Resolve	10	Vigour	12
Security	—	Morale	4	Armour	1

ATTACKS

- **Monofilament Duelling Katana:** Melee, 1+5 , Unbalanced, Monofilament, Non-Hackable, Parry 2, Vicious 1
- **Tactical Bow:** Range C, 1+6  damage, Burst 1, 2H, Subtle 2, Vicious 2

GEAR: Armoured Clothing, Physical Copy of *The Book of Five Rings* (well-worn)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Common Special Abilities:** Threatening 3
- **Deadly Parry (1–3 Heat):** In *The Book of Five Rings*, Musashi instructed duelists to “cut the enemy, whatever the means.” When he is the subject of a melee attack, Ikoma can spend between 1–3 Heat to deal 1+X  damage to his attacker, where X is the Heat spent. This damage possesses the Monofilament quality.
- **Martial Artist:** “The only reason a warrior is alive is to fight, and the only reason a warrior fights is to win.” He can reroll up to 6  on melee attacks, but must accept the new result.
- **Well-Travelled:** “It is difficult to understand the universe if you only study one planet.” Ikoma has certainly seen his share of worlds. He can reroll 1d20 when making an Education or Discipline test, but must accept the new result.

IKOMA MONTARO (JSA DUELIST)

“I assure you, I am not looking for trouble.” The young man’s voice was flat as he addressed the Yu Jingese agent in front of him.

“And I told you I recognise a filthy Japanese traitor when I see one!” the agent said. “Either you surrender your weapon or face the consequences! One way or the other, your little knife is going into the void after I finish with you!”

The Crane agent unsheathed his sword, a cruel-looking longsword, and pointed menacingly at Ikoma Montaro, who carried his katana at his side. Montaro slowly closed his eyes.

“Of course, there is no Void, it does not exist!”

Ikoma Montaro recited quietly while practicing his kata in his mind.

“The warrior has to master the various properties of his weapons.”

Montaro could almost feel the cords of his tsuka. He knew the texture, knots, and irregularities by heart. His hand almost touched the katana’s handle.

“The gaze is the same for single combat and large-scale strategy.”

He opened his eyes slowly, his enemy’s stance, sword, armour links, and flaws were evident.

“See through the enemy’s spirit so that you grasp his strategy.”

The Imperial Agent was full of rage. He would charge soon, and violently, with a downward cut from the beautifully decorated blade he was holding.

“It is difficult for these people to cut the enemy when at close quarters because of the length of the long sword.”

The path was clear, the agent stood still for a fraction of a second, announcing his imminent charge. Ikoma closed his eyes again, taking hold of his katana while taking a deep breath...

“Spirit is Void.”

Ikoma Montaro opened his eyes and his awareness, only to hear the rhythmic result of a perfect cut as his opponent lay on the floor bleeding. He deftly shook his katana and in one fluid motion sheathed the lethal weapon.

He continued walking on his path to face the Buddha.

APPEARANCE

Ikoma Montaro is a thin man with well-worn clothes and carries a katana that makes him look 300 years out of place. His face betrays no emotion and talks in a very measured tone. He is totally neutral in his demeanour, neither polite nor rude.

ROLEPLAYING

- He is emotionless unless talking about swords.
- He is usually low on resources so if given the opportunity, will gladly eat for free!
- When giving advice or opinions, he always has a metaphor about “the Way.”

BACKGROUND

His father died during the NeoColonial Wars, and a young Ikoma was left in charge of his sickly mother. Unfortunately, sadness and a frail constitution were too much for her, and she died, leaving Ikoma alone in the world. After her death, Ikoma found solace at the beach, when a small boat arrived. From it, a man disembarked, and Ikoma could not believe his eyes – the legendary Miyamoto Mushashi.

The swordsman approached the teenager and politely asked for directions. After getting a mumbly answer from Ikoma, Mushashi bid him farewell and wished him he would find his Path soon.

