

## Chapter 03: The Empire



## The Organization of the Empire

The Empire is a collection of many races that have joined for their own common prosperity and advancement. Power is shared

within the Empire between the Emperor(s), the Great Council, and the Grand Councils.

### The Emperor

The Emperor is selected from the Great Council upon the death of the predecessor. The branch that the member had been from selects a new council member. The Emperor then neutrally presides over the Empire, based on the advisement of the council and the citizens. The current Emperor, Anton La Montagne, has presided for the past 35 years. During that time he has greatly expanded the philosophical doctrines, slowed the invading Koranda and kept the Mega-Corporations from warring. He is an extremely powerful psionicists with powers beyond all others.

He has in the past few months gone into a coma, while he was slowly consumed by a cocoon. His life signs are so low that the Great Council is beginning to consider electing a new Emperor. The leading contender is Herod the Good, a middle aged and aggressive politician philosopher. His controversial last words were "I will come back reborn as the next evolutionary step of man." It is whispered that the Emperor must have gone mad

before this cocoon shrouded him. Yet his heart still beats and he must die before he can be replaced as Emperor. The Emperor's coma has begun to spread panic across the Empire as the word travels.

The throne world of the Empire is located on Terra Prime. This is a rich and luscious jungle world with enormous trees, snowy mountains, and large seas. Its atmosphere is very rich in many rare gasses and most races find it very comfortable to breathe. Gravity is slightly lower than Empire standard at 0.9 Gs.

The Empire is lead by the Emperor. The position is passed down by named successor, by the former Emperor. The successor is typically chosen from the Great Council, or an influential descendant of a former Emperor. The Great Council serves as the advisors to the Emperor, and is elected from the various houses that make up the decision making bodies of the Empire's Senate.

### Great Council

The Great Council consists of the twelve advisors to the Emperor. Each member represents one of the Empire's branches. Together they discuss and debate the issues of the Empire and present the debate to the Emperor to decide upon. The twelve council members are the most influential people in the Empire. The Emperor need to try to maintain neutrality between the council members, allows the councils viewpoint will severely influence the politics of the time. Almost always the council members are powerful psionicists, brought about my years of practicing meditations and philosophy.

Any given number of these political groups exists within the Senate, each with its own platform of ideals. These groups constantly forge alliances and dissolve them to further their own agendas. Ultimately the overlapping alliances form the moral majority, which has the main ear of the Emperor. A few have

even crossed the line of pursuing the interests of the Empire at large, and seek their own agendas. Overall the vast majority are honest and pure in intent.

The 12 members of the Great Council are elected from the 12 branches of the Empire's central government. The members of which are elected from the local governments of region of space, from each race, from each system, and from each planet, every colony or city, and finally to the individual. All serve as advisors back up through the network of branches, which in turn advises the GC and in turn to the Emperor. Filled with representatives from all over the Empire, they ultimately represent the will of the people to the Emperor. The Emperors decision has only occasionally countermanded the moral majority.

### Grand Councils

The twelve branches of the Empire are the 1) Imperial Senate, the 2) House of Races, the 3) Covenant of Philosophies, the 4) Foreign Ministry, the 5) Department of Defense, the 6)

Exploratory Service, the 7) Hall of Technology, the 8) Hall of Medicine & General Welfare, the 9) Imperial Fleet, the 10)

Imperial Services, the 11) Trade Organization, and the 12) House of Nobles.

**Imperial Senate:** The Imperial Senate is made from two senators from each of the core world planets, planets of the races, colony planets, and fringe worlds. The local governments of each of these planets are run in their own diverse fashions. Most are governed by the Empire, a Mega-Corporation, or some other group or organization including other branches of the government.

The Senate is filled with the representation from everyone of the multitude of settlements within the Empire. Within the Senate there have formed a number of political parties. These parties constantly form and dissolve with the waxing and waning of concerns of the populations. Alliances are forged and retracted as each of the senators seek to represent the voice of their peoples.

Discussion groups form around each growing concern. The Senators choose to join each group at will, with the changing focus of those they represent. The influential of the Senators reside in many of these groups. The most powerful of these is elected as the Senator Prime, who represents all of the Senate and their groups as a member of the Great Council.

**House of Races:** The House of the Populous represents the various races of the Empire. Each has a number of elected representatives in accordance with each of their populations. Similar to the Senate various special interest groups have formed, and weight heavily in their politics. The most powerful representative, the Speaker of the House sits on the Great Council.

**Covenant of Philosophies:** The Covenant of Philosophies is one of the most influential branches of the central government, and embodies the church of the Empire. Rather than being based on a common creation beliefs and societal restrictions, the church welcomes all diversity of beliefs. They seek to promote discussion and debate, and to seek out the secrets of forging a great civilization. The size of this branch is constantly growing and shrinking as new philosophers are invited into the covenant, and old ones retire.

