



STARBURST

November 1992

Issue: 17
Page One

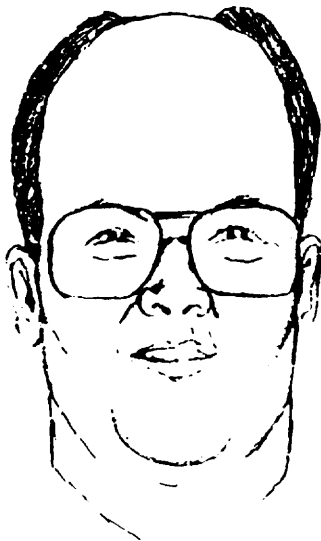
STARBURST is the newsletter of HIWG Australia and is distributed to all members of HIWG in Australia and New Zealand free.

STARBURST is published irregularly by David Schneider under the umbrella of the History of the Imperium Working Group (HIWG). STARBURST is distributed in New Zealand by Paul G. Ridgway, P.O. Box 262, Paraparaumu 6152, New Zealand.

Articles, comments and illustrations are gratefully accepted and should be sent to David Schneider, 5 East Avenue, Allenby Gardens, South Australia 5009.

Donations of stamps and funds are welcome but are not tax deductible.

KNOW YOUR HIWGER



Bush, Clayton R. 579DD9 Age:33 3 Terms Cr: Satisfactory
POSSESSIONS: Computer, many programs, books, fuzzy dice
SKILLS: Admin-2, Computer-2, Liason-I, Tactics-2,
Fleet Tactics-I, Wpns-0

Bush is also one of the few remaining members of the Full Imperium Movement in the Domain of Deneb. This group, predominately Vilani, supports uniting all human races into one "full" Imperium. This would include conquering the Zhodani Consulate, which goal explains the groups decline since II20.

Associate (civillian) member of the Naval Institute, Bush has shown consistent interest in military affairs. His purported motive is playing of simulation games.

A bachelor, Bush also has no pets or other ties to local society. His prized possession is his computer system, chosen to match the high-power models he uses at work despite the overkill for home use. He has moved several times, and currently works at an outlying planetary prison on Trin/Trin's Veil.

He may be simply a harmless eccentric. Due to his political views, interests, and nomadic lifestyle, however, DINI maintains a watch on him as a suspected spy.

RELIGION IN THE IMPERIUM

By Steven Fernandez

Part 2): The Decline of Dogmatic Religions

In Part I; I have argued (hopefully convincingly) that most people in the Imperium will have a belief in some religion, or another. And that this will be true even for the supposedly 'sophisticated' citizens of high-tech worlds. But also in Part I), I pointed out that the Western churches are in decline now (and suggested why).

In this Part, I will discuss the probable ramifications of the trends in religion that have already been manifested in the twentieth century. My discussion will attempt to extrapolate these trends up to the time of Traveller, and therefore to suggest a realistic fate for religions of the traditional mould (ie religions that follow the familiar forms of: demanding a regular pilgrimage to some shrine; asserting the existance of at least one human-friendly diety; asserting a diety-sponsored morality; postulating a non-material realm that is where we really belong; and so on).

If we accept that Western Churches are on the decline because they can't stop being dogmatic, ritualistic, tradition-bound, and overly formalised; then we

should accept that by the time of Traveller, these churches will be reduced to the status of fringe religions. And as fringe religions, they will be almost totally confined to those sectors that have strong Solomani traditions: As I doubt that they will be able to 'hold on' to anywhere else. (Putting that in specific terms, I would say that these churches would be confined to those sectors directly rimward of Massila sector: say the 3x3 square of sectors that are centred on the Solomani Rim sector.)

But you shouldn't think that only the Judaeo-Christian religions will suffer this 'fringing' fate. In fact, all the other, equally dogmatic, 'Great Religions' will suffer the same decline. Islam is an obvious candidate here, but the heavily ritualised versions of Hinduism and Buddhism would also lose their grip. (I am sticking my neck out here; but I think it's uncontroversial to say that even in the Far East, Americanisation is well under way. Therefore we can expect to see similar declines happening in the dogmatic Eastern faiths, in the near future.)