Ikoma knew then he would follow the path of such a man. He proceeded then to sign up at the local Haramaki dojo and began his training in the Way of the Warrior, where he excelled and became top of his class. His sensei chose him for the honour to represent the dojo in the yearly *Gekken Kogyo*. During the first round, he realised that Motobushima’s warriors were no match for his skill. Understanding this, he abandoned the tournament and the isle, never to return, to search for Perfection in the Way of the Sword. Now, with the Uprising, he is considering returning to Motobushima or joining the JSA to help restore balance and peace to his people.



SHI WON ON

NEMESIS

SONG CHAN HEE

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
9	10	13	11	9	9	9

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	+2	2	Movement	+1	1	Social	+1	1
Fortitude	+4	2	Senses	+3	2	Technical	+1	-

DEFENCES

Firewall	10	Resolve	13	Vigour	17
Security	-	Morale	-	Armour	1

ATTACKS

- **Cihuai Rifle:** Range C/M, 1+5 damage, Burst 2, 2H, Expert 1, MULTI Light Mod, Toxic 1, Vicious 1
- **Sensei Wraps:** Melee, 1+6 damage, Comms, Expert 1, Nonlethal, Parry 1, Stun, Subtle 1

GEAR: Modcoat (Long), SecurCuffs

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Farm Strong:** While Song's not going to win any awards for style, he's been in more than his share of fights and gives as good as he gets. He generates +X bonus momentum on Athletics and Close Combat tests, where X is the number of Wounds he is currently suffering.
- **Reliably Sharp:** Song might not be eagle-eyed, but he tends to find his mark all the same. When tracking a bounty, he can reroll 1d20 on Analysis or Observation tests, but must accept the new result.
- **"What Did I Get Myself into?":** Song's been in some bad spots, but he usually gets out in one piece. Usually. Each Heat spent to gain additional dice on a Ballistics or Acrobatics test provides two bonus d20s instead of one.

SONG CHAN HEE
(AUTHORIZED BOUNTY HUNTER)

Song Chan Hee was not one of those perfumed Imperial agents. His hands exposed his childhood as the son of farmers in Shaoshang toiling in the fields. His scars flaunted a term in the army, and now, his weapons revealed his new profession – hunting people for a fee. He was the real deal, he had seen it all... and yet, he had never been in such an alarming, dangerous, and malicious hovel in the whole galaxy like this remote asteroid station.

Song silently cursed Khayal, his "information expert," who had managed to track his current mark to the mining station. As an alert blared all over the place, announcing the imminent arrival of a new spacecraft, he located his bounty's favourite watering hole. Unlocking his weapons, he strode in.

From the floor to the glasses, the interior of the bar was filthy. Several large, shady characters were drinking around the room, perhaps discussing the potential booty to be earned from the incoming craft. He stepped confidently to the bar, but never stopped scanning the room.

"I'm looking for this man," he said, showing the bartender a hologram of his bounty. The bartender's worried gaze drifted to the private cubicles on upper level of the bar.

"How much?" the bartender asked.

As Song opened his mouth to speak, the whole station shook. Hull integrity sirens sickeningly blared like enraged dragons. Song dashed towards the cubicles, throwing open the doors. It took him three tries to finally find his prey.

"Mr. Atitarn," Song said. "I have a contract on your head. It does not specify in what state I have to deliver. What will you have me do?"

A quavering voice answered in a thick Neoterran accent.

"Don't shoot! I will go with you! Just get me out of here before that monster gets here!"

Song raised an eyebrow in confusion. Surrender was always unexpected, but he shrugged and tossed his SecurCuffs to Atitarn.

"Well then, put these on, and we'll be off."

The station shook again. This time it was clear they were under missile fire. A strange accent roared on the base's speakers. "This

is Arawn, lord of the frigate Annwn. Hand over Atitarn, and you will be spared."

Song rubbed his face with both hands, turning to his captive. "What the hell did I just get into?"

