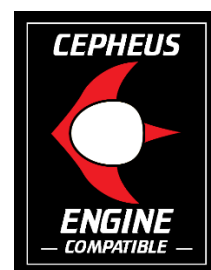


# A PRIMER TO THESE STARS ARE OURS!

DISCOVER THE 23<sup>RD</sup> CENTURY TERRAN BORDERLANDS!

By Omer Golan-Joel, Richard Hazlewood, and Josh Peters



# A PRIMER TO THESE STARS ARE OURS!

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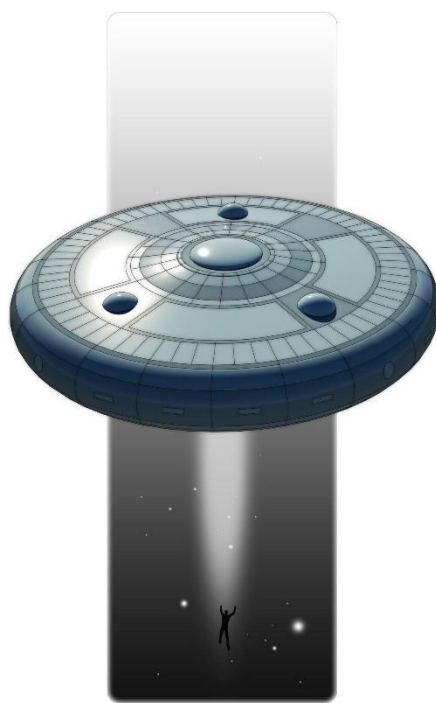
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## THESE STARS ARE OURS!

*"The first alien world I visited was Keid and I wasn't there for sightseeing. I served my term of duty in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion of the 5<sup>th</sup> Guard Regiment. We were fresh out of boot camp; we were all raw recruits from Terra. They raised our entire battalion from the ground up. Sure, we had some seasoned sergeants and an old CO, but we ordinary Guardsmen were green recruits. We were the class of '56, then straight from school to boot camp as Guard volunteers – hungry for battle in the name of Mother Terra. We did not know what war meant. We were soon to find out.*

*They brought us out of cryo on the last day of jump and prepared us for combat landing. We did a few training jumps from LEO back home, but this was our first dip into the fire. We suited us, grab our gear, and lined up for the pods. No one spoke. No one joked. This was real stuff – jump into the fire and kick the crap out of some grey-skinned bug for Terra and President Singh. Strapping myself into the pod was easy – they drilled us so hard in this in basic that we coulda done it in our sleep. Then I felt the kick, and out I was in space. A few minutes of stargazing and then the fire of atmospheric insertion.*

*The brass called this Operation Burnt Offering. There was some serious burning, all right, and we were the offering. Planetary defenses opened up on us when we hit the stratosphere in a hail of green plasma fire. There were pods as far as the eye could see – and the unlucky ones got zapped like flies. I saw their blips go out one by one on my HUD – Rusenski, Nkrumah, Segal – guys and gals I had drinks with the night before we boarded the transport – now little more than wisps of smoke in Keid's atmosphere. I braced myself, prayed hard that I was not the next in line, and then the parachute came up and I was gliding over the Reticulan city-scape.*

*It was night when we hit the ground. Gravity felt just like home, but the air was dusty and thin. The power was out in the bombed-out city district but two moons shined in the dark skies and we could see the flashes of explosions and laser fire a few streets away from us. The buildings here must have been graceful, tall silvery spires before the War. Now, they lay around like broken fingers jutting from the dusty ground. We regrouped into battle formation and advanced cautiously, wary of Grey snipers.*

*Our mission was to relieve a battalion of Technocratic rebels pinned down by powerful Imperial fire. Grey politics – I never got their point, but those Techies were on our side, the Imperials deserved a Gauss shot to the head for what they did to us in my parent's time. It was that simple back then. This is when I first met living, breathing aliens – short "women" with grey skin, no hair, and eyes which were larger than they should be. They were glad to have us there – at least this was what our interpreter told us; you couldn't judge from the look on their faces what they felt. By the time we got there, the entire battalion numbered less than twenty aliens. We braced with them for the inevitable Imperial attack, which soon came – a wave of warbots and walkers. Thanks God for our Plasmas and Tac missiles – they got what was coming for them.*

*That was how I first visited an alien world. It was strange, I got a laser blast to my knee, but I came back. Six of my friends – my best buddies from boot camp – remained there forever, probably in one of the mass graves; we did recover the bodies of thirteen more from my company and sent them for burial with full honors on the Motherworld. Now the war is over and Shengot us drummed out when he merged the Guard with the damned Naval Infantry bubbleheads. They didn't need that many Guardsman to man the Marine squads, so here I am, mustered out with a free Middle Pass from ol' Singh for my service. Now I'm going to see the universe – and this time not through a Gauss Rifle's recon scope."*

**- Former Guardsman First Class Boris Saunders, age 22, Svarog, December 21, 2259**



## WELCOME TO THE 23RD CENTURY!

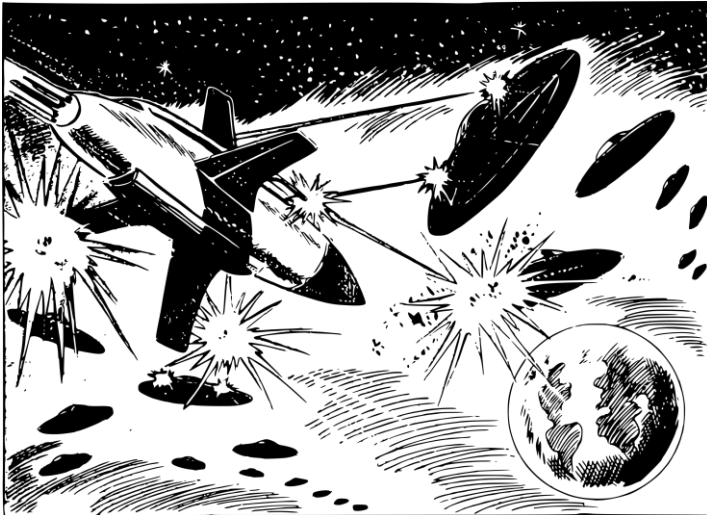
These Stars Are Ours (TSAO) is the first product of the Visions of Empire (VoE) line of space-opera setting material for the Cepheus Engine Core Rules. Set in 2260 AD, it introduces the player characters to the immediate aftermath of the Terran Liberation War against the mighty Reticulan Empire and its many thralls. The Reticulan Empire was forced to sign a humiliating peace treaty with the victorious Terrans and reluctantly accept Terran independence from the Empire. For their part, the upstart Terrans, bolstered by their victory against their old masters, now move to become a power to be reckoned with in interstellar affairs. On this background of espionage, maneuvering, and saber-rattling, and on the new interstellar frontiers, the player characters can forge a destiny of heroes or villains of the new United Terran Republic. It provides background information, a 16 by 10 hex star-map, full information, and write-ups about all 64 major worlds in this area, and other materials necessary to set a Sci-Fi campaign in the exciting times of the 23rd century.