The entire covenant is very monk like in practice, and most take vows of poverty to refute any corruption into their intellectual pursuits. Each is supported fully by the multitude of secluded monasteries throughout the Empire. Unlike any other branch of the government, the covenant sustains itself from donations, and from writing their philosophies. The Premier Philosopher of the Covenant serves as the mediator of the debates and discussions. His primary duty is to maintain neutrality and encourage fruitful debate. The Premier Philosopher sits on the Great Council.

**Foreign Ministry:** The Foreign Ministry branch governs the interactions with any entity that exists beyond the Empire. The Foreign Ministry serves as both the intergalactic emissaries and as the intelligence agency against the other Empires. The Director of the Foreign Ministry is elected from the ministry at large. The entire ministry consists of representatives that are former members of other branches. The Director represents the ministry on the Great Council. Currently the majority of the resources of this branch are focused on the Koranda War and freeing the worlds they have enslaved.

**Hall of Defense:** The Hall of Defense governs the construction, command, and fleets of the Imperial Defense Forces. The primary focus of this organization is the defense of the Empire. They have their assets spread throughout the Empire, in the fringe worlds, colonies, and focusing on the core worlds. The IDF typically guards the home worlds but occasionally teams up with the Exploratory Service to bolster forces in the Koranda War. They also serve as the police, judges and prison systems on the planets within the Empire's core worlds. Prior to the KW they also heavily patrolled the colony worlds and sometime the Fringe Worlds as well. Currently they focus the forces that have not been re-assigned to the front lines on the core worlds. Cruises in the colonies have become further and further in between. The leader of this organization is called the Master at Arms and serves on the Great Council.

**Exploratory Service:** The Exploratory Service is the main reaction force on the front lines of the Koranda War. The service's fleets patrol the Koranda border, monitoring for activity, and striking raids on the enemy. Their primary goal is to help defend the border and to retake lost Empire worlds. The Prime Regent for this branch serves on the Great Council.

**Hall of Science & Technology:** The Hall of Science & Technology is unfortunately one of the branches of government that has grown weaker as a result of the Koranda War. Their primary role was to share science & technology across the Empire, so that all could benefit from new discoveries. In addition they promoted the areas of development that the Empire needs to continue growth, increased efficiency and success. During this war, its funding has been greatly cut, and the research has slowed greatly. This was mainly due to the extreme need for a skyrocketing budget just to help the Koranda back.

Although they have greatly helped in developing new weapons to fight the Koranda, this has been their primary focus and all other prior research projects have been de-prioritized. As a result the technology levels in the Empire stagnated, and its colonies have even begun to decline. The massive amounts of resources and research to tackle the Koranda's technology, has caused the manufacture of common technology of a peaceful origin to become more and more scarce. The administrator is the most respected scientist of the time, as elected by his peers. They run the entire hierarchy of research by think tanks, of which he or she administers. Their primary role is to promote technological and science developments, as prioritized by the Empire's needs. The administrator serves on the Great Council.

**Hall of Medicine & Welfare:** The Hall of Medicine & Welfare governs the development and practice of medical care, and the distribution of humanitarian aid. Their primary goal is to continue to advance the medical practice, to provide common comforts to those of the dispossessed and the impoverished, to provide health care and food to those sick and those in famine. The Surgeon General presides over this health organization, and occupies a position on the Great Council.

**Imperial Fleet:** The Imperial Fleet consists of all the Empire's military space vessels. Although other branches also possess some limited numbers of warships, the majority of the Empires star ships are here in the Imperial Fleet. They are currently mostly deployed on the Koranda front lines, guarding the

border, and moving to intercept any trespass. The fleet serves as both a fighting force as the primary transport of other military branches. Their drop ships are non-stop delivering the Imperial Services to the front lines. Their ships range in size from moon size space stations, dreadnoughts, battleships, and carriers to the assault scouts, fighters, and interceptors. Their main charge is to keep the Koranda from penetrating into the Empire, however they are frequently called in to support the Exploratory Service from large strikes. The Grand Admiral resides on the Great Council.

**Imperial Service:** The Imperial Services are the ground troops of the Empire. From the special ops teams, to the assault and the ground forces, the IS has trained soldiers that form the core of the Empires' fighting forces. Dropped from orbit by the Imperial Fleet, the IS deploys everything from assault air craft, tanks, armored personal carriers, to the grunts. The Grand General has a position on the Great Council.