APPEARANCE

A tanned man wearing an outmoded trench coat, he has thick, calloused hands. His hair is dishevelled and long, occasionally hiding glaring eyes. It is clear from scars and his crooked nose that he has been in too many fights.

ROLEPLAYING

- He is very cheap.
- He is a tough but sensible guy.
- He is constantly looking for new contracts and bounties.

BACKGROUND

Living on a small farm in Yunmen province, Song was resigned to a life of working hard and watching holo-shows, until he visited Shaoshang and the Zhanshi recruitment booth.

He fell in love with the gallantry of the army life. He signed up immediately and regretted it almost as quickly.

As soon as his first term in the Army ended, he spent a few days at Neon Lotus Orbital where he saw a group of bounty hunters (just like the holo-dramas!), and he had an idea.

He quickly inquired about the mercenaries and used all his discharge money to acquire equipment and an official license. A hard worker, he started with "basic" assignments like bodyguarding and transferring prisoners, working his way up the pyramid of the bounty medium. Currently, Song is well known as a competent if somewhat lacklustre hunter and, so far, has not had any real "bad days."



JAMES HO

NEMESIS

DAO MINH HO

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
11	12	10	9	8	11	9

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	+3	3	Movement	+1	1	Social	+3	1
Fortitude	+2	1	Senses	+3	1	Technical	+1	—

DEFENCES

Firewall	9	Resolve	11	Vigour	12
Security	1	Morale	1	Armour	2

ATTACKS

- **Boarding Shotgun:** Range C, 1+8 (N) damage,
- **Yándǎ (Variant Sword of Office):** Melee, 1+6 (N) damage, Unbalanced, Piercing 2, Parry 3, Vicious 1

GEAR: Yě Jī Inspector X (Variant Light Combat Armour)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Common Special Abilities:** Menacing 2
- **"Make a Choice, Citizen":** Yě Jī have a reputation as diplomats, but Dao's negotiations tend to be on the forceful side. When using the Intimidate or Negotiate Psywar techniques, he can reroll up to 4 (N), but must accept the new result.
- **Old Habits:** His time as a Leopard has not made Dao a gentle Pheasant. When making a Ballistics or Close Combat test, he can reroll up to 3 (N), but must accept the new result.

DAO MINH HO (IMPERIAL SERVICE AGENT, PHEASANT RANK)

Yě Jī Dao Minh Ho nodded to the Bào troop, who backed off taking position behind the Imperial Agent. A terrified man lying on the floor scurried to the corner of the room.

"You are out of luck, citizen..."

The scared man huddled tightly in the corner, eyes fixed on the demon in glowing armour before him, an Imperial Agent, Pheasant Rank.

"First of all, I should not stop the Leopard from doing his job," Ho continued, motioning to the Bào troop standing guard behind him. "Secondly, you are suspect of the highly illegal traffic of stolen Cubes. That crime is on the level with treason, mind you."

"I have nothing to do with the Cubes! I only stored them when Arawn's man leaves them here, and I hand them over to the courier after the ransom is paid! Please!! I don't know anything! You have to believe me!"

"What about the pirate?" Ho calmly said. "Where is his base? Who supplies him with the access and travel codes?"

"That is all I know, good sir! Please! You have to believe me!"

"I told you this was not your lucky day. Listen: your crimes are enough for you to be executed right here, right now. I'm not even required to report to a Xian He." Dao Minh Ho projected a hologram showing a judicial sentence sheet. "Yet, I do have some options for you. Make a choice, citizen: Wú Míng or a cold cell. You can spend the rest of your life, as a nameless one atoning for your crimes against the Empire-State and all of Human Sphere, or we can put you where you will be forgotten."

The little man desperately regarded both the Bào guard and the Pheasant agent, as if they would tell him all this was a dream and not a Yu Jingese citizen's worst nightmare come true.

"I... I will tell you everything I know." He slumped on the floor, tears rolling down his eyes. "The pirate fleet, the one you are looking for, hides at Human Edge. They get their travel codes from the Kadir Caravansary. Please, Yě Jī! I beg your mercy!"