It is two years after we won the War against our old Reticulan masters. We - the children of Mother Terra - are now free to forge our destiny and put our mark on the stars. These stars are ours! We took them by our right, and by the blood of our brave soldiers and star-sailors who gave their lives to free our Motherworld from the Reticulan yoke. The United Terran Republic proudly carries our Terran banner forward and we will make ourselves - humans from Terra - into a power to be reckoned with. This is a time for bold men and women to step up and leave their mark on the universe. We need intrepid explorers to discover the riches of our far frontiers; enterprising merchants to open new trade routes with far-away alien stars; cunning spies and agents to protect us from any alien plot against our hard-won independence; and of course - daring soldiers and spacemen to protect our borders and push back those who still desire to enslave us.

But we are not alone - brave Cicek warriors and even Reticulan and Ssesslessian defectors fought at our side against the Reticulan legions. Rebuilding our space - indeed, building Terra into a mighty force on the interstellar playfield will require the help of these same alien allies. Against this mighty alliance, stand our many enemies - both internal and external. Corrupt politicians and crime-lords plot to turn our glorious Republic into their own plaything at our expense. Ruthless pirates and raiders rob far-flung colonies, heedless of the opening they give to our greater enemy. In the shadows, House Thiragin - the Reticulan noble house which once ruled Terra with an iron fist - plots and plans for its ultimate revenge on us upstart "barbarians". For all of this - children of the Earth - Mother Terra needs you!



## REQUIRED MATERIALS



To use this primer, you will need a copy of the Cepheus Engine System Reference Document, from Samardan Press™ available from DriveThruRPG.

Alternatively, you may use any other variant of the 2D6 Science Fiction SRD such as the base System Reference Document (SRD), itself freely and legally available at <http://www.travellersrd.com>.

Also, to get the most from this book you will need at least two six-sided dice and some pens/pencils and paper or a computer.

## References to Other Books

Cepheus Engine System Reference Document: *CE*

## About the Authors

**Omer Golan-Joel** is a 34 years old freelance English-Hebrew-English translator and an avid sci-fi and fantasy gamer from the town of Yavne, Israel. He lives with his fiancée and two cats Saki and Chicha – the real masters of the house – as well as an entourage of lizards, from the gang of house geckos to the large Star Agama who graces the wall of his home in the warm and hot months. Omer is a fan of science-fiction, fantasy and history, an amateur cook, and a hobbyist herpetologist. He also writes sci-fi and fantasy role-playing gaming material, including **Outer Veil**, a full-scale campaign setting for the rules once known as Mongoose Traveller, which was published by *Spica Publishing*® in 2011. In early 2016, he joined forces with his old comrade-in-arms Richard Hazlewood to form *Stellagama Publishing*, an independent role-playing publishing house.

**Richard Hazlewood** has been playing RPGs since 1976. He served eight years in the US Navy, operating nuclear reactors on submarines. He enjoyed that so much he got out of the Navy and went into aviation. Richard has a Master's Degree in Aerospace Engineering and works for a major US Airline. He has two grown children and three grandchildren. Richard lives with his wife and three dogs in the Southern USA.