The Thorian Legions are the land, air, and sea forces of the Empire. They are transported from world to world via giant troop carriers that are protected by the Imperial Fleet. The Legions are assigned a great number of tasks, from garrison duty, military observers, combat trainers, to straight tactical assaults. Three special societies exist within the Legion. They are those that in addition to service have pledged themselves wholly to the Empire. They form the core grunts, vehicles, and aircraft of the Empires fighting forces.

The Thorian Empaths serve the Empire as combat healers, and masters of psionic powers. The Thorian Empaths are primarily disciplined in the healing psychic skills. Empaths are dedicated to the protection of the lives of those within the empire and the empire's friends and allies. The Empaths can be found amongst the Legion. One or more will always be found in the Imperial Sanctuaries and Monasteries.

The Thorian Guards serve as the bodyguards of the Senators, their dwellings, vessels, and property. They are shrouded in mysticism, secrecy, skilled in all ways of war, and trained in the use of psychic skills.

The Thorian Draconis are the most elite of the Thorian Guard that serve the Emperor directly as his personal troops, bodyguards, and agents. They are viewed as both warriors and priests blessed with the divine psychic power of the Emperor. The Thorian Draconis are hand chosen from the most elite of the Thorian Guard. They are the most skilled in the ways of war, and the most gifted in the psychic ways. They have been known to infuse the Emperors psychic energies to bless items, weapons, and armor. They often act alone under the direction of only the Emperor. There are many monasteries, hidden throughout the Empire, used solely to train them.

The Thorian Battle Priests are the elite unit of Thorian Templars, Draconis and Empaths assigned to fight in the Chaotian Wars. The Thorian Battle Priests are fighting an all out covert war. Psychic beasts known as the Chaotians have been invading through dimensional rifts that are forming all over the galaxy. These powerful psionics can possess humanoids and control their actions. The Chaotians seek to simply torment the galaxy through the rifts, causing panic, and chaos when they strike. They will take over entire colonies by summoning more of their kin. They are so chaotic in nature that they even resort to cannibalistic acts to bolster their powers from their consumed brethren. The Battle Priests primary directive is to fight this new invader. They are sworn to secrecy as they attempt to cover up the truth of the new threat from the already panicked populous of the Empire.

The Thorian Templars are those of the legion that run, maintain, and protect the Imperial Sanctuaries, and Monasteries. In these sanctuaries any can come in time of need to be protected from wrongdoing. The Templars have pledged to protect the ideals of the Empire, even in its most far-flung regions. All Empire cities, stations, and colonies will have some form of sanctuary. The Monasteries are the training grounds of the Thorian Guard, Draconis, Templars, Battle Priests, and Empaths.

**Trade Organization:** The Trade Organization serves to promote, protect, and balance trade between the various races of the Empire. They work to protect the economy and increase the manufacturing capacities of the Empire. This body also mediates disputes between the MCs and attempts to prevent war and aggression between them. This branch consists of MC selected representatives and officials from the various race governments. Since the majority of trade is war related this branch has also slipped from its former peace time position of power. The leader occupies a position on the Great Council.

**House of Nobles:** The House of Nobles is another hold over branch from the very origins of the Empire. During early space explorations, the adventurers would be able to claim vast regions of space for them to preside over, or they were awarded this privilege for great acts of heroism or patriotism. In all cases these heroes have been rewarded for their service and are the founding fathers of the Empire. They are ranked as nobility and their King of Kings does hold a position on the Great Council.

This branch of the government although a founder once wielding vast power over early colonization, has waned in power for centuries. The position is passed on from rulers to children or siblings much in the way of ancient kings. These roles are now filled with multi-generation descendants of the original legends, and they are not taken as seriously as they were in the early years of the Empire. They are now one of the weakest branches of the government.

## Empire History: Human Perspective

### The Formation of the Empire

In the middle of 21st century on Earth, an organization of philosophers is born. The leader of which was a man known as Sonmarteau. During its early years, the members of this group debated those things that make a society great, and how has society failed in the past and why. This group grew in numbers, that it became somewhat like an unorganized philosophical religion. Their international status and open membership swelled the ranks with politicians and leaders of all kinds. They became the consultants to government leaders of all kinds, and they were highly revered.

Eventually as more and more people became aware and practiced this new belief its practices became the law of land. Governments radically changed and adopted the peaceful and society building ways of what was eventually known as the Empire. The Empire was not an actual organization but considered the spirit of the age, and peacefully conquered by enlightening the masses.

The Empire promoted the worth of the individual, to education of the mind, and the fitness of mankind at large. Enormous universities were built to educate all of the populations of the world. Education, fitness, theory and philosophy were the classes of the day. The universities were almost monastery-like in their strict regiment of hard labor, discipline, enlightenment, and discussion.