"Very well, to hell with your name!" Dao Minh Ho smiled and holo-signed the Wú Míng sentence of the now-nameless wretch before him.

APPEARANCE

The golden Pheasant armour contains a middle-aged man with cold grey eyes. He carries himself with poise and confidence, relaying a sense of a power. When he does smile, it is like a crocodile about to strike.

ROLEPLAYING

- Dao Minh Ho speaks softly and with purpose.
- He continually says he despises violence despite his pugnaciousness.
- He is a conservative traditionalist.

BACKGROUND

Dao Minh Ho worked hard to enter the Bào Judicial Unit and harder still to climb up the ranks. The idea of working directly for the Imperial Service, protecting the StateEmpire from foreign threats like PanOceania was exactly what a true son of Yu Jing should desire. The opportunities to exert violence without consequences was just a plus in his book.

When he aced the test for a promotion into the Imperial Agent's ranks, he could not believe he was going to become one of the glorious Yě Jī!

Now enjoying the full trust and devotion of his former unit, Dao Minh Ho has been charged with bringing to justice a traitorous gang of criminals dealing with hijacked cubes. Agent Dao Minh Ho has made some advances but is just getting warmed up. He will rain the Emperor's vengeance on these criminals one way or another.



SAMUEL MA

NEMESIS

WU MA

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
10	9	12	11	8	9	11

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	+5	1	Movement	+2	1	Social	+2	1
Fortitude	+3	2	Senses	+1	1	Technical	+1	-

DEFENCES

Firewall	9	Resolve	13	Vigour	14
Security	-	Morale	3	Armour	5

ATTACKS

- **Spitfire:** Range M, 1+6 damage, Burst 4, 2H, Spread 2, Unsubtle
- **Heavy Pistol:** Range R/C, 2+5 damage, Burst 1, Unbalanced, Unforgiving 1, Vicious 1
- **Kukri:** Melee, 1+10 damage, 1H
 - **Primary Mode:** Non-Hackable, Piercing 1, Thrown, Unforgiving 2, Vicious 1
 - **E/M Mode:** Breaker, E/M, Thrown, Unforgiving 1

GEAR: Shàng Jí Armour (Variant Powered Combat Armour)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **"Citizen! Be Proud!":** So long as he's covered by Yu Jing's engineering marvels, Wu knows nothing of fear. When wearing his Shàng Jí Armour, he gains a Morale Soak of 3.
- **Faster, Lighter, Better:** Sometimes, the propaganda's fairly accurate. When wearing his Shàng Jí Armour, Wu generates an additional +1 Momentum on successful Acrobatics and Athletics tests.
- **Trust the Armour:** Other soldiers wear their armour; Wu's is like an extension of his own body. When using the Defence or Guard Reactions, he can defend with Resistance instead of Acrobatics provided that he is wearing his Shàng Jí Armour.

WU MA (SHÀNG JÍ INVINCIBLE)

"Yu Jing is the Leader! The new Shàng Jí armour is faster, lighter, and better! Citizen! Be Proud!"

The Ministry's propaganda bulletin about the Invincible Armour replayed in Wu Ma's head as he inspected what few remained of Wei Liu.

"Zhanshi Lao!" Wu Ma barked at the remaining squad members. "Regroup on my position! We are taking the enemy position right now!"

"But sir! They shot Sergeant Wei!" The trembling voice of the light infantry told Wu the next sentence would have to count, or he would be facing the Druze mercenaries by himself.

"He is down because the enemy fired a missile at him! Idiot! And Sergeant Wei took it while somehow managing to wipe the enemy out of the equation!" He easily hefted Wei's spitfire. This is it, he thought to himself.

"Now! Who among you are going to honour the sergeant's death?"

With the best servo-improved armour the StateEmpire had produced gave him, Wu Ma covered a dozen metres in three wide jumps, unloading the heavy weapon point-blank at the mercenaries. Wu Ma had the advantage, for a few seconds at least, more if the Zhanshi followed closely.