*(Consequently, these Eastern religions will also be confined to the 3x3 square of sectors that has already been mentioned.)

In addition, whatever survives of these former colossi will exist in the Traveller era as highly 'mutated' derivatives. In fact, this 'mutation', I wish to convey a certain impression about how these religions will change over time. Specifically, I mean that for any currently dogmatic religion 'X', it will change so much - over the centuries - that its Traveller 'descendant' would be virtually unrecognisable to us today. And, almost certainly, the changes that religion X has undergone would result in utter paganism by Traveller's time (from the point of view of any X-believer of today, that is: his Traveller counterpart will think differently, of course). For example, a paganised Catholicism may interpret the Holy Trinity as being just a single deity that simply has three heads. Or, even more radically, it may interpret the Immaculate Conception as a case of artificial insemination: And so artificial insemination may be upheld as the only 'sinless' way of starting motherhood.

Having just argued that the dogmatic religions will cease to be significant in the popular consciousness of mainstream Imperials, let me now make this conclusion more vivid (and more directly game relevant) by pointing out a few consequences of it:

1) The Bible, the Torah, the Koran, and possibly the Hindu-Buddhist equivalents of these, will all become as meaningful to the average Imperial, as Homer's Iliad and Odyssey are to the average Western citizen of today.

2) The children of the (former) Imperium will have nothing like your old Sunday School experiences. (Clap, or cry, as however seems appropriate to you.)

3) Whatever religions capture the hearts and minds (in that order) of mainstream Imperials, they will not be the kind of religion that insists on rituals, or worship, for their own sake. Rather, they will be the kind of religion that - if it demands any public meeting obligations at all - will call these meetings for concrete and well-defined reasons.

4) These new, mainstream, religions will place much less emphasis on the unseeable and the unknowable. Rather, they will place their authority more in terms of explaining away ordinary experience into a plausible sounding grand context (although not necessarily a strictly "scientific" one.)

The take home message is, then, that "old style" religion (about god(s), afterlife, pilgrimages, etc) will not survive as a pervasive phenomenon amongst Imperials. (Nor amongst any other humaniti race, for that matter: As even the Solomani will, in general, regard the "new style" religions as being more 'relevant' to the interstellar age). Consequently, a very different conception of religion (ie the "new style") will emerge to replace the old: A conception that will emphasise human virtues (whatever they turn out to be) and that will encourage any, and all, attempts to improve the real-world lot of all humans (if not all sophonts as well). In a single word, this new conception could be (loosely) labeled as "humanism".

Unfortunately, a detailed account of 'humanism' is not on the agenda for this episode. In fact, I won't be addressing that very issue until the episode after

the next.

And the reason for the delay? Well, simply because there is one further matter that needs to be addressed, before moving on to describe what the 'new style' religion will be. And this outstanding matter is the issue of where science will stand, when the dogmatic religions gradually fade away...See you until then.

Next Episode: "Why Science won't be worshipped."

Back Issues of the Journal of the Travellers Aid Society

I have owned Best of the Journal numbers 1-4 (covering issues of the *Journal of the Travellers' Aid Society* 1 through 16) for some time, but have never seen any issues of the Journal itself for sale here in Adelaide. After seeing some back issues available in Canada, I decided to order some (issues 13, 16, 17, 19, 21, 22, 23 and 24) to see what they were like.

I found that most of the articles that interested me in the issues I purchased have been incorporated in the various MegaTraveller sourcebooks, Alien Modules and in World Builders Handbook. Of course, it is always possible that the best issues have been sold out and so only the lesser issues were left for me to buy. I can recommend the "Best ofs" (if only to get the best of the short adventures) but suggest that individual issues are now only of minor interest. The writeups on aliens are all now available from the HIWG document library (see section in Index on "Aliens"). One issue of JTAS implied that there "Best ofs" numbers 5 and 6, but I have never seen them.