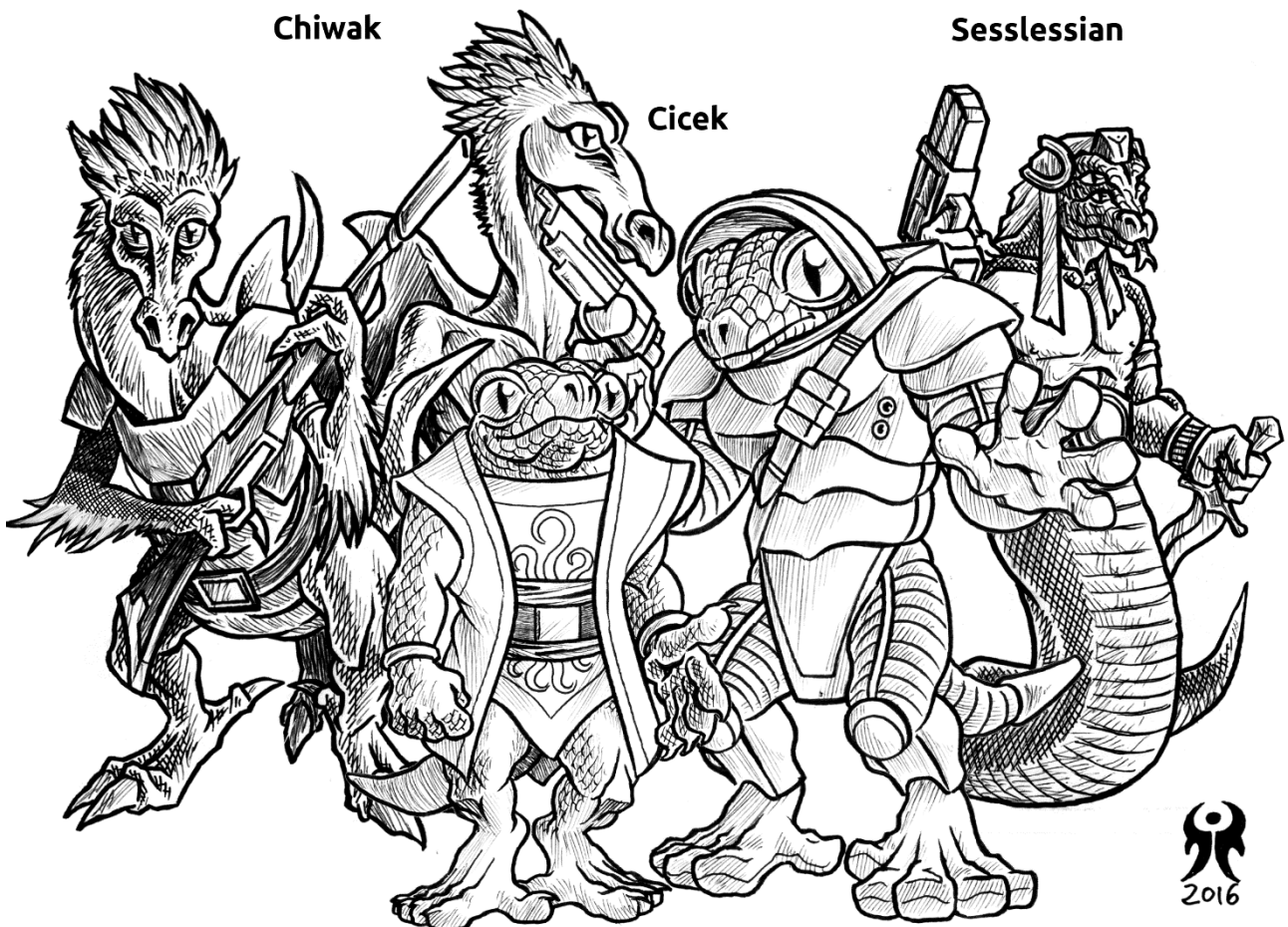
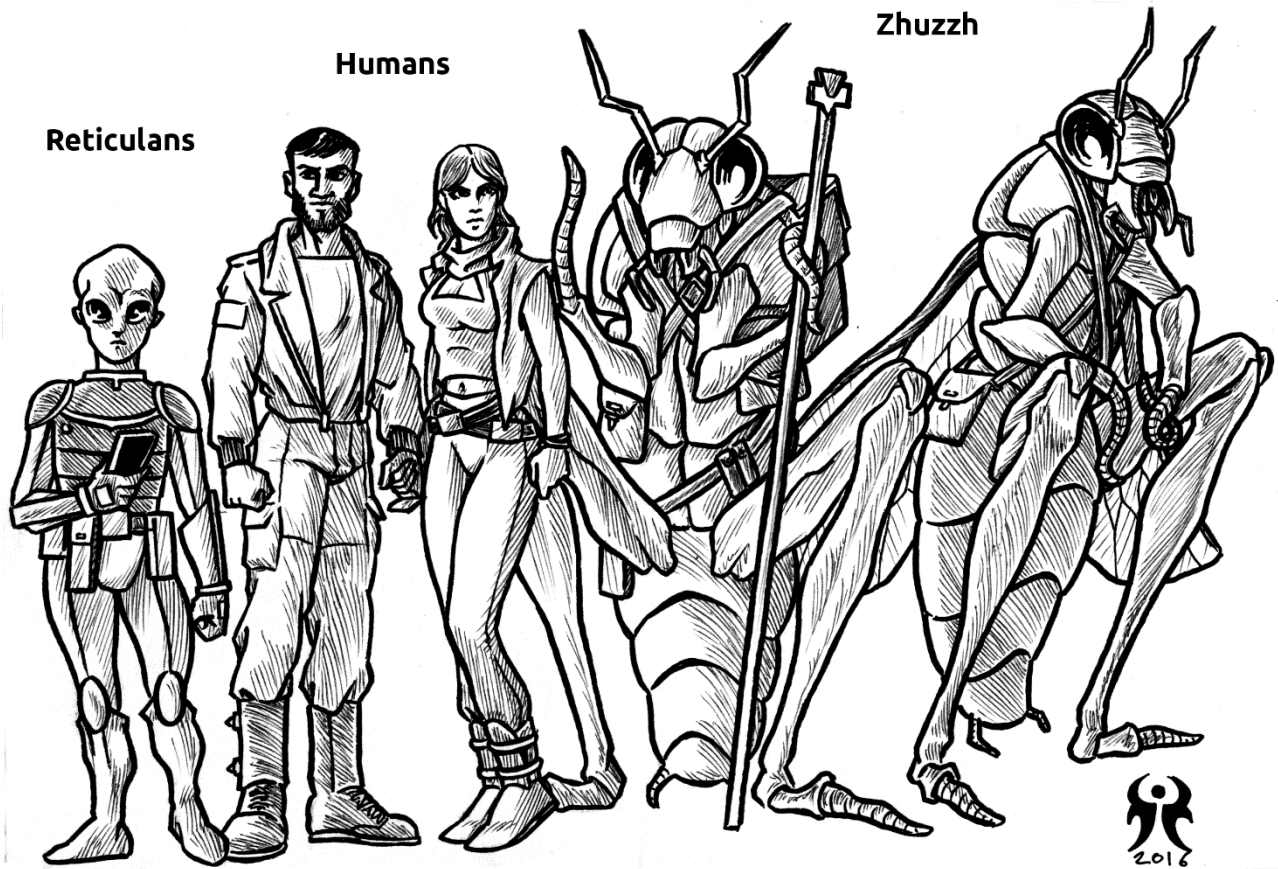
**Josh Peters** is a high school math and history teacher, an accomplished drummer, and avid tabletop RPG gamer. Josh has a Master's degree in history, and resides in Montreal, Canada, with his beautiful, patient wife and deviously adorable daughter.

## Stellagama Publishing

*Stellagama Publishing* is a small, independent, international role-playing game publisher focused on science fiction gaming founded in January 2016. We publish gaming material for Cepheus Engine, 2d6 Sci-Fi OGL, Stars Without Number, and the White Star™ RPG based on *Sword & Wizardry: White Box*. Our interests are first and foremost to put forth enjoyable, immediately playable supplements, settings, and adventures for these games for the enjoyment of our fellow players and referees.



# A Primer to These Stars Are Ours!



## SETTING OVERVIEW

**The Stars Are Ours!** Takes place in 2260 AD, two years after the Terran-Cicek victory in the Terran Liberation War against the mighty Reticulan Empire. This is a time of uneasy peace, when all sides of involved in the former War now vie for political, military, and economic power. Many of the worlds in the Terran Borderlands were battlegrounds of the war. The war affected the life of almost every Terran who lived through it. Most human characters actually fought in the War. For Reticulans who support the Technocratic Movement, this was a war of liberation from outdated Imperial rule. For Imperial Reticulans, however, this was a shameful disaster where the upstart Terrans had the audacity to challenge the Empire – and the impudence to win. A few Reticulans even plot revenge.

### **The United Terran Republic**

Terra and the space she carved out of the stars by force of arms is the new thorn in the side of the Reticulan Empire. Defeating House Thiragin – the wealthiest of the Great Houses – the Terrans established themselves as a force to be reckoned with. Ruling over Terran Space is the United Terran Republic (UTR), a vigorous power administered by the pragmatic President Alberto Shen. Militarized and centralized to the hilt during the war years, the UTR now moves to more pluralistic economy and politics. When the War ended, the UTR demobilized a significant part of its military, though still retaining an impressive force. We - the Terrans - are a rising force in interstellar politics and are aggressively developing our economy, as well as pushing to colonize the wide-open frontiers of space.

### **The Reticulan Empire**

Immensely old and vast beyond any Terran comparison, the Reticulans rule over more than a Sector of space. The humanoid Reticulans, sometimes referred to as “Greys”, are rational, technologically advanced beings. All Reticulans are biologically “female” and reproduce asexually. The Imperial system is one of vertical and horizontal monopolies held by the nine Great Houses with the Empress on top. Both Terran and Cicek were once client species of the Reticulans, but have recently won their freedom. The Reticulans have been engaged for an apparent eternity in an intermittent war against the aggressive Chiwak to the Rimward of Imperial space, employing warbots and alien, often human, auxiliaries.