A new era of logic, peace, thoughtfulness, equality, and fellowship is born. Wars end, violence ends, and people once again care about other people. It is a time of prosperity and the population rate accelerates seemingly infinitely. In this time the

Empire model became the basis for most of the civilizations on Earth, and mankind began to prosper at staggering rates. The entire world enters a golden age of unity and homogeneity.

Many things were thought to have attributed to the formation of the Empire, besides its solid foundation in philosophy of the rights of the individual. Foremost was the primitive worldwide communication net that allowed the thoughts and ideas of its formation to be freely shared even in the hearts of the most oppressed nations. In addition there was an extreme need of the people to begin to build faith once again. Religions having lost major appeal during the 21st century with countless senseless religious wars, vile acts of terrorism, and countless government cover-ups, scandals, and betrayals. The philosophical Empire appealed to these populations and it brought swift change to their civilizations.

The practice of the observers of the Empire ideologies evolving into ritual became known as the Great Pondering. The ritual blended slow extension movements while meditating on thoughts, situations, and solutions taught self-defense as well as discipline, enlightenment, and expansion of consciousness. Practitioners found it very rewarding and restoring on the faith and inner peace that religions had fulfilled for thousands of year and became very popular. The faith also developed the great respect for one another, civility, uncensored debate, and philosophical pursuits that the Empire was forged in. With this time of great prosperity the populations grew at an unprecedented rate, and the civilizations expanded across more and more of the habitable land of Earth.

### The Conquering of Space

By the early 22nd century cities had expand a hundred-fold, technology was driven into a golden age, as the Earth's resources grow more and more scarce. It was seen that the Empire would soon outgrow its home. The Empire promoted space exploration heavily since its formation and great strides towards exploring our solar system had been made.

Soon the first attempts to colonize the moon met with rapid success. The enclosed outpost quickly grew into an enormous underground city carved into the bowels of the moons rocky crust. Gaea station was built in Earth's orbit. The rate of growth of the station made it possible to begin to colonize the moon and harvest its resources. Its continual growth since has grown into six concentric bands that encompass all of Earth, hosting hundreds of cities, starports, factories, and construction

yards. The Moon proved capable of providing the resources to build starships away from the Earth's gravity. These starships proved to be the launching pad from which the rest of the system was colonized.

In a similar fashion, Mars was colonized as well. Hundreds of terra-forming factories warmed the planet's atmosphere with carbon dioxide. Vast colonies of Nitrogen and Oxygen creating bacteria and algae were introduced pushing the temperature farther up melting the ice caps, and restoring Mars's seas. Within 50 years, the air of Mars was breathable with the assistance of a simple oxygen mask, and the colony prospered. The seas of Mars provided even more hydrogen-based fuel for the increasingly further exploration of the solar system.

The successful colonization of Mars and the Moon, all habitable space bodies were quickly settled. Together with a solar shield to cool the atmosphere, the Venus landscape was seeded with bacteria and algae that transformed Venus's atmosphere slowly into a more Earth like environment. This process took over 200 years to reach breathable levels, but soon it too was covered in the Empire's colonies.

Saturn's moon Europa was the next to be terra-formed. Mining stations on Mar's moons, and years of experience terra-forming

other worlds aided the colonization of this moon. Titan is next conquered, and space stations are built orbiting Saturn, as the gas giants provide valuable fuel that is simply scooped from the atmosphere. Ganymede and Callisto soon follow suit. Having established trade routes through out the solar system, eliminating the return to Earth, a true space civilization was formed. With this success in colonization and resources, the solar system began to look beyond its borders.

## **The Birth of the Mega-Corporations**

The first of the Mega-Corporations were born during the 23rd century. The conquering of space and subsequently of the solar system gave rise to these massive companies. With the great push to colonize space they invested deeply in achieving this goal and were rewarded with mighty riches that simply fueled them more. As these gigantic companies began to require more and more resources to increase their endeavors, they devoured over companies in the race to increase their efficiencies in space.

They grew in power and laid claim to the resources of the colonies that they planted throughout the system. The Empire supported these companies and their grand achievements, and slowly the MCs grew politically power as well. Over the centuries since, the MCs have waxed and waned in power in the Empire. They also became grown rivals, and have been known to spy, steal and war amongst each other. The major MCs include; WARMART, Cosquetta, Whyte and JPS. They have become engrained into the fabric of the Empire.

Having grown to organize the massive expeditions to worlds beyond our system for colonization. WARMART at this time was the largest producer of star drives and soon had developed faster than light engines. They were the first of the MCs to leave our system, and begin building human worlds in the depths of space. They were shortly joined by the other Mega-Corporations and a race to both colonize and harvest resources ensued.