There was one article in JTAS 17, though, that I thought would be relevant to those of us working on the Yiklerdzanzh sector project. I have reproduced that part of it relating to Vilani and Zhodani here, but cannot retype the whole thing for copyright reasons. See me or someone else with a copy to see the few bits that I have omitted (or buy your own).

The commonest Vilani male personal names are Eneri, Enli, Ganidiirsi (abbrev. Gani), Shannash, Mazun and Khugi. The commonest female personal names are Gamaagin (abbrev. Gam), Nashu, Sharikkamur (abbrev. Sharik), Ikush and Munush. This article states that Vilani is a tonal language, so that each syllable can be spoken in six tones. Therefore, E₄ne₂ri₅ is a man's name but E₁ne₁ri₄ means "bread pudding". I have never seen the tonal bit mentioned elsewhere, so perhaps this has been superseded.

Zhodani names vary with social class. Intendants and nobles have a single name which includes their rank as a suffix. Intendants' names end in *-iepr*. Nobles are (in ascending order), *-atl*, *-stebr*, *-tlas*, *-tlasche'* and *-iashav*. Names are chosen by the individual in his fifth olympiad and do not differ between the sexes. Proles have a personal name and a family name (personal name first). The names have long ago lost any particular significance. Prole surnames commonly end in *-qaf* ("from", for example Dliant Jdiprzhdilqaf, literally Dliant from Jdiprzhdil, a large estate on Zhodane) or *-nad* ("-er" as in Tliaqramad, or Miller, from Tliaqre', "to grind grain"). I have never seen this information repeated, but GDW do seem to be sticking to it and it looks like we should do the same.

- Grant Sinclair

P.S. I also ordered a duplicate copy of High Passage issue #2 by accident - if anyone wants it, please make me an offer.

Errata for Talpaku Subsector

Oops! I have made some mistakes with the remarks in UWPs for Yiklerdzanzh subsector I:

- 0223 should not have the (Wa)
- 0229 should also be Lo
- 0421 remarks should read Fl Lo Ni should show zero gas giants and 4 planetoid belts, rather than the reverse.
- 0424 should not be Ni
- 0524 should not indicate that it is an owned world
- 0624 should not be Ni
- 0627 should have atmosphere 7 in UWP listing and map
- Map for 0424 and 0725 should indicate a gas giant

Sector Statistics

I have done some analysis of the sector and come up with some interesting results. Note that figures may well change as UWPs are updated (e.g. because of the errors I have found, though most of mine are related to trade classes rather than population or tech levels from 9+).

Total sector population: The total population of the sector is currently 1.295 trillion, with 1.231 trillion being in high population worlds (182 billion in 38 pop 9 worlds, 1.100 trillion in 23 pop A worlds). Note that a few worlds are yet to be defined. Also note that if a world had a population digit above zero yet had a population multiplier of zero, I have assumed a population multiplier of 5.

I believe that all this is far too high. For comparison, compare against the Vanguard Reachēs (271 billion), Spinward Marches (514 billion), Deneb (692 billion), Antares (722 billion), Reavers' Deep (742 billion), Core (816 billion), Heliush 1.058 trillion), Vland (1.103 trillion), Alpha Crucis and Spica (both 1.119 trillion), Massilia (1.141 trillion), Old Expanses (1.655 trillion) and Solomani Rim (1.857 trillion). The last two sectors stated are the only ones that I know of that have populations greater than ours.

I would have thought that the population of our sector should be somewhere in the 600 billion - 800 billion range (i.e. to somewhere between half to two-thirds of our present level). Note that they are talking about the Zhodani being more lightly settled than the Imperium (see AAB Proceedings) and that I think that populations in the Solomani Rim had a positive DM of some sort due to the nature of the sectors.