### **Ssesslessian Harmony**

The Terran victory created two new interstellar polities, which are in essence Terran client-states. The first is the Ssesslessian Harmony. Centuries ago, the Reticulans glassed the Ssesslessian homeworld, forcing them to become nomads and thralls of the Empire. The UTR gave two former Reticulan worlds to the Ssesslessians as their new homeworlds. Highly spiritual but sectarian, the snake-like Ssesslessians maintain multiple mystery-cults to their numberless gods, all presided over by the Council of Harmony – and its Terran advisors.

Second is the Reticulan Technate. Even before the War, many Reticulans began to question the rationale behind the Imperial system. In its stead, they proposed Technocracy – meritocratic rule by experts and scientists rather than by hereditary nobles. This underground Technocratic Movement supported the Terrans during the War and now control the Terra-backed Reticulan Technate. Rationally managed in both economy and politics, the Technate shows much vigor which is in short supply in the old Empire.

### **Cicek Confederation**

To the Spinward-Rimward dwell the tribal, reptilian Cicek. Highly individualistic and competitive in the case of males and tribal community oriented in the case of females, the Cicek dislike any political framework larger than a tribe. As a male’s Glory changes quickly over time, so does the Cicek hierarchy. Only a particularly Glorious male may hope to unite several tribes under his command.



## **A Primer to These Stars Are Ours!**

The latter happened recently when the warlord Nine Talons accumulated enough notoriety and Glory to unite the tribes behind him. He formed the Cicek Confederation, combining multiple tribes into a very loose "government". However, Cicek being Cicek, things are unstable and the only hope for stability is continued effort by Cicek females to reign in the typical male competition.

### **Zhuzzh and Precursors**

The insectoid Zhuzzh are opportunistic nomads, traveling space in their many starships and trading in all sorts of artifacts, trinkets, and other goods. They are not above turning to piracy or smuggling when the opportunity arises. Zhuzzh are said to originate from a former Precursor world. They were originally semi-sentient scavengers who filled the vacuum vacated by the Precursors' fall. The Zhuzzh then quickly evolved sentience and learned how to use Precursor technology. This allowed them to advance rapidly, though usually through jury-rigging rather than a profound understanding of the principals of engineering behind their devices.

### **On to Adventure!**

This is a time of great danger among the stars, as well as great opportunities. Enterprising people – both human and alien – can find employment in a wide variety of bold actions among the stars, from exploration of unknown worlds beyond the frontier, to diplomacy and espionage along the border, to trade and commerce between the far stars and across borders, to mercenary work in the many local and interstellar conflicts – or, indeed, active-duty military life in these interesting times. Adventure awaits!

## A Primer to These Stars Are Ours!



## THE TERRAN BORDERLANDS

Reticulan space stretches many parsecs to the Rimward of Terra, and Terran space expands further Coreward. This vast universe holds boundless opportunities for adventure and drama under the light of many distant stars. The greatest drama, however, the greatest conflict and action, goes in the narrow band called the Terran Borderlands. There, the spheres of influence of the United Terran Republic, the Reticulans, the Cicek, and the Ssesslessians intersect. There, political machinations, covert operations, and still-opened war-wounds simmer as these interstellar powers jockey for dominance in the Post-War universe.

The galaxy is vast and we have visited a tiny and insignificant area out of this great disk of stars. Even the Reticulan Empire – the greatest interstellar power known to us – is a speck in size compared to the galaxy. In this space, however, our history unfolds. The Reticulans once designated their space as a "Sector", forty parsecs from Coreward to Rimward and thirty parsecs from Spinward to Trailing. They divided it into sixteen "Subsectors". They eventually grew and expanded out of this initial Sector and subjugated four species – including the Terrans – to serve as their client-states. Known space, in its modern form, stretches across approximately four Sectors, that is a radius of approximately thirty to forty parsecs from Zeta 2 Reticuli, though they do not directly correspond to the Sectors of official Reticulan astrography. The approximate center of known space is Zeta 2 Reticuli – the Reticulan homestar, a dozen parsecs to the Rimward-Trailing from Sol. It is somewhat to the Coreward and the Spinward from the astrographical center of the Reticulan Empire. The Empire itself fills nine Subsectors, while its client species, as well as the now-independent Terrans and Cicek, expand known space by a subsector or two outward.

## **Cicek Confederation**

Cicek space lies on the Spinward-Rimward corner of the Borderlands. Until recently a frontier region, these Cicek stars saw massive development during the War. The risky trade and supply route from Terra to the Cicek core worlds along the Solar Main – called the Cicek Run – went through this region and brought with it rapid development. Even today, the Cicek borderlands worlds enjoy a “boomtown” economy, as several tribes have migrated there to exploit the virgin rocks for resources and settle the fertile soil of the local “capital” of Fei Lian. As usual for Cicek, the typical starport in this region is a free port open to all kinds of business, legitimate or otherwise, with few (if any) questions asked.

## **Reticulan Empire**

At the Trailing-Rimward side of the Borderlands lies Reticulan Imperial space – old, well-developed, rich worlds controlled by the Reticulan House Thiragin. A few of them, such as Asura, sustained significant damage during the War, but most of the Reticulan Imperial worlds are developed and rich beyond what most Terran worlds can achieve. With the old Thiragin capital at Keid in Technate hands, the new Reticulan Imperial regional capital was established on the similarly wealthy Rana system.

## **Reticulan Technate**

Five of the Reticulan border worlds conquered by Terra in the late War formed the Reticulan Technate, controlled by the rebel Technocratic Movement. They all suffered significant War damage, especially the Technate capital of Keid – the old House Thiragin seat of power – which saw heavy fighting at the final stage of the War. The Technocratic government, supported by Terra and managed by Reticulan scientists and engineers, devotes most of its resources for rebuilding the shattered economy. The local culture is far more stable than that of the Empire, but also far less stable and is prone to all sorts of weird projects and factionalism led by brilliant and eccentric Reticulan minds.

## **Ssesslessian Harmony**

For centuries, the Ssesslessians were without a homeworld, their original world destroyed by the Reticulans. They vowed not to settle down until they enact divine punishment on the Reticulans, but during the War, Terran diplomatic efforts convinced some of them to settle on the former Reticulan colony of Mehen and the mining world of Jörmungandr. The Reticulan colonists, fearing massacre by the vengeful Ssesslessians, fled to the Rimward Imperial stars, leaving most of the infrastructure intact for the Ssesslessians to use. The Ssesslessian Harmony is a Terran client-state and trades extensively with Terra.