In the late 24th century, the Empire had stretched farther and farther away from Earth. The colonies being completely controlled by the Mega-Corporations soon fell under their governing. The much slower expansion of the Empire into the new territories than the racing Mega-Corporations helped this weakening of the Empire control. Communication was being strained to reach the far-flung worlds, and they slowly became more and more under the MC control. As the centuries have passed this has been a recurring theme within the Empire.

## **The Addition of New Races into the Empire**

The WARMART Mega-Corporation was the first to encounter another race in the 25th century. One of their outpost colonies discovered signals coming from systems beyond the expanse of explored space. After deciphering the encryption and language, they found the signals to be from a very advanced race, with technology and culture very similar to their own. In addition the signals were a communication of introduction directed at the Empire. Within a year a fleet was assembled, composed of WARMART and Empire ships and full compliments of emissaries, scientists, and diplomats. When they reached this distant civilization they met with a race called the Draken.

Immediately the two races became steadfast friends. The Draken were a race of humanoids slightly shorter than human, but considerably stronger. They were quite similar in technological levels and both readily shared their discoveries. The Draken had a history of wars with the Targons, and had a much more warlike ideology. The Draken were presided over by a king, and they maintained a complicated tribal and clan system of government. Although they were peaceful and welcomed the Empire in friendship they possessed a massive fleet of military vessels from the years of war with their enemy.

During this time the Draken introduced the Empire and WARMART from the Acroyan. They were another relatively peaceful race of philosophers and thinkers like the Empire. The Acroyan race had suffered similar wars with yet another hostile race called the Mechlans, and was quick to embrace an ally. The Acroyans had a representative democracy system of government presided over by a counsel of elders, and again a large military. The Acroyans shared their technology, theologies, and friendship with the Empire. The Acroyan way of life, philosophy and beliefs were so close to that of the Empires that they completely mingled.

The Empire began developing its own fleet of space vessels, heeding the warnings of the Draken and the Acroyans. Within 20 years the Empire built a massive naval fleet with a hybrid of Human, Draken and Acroyan technology. This vast number of ships allowed the Empire's space forces to patrol all of human space and spend extended time visiting their new found neighbors. As the Empire regains a more powerful presence in the colonies as they began to patrol more and more of Human space. This was particularly true with WARMART's territory,

since it was in between the Empire and the Acroyan and Draken space.

The influence of the Empire was as powerful here as it was in the core worlds. Eventually the Acroyan and the Draken people joined the Empire, forging a powerful alliance. Each of the races maintained their own central government but were joined in the brotherhood of the Empire. Their populations, technology, and ideals were spread throughout the far reaches of the Empire.

The ideas of family, clan, and common history gained in popularity in the colonies of the Empire. From the Acroyans a renewed era of philosophy, justice, and honor were inherited.

The combining of these three races created the Empire as it is known today. A sole Emperor, who is elected from the Great Council, rules the Empire. The Great Council is elected from members of the many government branches. These houses each represent a different facet of the Empire interest from individual races, Mega-Corporations, regions of space, and the general populace.

In time many other races were encountered. Many of whom joined the Empire and others that rejected it. Regardless the Empire promoted peace both within its realm and with its neighbors. Occasionally wars ensued would ensue with hostile races but overall a time of peace was instilled.

## The Rise of the Mega-Corporations

As the Empire grew and spread farther and farther into the reaches of space, the Mega-Corporations continued to grow in size. With the volume of military ships that the MCs produced they now were quite well equipped themselves. Each formed its own fleet of ships and forces to defend their far spread colonies that occasionally would come under attack. The MCs spread their garrisons around their sectors of space. Most of the other MCs were jealous of the power and central location of the new Empire near WARMART's territory. They began to explore even greater depths of space seeking anything that could help them to compete in the new order.

By the 27th century these new colonies on the fringes of the Empire were pushed harder and harder and became oppressive. This is especially true with the Cosquetta. The Cosquetta eventually discovered a new race of feline humanoids called the Kreatai. When they discovered that they had barely any technology comparable to that of the Empire, the Cosquetta began to use them as laborers. The Cosquetta stripped much of the Kreatai of the resources of their civilization. The Empire shocked by the news of a hidden and oppressed race in the Cosquetta territories quickly attempted to put an end to it.

When Cosquetta first resisted, the Empire's fleet moved to ready for battle with the rogue MC. The Cosquetta quickly ceased their activities to make peace, but this began a long string of trouble events with the MC. The Cosquetta began to do whatever they could to gain the upper hand, and had no qualms about the use of force, spying, stealing, and oppression to serve their ends. Eventually they discovered a new race of insect like humanoids called the Ixaclix and once again began to disregard a native population, only to be put in line again by the Empire. A long line of masked hostilities has marked its history since. The Clans have grown very strong in influence hear as the people have had to deal with a great number of hardships under the Cosquetta rule.