With a second burst, he downed two more of the Druze, who fell back to a less exposed position. Wu Ma followed, neutralizing any resistance until the weapon clicked empty.

Cursing, he threw the spitfire and drew his sidearm. The charging Zhanshi finally caught up and engaged the fleeing enemy. He began haranguing his troops when a red flashing sign appeared in front of his eyes. "Cyber-attack detected! Engage safety measures? Y/N?"

"YES!! YES!!! DAMN IT!"

"Cyber-attack in progress! All life-support shutting down. Y/N?"

"Wha...? NO! Reset! RESET!!!"

"Re-booting..."

Everything turned black, and Wu Ma could hear the enemy's shots tinging as they repeatedly hit his armour. For the full three seconds it took the armour to reboot, he knew what hell was like. Then as sudden as the attack began, he recovered control of the suit. The Zhanshi were barely holding their ground without his support. Most

importantly, he saw his prey. "There you are!!" Wu roared as he discharged his pistol at the fleeing hacker.

Relieved and with his honour still intact, Wu Ma shouted, "Now, soldiers of the Banner! Follow me to victory!"

APPEARANCE

Wu Ma is an imposing man in one of Yu Jing's finest Invincible Heavy Armour. He is rather pale for a Yu Jing citizen and squints a lot, suggesting he rarely takes off his armour. He carries a battered but clearly functional Spitfire.

ROLEPLAYING

- He talks very loudly.
- When not wearing his helmet, he spits a lot.
- He hates mercenaries and bounty hunters.

BACKGROUND

Official Evaluation/ Second Quarter

Subject: Wu Ma, a.k.a. Wu the Horse, Shàng Jí Invincible Heavy Armour Regiment

Overview: Officer Wu Ma is one of the regiment's most efficient and talented recruits. Since the introduction of the Superior Armour Program, he has demonstrated an above average understanding of the armour's capabilities along with a finesse in performance few recruits managed during the early training stages.

Performance: Wu Ma performed top of his class during all theoretical and practical trials during training. In field, he proved a valuable asset to his squad, following orders while ensuring the highest execution results (see "Hamadi Mining Installations Operation Report," attached). Both line and support elements have been willing and ready to follow his leadership without questioning. It is also worth noting that Wu Ma reacts under pressure following the Ministry's ideological primer.

Loyalty to Party: Total

Final Evaluation. Subject is recommended for Transfer ()/Promotion (X)