## **Unclaimed Worlds**

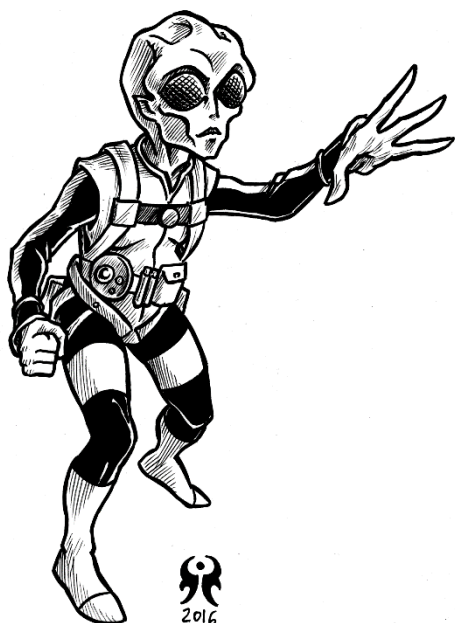
The Terran Borderlands include several worlds still unclaimed by the interstellar governments. Most are uninhabited except for the failed colony on Asherah and the illicit settlement on Koschei. These worlds are wide open to exploration and colonization. Some groups – mostly Terran and Cicek – have already expressed interest in colonizing these stars, though their remoteness slows down such plans as reconstruction of existing colonies takes precedence over establishing new ones.

## **United Terran Republic**

The United Terran Republic dominates the Coreward half of the Terran Borderlands and extends to several more colony worlds to the Coreward and the Trailing of the area shown on the map, though the Terran economic and political core is at the Terra-Sol system, Chiron, Barnard, and Belobog. The UTR is expanding in all directions, except for the Rimward where treaties and agreements have established a permanent border. The Terran government invests in bolstering the colonies along that border to shore up its defenses against potential Imperial Reticulan aggression.

## RETICULANS – PLAY AS A GREY ALIEN FROM ZETA 2 RETICULI

The These Stars Are Ours! core book offers 7 alien careers from four alien species, in addition to 12 Terran careers. Here we provide a sample of such an alien career – the Reticulan Prole – including a description of this species, tips about playing a Reticulan, character generation rules, advanced Event tables, and Cepheus Engine statistics for a Civilian Flying Saucer.



### Reticulans – Species and Empire

The Reticulan Empire is the oldest and most powerful polity in known space, though the Chiwak have been known to contest that claim. Reticulans are small, slender humanoids, standing on average 140cm tall. They possess large, bulbous heads dominated by two large, almond-shaped eyes. They have little or no nose and a small, toothy mouth. Reticulans exhibit both mammalian and reptilian characteristics. All Reticulans are biologically female. Each individual lays eggs several times in her life through parthenogenesis, each egg eventually producing a Reticulan hatchling. This form of reproduction requires no sexual contact with other individuals and creates less genetic variety than sexual reproduction, though the hatchlings are not exact clones of their mother (though they are quite like her). This superficial similarity among Reticulans led Terrans to hypothesize in the early years of the occupation that the Reticulans were all artificial clones.

Reticulan psychology is shaped by two main biological facts about their species. They reproduce asexually through parthenogenesis, and their evolutionary origins can be traced back to a scavenger species that ate prey long after predators had eaten their fill. The current theory is that these Reticulan ancestors never fought predators, or other hijackers. Instead, they waited for them to finish and then fed on the remains. This made the species poorly adapted to physical fighting. Moreover, asexual reproduction removed a reason to fight over mates. This meant that this Reticulan ancestor had even fewer evolutionary pressures forcing them to be efficient combatants. This in turn reduced evolutionary pressures to develop aggression and strong emotional passions. Rather, evolution drove the ancestor-Reticulan towards more cognitive development.

Reticulans are very rational beings. The average Reticulan is smarter than the average human, and a particularly brilliant Reticulan outstrips even the greatest human geniuses in terms of raw cognitive power. Reticulans prefer to use their intellect, rather than emotions or brute force, to solve problems. They also have a fondness for categorizing and encoding information, as well as a knack for creating efficient procedures and plans. Relations between Reticulans are usually based on rational and utilitarian concerns. Still, it would be wrong to think the Reticulans incapable of emotion. Ambition and pride are common feelings among Reticulans, as is loyalty to one's house or bloodline.

The Reticulan Empire is ruled by the Empress and the Great Houses. Each Great House, as well as many of the Minor Houses, is essentially a massive semi-monopolist megacorporation, not unlike the Zaibatsus of Imperial Japan on Old Terra. The Great Houses, however, have a great deal of political influence. Each House is ruled by a single Reticulan bloodline, and ownership is hereditary. At the most basic level, the Empire is not necessarily feudal since its rulers are not a class of land-owners. Instead, it is more like highly stratified and monopolized capitalism: each House owns a

wide variety of subsidiaries, industries, and outlets, and has the right to govern planets, or even subsectors. As communications are limited to the speed of Jump travel, each planetary business, even when owned by an interstellar Great House, must run itself almost independently. Thus, the ruling bloodline guards its House's interests over interstellar distances by extreme nepotism: the entire senior managerial staff comes from its daughters.

All Proles in the territory of a Great House are its subjects. Many work for the House controlling the area they live in - as said above, it is essentially a monopolistic corporation. If commoners move - not always an easy thing to do - to the territory of another Great House, they'll usually have to find a job with that house. The Proles constitute a clear majority of the Reticulan species and fill all productive and most contemplative jobs. They also staff the lower and middle managerial positions, with the Gentry functioning as senior managers and the Nobility as executives. Economic prosperity and status vary greatly between Proles, but the one thing in common between them is their lack of any significant political power, as the decision makers are, for the most part, Nobles.

### **Playing a Reticulan**

When playing a Reticulan, always try to be as rational as possible. A Reticulan character may have emotions, but her reasoning abilities should always be at the fore. A Reticulan character keeps a cool head and a sharp mind even in stressful situations. When trying to solve a problem, she will resort to scientific and technological solutions before turning to emotion, intuition, or violence. Reticulans view violence as only one of several tools in their disposal when confronting problems. They wield it as a scalpel, not as a sledgehammer, but when they see fit they are capable of things which would be viewed as vicious cruelty by other species. When they do resort to violence, Reticulans prefer to carry it out via technological means, such as robots, or their alien clients - they themselves are not very well-adapted to combat.

Reticulans lack the biological or cultural imperative for love, other than motherly love. They may form friendships with other individuals - even alien individuals - but these relations are rarely passionate, and carry only moderate emotional attachment. They may display loyalty, but will rarely adhere to what they see as a lost cause. They are capable of compassion, but less so than most humans. In interpersonal relations, just like in problem-solving, Reticulans tend towards rationality and utilitarianism. Furthermore, Reticulans are long-lived, and their upper class is extremely long-lived. This leads to them embracing "the long view" in all their endeavors. Reticulan villains might spend decades or even centuries on elaborate schemes. At all times, Reticulans are calculating and very rarely do they make a rash decision.