So I believe that to reduce the population of the sector it is only worthwhile looking at worlds that are High Population (they comprise 99% of the population after all). We should certainly consider reducing the population multiplier of these High Population worlds and possibly also reduce the population digit of some worlds by 1 (9 to 8, A to 9).

I do not believe that a blanket rule is appropriate, since some analysts have probably done something like this already (I have, for one). I was thinking that the best approach is to have a look at the sector as a whole and attempt to make decisions on how powerful we want each state to be. This would mean setting rough population and tech levels for our various interstellar states and changing UWPs to fit this. You can either order the exact changes yourself or else set state and/or subsector goals and have the appropriate analyst(s) change their UWPs as they see fit.

Yiklerzdanzh State Demographics: Here is a table showing populations on various states. Note that the Vlazhdumecta stats do not include worlds in Fulani sector. What do you think about this? I am thinking that I should maybe include the Fulani sector stuff in with our own (that sector is supposed to be pretty sparse, so resources generated by the worlds in that sector would mostly be sent our way). If we do include the Fulani worlds, that makes another 18 worlds, 3 of which are high population and 1 of which is possibly pop A (not sure, it is hard to read the map - the doubtful one is the one 2 pc rimward of Shtansh. Is your copy easier to read?)

Also note that worlds with zones of F, U and R are included with Na, since I feel that the population and resources of these worlds would not be available to the enveloping state for the purposes of conflict. What do you think about this? If some subsector analysts have not finished setting zones, some figures may be more accurate than others.

Yiklerzdanzh Sector - Demographics

State	Population	Worlds	Worlds (pop A)	Worlds (High Pop)
Ak	8.102 billion	6		2
Ch*	7.128 billion	4		1
Cs	1.028 billion	9		
Mi	330.084 billion	37	6	10
Sa	27.275 billion	8	1	1
Ta	71.097 billion	23	1	6
Vl	134.035 billion	19	2	5
Zh	638.168 billion	171	12	25
Na	349.799 billion	154	2	11
Mi+Ta	401.181 billion	60	7	16
Zh+Vl	772.203 billion	190	14	30

* The Carillon figures do not include their 4 undefined worlds.

Average occurrence of pop A worlds even with the standard world generation sequence is 2.78%; including the F, U and R zoned worlds within their borders, the Mi have 16.2% of worlds being pop A and the Zho have a percentage of 6.57% (6.97% if the Vl are included). The Zh and Mi states, then, seem to be the areas where some heavier than normal pruning is needed. Given that the Zhos (and hence the Meichntid Ibl?) are supposedly more lightly populated than the Imperium, we should perhaps have fewer than the "normal" number of pop A worlds.

I have provided subtotals for the Mi and Ta on the one hand (which I assume are anti-Zho) and the Zho and Vlazhdumecta on the other (which I assume are allies). I have no idea of how the other states stand (except the Carillon, who seem to be neutral) - to be honest, I don't think it will make much difference, as they are comparatively very lightly populated.

Yiklerdzanzh Naval Technology: I wanted to get some idea of how widespread what tech level was at each state, for shipbuilding worlds. I have listed starport A and B worlds (since they are the ones involved in starship construction) by tech level. Those which are High Population are also shown (since these have the greatest capacity). As before, I have counted worlds with zones F, U and R with "Na".

Starport A/B worlds High Pop Starport A/B worlds

State	TL 9-13	TL 14+	Total	TL 9-13	TL 14+	Total
Ak	5		5	2		2
Ch*	3		3	1		1
Cs	7		7			
Mi	11	10	21	1	8	9
Na	16	1	17	3	1	4
Sa	3		3			
Ta	15		15	6		6
VI	8	4	12	3	2	5
Zh	70	10	80	11	5	16
Mi+Ta	26	10	36	7	8	15
Zh+VI	78	14	92	14	7	21