The Whyte Mega-Corporation had trouble competing with WARMART as well. In time they began to be more and more secretive of their ways and closed the societies in their territories to the outside world. They began to rather than race for the stars seeding endless amounts of colonies, but work on building the ones that they had. In addition they began to delve more into

developing high technology and advanced sciences than expanding their reaches. In time they have become renown for their high tech manufacturing abilities, and have developed many of the technological developments since. Life within the Whyte territories was not as opulent as the core worlds of the Empire or WARMART, but they did treat their people with respect and continued to observe the ideologies of the Empire in their own ways. Utmost to them was educating their populace and encouraging their exploration of science and technology.

JPS was the only large MC to have been started by a single individual. Jon Carl was just a small privateer running freighters in the Earth system. Eventually he had an entire fleet under his command. Contracted to help supply the colonies of many MCs they learned a lot about colonization. In time their refueling stations spread throughout the Empires expanse. These stations in time grew to be meccas of entertainment often possessing not only fuel, but also of casinos, resorts, cruise ships stops, and tourist destinations.

With the influx on income the small MC was able to begin its first colonies. As they colonized the worlds the other MCs had left behind they grew into formidable numbers in the core systems of the Empire. Slowly they began to expand their stations into the other MCs territories, which was tolerated with the luxuries they provided. JPS has since provided much of the entertainment and distribution of resources throughout the Empire. Having retained their central location in the core systems they have remained very close with the Empire.

WARMART is the largest and the most popular of the MCs. From the beginnings of the Empire, they have been in the fore front of the political and cultural scene. During the centuries they have built an extremely strong bond with the Empire and many of the advanced races that have joined it over the years. During the Koranda War, they have given freely to the Empire in the way of resources, ships, and even have fought alongside with the Empire itself. They are seen to represent to core values of the Empire in almost every way.

Many other smaller MCs exist and control small regions of space or like JPS share space with others and specialize in specific trades.

## The Rise of the Clans

The Clans began for many different reasons in many different parts of the Empire. The largest factor was the long tradition of it that was introduced when the Draken joined the Empire. When the three primary Empires began to co-mingle their societies also became more homogenous. The Draken people were a tribal society. Each family or groups of families formed what was known as clans. These clans in turn controlled a habitation, or were devoted to a common goal. Clans are often bound together for protection, growth, or simply because they embrace each other in friendship.

The Clans were able to detail their history and lineage far back into the span of history. The Human culture that had been spreading across the reaches of space often had only one or two generations on a given planet before they moved on. As a result humanity had mostly lost any type of sense of common history. This sense of continuity was something that the humans began to greatly admire. When the Drakens met the humans in friendship, some were asked to join the clans, and in other parts of the realm Clans formed from humans entirely by themselves. The Acroyans having similar traditions also brought their clan like ways into the Empire. Within several centuries many clans have merged all three of the core races of the Empire.

In the last few centuries the clan system has grown even more. Pockets of the Empire population that were left on many worlds heightened this growth. The Koranda was separating colonies behind the front lines, as well as the migration of the MCs, and the growing numbers of the dispossessed all contributed to this development. Currently the number of clans is extremely immense and widespread throughout the Empire.

Although the various clans may have developed for many different reasons, they all possess similar characteristics. Typically they are lead by a single family. The head of that family is typically the clan leader, and the leadership is carried down the family line unless its authority is challenged. Each clan has an established method of challenge, ranging from sparring combats, to other more ceremonial challenges. The families even though they occasionally vie for leadership express a deep sense of unity with other members.

The clans are also known for their competition with other clans. Although this typically is expressed by way of their reputation,

honor, control of resources, conflict of interest, or political power, it can also range to more mundane territorial disputes. Occasionally violence will break out between locals clans. The death of owns kinsman, is a call for revenge. To keep these disputes from escalating, the clans practice wergild. If a clan has caused the death of a member of another clan, they will offer the value of that member to the other clan. This offering is called wergild. If the other clan accepts the dispute is resolved. This is a common practice to keep relatively minor incidents from escalating into to full blown conflicts.

The clans also keep detailed records of their exploits, lineage's, and histories. This practice has rejuvenated the old practice of heraldry, and each clan possesses heraldic markings, and other symbols marking their history. Ultimately it is the expectation that each member will preserve these traditions and bring glory to their clan. Clan families are often contracted for work by the MCs, or they have long traditions of working for the Empire.