## Generating Reticulan Characters

The grey-skinned aliens called Reticulans by humanity, mature much more slowly than humans and enjoy longer lifespans. They start their careers at the age of 26 and begin aging only at age 50, at the end of their sixth term. Afterwards, they make an Aging table roll only every two career terms (8 years). They often live over 150 years, but the elite enjoys longevity treatments which extend their lives to several centuries. All Reticulans are female. They are descended from Scavenger-Carrion Eaters. Reticulans may have up to 12 terms using the career generation rules.

Reticulans have the following Racial Traits: Engineered (TL11), Low Gravity Adaption, Notable Intelligence (+2), Small (STR 1D6, DEX 3D6, END 1D6).

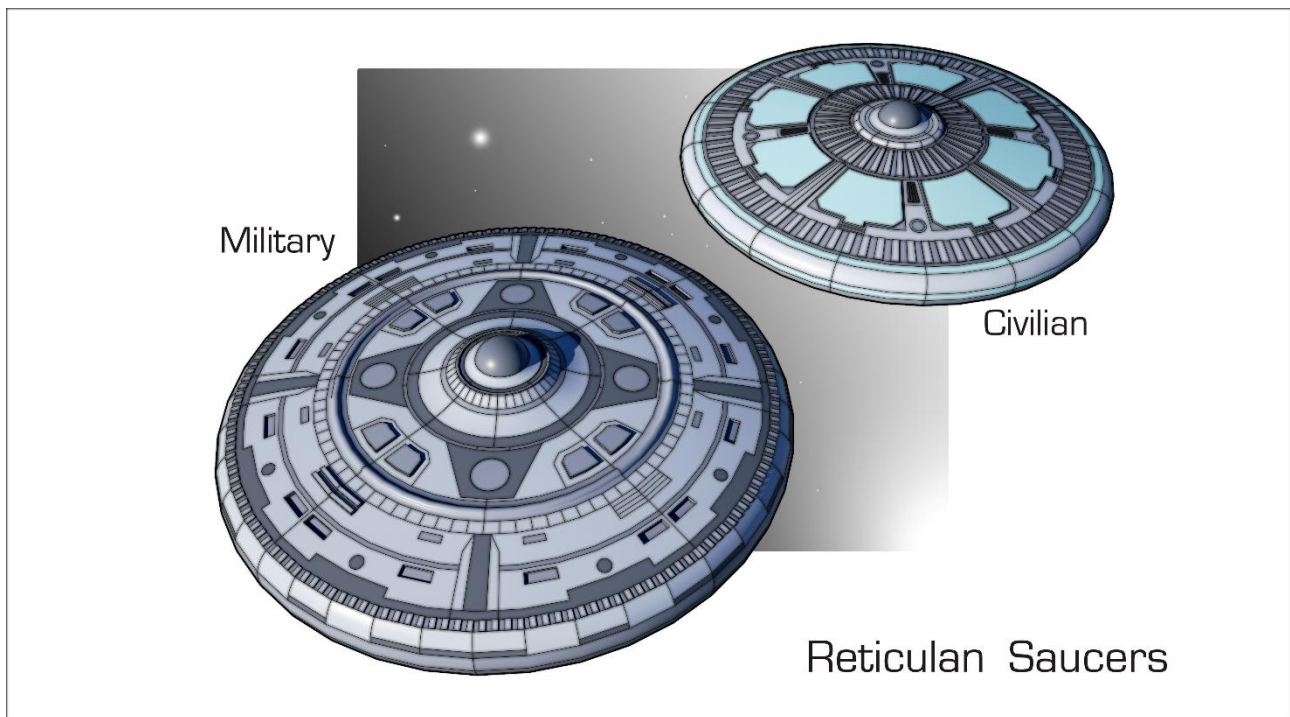
The following character generation tables use the Cepheus Engine character generation rules, with the addition of the Ally and Saucer mustering out benefits, detailed below.

Reticulan Prole					
A Reticulan commoner, as opposed to the Noble ruling caste. Proles are workers, technicians, scientists, soldiers, and explorers, among many other trades and professions.			<b>Qualification</b>	Any Reticulan	<b>Commission</b>
			<b>Survival</b>	INT 5+	<b>Advancement</b>
			<b>Re-Enlistment</b>	4+	
Mustering Out Benefits					
Rank	Title	Skill or Bonus	1D6	Cash	Materials
0	Worker	Computer-1	1	Cr1000	Mid Passage
1	Petite		2	Cr2000	+1 EDU
2	Moyenne		3	Cr5000	High Passage
3	Grande	Leadership-1	4	Cr10000	+1 INT
4	Haute		5	Cr20000	+1 SOC
5	Burgess		6	Cr50000	Ally
6	Equesa		7	Cr100000	Saucer
Skills and Training					
1D6	Personal Development	Service	Specialist	Advanced Education	
1	+1 STR	Admin	Broker	+1 SOC	
2	+1 DEX	Comms	Computer	Electronics	
3	+1 END	Electronics	Gravitics	Engineering	
4	+1 INT	Recon	Medicine	Gravitics	
5	+1 EDU	Sciences	Recon	Navigation	
6	Gun Combat	Vehicle	Sciences	Piloting	

## New Mustering Out Benefits

- **Ally:** An Ally may be a close friend or relative who may be willing to help the character from time to time. The details are left to the Referee and Player.
- **Saucer:** You receive a Civilian Saucer (see below). If you roll this Benefit again, you may upgrade to a Military Saucer or gain a Level of Pilot (small craft). Additional rolls of this benefit can be used to reduce the age of the ship or allow small improvements (not to exceed MCr1.0 each) to the ship. Note that the ship is 1D3 decades old and might suffer from various quirks.





## Flying Saucers

### 30-ton Reticulan Civilian Saucer

The space vessel which comes to mind when someone thinks of a "Reticulan ship" is the Saucer. This is the workhorse of Reticulan interstellar society – highly standardized, highly efficient, and very easily reconfigurable for a wide variety of roles. Components, from lab modules to staterooms, are completely modular and are easy to install and remove. Furthermore, as Saucer Tenders – commonly available in most Reticulan star systems and in alien space around the Reticulan border – can carry Saucers between star systems, they are a favorite method of travel for Reticulans who do not have to leave the comfort of their own ship when traveling, but instead fly it in-system and then dock with a Tender to jump to the next one.

There are several common configurations, the most well-known of these is the Exploration version installing advanced sensors, two staterooms for extended stay and a small lab; a residential variant carrying staterooms and some Luxuries; and a shorter-range shuttle version carrying a combination of Small Craft Acceleration Couches and cargo space. The data below describes the "base" saucer, without additional components installed – this can be reconfigured by the owner after purchase at any Starport C or better in Reticulan space.