There are also some worlds with starport A and B that have tech levels below 9 (from 6 to 8). I seem to remember somewhere, but I can't remember where, that there is a rule about minimum tls per starport (applying to the starport only, not the whole world). I seem to remember that the minimum for starport A was 9 (since they are supposed to be able to construct starships, or they would not be starport A, and therefore need TL 9 by definition) but have no idea what B was. Less than 9 anyway. If my ageing brain is right, then there may be a few more worlds to add in to the above. Have you ever seen the reference? Some worlds may have to have TL raised anyway, due to atmosphere. There is only one world with starport A with TL < 9 (in the Meichtid Ibl at hex 1813, TL 8); there are about 25 worlds with starport B with TL < 9. I am not sure how to handle these, so for now I will not include them anywhere. What do you think?

Shipyard Tonnage: I have next worked out estimates of shipyard capacities using Trillion Credit Squadron rules (with average modifiers used for govt code 6 and 7). Again, worlds with starports A and B are the only ones relevant; worlds with TL below 9 excluded; worlds with zones F, R and U counted with "Na"; and Vlazhdumecta worlds outside Yiklerdzanzh are not counted.

Just in case you don't have Trillion Credit Squadron, it derives shipyard capacities and budget from population, in each case involving a relatively insignificant modifier based on government type. Being so heavily based on population, changes to sector population will have similar effects on the figures. I have seen something (in AAB Proceedings?) questioning whether the size of the Navies produced by the Trillion Credit Squadron rules are reasonable, or whether overinflated, but I believe that it is not too bad (maybe a bit high) and at least will be consistent.

Annual Naval Budget (Mcr): Peacetime and Wartime

State	Peacetime Annual Naval Budget (Mcr)	Wartime Annual Naval Budget (Mcr)
Ak	4,245,520	5,059,185
Ch*	3,035,000	5,157,000
Cs	504,798	662,871
Mi	170,031,097	191,006,568
Na	7,764,072	9,404,078
Sa	468	609
Ta	41,208,200	50,256,779
VI	79,523,170	98,779,800
Zh	213,388,291	267,211,009
Mi+Ta	211,239,297	241,263,347
Zh+VI	292,911,461	365,990,809

Peacetime Annual Naval Budget (Mcr) by tech level

State	9	A	B	C	D	E	F
Ak		45,000	20	2,200,500	2,000,000		
Ch*		60,000		2,975,000			
Cs	35		1,513	462,750	40,500		
Mi	5,175		522,063	3,600	2,500,235	21	167,000,003
Na	2,000	5,250	4,766,822	2,440,000		550,000	
Sa	150		18	300			
Ta	39,685	332,500	24,011,015	15,625,000	1,200,000		
VI	33,000	1,100	570	4,222,000	9,250,000	66,016,500	
Zh	33,934	487,609	65,616,385	4,227,846	40,833,567	102,188,950	
Mi+Ta	44,860	332,500	24,533,078	15,628,600	3,700,235	21	167,000,003
Zh+VI	66,934	488,709	65,616,955	8,449,846	50,083,567	168,205,450	

To translate the MCr figures into ships, consider the following figures from *Fighting Ships of the Shattered Imperium*: a TL 14 heavy battleship costs TCr 17; a TL 13 battleship/dreadnought costs 1-1.5 TCr, a TL 13 cruiser about 0.1 TCr, other vessels orders of magnitude cheaper again. So the Meichntid Ibl could build about 10 heavy battleships per year if it wished, all of them TL 15.

Trillion Credit Squadron states that maintenance costs of ships in a standing navy are about 10% of your budget per year, but mothball fleets cost only 10% normal maintenance. So I am assuming that a state would have 9.1 years worth of ships in a standing navy and 0.9 years worth of ships in mothballs, for a total of 20 years worth of production. So the Meichntid Ibl might have a standing navy of perhaps 50 heavy battleships, 600 battleships and dreadnoughts and somewhat more numerous cruisers and smaller vessels; with about the same number of older vessels in mothballs. This seems rather a lot. If population of the state were to be changed, the numbers of ships would be altered accordingly.