Clans will typically have some sort of central hall. This hall will be built to show the strength, power and wealth of the clan. The central hall of the building serves both as a meeting place, and a room for feasts, and ceremonies. During the day the hall will be filled with the leaders of the families and conduct internal business. At nights feasts are hosted, that last well into the evening. When visitor or guest of the clan is brought to the hall, they are treated with great hospitality, and genuine welcome, even to their enemies. Every effort is given to promote the glory of the clan within the central hall, and are often decorated with tapestries, clan relics, and portraits of great members. The clan hall will also have a barracks, kitchens, pantries, meeting rooms, and occasionally even shrines to great members, and chapels and oracles of the Empire.

If there are a large number of clans in a specific area, they will be presided over by a council of elders. This council attempts to address the concerns of all parties, and to promote themselves collectively. If the practice of wergild does not settle disputes they will be brought before the council. Ultimately all of the clans are represented within the Empire, through a hierarchical structure of councils that is presided over by the House of Clans in the Empire collection of parliamentary divisions.

## The Koranda Wars History

During the 32nd century the Empire began to hear of the Koranda. The farthest civilizations on the fringes began to hear of the approaching invader. Stories of the fall of great civilizations beyond the Empire, and of the relentless assault soon became the focus of debate of the Empire. When countless scouting and emissary ships were lost attempting to contact the Koranda, they began to brace themselves for potential war. The

Empire purchased massive amounts of ships from the MCs, and built enormous fleets to counter the Koranda threat.

The Koranda met the Empire at full steam, in the middle of the 32nd century. The Koranda initially was an unbeatable force resulting in the loss of many of the colony worlds. Engagements between the two fleets met with disaster on the part of the



Empire. Countless planets, bases, and entire civilizations were lost to the invading Koranda. The Empire was shaken considerably by these losses and all resources were thrown against the front line to slow their invasion.

The Koranda are a race of humanoids with vast psionic powers. In addition they were more technologically advanced than the Empire. The Koranda's forces were made of a number of enslaved races, and robots. The bulk of which are the genetically engineered clones, the Zitsu-Kar.

The Zitsu-Kar are ten foot tall humanoids that have been designed only for loyally fighting the Koranda's wars. In addition the Koranda have enslaved entire races via mind-control of both intelligent civilizations and predatory beasts. In more recent developments, the Koranda has unleashed a race of giant robotic warriors, and have apparently forged an alliance with the Mechlans.

The Koranda attack both on the front lines and occasionally deep behind into the Empire. They attack worlds in many different fashions. Directly they will bombard a planet from orbit for days, while launching drop-ships filled with their troops to the planet surface. The troops will then take over all large settlements and bring the populations into concentration camps. The few survivors that have escaped have spoke on great cruelty. The Koranda have practiced everything from brain washing and mind control on the them, to horrific medical experiments and mass exterminations.

Alternatively the Koranda will attack more discreetly. They will plant darphy colonies on the planet. These darphies are a large predatory animal that is vaguely humanoid. The hives release a psychotic gas into the atmosphere that causes mass panic and hallucinations in the targeted population. The defenders are usually not even aware of the hives, when the gasses begin to take affect. Central organization breaks down, and the populace begins killing each other, in a psychotic trance. When complete unrest ensues, the main forces of the Koranda land.

The Koranda fleet has rarely attacked the Empire Fleet directly unless there was a planet to fight over. In fact they will often pass by such a fleet without attacking while making their way to their next conquest. The reasoning for this is unknown, although it is believed that the Koranda do not fear the Empire fleet. However it is these types of encounters that the Empire has had the most success with. Large planetary conflicts are where the Empire has usually lost.

The war has lasted for two and a half centuries. Currently the war has slowed tremendously. It is thought that the Koranda have depleted their resources to a greater degree than Empire and are having problems massing the forces that will allow them to continue the offensive. The Empire albeit likewise depleted has begun to swing the tide of the war, and has been able to thwart their advances. Currently the frontline is fairly fixed, although the war still rages.

## The Wars of Mega-Corporations

The Koranda war was an incredible drain on the Empire, and the balance of local power was again upset, as the Mega-Corporations grew. The Empire's presence begins to wane in the local systems as they are pulled to the front lines. Even in the farthest reaches of space, its spirit within the people is never completely eclipsed by the local Mega-Corporations. The MCs building as many ships as possible for the war, become incredibly powerful once again. They soon have enormous fleets of their own to protect their territories. In the regions of space controlled by Cosquetta, life becomes a harsh system of MC domination. Greed and the corruption of power rule the day. WARMART and the other core MCs attempted to preserve the principles of the Empire as best was possible.