Using a 30-ton hull (0 Hull, 1 Structure), the Reticulan Civilian Saucer is a common sight in Reticulan space. It mounts maneuver drive sE and power plant sG, giving a performance of 3-G acceleration. Fuel tankage of 3 tons supports the power plant for 4 weeks. Adjacent to the 2-person Control Cabin is a computer Model3. Standard software load includes: Fire Control/1 and Simulated Intelligence/1. The ship is equipped with Military sensors (+0 DM). The ship has 1 hardpoint and 1 ton allocated for fire control. Installed on the hardpoint is a single Beam Laser. Reconfigurable cargo capacity is 10.5 tons. The hull is streamlined with Self-Sealing and Stealth options. Special features include Fuel Scoops and an Airlock. The ship requires a crew of 1: Pilot; although the Simulated Intelligence program makes the ship self-guiding. The ship can carry up to 1 additional passenger in the Control Cabin. The ship costs MCr19.940 and takes 30 weeks to build.

## Simulated Intelligence (TL13)

Advanced computer algorithms running on a powerful computer can perform highly complex tasks autonomously and appear "intelligent" upon cursory examination. They are not truly self-aware, however, and might encounter difficulties where there is need of non-procedural thinking or "intuition". The Simulated Intelligence ship computer program is an advanced, powerful version of the ordinary Intellect software and Expert programs (CE70) designed to run on ship mainframes and capable of conducting highly complex spacecraft operations. This program can use the Pilot, Navigation, Engineering, and Electronic skills in any task using the ship's own systems, and, combined with Auto-Repair (CE126) and Repair Drones, it may also use the Mechanic, Gravitics, and Engineering skills for any shipboard task, using the drone as its "eyes and hands". Note that Simulated Intelligence will encounter difficulties when faced with complex, unpredictable situations requiring true self-aware sentience and will then suffer negative DMs at the Referee's discretion; thus, most military starships and some civilian ones will prefer to employ a full sophont crew even when using a Simulated Intelligence to carry out day-to-day tasks.

Simulated Intelligence comes in two versions - Simulated Intelligence I and Simulated Intelligence II, as noted below.

*Simulated Intelligence I* - MCr1, Rating 10, has skill-1 in Pilot, Navigation, Engineering, Electronics, Mechanics and Gravitics. May only use one skill at a time.

*Simulated Intelligence II* - MCr10, Rating 15, has skill-1 in Pilot, Navigation, Engineering, Electronics, Mechanics and Gravitics. May use up to two skills simultaneously.

Note that all species in this setting have regulations requiring at least one person with the necessary skills to be aboard. There are no robotic ships in this setting – although theoretically, there could be.

## Saucer Familiarity

The Reticulans have been using Saucers – both military and civilian – for centuries. As technology, advanced they upgraded a few systems, but the most basic layout and work interfaces have changed very little. As Reticulans use saucers extensively, their shipyards, technicians, and pilots know them inside and out, and finding spare parts for a Saucer is easy on any Reticulan world but the most remote and desolate.

*Thus, Saucers enjoy the following benefits:*

- A Reticulan engineer attempting to repair or jury-rig any system on a Saucer enjoys a +1 DM to her task roll.
- A Reticulan pilot flying a Saucer enjoys a +1 DM to her Pilot rolls.
- Annual maintenance, spare parts, and repairs for a Saucer at any Reticulan starport enjoy a 10% discount.

## ADVENTURE AWAITS

### Sample World: Buggane B400655-D, Temperate (Teegarden's Star c, M6V, Reticulan Technate)

Located two parsecs from Belobog, Buggane served as an important Reticulan military stronghold during the War, as well as staging ground for deploying units to Belobog. The Empire fortified this world and built its starport and naval bases underground to help defend them against bombardment. The Terrans hit Buggane multiple times. Multiple wrecked naval vessels, as well as war debris, form a “ring” at 100-planetary-diameter distance from the main world. This “ring” is still fertile ground for salvage operations, which are now carried out by the Technate government, as well as by Terran and Zhuzzh freelancers. The planet itself also saw major fighting and still holds extensive bunker networks built by the Empire. While the Imperial defenders did surrender to Terra after significant fighting, many underground shelters and communication tunnels remain unexplored, presumably abandoned.

### Sample Patron: Grrtrhd, Zhuzzh Salvage Operator

This independent salvage operator usually goes by “Gertrude”, as her Zhuzzh name is nearly unpronounceable by human “vocal orifices”—as she calls them. She is looking for a group of hardy space salvagers for a major operation.

**Equipment and Skills Required:** Engineering, Mechanics, Electronics, Zero-G, other Technical skills an asset. A starship or other small craft will be an asset, but not absolutely necessary.

**Description:** “Gertrude”'s operation on Buggane has hit a snag. Her last crew was imprisoned by Reticulan Technate authorities on charges of illegal salvage and black marketeering. She needs a new crew to crack open and investigate a supply depot rumored to be buried in an asteroid in the Buggane system. She will pay 15% of the value of all salvage recovered, 20% if the PCs bring their own ship.

**GM Information:** “Gertrude” has found the location of a “lost” Technate insurgent supply depot from the War. These depots in Buggane were instrumental in aiding the rebels hold out against the Reticulan Empire until the UTR could liberate the system. The Technate claims all materiel found in these depots as its rightful property but acknowledges that salvage operators are often indispensable in locating caches. This is a meritocracy, after all. “Gertrude” is not satisfied with the 25% commission she would receive for turning in these lost Technate supplies to their rightful owners, and is skirting the law in the hopes of making a major score. If the Buggane authorities detect or catch the PCs, she will leave them high and dry.

### Complications:

1. Precursor artifacts in the bunker have not yet attracted the attention of the Technate, but other Zhuzzh salvagers might be close by to jump on the PCs after they’ve made the initial entry.
2. The bunker has automated defense systems, warbots, and other traps.
3. The bunker has *live* defense systems in the form of Reticulan Technocratic rebels who were kept in low-berth during the War.
4. The supply cache is a treasure-trove of supplies. Unfortunately, it is also a Reticulan Technate space police sting, who are using the base to catch illegal salvage operations.
5. The cache contains the location of an even bigger score. Do the PCs find the map before “Gertrude”? What do they do with it?
6. The supply cache contains weapons of mass destruction.

## TERRAN NEWS AGENCY DISPATCHES, FEBRUARY 2260

### ALULA 25-DEC-59

The Far Trader *TSS Uriah the Hittite*, registered on Jambavan, was reported lost with all hands after an alleged pirate attack while approaching the Alula jump-point. High Port Administrator Kinked Tail expressed sadness over the loss of Terran and Cicek lives but said that it is neither her job, nor that of the Emerald Eyes tribe to police the higher orbits. She further claimed that the pirate ships surely originated from Lindworm, which is beyond Emerald Eyes territory.