It seems that there is no such thing in Traveller as a port used only for military purposes and not included in world stats. If the same applies in Yiklerdzanzh, then the above table shows all yards involved in constructing starships. Both the Zhodani Consulate and the Vlazhdumecta have ships and yards off-sector which can be drawn upon for starship construction (though the Zhodani have to defend territory other than our sector, too).

Sector Analysis

Having produced the above statistics, I will now draw some conclusions on the balance of power. It seems to me that the Zhodani, particularly with their Vlazhdumecta allies, are the most powerful state (obviously this is reasonable). Number two comes the Meichntid Ibl, who could not take on the Zhodani but appear to have enough starships to defend themselves well, and enough population at a high enough TL to resist occupation even should they lose the naval battles. A long way behind them come the Talpaku and the others.

It seems to me, though, that the "big three", the Zho, Mi and VI are so far in front of everyone else that no one else matters. If you are not in alliance with the Meichntid Ibl, then the Zho can waltz in and take over anytime they want to. More likely, they can use their power to back demands for trade agreements and make client states out of them. Some states may well be allies of the Zho anyway, because of their background.

I think that the stats I have produced show that the Zhodani, the Vlazhdumecta and the Meichntid Ibl should bear the brunt of the population decrease needed to reduce the sector population to more reasonable levels. If half or two thirds the Zhodani pop A worlds plus half the Mi worlds were to be changed to pop 9 with the same pop multiplier, the occurrence of pop A worlds would be more reasonable, the sector population would be more reasonable and there would not be such a gap in power between the "big three" and everyone else, which I think would make the sector more interesting. A method that is a bit more sophisticated than the one I suggest might be in order, like dropping an existing pop 9 world down to pop 8 for every world dropped from pop A to pop 9; there will be an artificially high number of pop 9 worlds otherwise. You can probably think up a better method.

The look at the sector needs to be more detailed than this, though. For instance the world at 2928 in the Sa state is an unabsorbed pop A world; that one world (20 billion people) has about 19 times the population of the rest of the Sa worlds put together, which seems weird to me. I would have thought that if it is really unabsorbed, that it just wouldn't be a Sa world (it is on the border of the state after all, if it is really an unabsorbed world then why is it claimed by the Sa at all?). It is so unusual (being fourth out of the

five worlds I know of in Charted Space that are pop A with Droyne) that it should surely be a feature of the sector, if left as it is. There are undoubtedly other problem worlds which will show up if the sector is examined.

Talpaku Communications Networks

Communications Network: There is no equivalent of the Imperial express boat network. There are instead several companies which run jump-3 manoeuvre-1 *Kzit* class couriers around the major worlds (those which are high population or starport A) - these are Talpakuhome, Vivaldi, Quatrain, Shallowwater, Salty Tears and Chaos Fallen. At least one courier (and usually more) will leave each of these worlds every day.

The courier companies have offices on all these major worlds. They also have agreements or contracts with other shipping, so anyone on any world can send a message to any other world in the Community with a single payment. The network is such that all worlds (except the prison world of Exile) are within jump-2 of a major world, so information crosses the Community fairly quickly.

The *Kzit* class couriers are 100 ton vessels that cost MCr 24.294 (less than that of an Imperial x-boat). Many couriers are stock standard (i.e. all cargo space devoted to databanks for messages), but others have a mix of databanks and a cargo space provision for smaller packages. These couriers are the equivalent of the aircraft which provide overnight courier services between cities of 20th Century Terra; they carry mail at rates equivalent to Imperial xboat costs, or small packages at 5 times normal starship freight cost. Governments and corporations also use these couriers (sometimes encrypting the messages), though the biggest have couriers of their own.

The recent development of TL 13 technology has allowed the Community Navy to upgrade its own couriers to jump-4. These are attached to fleets in wartime and are used to ferry military and intelligence material as required (usually, from naval base to another). Some of the older TL 12 (jump-3) designs were sold off to private industry, and are included in the ranks of the courier companies described above.