In the early 33rd century, the Mega-Corporations realizing that the power of the Empire lay far away on the front lines of the Koranda War, soon began to skirmish in the faraway colonies, at first in small incidents, and later with the greater ferocity, over profitable resources. The Cosquetta lead this aggression on the other MCs, although countless smaller ones joined it. With the WARMART, the largest MC fleet was fighting with the Empire against the Koranda, this left only the Whyte, and the ragtag JPS Fleets to try to suppress the Cosquetta. The two smallest of the core MCs were barely a match for them. Concession after concession was made with the Cosquetta to seek peace, however a new offensive would start after the Cosquetta's greed for power grew.

After a century and a half of small skirmishes between the MCs, the Cosquetta lead a full-scale war. After allying themselves with the Targons, and promising victory over the Koranda once they took control, the Empire split into opposing camps. The Empire, WARMART, Whyte, and JPS, and several other MCs allied themselves against the Cosquetta, the Targons and many of the smaller MCs. Recent breakthroughs on the front lines of the Koranda War and the battle hard veterans from those fights were able to meet the challenge slowly but steadily. This first Corporate War lasted for 5 years, before peace was made.

The Cosquetta, betrayed by the Targons who invaded Cosquetta as well, brokered the peace by giving up much of their gained lands, and saving some power in the House of the MCs. The Cosquetta territories back to the size from 150 years before, left the Cosquetta to face the Targons to regain their lost territories. This new war would keep the Cosquetta from becoming a threat again for several decades.

The Cosquetta eventually grew in power again, and soon thereafter began their ancient ways. Only a few large battles have broken out, but the Cosquetta have been back to resorting to any level to try to gain new territories again. The MCs would have short battles once again, with the MCs attempting to resolve blame in the House of MCs. The Koranda war having flared up repetitively proved to be a distraction to the Empire to put down the unrest. The Empire was focused on restoring its lost territory from the Koranda, and taking advantage of their

dwindling decline. It regretfully tolerated all the but the largest of disputes before pulling ships from the Empire's Fleet at war.

Ever since, the MCs would war in small groups for a short duration over any number of disputes. Massive debates were warred in the House of the MCs to attempt to resolve the matters and blame one another. It has been become almost commonplace and even many of the smaller ones steal, spy,

cheat, and attack one another. Today it is usually much more clandestine in nature and double-dealing politics rule the day in the House. For the last 5 centuries alliances have been made and fallen. Some still maintain the ways of the Empire, some have lost many wars, and others continue to bully the others. The Empire's Fleet has only recently begun to intervene in these affairs again, and its strength is once again growing with the tidal change in the Koranda War.

### **The Empire Sinks into a Dark Age**

Since the 33rd century, the Koranda War, and the warring MCs, have greatly weakened the infrastructure of the Empire. This is most especially true with the colonies. Many colonies and worlds near the Koranda lines, have been completely cut off from the Empire, or even lie deep behind enemy lines. The decentralization of power within the Empire, and the collapsed infrastructure of trade routes have left these areas in a new dark age. The militaries and core worlds of the Empire and MCs fair better, but the entire Empire is heavily affected. This causes the colonies and fringe worlds to depend more and more upon the local MCs. Those that have been left abandoned often neither

have communication with the Empire or the modes to travel back. This has caused the balance of power to sway back to the MCs in these areas.

The Empire still survives, however its once golden era has slowly faded away. The spread of new developments in technology slows, as communication and trade lines dwindle. The homogenous strength of the Empire fades, as the local MCs govern as they see fit. Although the Empire is again gaining in strength, they still are at war with the Koranda and the spread back to the colonies is a slow process of resource management.

### **The Empire Today**

Today is the year 3417. Most of the known races of the galaxy are members of the Empire, closely allied, or have been lost to the Koranda. This war has dragged along for centuries, stalemated and highly volatile. New skirmishes arose constantly and not on the frontiers, but even deep within the Empire. This has cost the Empire countless lives, ships, and vast resources. Much of our galaxy is now in the hands of the invading Koranda, and vast regions have been cut off from contact with the Empire.

The Koranda War has greatly drained the resources of the Empire. The once strong central organization of the Empire has again waned in power. The Mega-Corporations are allowed more and more autonomy over the regions of space that they control. The Empire simply has less and less resources to

expend on policing the little day to day affairs of the realm. Unfortunately this has allowed the competitive Mega-Corporations the self-determination, to decide if they were going to be a positive influence in the regions that they controlled, or a self-serving one. Some of the MCs treat this as a time when they can prove their merits to the Empire and try to remain just. The others have resorted to doing any unscrupulous act to gain a larger market share, increasing their wealth, and power.

Recent breakthroughs have allowed the Empire to recapture some lost territory, and the Koranda rarely stages new offenses. The Empire is steadily attempting to rebuild itself and regain control of all of the territories. Both are delicate procedures with their current resources.