**JAMBAVAN 5-JAN-60** - Terran Ministry of Colonization and Space Travel officials stressed again that ships going into Cicek space should be ready to defend themselves and carry appropriate weapons.

### GASHADOKURO 6-JAN-60

Imperial health officials have expressed concerns regarding the spread of the Blue Fever epidemic among Reticulan refugees from Asura. The refugees, housed in repurposed hangars, complained about overcrowding and inadequate medical resources, but House Thiragin representative Nilrana said that such claims are little more than Technocratic propaganda aimed to foment discontent among the refugees, and that the Terrans, who bombarded Asura, should be blamed for any misfortune the refugees suffer from.

**KEID 17-JAN-60** – Sources in the Reticulan Technate said that this is evidence for the illogical, inefficient nature of the Imperial system, especially in comparison to the on-going, successful reconstruction of Technate worlds.

### BELOBOG 11-JAN-60

Ministry of Finance director for the Belobog District, Marcella Shimon, announced the Ministry's plan to privatize the Kresnik Mining Concern. No details regarding potential buyers were given but representatives of New Terran Frontiers and Chiang Robotics have expressed keen interest in the offer. Kresnik Miner's Union spokesman, Boris Nakamura told TNA that the Union will cooperate with such a move only if the Ministry will respect the hard work and dedication of the miners, who delivered crucial raw materials to Belobog while under Reticulan bombardment, and vouch for their employment security.

### JORMUNGANDR 12-JAN-60

A malfunctioning mining robot killed six Ssesslessian miners and a Terran engineer and wounded twenty-two additional miners in a freak accident in a lanthanum mine near the southern pole of Jörmungandr. Ssesslessian Harmony security troops destroyed the robot and thus saved the lives of over a hundred additional miners and engineers. The mine's chief foreman announced that a software glitch caused the robot to attack miners with its laser drills. However, anonymous sources in Jörmungandr's government disclosed to TNA that they strongly suspect malicious software left behind by the Reticulans when they evacuated the world in 2244.

### MARS 1-FEB-60

Unstable weather continues in Syrtis Major Planum and Terran authorities have evacuated six more settlements due to flash flooding. The Mars Planetary Meteorological Service cited the effects of the current stage of terraformation as the reason for the heavy rains and stormy weather over this region.

**MARS 2-FEB-60** – The Mars Xenoarcheological Society announced the discovery of alien ruins exposed by the flash floods in Syrtis. They told TNA that the working hypothesis is that these are of Precursor origin, though they have not ruled out a later Reticulan construction. The Society has postponed further investigation until the weather stabilizes enough to allow safe excavation.



## EXCITED? MUCH MORE AWAITS IN THE THESE STARS ARE OURS CORE BOOK

These Stars Are Ours is a fully independent setting for the Cepheus Engine rules. Here we are proud to present all the material you will need to play games, adventures, and campaigns in that universe. We present you with the universe of 2260 AD – two years after the decisive Terran victory over the Reticulan Empire, securing Terran independence and making humanity a young but rising interstellar power.

**Chapter 1 – the United Terran Republic** provides details of 2260's Terra, its history, current affairs and outlook, government and politics, military might, economy and corporations, technology, crime, and law enforcement. The chapter also provides the enterprising Referee with details about the conquest and colonization of space, cultural life in 2260 and criminal and terrorist groups and organization to make the lives of player characters "interesting".

**Chapter 2 – Aliens** describes Terra's alien neighbors, allies, and rivals. Primary among these are the Reticulan Empire and Technate, the Cicek and their Confederation, the nomadic Zhuzzh and the enigmatic Ssesslessians. This chapter also describes minor alien species and alien empires – some of which are quite prominent – lying far from Sol and thus less influential on current affairs. We provide details about the biology, psychology, and culture of each alien species, as well as advice about playing alien characters.

**Chapter 3 – Characters and Careers** deals with creating characters specifically intended for These Stars Are Ours. We offer character creation guidelines and careers for Terran and alien characters, including alien species-specific rules and full career tables. We also provide optional advanced character generation rules including event tables for all careers described in this book and rules for earning decorations while in service. This chapter also provides rules for cybernetic enhancements and related advanced technologies.

**Chapter 4 – Starships** contains two new small craft designs and five new starship designs unique to These Stars Are Ours. From the ubiquitous Reticulan Saucers and Terran military transports to Cicek raiders and Ssesslessian Infiltrators, this chapter allows the Referee and players to experience space travel and space combat in These Stars Are Ours. All starship descriptions contain full game stats, as well as detailed deckplans.

**Chapter 5 – Terran Borderlands** provides the Referee with a detailed overview of Terran space and its alien neighbors. Out of the entirety of Known Space in this setting – which spans multiple Sectors – this book focuses on the border region between Terran, Reticulan, Cicek and Ssesslessian space, as well as the Spinward Terran frontier which is open to exploration and colonization. This is an area brimming with political conflict, drama, and action, ideal for exciting science fiction campaigns. This chapter overviews known space and then details the sixty-four worlds of the Terran Borderlands; worlds brimming with adventuring potential.



# A Primer to These Stars Are Ours!

**Chapter 6 – Patrons** described twelve Patrons from this setting willing to hire player characters and send them on thrilling adventures throughout the Terran Borderlands.

**Appendix A – Terran News Agency Dispatches, February 2260** replicates an in-game news bulletin sheet, printable as a handout for players and containing multiple news stories – each one of them is also an adventure seed for your game.

**Appendix B – Sources of Inspiration, Literary and Otherwise** refers to multiple works of science fiction which have inspired the design of These Stars Are Ours – and which can provide inspiration for your game as well. It lists works of literature, cinema, and television as well as the most recent and most modern medium – video games.

## Launch into the 23<sup>rd</sup> Century with These Stars Are Ours!

- History and background material for 23rd century Terra and the larger universe.
- Corporations, political parties, and illegal groups – both Terran and alien.
- 4 major alien species and several minor ones – all detailed.
- Rules for generating and playing characters from 6 alien species.
- 7 alien careers and 12 Terran ones.
- Advanced character generation rules and event tables for all included careers.
- Rules for cybernetic augmentation, body modification, and cyborg conversion.
- 2 small craft and 5 starships with full game statistics and high-res deck plans.
- The Terran Borderlands including 64 detailed worlds and a high-res star map.
- 12 Patrons offering adventurous missions to the players' characters.

**Note that this book provides character generations, biological and cultural background, and flying saucers (!) for playing Grey Aliens from Zeta 2 Reticuli – ready to drop into any Cepheus Engine campaign!**



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