Officer responsible: Captain Zhou Li, Shàng Jí Regiment

INFINITY INDEX

- Akrylat-Kanone 71
 Anawrahta Island 42
 Ayutthaya 39
 Baekdusan 71
 Battha Racha 39–40
 Bèi Mén 50
 Bèi Tù 50–52
 Benshen Archipelago 25
 Bōsōzoku 16
 Celestial Reliquary 64
 Chain-Colt 72
 Chéng Pài 50–51
 Cheng Tù 60
 Chenqí Ocean 24
 Chinese 84
 Chongqing Quantronic Security Kit 71
 Chungiu 69
 Cihuái Rifle 72
 CLAW-2 Monkey Trap 72
 Covert Dermal Grafts 72
 Crane Armour 72
 Dailing 27–28
 Feng Chi 54
 Fenghuang 21
 Ferro-gel Ammo 73
 Fireflies 73
 Fúcánglóng Arm 73
 Fukaitani 68
 Fukurō Security 17
 GADGET-3 Zhang Xun 73
 Gandakpur 26–27
 Gesar Augmentation 73
 Guanxi 84
 Gǔiláng Skirmishers 100
 Gyi 42
 Hac Tao Special Intervention Unit 101
 Hǎimén 56
 Hala Bashi 28
 Heavy 76
 Henggu 28
 Hou Tu 28–29
 Human Edge 67
 Hykaate Dome Kit 73
 Imperial Civil Service 4
 Imperial Messenger Ceremonial Kit 73
 Imperial Service 4
 Instruction Camp 40
 Invincible Trooper 99
 IQ Upgrade 71
 Iron Turtle Suit 74
 Jiax Zhu 52–53
 Jiǎ Yan 55
 Jichāngyì 58
 Kǎnrèn Counter Insurgency Group 102
 Kallang 29
 Kambu 29–30
 Kampubang 29
 Kān Zhu 65
 Karkorin 30
 Kaseitoshi 67
 Khmoc Outfit 74
 Kho Siab 34
 Kibō Station 67
 Kinkakuji 68
 Kí-rin Ammo X 74
 Kí-rin Rifle 74
 Kofuku 36–37
 Kōga Group 18
 Koguryo 31–33
 Kokkyō-3 68
 Kompong Mera 29
 Kōritawā 70
 Koryo 31–32
 Kufang 51–52
 Kume 34–36
 Kumoropu Bicycle 74
 Kunai Solutions 18
 Kunlun 69
 Kuraimori 34–38
 Kuraimori Oni 22
 Lac Long Quan 33
 Lac Viet 33–34
 Lane Xang 33
 Lang Gang 28
 Lang Hai Ocean 24
 Lavapura 40
 Lian Quan 54
 Loudcast Box X 74
 Luang-Sokeo 33
 Lunar Dragon Head 75
 Lunar Dragon Module X 75
 Máqué Dǎo Archipelago 55
 Memories Kit 75
 Miào Chán Monastery 65
 Mílù Hovercycle X 76
 Motobushima 37–38
 Nakonthai 39–41
 Nam Louey 33
 NeoColonial Wars 4
 Second 5
 Neokatana 76
 Ngam Drops 76
 Ninja Clans 17–18
 Oceanographic Service 56
 Paekche 32
 Palad Khik 76
 PanOceania 4
 Paradiso 68
 Phong Châu Camp 34
 Pianli 52–53
 Qiang 76
 Qihai Ocean 48
 Qihai Sea 56
 Qinglengyuang Ocean 24
 Quanxue 70
 Rantan Services 18
 Recall 77
 Rui Shi Remote 77
 Sakuramachi 38
 Sambor Duk 30
 Sanada Outcomes 18
 Sensei Wrap 77
 Sēn Sūn 53–55
 Shambhala 26
 Shan Yu 27
 Shaolin Warrior Monks 102
 Shaoshang 59
 Shentang 19–43
 Climate and Geography 19–20
 Economy 22–24
 Flora and Fauna 21–22
 Oceans 24–26
 Shichuān 57
 Shidong 70
 Shi Huò 52
 Shinobigatana 77
 Shizhukong Ocean 48
 Shua“lǎi 84
 Shuangdong 70
 Shuto 66
 Silla 32
 Skeletal Reinforcement X 77
 Sol 66
 State 56
 State Oceanographic Service 56–57
 Sufbaatar 30
 Sù-Jiàn Immediate Action Unit 78, 103
 Sukhotai 40
 Supankōru 67
 Svalarheima 69
 Svarlarheima 4
 SWORD-1 Horrorshow X 78
 Sword of Office 78
 TANK AutoMediKit 78
 Tenchō Investment Services 18
 TF Coat 78
 Thagyarmín 41–42
 Thaton 41–43
 Three Lakes 53–54
 Thuminhip 43
 Tian Chi 53
 Tiān Dì Jīng 61–62
 Tianjing Island 25
 Tiě Heng Island 49
 Tomari 38
 Tsukuba 67
 TZ Tsurugi Motorcycle 79
 UPGRADE Phoenixware 79
 Vigour Poison Charge X 79
 Vigour Poison X 79
 Wanhou 29
 Wei Chuān 55–58
 Wei River 56
 Wushu Archipelago 42–43
 Wushu Tracksuit 79
 Xīn Qīnchéng 53–54
 Xuan Ji 59
 Xuanyan 70
 Xuanzhong Archipelago 49
 X-Visor 80
 Ya Lang 43
 Yangwater 80
 Yáozaō Remote 80
 Yian Xiang 43
 Yinjiao Ocean 25
 Yoake Station 67
 Youxiong 70
 Yuanye Ocean 49
 Yú Hú 57–58
 Yukiresha 69
 Yunmen 58–59
 Yuriko Oda 104
 Yutang 44–65
 Climate and Geography 44–45
 Economy 47
 Flora and Fauna 45–47
 Oceans 47–48
 Zenifi Tower 62
 Zenshō 67
 Zhànshì Qízhì 99
 Zhānyīng Imperial Agent 100
 Zhaohai Ocean 49
 Zhenchá Armored Reconnaissance
 Regiment 101
 Zhǐ Tù 60–64
 Zhōu Zhōug 64–65
 Zhubin and Renying Settlement 25
 Zijinchéng 62–63
 Zongzhu Archipelago 48

CHENGQI OCEAN

Zhongting
Continent

Matobushima

Tonari

KURAIMERI

Ikume

Sakuramachi

Kotoku

Sacred Mountains
of Onahumai

Shambhala

GRANDAKPUR

Lac Long Quan

LAC VIET

KOGURYO

Paekche

Lane Xang

LUANG-SOKEO

NAKHONHAI

Sukhothai

Ayuthaya

Battina Racha

KAMBU

Kompong
Mera

Sambor Duk

YA LANG

Yan Xiang

HOUATU

QINGLENGYUANG
OCEAN

Wushu
Archipelago

THATON

Thaqyarmim

LANG HAI
OCEAN

Amawrahla
Island

Henggu

Sibai
Island

KARKORIN

Sulibaatar

ORILING

Shan Yu

YINJIRO
OCEAN

Zhubin
Settlement

Renyinq
Settlement

Wan Hou

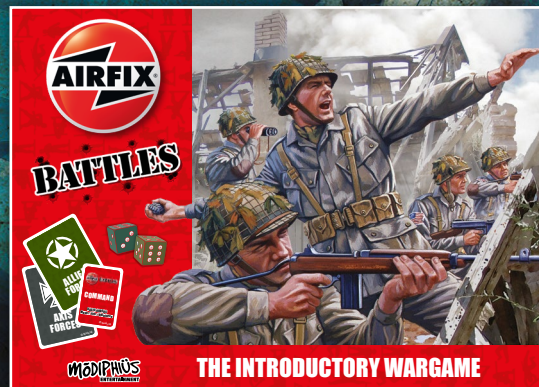
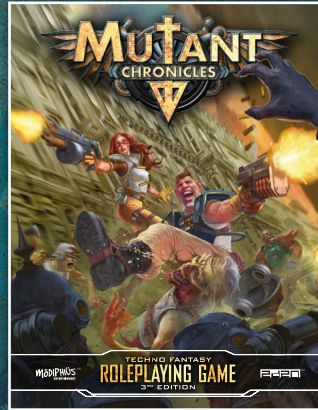
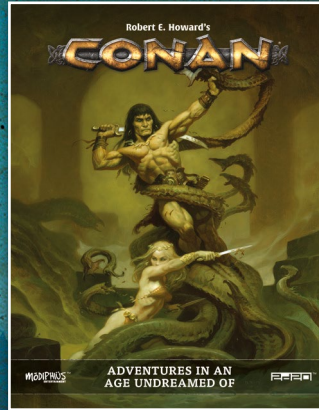
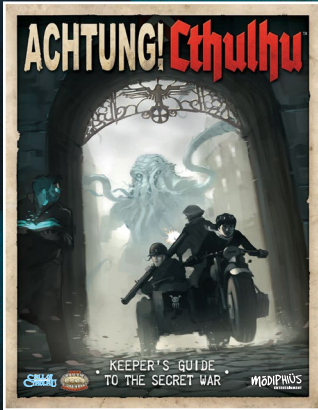
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